

## Locating Measures Used in I/O Psychology: A Resource Guide

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Suppose you have developed hypotheses and specified the relevant research variables you want to study. Assume you want to use existing or published measures of these variables but have found none. The purpose of this guide is to outline the resources available and steps for finding suitable measures.

There are four sources of information to sample to locate measures such as survey questionnaires and scales. These sources include (a) journal articles, (b) reference books and computer databases containing questionnaires and scales, (c) publishers of tests and inventories, and (d) the World Wide Web.

### Journal Articles

The best source of measures is academic journals that publish articles involving I/O psychology and related fields, such as human resource management. An efficient method for locating measures in such journals is a computerized literature search using databases such as *PsycLIT*. *PsycLIT* database contains article abstracts from over 950 behavioral science journals. To undertake a search, use the *PsycLIT* thesaurus to identify keywords that describe your research variables, for example, "job satisfaction." Then, combine these keywords with words descriptive of measures, such as, "scale," "questionnaire." For instance, the following *PsycLIT* (Silver Platter version) search command will produce several hundred articles that employed a job satisfaction measure: *job-satisfaction and questionnaire\*-or survey\*- or measurement- or scale\**. (The use of \* is a *PsycLIT* command that looks for singular as well as plural word forms.)

**"I found an article that used a measure that I would like to use, but it did not provide a copy of the measure. Now what?"**

This situation may happen to you. If so, you have at least three choices:

1. Contact the article's senior author by telephone, e-mail, or letter, and ask for a copy of the measure and permission to use it. All journal articles provide authors' affiliations; most give mailing addresses as well. Some journals (e.g., *Journal of Applied Psychology*) provide e-mail addresses when available. If an article is more than one-year old, check the senior author's current mailing address in the membership directory of a national

association, such as the *American Psychological Association Membership Directory* or the *Academy of Management Membership Directory*.

2. Look for a copy of the measure in another reference source (see the Appendix).
3. If you cannot contact the senior author (or co-authors) or find the measure in another source, try to construct a facsimile of the measure by carefully studying the article's content. Authors describe their measures and scoring procedures in the article's Method section. Furthermore, additional measure information may be obtained from other sections of the article. For example, as part of their statistical results, authors may report in a table the individual items composing a measure. Thus, by piecing together information from various parts of an article, you may be able to re-construct a measure.

### Reference Books and Computer Databases

Another important source for measures useful in I/O psychology research is reference books. There are a number of published reference works containing intact questionnaires and scales or citations to literature sources using these measures. The Appendix lists reference sources containing relevant I/O psychology measures.

Although some of the references given in the table have the word "tests" in their titles, they also contain measures that assess characteristics other than cognitive abilities. Indexes within these sources aid in identifying appropriate measures. The Score Index in the *Mental Measurements Yearbook*, for example, is a useful measure identification tool. To employ the Index, think of appropriate names and synonyms of your research variables (e.g., "job satisfaction," "job attitudes," "morale"). Look for these names in the Index. Then, use the reference information cited in the Index to review relevant measures.

Along with *PsycLIT*, other databases can also help locate suitable measures. These databases include:

1. *Dissertation Abstracts on Disk*
2. *Abstracted Business Information* (ABI Inform Database)
3. *Health and Psychosocial Instruments on CD-ROM* (HAPI Database).

Each of these databases makes use of search procedures similar to those outlined for *PsycLIT*. *Dissertation Abstracts on Disk* covers U.S. doctoral dissertations published since 1861. The ABI Inform Database contains abstracts of over 1,000 business-related magazines, trade publications, and journals. The HAPI Database (accessible through BRS Information Technologies and available at many libraries) gives information on over 15,000 measures.

### Publishers of Tests and Inventories

Test publishers distribute inventories and scales as well as tests. For example, a test publisher may publish a measure that concerns work motivation. For this reason, test publishers' catalogs are a prime source of measure availability. A comprehensive search for a measure should include a review of testing organizations' catalogs. A list of test publishers' mailing addresses for obtaining product catalogs is in the current edition of the *Mental Measurements Yearbook*.

### World Wide Web

Survey measure sources also reside on the World Wide Web. For example, in the field of management information systems (MIS), there are two web sites that provide measures of constructs associated with user reactions to computer systems. These are:

1. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~newsted/surveys.html>. This site provides a listing of constructs or attributes relevant to information systems research. Users simply choose a desired construct, and a measure of that construct is displayed. Only measures published in research journals are in the database.

2. <http://www.misq.org/archivist/home.html>. As a branch of *MIS Quarterly* (an MIS research journal), *MISQ Archivist* serves as a repository for data and measures from articles submitted to the journal. The site may be useful in locating a specific measure published in *MIS Quarterly*.

Other web sites, similar to the MIS sites mentioned above, will likely be created in other disciplines in the future. Researchers should monitor the web for such developments.

### "If I find a suitable measure, do I have to get permission to use it?"

The answer to this question is "Yes." If the measure you want to use is available from a commercial vendor, you may be able to buy it. (Students purchasing a measure for research purposes may be eligible for a discount.) By buying a measure, you have the right to use it for your research purposes. Note, however, that many publishers require potential purchasers to establish their qualifications to use some measures.

As we suggested earlier, if a measure is in a copyrighted publication, users have the responsibility for contacting its author and requesting written permission for its use. If the author cannot be reached, contact the publisher of the journal in which the article appeared.

### Conclusion

Whether as an I/O student, researcher, consultant, or practitioner, most of us have been faced with the problem of identifying an appropriate measure to assess a particular variable. If you have not faced this problem,

odds are you will. We have attempted to outline an approach to help you in your search. Obviously, there are no guarantees, but use of the strategies and resources identified here should enhance your chances of measure identification success.

## Appendix

### Reference Sources of Existing Scales and Questionnaires

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