

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON SCALE DESCRIPTOR SELECTION: HETEROGENEOUS GROUP VS. HOMOGENEOUS GROUP

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The purpose of this study is to compare the differences between heterogeneous and homogeneous groups on scale descriptor selection. Four types of response scales (capacity, frequency, intensity, and evaluation) including 80 different descriptors were used in a questionnaire. One hundred and fifty-six health service users (heterogeneous group) and 149 students of National Taiwan University (homogeneous group) were asked to place each of the 80 descriptors on a 10 centimeter line according to where they think each descriptor lies in relation to the two pre-specified anchors. Results showed that different groups have different judgments on scale descriptor selection. The subjects of homogeneous group had more consistent and open views on scale descriptor selection. However, they had more inconsistent opinions on more vague and uncertain descriptors, while the subjects of heterogeneous group had more inconsistent opinions on more extreme descriptors. Moreover, the averages for the same adverb but with different scale descriptors were different. The results are useful for the social and behavioral science researchers who use response scales as instruments in their studies.

**Keywords:** Scale descriptors, Homogeneous group, Heterogeneous group, Quality of life, World Health Organization