HELPING ATTITUDES SCALE (HAS)

Reference:

Description of Measure:
A 20-item measure of respondents’ beliefs, feelings, and behaviors associated with helping. Each item is answered on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

In the current series of studies, we developed a self-report measure of Mental Representation of Caregiving (MRC). Study 1 (N=841) describes the development and factor structure of the MRC scale. Studies 2-4 provided convergent, discriminant, and construct validity of the MRC scale, by examining its associations with attachment dimensions, empathy, emotional control, relational interdependent self-construal, communal orientation, and value priorities. Study 5 revealed significant associations between caregiving representations and parenting attitudes (desire to have a child, feelings toward parenthood, and expectations of self-efficacy as a parent). Overall, the results provide highly consistent evidence for the reliability and validity of the new MRC scale. The implications of individual differences in mental representation of caregiving for prosocial behavior and helping are discussed.


A field study of altruistic behaviour is presented using a modification of the dictator game in a large random sample survey in the Netherlands (n=1,964). In line with laboratory experiments, only 5.7% donated money. In line with other survey research on giving, generosity increased with age, education, income, trust, and prosocial value orientation.

Two studies examined the choice differences between prosocials and proselfs by examining the influence of norms of social responsibility and reciprocity. In line with the integrative model of social value orientation, it was expected that prosocials differ from proselfs in their level of cooperation because they wish to maximize own and other's outcomes (i.e. paralleling the norm of social responsibility) and enhance equality in outcomes (i.e. paralleling the norm of reciprocity). Study 1 revealed that prosocials felt more responsible to further the group's interest than proselfs did and this social responsibility feeling appeared to account for choice differences. Study 2 revealed that prosocials were more likely to reciprocate their partner's actions than were proselfs. Also, feelings of social responsibility did not account for this observation, suggesting that enhancing joint outcomes and equality in outcomes constitute two relatively independent dimensions. The findings are discussed in light of the integrative model of social value orientation.

**Scale** (taken directly from [http://www.mnstate.edu/nickell/help20.htm](http://www.mnstate.edu/nickell/help20.htm)):

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This instrument is designed to measure your feelings, beliefs and behaviors concerning your interactions with others. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer the questions as honestly as possible. Using the scale below, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement in the space which is next to each statement.

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1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Undecided Agree Strongly Agree
Disagree
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___ 1. Helping others is usually a waste of time.
___ 2. When given the opportunity, I enjoy aiding others who are in need.
___ 3. If possible, I would return lost money to the rightful owner.
___ 4. Helping friends and family is one of the great joys in life.
___ 5. I would avoid aiding someone in a medical emergency if I could.
___ 6. It feels wonderful to assist others in need.
___ 7. Volunteering to help someone is very rewarding.
___ 8. I dislike giving directions to strangers who are lost.
9. Doing volunteer work makes me feel happy.

10. I donate time or money to charities every month.

11. Unless they are part of my family, helping the elderly isn’t my responsibility.

12. Children should be taught about the importance of helping others.

13. I plan to donate my organs when I die with the hope that they will help someone else live.

14. I try to offer my help with any activities my community or school groups are carrying out.

15. I feel at peace with myself when I have helped others.

16. If the person in front of me in the check-out line at a store was a few cents short, I would pay the difference.

17. I feel proud when I know that my generosity has benefited a needy person.

18. Helping people does more harm than good because they come to rely on others and not themselves.

19. I rarely contribute money to a worthy cause.

20. Giving aid to the poor is the right thing to do.

Scoring:

Items 1, 5, 8, 11, 18, 19 are reverse scored. The scores for each item are summed up to form an overall score, ranging from 20 to 100. According to the author, a 60 is a neutral score.