

Do you Like this Paper? Would you Agree with “I Like this Paper”? The
Impact of Formulating Items as Questions versus Statements on
Evaluations

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Abstract

Consumer intelligence and public opinions, as conveyed in surveys, elicited via statements can be systematically different from those elicited via questions. The current paper shows that items in a statement format yield lower agreement than questions because opinions, product beliefs, or evaluations are viewed as more intense when formulated as a statement. Higher content intensity raises respondents' threshold for agreement, which, in turn, results in fewer affirmative responses. The findings are relevant as the lower mean scores obtained with statements impact their persuasiveness, when featured in PR campaigns. Their impact also radiates into subsequent decision making by triggering correspondingly lower levels of willingness to pay. This research not only documents how linguistic format alters consumer evaluations but also explains how shifts in thresholds underlie this effect.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making, Information Processing*

Track: Consumer Behaviour