

Resource 4:

Evaluation of Projects: Using the National National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women (NCAS) Survey questions

A commonly asked question about using the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) is about the possibility of using NCAS questions for project evaluations. Certainly, the questions are available for people to use in their work. The NCAS questions can be useful for ‘taking the attitudinal temperature’ of a group, workplace, or organisation. However, there are several important considerations and cautions to keep in mind when using NCAS questions in project or program evaluations.

Are the NCAS questions relevant for my program evaluation?

The aims of your program will inform the most relevant questions for evaluation purposes. The NCAS questions will potentially be relevant if your program aims to shift:

- People's knowledge of violence against women
- People's attitudes to violence against women and/or gender equality
- People's intention to act if they witnessed abuse or disrespect towards women.

Can the NCAS measure short-term changes?

The NCAS was designed to measure changes in population knowledge and attitudes over long periods of years. However, attitudes generally change slowly and the NCAS's ability to detect changes in attitudes due to short-term programs has not been tested.

Should I use NCAS questions or new questions?

Strict social science methods, including psychometric testing, were used to develop the NCAS questions and scales, so there is confidence in the validity of the results for the population. Thus, relevant NCAS questions are generally preferable to new questions which have not been psychometrically tested.

Can I change the NCAS questions and NCAS scales?

Even slight wording changes to survey questions can change what they measure and the validity of the results. Thus, think carefully before changing the wording of NCAS questions.

If you wish to use an NCAS scale or sub-scale, consider whether you have the capacity to analyse them. Also remember that using only some of the items in a scale may affect what the scale measures and the validity of the results.

Are there any NCAS questions I should not use?

If you are trying to detect change in knowledge or attitudes as a result of your program it is best to avoid questions where there is minimal room for improvement. For example, virtually all of the NCAS respondents (97% or more) understood that certain behaviours were a form of violence. As a general guide, aim to choose questions where at least 10% or more of the NCAS respondents had poor knowledge or attitudes.

With those caveats in mind, NCAS questions may be a viable choice for evaluation purposes.

Tips for using the NCAS in evaluation

- Consider if the NCAS questions will be useful in evaluation during the planning of an activity.
- Before using an NCAS question or group of questions for evaluation, consider if this is the best way to evaluate your project? Does the NCAS measure the thing you are seeking to change? Is there a more tailored tool that would provide the information you need?
- If you want to see how the NCAS questions were asked in context, the full interview script is available at Appendix 4 of the [NCAS Appendices](#).

This resource is one of ten resources within the toolkit- Re-shaping Attitudes: A toolkit for using the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) in the primary prevention of violence against women. For more information, please visit www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/research

Suggested citation

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For more information or to provide feedback on this resource or toolkit, please contact research@respectvictoria.vic.gov.au.

