

Why Do We Prefer Second Best Quality Indicators?

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Overview

- Astonishment and Anger
- Response rate – response bias
- Why reporting response rates standard?
 - Luhmann – Legitimation durch Verfahren
 - Kahnemann – Procastination
- And now?

Astonishment and Anger

Response Rate – Response Bias

- Response rate is routinely reported for almost all surveys
- It is taken as key quality indicator (ESS targets 70%)
- However,.....

Response rate...

has historically been central to survey research in the United States because of the assumption that the larger the proportion of participating sample units, the more accurate the survey estimates.

AAPOR 2019

Why is it second best?

Formulas for calculating rates are now standardized, but the relationship between response rates and survey quality has become much less clear.

AAPOR 2019

Proof: Groves 2006

there is little empirical support for the notion that low response rate surveys de facto produce estimates with high nonresponse bias

R.M. Groves Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 5, Special Issue 2006, pp. 646–675, p. 670

3MC Example ESS

2016 Summary reports
response rates not bias

23 Countries
Range 30,5% to 74,4%

Why is response rate standard

- “simple figure”
- “easy to understand”
- “exact”
- “standardized” (AAPOR)

Luhman: Legitimation durch Verfahren

- Procedures are powerful agents
- Belief – good procedure – good results
- Counterexample GIGO

Nonresponse bias – no Luhmann

- “complex”
- “estimation”
- “statistics”
- no agreed standard

Kahneman - Procrastination – being busy doing easy things

- How about, calculating the total average ESS response rate right now
- Why are we tempted?
- How often do we follow such temptations?
- That's why

Luhmann + Kahneman = 0

- We have no robust, powerful and meaningful quality indicators
- That's where we have been so long

The background of the slide is a warm, orange-toned photograph of an office environment. On the left, a black office chair is partially visible. In the center, a whiteboard is mounted on a wall, showing handwritten text in blue and red markers. The text on the whiteboard includes 'RESOURCE' and 'INITIATION' in blue, and 'FIRST' in red. The overall scene is slightly out of focus, creating a soft, professional atmosphere.

And now?

Where would you like to go?