

Title: Response Quality Comparison Between Computers and Smartphones in Different Web Survey Modes and Question Formats

Purpose

Low response rates in Web surveys and the use of different devices in entering Web survey responses are the two main challenges to response quality of Web surveys. This study compared the effects of using interviewers to recruit participants in computer-assisted self-administered interviews (CASI) vs. computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI) and smartphones vs. computers on participation rate and Web survey response quality.

Design/methodology/approach

Two field experiments using two similar media use studies on U.S. college students were conducted to compare response quality in different survey modes and response devices.

Findings

Response quality of computer entry was better than smartphone entry in both studies for open-ended and closed-ended question formats. Device effect was only significant on overall completion rate when interviewers were present.

Practical implications

Survey researchers are given guidance how to conduct online surveys using different devices and choice of question format to maximize survey response quality.

The benefits and limitations of using an interviewer to recruit participants and smartphones as Web survey response devices are discussed.

Social implications

It shows how computer-assisted self-interviews and smartphones can improve response quality and participation for underprivileged groups.

Originality/value

This is the first study to compare response quality in different question formats between CASI, e-mailed delivered online surveys and CAPI. It demonstrates the importance of human factor in creating sense of obligation to improve response quality.

Keywords: Field Experiment, United States, Data quality, Survey Mode, Smartphone, Computer-Assisted Self-Interview, Computer-Assisted Personal Interview