


How to Get Those Non-Responders to ... Well ... RESPOND?

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Today's Objectives

- Understanding survey response (and lack thereof)
- Causes and consequences of survey bias
- What are some tactics to reduce non-response (participation) bias?
- Q/A & general discussion

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Understanding Survey Response



- Survey response—tough to predict
- Many factors influence: study objectives, target audience, contact information, approach, distribution methods, burden (value), etc.
- Depending on type of research (and budget), response rates vary
 - 5% or less for many consumer studies, 99%+ for many medical studies
- 100% strived for; nearly impossible to obtain
- Tactics available to improve!



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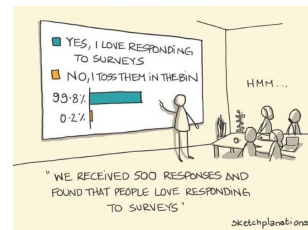
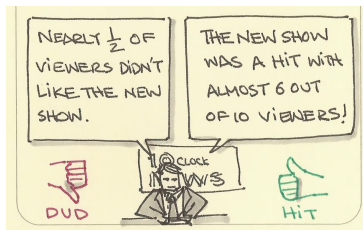
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Bias



Definition: prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another in an unfair way. For survey research:

- Can be intentional (to achieve certain results) or unintentional (accidental)




- Two main types: response bias & non-response/participation bias
- No survey is entirely free of bias; goal is to minimize

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Causes & Consequences of Bias




Response bias: Any factor that influences response.

- Causes
 - Confusing survey design/questions (leading, loaded, double-barreled questions, unclear, etc.)
 - Skewed sample (Type: convenience, voluntary, etc.)
 - Fatigue; survey too long/cumbersome
 - Technical issues
 - Responses given are not thought out (acquiescence/yea saying, opposition/nay saying, neutral responding, random, etc.)
- Consequences
 - Can create misleading results
 - May persuade to take a misguided (inaccurate) view/action

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Causes & Consequences of Bias



Non-response/participation bias (not the opposite of response bias): portion of sample is unable or refuses to participate.

- Causes
 - Failed survey deliver
 - Survey didn't reach the correct respondent (non/wrong contact)
 - Inability to participate (distribution method/access impediment)
 - Outright refusal (delete email, throw away messages, etc.)
 - I'm too busy/over-surveyed
 - Burden (low value)
 - Uninteresting topic
 - Timing (forgot about it)
- Consequences
 - Less representative; may result in an under-covered research segment
 - Increased drop-off/terminate rates
 - Can create misleading results
 - May persuade to take a misguided (inaccurate) view/action

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Tactics to Improve Non-Response/Participation Bias



- Pick the right time to survey
 - Avoid holidays, busy times
- Ensure you correctly identified the target audience
- Ensure contact list is accurate/up to date
 - Whitelist
- Pre-notify your target audience that a survey is coming
 - Inform about objectives, timing, give context to “what’s in it for me”
 - Market; use multiple sources/channels
- Have a well-designed survey construct
 - Understand your target audience
 - Keep the survey short; 5-10 minutes in length
 - Ensure questions are well framed, using appropriate scales
 - Limit open-ended questions
 - Limit graphics

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Tactics to Improve Non-Response/Participation Bias



- Motivate/entice participation
 - Offer multiple distribution channels
 - Craft a crisp, easy to understand, call to action invitation message
 - Use the right subject line; short/to the point
- Ensure anonymity/confidentiality
 - Open versus unique links
- Gently remind/nudge to participate
 - Brief, friendly, nonaggressive reminder messages
 - Restate objectives and “what’s in it for me”
- Close the loop
 - Thank participants; share high-level results/actions

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Other Considerations



- Understand the population/universe in study
 - Review critical profile characteristics (demographics/psychographics)
- Set quotas on key respondent groups to ensure data collection aligns to population/universe
- In analysis, weight the data
- Resurvey nonrespondents later

Questions?

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Thank You!

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