Implementing high-quality web surveys

Dr. Pamela Campanelli
The Survey Coach, UK

Course description

Web surveys are technically easy to implement, but knowing the underlying methodological principles is crucial as there are both advantages and hidden pitfalls to this methodology. This course is about all the features that make up having a high quality web survey (excluding the wording of the actual questions as this is covered in another course). This course looks at how web surveys compare to other methods of data collection, issues with sampling and detailed steps for nonresponse reduction (e.g., types of invitations to potential respondents, how these should be worded, how and when they should be sent, reminder systems, incentives). It looks at the webpages themselves from the visual side (e.g., pros and cons of colour; what should be in the upper left hand corner, etc.), choice of format (e.g., the importance of having the right size text boxes, issue with drop down boxes). Other decisions (e.g., scrolling versus paging designs, useful error messages, issues with "starred" questions; pros and cons of pictures, embedded videos, gamification). The course also covers web survey software and adaptions needed for web surveys on smart phones.

By the end of the course participants will:
- Have the practical and methodological knowledge to conduct high-quality web surveys
- Be able to conduct their own web survey projects
- Be able to evaluate the quality of existing web surveys
- Have knowledge not only about the design of the web-pages themselves, but also how to implement a web survey effectively

Prerequisites

Some previous knowledge on the basics of survey methods is helpful, but not required.

Schedule

July 5, 2018

Time	Topic
09.00 10.45	• Introductions and overview of the course • What kind of internet survey are you planning? • What is unique about internet surveys? Computerisation allowing automated skips, piping, randomisation, complex formats, etc.; distributed; interactive • The visual side of internet surveys Dillman's visual principles; effects of proximity; shaded background fields, hierarchy of brightness; formatting questions; visual layout makeovers, etc.
10.45-11.15	**BREAK**
11.15-13.00	• WORKSHOP in critiquing the visual layout of short internet survey • Specific internet survey decisions (e.g., HTML formats; scrolling versus paging designs; progress bars; multimedia features; intelligible and useful error messages; issues with forcing respondent to answer questions; paradata) • Understanding and minimising nonresponse

July 6, 2018

Time	Topic
09.00 10.45	• Understanding and minimising nonresponse *(continued)* • **WORKSHOP** in improving contact and cooperation for internet surveys
10.45-11.15	**BREAK**
11.15-13.00	• Workshop feedback • Limitations of internet surveys Internet surveys compared to other methods of data collection: issues of sampling, coverage, nonresponse, length, measurement error, etc. • Internet survey software • Overview of internet surveys for mobile devices (phone, tablets, etc.)

References

Callegaro, M., Lozar Manfreda, K. and Vehovar, V. (2015), Web Survey Methodology, London: Sage.
Couper, M. (2008), *Designing Effective Web Surveys*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Tourangeau, R., Conrad, F. and Couper, M. (2013), *The Science of Web Surveys*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Short bio

Dr. Campanelli is an international trainer, researcher and survey methods consultant; and UK Chartered Statistician, Chartered Scientist and fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Prior to becoming an independent consultant, she worked at the University of Michigan, US Census Bureau, ISER at the University of Essex, and was a Research Director at NatCen Social Research, London. She has led an UK Economic and Social Research Council grant on Survey Nonresponse and participated in one on Mixed Modes and Measurement Error (face-to-face, telephone and web). Her main interests are web surveys, questionnaire design, question testing methods, mixed mode designs.