



PERCEIVED SURVEY QUALITY AND RESPONDENT PARTICIPATION

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This paper addresses the problem of decreasing response rates in telephone survey research. It theoretically and empirically investigates three important factors of survey participation, namely survey quality, respondent satisfaction and trust. For this purpose an interdisciplinary approach is adopted, where services marketing framework is applied to the field of survey research. The results confirm the hypothesized relations among all three investigated constructs and intended survey participation. Moreover, when they are compared to a set of demographic variables, perceived survey quality, respondent satisfaction and respondent trust exhibit stronger relatedness with intended survey participation. Additionally, results provide an insight into how survey participation can be improved by focusing on specific elements of interviewer conduct and questionnaire design. Some further theoretical and research implications of the applied framework and empirical results are also discussed.

Key words: response rates, survey participation, survey quality, services marketing



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INTRODUCTION

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Many authors found that decreasing response rates are detrimental to the validity of research data (Brenan et al., 2005; Dillman, 2000; Groves et al., 1992; Singer et al., 1992) which sets this issue as a top priority for the research profession. As a response, a plethora of attempts to explain, investigate and

improve survey participation emerged, focused on different factors which impact it. Concurrently with the increased level of knowledge regarding survey participation, some important concerns regarding the explanatory power and potential for operative efficiency of traditional approaches have to be addressed. Despite a vast body of knowledge in this field and the plethora of techniques considered, recent trends show that participation rates are often lower than previously estimated (Bickart and Schmittlein, 1999) and that falls in response rates have even increased during the last decade (Curtin et al., 2005). It is therefore possible to suspect that attempts to explain survey participation phenomena are largely focused on factors that are either of marginal importance and/or are inoperative in terms of researcher control over them. Empirical research on the efficiency of compliance techniques for instance offers inconclusive results, suggesting that only some incentives (i.e. monetary) have proved constantly efficient (Brenan et al., 2005; Singer et al., 1999; Singer et al., 1992; Yammario et al., 1991; Yu and Cooper, 1983). However, the questionable efficiency of direct compliance techniques seems to be only the peak-problem of an iceberg hiding the more general issue of manageable leverages which researchers can utilize to increase respondents' preparedness to participate in surveys. Traditional survey participation models predominantly focus on factors that are uncontrollable from the researcher's standpoint and genotypic (invariant) by nature. In order to develop more efficient models, researchers should rely largely on controllable and phenotypic factors, thus elements that are variable across studies and over which researchers can exercise some control (Struebbe et al., 1986). Two such important factors that are considered to affect participation are the survey design and interviewer conduct (Groves et al., 2002; SturGIS and Campanelli, 1998; Yu and Cooper, 1983; Oksenberg et al., 1986). Both can be considered as the essential survey elements affecting cooperative relationships with respondents. As noted by Schulman (2003), instead of multiple refusal conversion attempts, focus is needed on preventing respondent alienation and maintenance of their long-term goodwill.

In the light of these considerations, this paper aims to re-focus survey participation research back to the essential survey elements and participants. Its purpose is empirical investigation of mechanisms and constructs that can provide further insight into the link between the quality of surveys as perceived by respondents – and its impact on survey participation. More specifically, the aim is to assess how respondents evaluate the quality of a questionnaire and interviewer conduct and how these evaluative judgments correspond with their

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satisfaction, trust and willingness to participate in subsequent surveys. As quality, satisfaction and trust are complex latent constructs we first briefly discuss their theoretical background which serves as the basis for their measurement in the study. Underdeveloped theoretical background is specifically one of the important weaknesses in understanding the causes of survey participation (Groves et al., 1992). In fact, latent constructs are often measured by use of behavioral correlates as proxies for them, without attempting to define, measure and understand the role of underlying constructs in the survey response process. To fill this gap in the literature we introduce a concept named "respondents perceived quality" of the survey. In addition, a distinction is made between the intention to participate and actual, observable participative behavior. As postulated by the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) the link between the two is strong yet complex and could represent a research issue in itself (e.g. what factors intervene between non/participation decision and actual behavior). Despite the fact that behavioral intention is a constituent element of the decision-making process in survey participation, it has been rarely empirically verified. One of the notable exceptions is the study of Singer et al. (1999) in which it was found that the willingness to participate predicts actual participation where the relationship persists with controls on demographic characteristics and survey design features as well. Therefore, in the present study *intended* survey participation is included as a key dependent variable and a proxy for actual participative behavior.¹ All key constructs considered are presented within the framework of services marketing; a framework we found highly relevant for this purpose.

THE RESPONDENT PERCEIVED QUALITY OF THE SURVEY

We postulate that a "customer-oriented" approach toward survey quality and survey participation can be potentially efficient in the research context too. Conceiving of survey research as a service encounter enables the much needed transfer of specific knowledge between the two areas. As services are intangible by nature, the problem of quality assessment is much like that in survey research, hence the issue of gaining customer trust through tangible elements and interpersonal interaction are common to both areas. Within the specific service context of telephone interaction it was found for instance that listening skills, oral competencies and script characteristics all affect customer evaluations of telephone encounters (Ramsey and Sohi, 2000; de Ruyter and Wetzels, 2000; Pontes and O'Brien, 2000; Doscher and Simms, 2001, and Burgers et al., 2000). While direct transfer of these findings to a survey

research context can be questionable, the general approach taken toward studying the quality of interactions with respondents can certainly be of interest. Here we start from the notion that quality is a complex construct, which consists of elements and dimensions that are most important to respondents. In general, service quality is defined as fulfillment of customers' expectations (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). Consequently, respondent perceived quality is defined as evaluation of performance on those survey elements on which respondents hold high expectations. Existing findings on respondent opinions and experiences with surveys show that interviewer conduct and questionnaire characteristics are the two most critical elements (Schleifer, 1986), so they should be in focus when evaluating quality. Another argument for focusing on these two elements is the notion that the "actors and questions" are of particular importance for the telephone surveys (Groves, 1979).

In addition to perceived quality, two additional concepts were assessed as antecedents of respondent intentions for repeated survey participation. The first one is respondent *satisfaction* with recent survey encounters in which they participated. Customer satisfaction is a linking concept that further explains how quality perceptions impact their attitudes and behaviors. Next to quality, satisfaction is considered to be the cornerstone of a customer-oriented approach, resulting in different favorable outcomes of both a short and long-term nature (Anderson et al., 1994). Satisfaction is defined as a holistic judgment about pleasurable fulfillment, but pertains to concrete experiences and is more emotional by nature than is quality (Oliver, 1997). Respondent satisfaction-like concepts have already been considered in survey participation literature, most often under terms like "enjoyable/pleasurable experiences" and "hedonic rewards" (Groves et al., 1992; Schleifer, 1996). In these investigations, satisfaction judgment was conceived as a general attitude that is not related to specific and recent survey experiences, but rather to past survey experiences in general. Due to the short-term and emotional nature of satisfaction judgment however, it should be measured soon after the specific experience. Also, when measuring a complex unobservable construct such as customer satisfaction, the use of multiple item instruments is strongly suggested in order to assure construct validity (Oliver, 1997); something which seems to have been neglected in available studies.

The second additional concept is respondent *trust*. Questions of survey legitimacy, data confidentiality and respondent assurance, which are often mentioned as important factors in survey participation, are all tightly related to the concept of trust. Regarding construct domain, trust is focused on ethical, normative, reliability and safety aspects of interac-

tions with customers and can be evaluated on a global and specific level (Singh and Sirdesmukh, 2000). A distinction between general and specific trust is highly relevant in the context of survey research as we are primarily interested in trust which pertains to researchers and/or a specific survey, rather than a general trust in the research profession or in an abstract concept of "survey". Hence, we are interested in the controllable, *interaction-induced* trust of respondents focused on the interviewer and the research company. This kind of trust is developed during interaction with respondents, especially in the initial moments of the interview (Groves, 1979).

Regarding relationships among key constructs of interest we postulate that all of them are positively interrelated. According to theoretical and empirical evidence perceived quality is namely associated with satisfaction (Anderson et al., 1994; Oliver, 1997) and trust (Foster and Cadogan, 2000), while trust and satisfaction are also connected (Selnes, 1998; de Ruyter and Wetzels, 2000). The first three hypotheses are thus stated as follows:

- H1: Perceived survey quality is positively correlated with respondents' satisfaction.
- H2: Perceived survey quality is positively correlated with respondents' trust.
- H3: Respondents' satisfaction is positively correlated with respondents' trust.

Intended survey participation is considered to be the main dependent variable in the study. According to available evidence, associations between key independent constructs and intended survey participation are also expected to be positive. Quality is namely related with loyalty (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996) while satisfaction and trust are associated with intended loyalty (Anderson et al., 1994; Oliver, 1997; de Ruyter and Wetzels, 2000). Accordingly, a second set of hypotheses postulate that:

- H4: Perceived survey quality is positively correlated with intended survey participation.
- H5: Respondents' satisfaction is positively correlated with intended survey participation.
- H6: Trust is positively correlated with intended survey participation.

EMPIRICAL STUDY

Study design and construct measures

The data for this study were collected by means of a telephone post-survey, which investigated respondent perceived quality of a preceding survey. Both surveys were conducted by a leading commercial market research company in Slovenia using the company's CATI facility. Telephone numbers of re-

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spondents who participated in the preceding (commercial) study were used as a sample frame. The preceding study was of a commercial nature and its focus was on evaluation of different brands of food in terms of their image and preferences among Slovenian consumers (the target group was defined according to age of 15-65). No incentives or compliance techniques were used in that commercial study and the response rate obtained was 54%. In order to capture vivid experiences of respondents, the post-survey was conducted within a week after the preceding survey, reminding respondents that the interview pertains to that particular survey. Due to potentially confusing "survey on survey" request for respondents, they were asked to recall the topic of the preliminary survey, enabling us to confirm whether they had the "right" survey in mind. The post-survey, among other elements, also assessed the quality of the interviewer's work, which raised another concern for the research design as both surveys were performed by the same (professional) interviewers. For this reason, the assignment of telephone numbers to interviewers was arranged in such a way that they did not interview the same respondent in both surveys. Respondents were informed that post-survey results will serve for academic purposes only and that the survey is conducted by different interviewers than those who conducted the initial survey. The post-survey sample was a systematic-type sample, where each third telephone number from the sample frame was selected. The refusal rate among eligible respondents was 48%, and a total of 407 valid questionnaires were obtained. Fifty-five percent of respondents were female, age ranged from 15 to 77, with a mean age of 41 years. Respondents had a median education of 12 years (completed middle school). Age and education structures of the sample were relatively balanced across categories. The response rate in the study was therefore relatively low. A possible explanation for this might be the nature of the initial survey from which the sample frame for our study was obtained. The commercial nature of the initial study probably affected respondents' preparedness for participating in it, but also in the post-study. Another possible assumption as to why the response rate in the post-study was not higher was the survey topic. The issue of survey quality is normally not of great relevance for an ordinary customer/citizen as was indicated by some comments such as... "I can't say much about this topic".

Survey quality, satisfaction and trust constructs were measured by means of multi-item scales of Likert-type. Answers were provided on a numerical 5-point scale, where the minimum value (denoting maximum disagreement) equaled 1 and maximum agreement equaled 5. Items generation was based on construct theory which is the starting point for measure-

ment of latent psychological constructs (Malhotra, 1999). In addition, content and exact wording of the items were adapted according to the findings of the preliminary qualitative survey.² The construct of perceived survey quality was measured with 12 items which address interviewer conduct and questionnaire characteristics (see Table 2 for exact wording of items). Reliability of the construct proved to be satisfactory ($\alpha = .86$). The factor analysis was carried out (Principal Axis Factoring, with OBLIMIN rotation) extracting two factors (Table 2). As expected, factor loadings show that one quality dimension pertains to interpersonal interaction and another to questionnaire characteristics. Respondent satisfaction was measured with four items, covering different components of satisfaction with reliable consistency ($\alpha = .85$). The satisfaction items were: (1) I am satisfied that I participated in the survey, (2) I liked the survey, (3), That was one of the best surveys I participated in (4) and: If I think of the survey as a whole I was very satisfied with it. Trust was measured with four items: (1) Interviewer was honest and sincere, (2) I had the impression that I can fully rely on the interviewer, (3) I gave my answers to the interviewer with full confidence and (4) I was not worried about the confidentiality of personal information I revealed. Reliability of this construct however was barely acceptable ($\alpha = .59$). Subsequent reliability analysis showed that deletion of the "data confidentiality" item slightly improves the reliability ($\alpha = .65$). Respondent preparedness for future survey participation was measured as a behavioral intention measure with high reliability ($\alpha = .80$). It consisted of two items: (1) If that company asked me for permission to call me again I would accept, (2) If they called me again I would participate in such a survey. For all four multi-item measures, indexes were constructed, where high scores correspond to more positive perceptions of quality (or satisfaction, or trust) and a stronger intention for repeated survey participation respectively. In addition to construct measures and basic demographic variables, a few additional variables were recorded, namely interviewer code and length of the preceding survey, both being interesting as survey participation factors. Basic demographic variables of gender, age, education, incomes and family size were also recorded, allowing testing of their relatedness with survey participation intentions.

RESULTS

Survey participation factors

The primary concern of this study was to determine relatedness of perceived survey quality, satisfaction, trust and intended survey participation as proposed by hypotheses H1 – H6. Hypotheses were tested by means of bivariate correlation ana-

lysis, which was performed with construct indexes. Correlation analysis indicates significant and substantial associations between all proposed constructs (see Table 1). Hypothesized interrelations among perceived survey quality, respondents' satisfaction and trust (H1 – H3) are therefore confirmed. All three independent constructs in turn positively correlate with intended survey participation, meaning that hypotheses H4 – H6 are also confirmed. Intended survey participation has the highest positive correlation with respondent satisfaction, followed by perceived survey quality and trust, which indicate their respective impacts on the intended survey participation. In terms of percentage, 85% were "willing future participants" in our study. Such a percentage indicated that they would either agree or fully agree to participate in such a study again.³ Intended survey participation for the future is therefore much higher than the actual response rates obtained in the initial and post-survey. This might be partially explained by the hypothesis that the study sample contained a higher proportion of "hard-core" participants as most dissatisfied participants from the initial study were reluctant to participate in the subsequent study. Another important factor that should be considered here is the fact that behavioral intentions are used as a criterion variable, hence the actual participation would probably be lower.

TABLE 1
 Bivariate correlations
 among analyzed
 constructs

	Intended survey participation	Quality	Satisfaction	Trust
Quality	.37**			
Satisfaction	.52**	.60**		
Trust	.23**	.36**	.21**	
Survey length	-.05	-.04	-.01	-.01
Age	.12*	.18**	.11*	.01
Education	-.13**	-.23**	-.24**	-.08
Income	-.11*	-.24**	-.22**	-.10
Family size	.01	-.00	.02	.05

*p <.05; **p <.01

The results in Table 1 suggest that respondent satisfaction is more strongly related to survey participation than perceived quality and trust. All three constructs however provide a much better explanation of survey participation than demographic characteristics of respondents, which exhibit substantially lower correlations with the dependent variable. Interestingly, education and incomes are negatively correlated with intended survey participation, suggesting that the socio-economic status of a respondent is an important factor in survey (non)participation. The correlations of survey length as an objec-

tive measure of "respondent burden" with measured constructs are, contrary to expectations, insignificant. Survey length does not have direct effect on intended survey participation, nor on the quality, satisfaction and trust perceptions of respondents. The results in Table 1 also show that the proposed constructs of satisfaction quality and trust are correlated as hypothesized, suggesting that survey quality is not only highly important for respondent satisfaction, but also for their trust developed during the survey encounter.

Elements of perceived quality

In the subsequent step of analysis the focus was on discrete survey elements and their direct association with intended survey participation. This was done under the assumption that researchers are interested in this kind of information in order to improve survey participation through discrete survey elements. For this purpose, the factorial structure of quality items was analyzed firstly and secondly their correlations with intended survey participation, satisfaction and trust were examined (Table 2). The results reveal that the general perception of "survey excellence" (captured with first item), interviewer skillfulness, rapport establishment competence and listening behavior, have the strongest impact on survey participation. Both quality dimensions – that of interviewer and of questionnaire – are of similar importance here, none of them being superior to the other. Somewhat surprisingly "voice pleasantness" of the interviewer proved to be insignificant as a direct survey participation determinant. Still, the pleasantness of the interviewer's voice loads significantly on the interviewer quality dimension and exhibits a significant correlation with satisfaction and trust.

TABLE 2
 Respondents'
 perceived survey
 quality elements

	Factor loadings		Intended SP	Satisfaction	Trust
	1	2			
Taken as a whole, quality of survey was excellent	.29	.36	.32**	.55**	.22**
Survey allowed me to give exactly those answers I had in mind	.05	.58	.24**	.46**	.20**
Questions in the survey were clear and understandable	-.11	.82	.23**	.43**	.21**
It was very easy to follow the survey	.05	.68	.21**	.39**	.21**
Survey was carried out without any problems	.27	.43	.22**	.37**	.17**
Interviewer was very skillful in performing his job	.56	.20	.27**	.41**	.24**
Interviewer was very courteous	.76	-.07	.18**	.25**	.30**
Interviewer showed an appropriate personal stance to me	.78	-.08	.19**	.28**	.33**
Interviewer established a rapport with me	.67	.05	.28**	.40**	.31**
I had an impression that the interviewer listened carefully to me	.47	.26	.29**	.39**	.30**
Interviewer had a pleasant voice	.52	-.04	.06	.26**	.22**
Interviewer fully accepted my wishes and concerns	.42	.13	.12*	.20**	.24**

*p <.05; **p <.01

With regard to the impact on respondent satisfaction, interviewer and questionnaire elements are relatively balanced

with the exception of the general excellence impression which was most highly correlated with the satisfaction construct. Trust on the other hand is under a stronger influence by (all) interviewer elements.

IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The prime concern of the paper was investigation of whether understanding respondent experiences with survey encounters can help in a better understanding of survey participation decisions. This was done by considering the impact of multiple influences on intended survey participation, thus building on a multiple-constructs theoretical framework, something which has been neglected in survey participation research (Groves et al., 2000). Transferring and testing three important concepts from the services marketing field suggests a rich set of practical and theoretical implications. In terms of direct impact on intended survey participation all quality elements considered are significant, with the exception of interviewer's voice. More detailed inspection shows that the general impression of "survey excellence", perceived skillfulness of interviewer, rapport establishment and listening behavior, can be considered as the most important elements which are, however, closely followed by questionnaire characteristics. This has obvious implications for survey research practice, confirming the importance of selection and training activities but also of qualified study design, which should pay attention to data quality on the one hand and to respondent perceived quality on the other.

The proposed concepts explain more variance of survey participation intentions than demographic variables. This suggests their potential superiority in terms of exploratory power relative to traditional models that focus on uncontrollable and "genotypic" factors like demographics only. Furthermore, the study results and applied framework suggest some promising research directions for the future. For instance, there is an evident lack of studies investigating the relation of respondents' specific experiences and general, attitude-like constructs. While we can find some attempts to investigate "general survey climate" at the individual level (Loosveldt and Carton, 2002), the question of how respondents' discrete experiences affect their general preparedness for survey participation seems overlooked. Another implication is based on the fact that traditional models tend to use objectively measurable variables (e.g. demographic characteristics, incentives, different introductions) as survey participation predictors while the concepts explored in the study represent unobservable, attitude-like constructs. Along with their relative superiority over demographic variables, it is also of interest that the objective mea-

sure of survey length proved an insignificant predictor of survey participation. This confirms that subjective perceptions and psychological constructs should be more emphasized in the future, as proposed by Groves et al. (1992).

In addition, we suggest that behavioral intentions are an important link in explaining how respondents make a participating decision and how it is realized. For a better understanding of how intention to participate is realized in actual behavior however, two important issues should be considered in the future. The first is inclusion of actual behavior in research design, which would enable empirical verification of these linkages. Actual behavior was omitted in the present study as a criterion variable, which is an important limitation. This constrains conclusions regarding survey participation at the level of *intentions* and suggests the use of improved research designs in the future. A preferable design would enable concurrent evaluation of respondent experiences and participative intentions at one time point, and actual behaviors at another time point. Still, each research design can have inherent weaknesses and it must be applied with prudence. If, for instance, interviewer conduct is the subject of evaluation, it is important by whom and how this evaluation is performed as interviewers cannot evaluate themselves. In addition, temporal factors should be considered in performing post-surveys as respondents might evaluate some variables like interviewer voice or specific emotions only shortly after they encountered the survey. The second issue is the theoretical explanation of this link, where the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) seems of particular interest. It specifically provides a possible explanation of what contributes to formation of behavioral intentions and which factors moderate the intentions-behavior link. Subjective, latent concepts can therefore possibly represent the missing link between various techniques and incentives for improved survey participation and observable respondent behavior. As noted by (Groves et al., 1992) there is a lack of theoretically grounded principles that explain the effectiveness of a particular technique and apparent need for integration of socio-demographic factors with the less observable (psychological) component of survey actors. For this purpose more in-depth insight into the "chain of effects" underlying the survey participation decision of respondents is needed in the future. In combination with the approach taken in our study, other methodological approaches should be also considered where protocol analysis seems especially promising for deciphering the decision-making process (Ursic and Helgeson, 1989). Contrary to the item-level response process which has been well explored (Groves et al., 2002; Tourangeau et al., 2000), the process of survey response

decision-making has been explored to a much lesser extent. For a starting point it would be interesting to further investigate how respondents form their judgement of survey quality. Similar to services marketing we might assume that respondents rely on some tangible cues that are available to them. In survey research, elements like confidentiality assurances and interviewer voices could be considered as cues of quality. In fact, introductions, assurances, incentives offered and interviewer voices, are the only elements in initial moments on which respondents can rely, when they form an initial judgement on survey quality. Because of that Groves (1979) suggests allowing respondents a bit more time before the request for survey participation is expressed. A path from initial moments of interaction to the long-term cooperative relationships with respondents is by no means simple and easy to understand. Yet further insight into this path seems imperative for researchers in order to efficiently cope with falling response rates. In addition to the traditional focus on a *breadth* of survey participation determinants, a stronger focus on insight into *depth* of them is recommended in the future. This requires further investigation of the linkages between the constructs that underlie the core survey elements and decision-making process, but also further developments of theoretical foundations in this field.

NOTES

¹ In addition, further analysis of relations between intentions and actual participation would require additional survey, or alternative survey design, which was unattainable due to time and cost constraints.

² A preliminary qualitative survey consisting of two focus groups and 15 in-depth interviews on how respondents experience and evaluate surveys was carried out before constructing the measurement instrument.

³ This percentage was calculated from the intended survey participation measure (consisting of two items on a 5-point scale. A value of 3.5 was cutting point, defining the proportion of willing future participants.

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Opažena kvaliteta ankete i sudjelovanje ispitanikâ

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Ovaj rad bavi se problemom smanjivanja stope odgovaranja u telefonskim anketama. U njemu se teorijski i empirijski istražuju tri važna čimbenika sudjelovanja u anketnom istraživanju: kvaliteta ankete, zadovoljstvo i povjerenje ispitanikâ. Za tu je svrhu upotrijebljen interdisciplinarni pristup, unutar kojega je sustav marketinga usluga primijenjen na područje anketnog istraživanja. Rezultati

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potvrđuju pretpostavljene odnose među svim trima ispitivanim konstruktima i namjeravanom sudjelovanju u anketi. Štoviše, kada ih se uspoređi s nizom demografskih varijabli, opažena kvaliteta ankete, zadovoljstvo ispitanikâ i povjerenje ispitanikâ pokazuju jaču povezanost s namjeravanim sudjelovanjem u anketi. Rezultati također daju uvid u to kako unaprijediti sudjelovanje u anketi upravljanjem pozornosti na posebnosti ponašanja ispitivača i izradbe anketnoga upitnika. U radu se razmatraju još neke teorijske i istraživačke implikacije primijenjenog sustava i dobivenih empirijskih rezultata.

Ključne riječi: stope odgovaranja, sudjelovanje u anketi, kvaliteta ankete, marketing usluga

Wahrgenommene Umfragenqualität und Teilnehmerzahlen

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Der vorliegende Artikel beschäftigt sich mit dem Problem der stetig abnehmenden Teilnehmerzahlen bei Telefonumfragen. Auf theoretischer und empirischer Grundlage werden drei wichtige Faktoren untersucht, die für die Teilnahme an einer Umfrage wichtig sind: die Qualität des eingesetzten Fragebogens, das Vertrauen und die Zufriedenheit der Umfrageteilnehmer. Der Verfasser entschied sich für einen interdisziplinären Ansatz, bei dem das System des Dienstleistungsmarketings auf den Bereich der Meinungsforschung angewandt wurde. Die Untersuchungsergebnisse bestätigen die Hypothesen des Verfassers hinsichtlich der Zusammenhänge, die zwischen den drei untersuchten Faktoren und der beabsichtigten Teilnahme an einer Meinungsumfrage bestehen. Im Vergleich mit einer Reihe demografischer Variablen erweist sich, dass die wahrgenommene Umfragenqualität, die Zufriedenheit und das Vertrauen der Umfrageteilnehmer tatsächlich in einem stärkeren Maße zur beabsichtigten Teilnahme an einer Umfrage in Bezug stehen. Des Weiteren lassen die Resultate erkennen, wie die Bereitschaft zur Umfrageteilnahme gesteigert werden kann, indem dem Auftreten des Meinungsforschers und der Erstellung von Umfragebogen mehr Sorgfalt entgegengebracht wird. Ebenfalls untersucht werden einige weitere theoretische Implikationen, die aus dem angewandten System des Dienstleistungsmarketings und den gewonnenen empirischen Ergebnissen hervorgehen.

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Schlüsselbegriffe: Umfrageteilnehmerquoten, Umfrageteilnahme, Umfragequalität, Dienstleistung