

Who answers what and when? The effects of the questionnaire on non- response on the questions of the barometers of the CIS

Lucía Medina, Robert Liñeira, Jordi Muñoz & Guillem Rico

The first studies of opinion already revealed that the way of presenting the questions to the respondents, the response options offered to them, and even, the own position of the question in the questionnaire had an influence on the quality and quantity of responses, and the numerous research has served to add and refine the evidence in this regard, and also to underline that the cognitive skills and resources of individuals interfere with their ability to respond to the questionnaires.

However, this research examines the issue from a holistic approach and an innovative methodology. Our approach examines the effect on non-response of the characteristics of the questions taking into account the simultaneous effect of personal characteristics and interaction with these. Ultimately what interests us is to discover what effects have the characteristics of the questions according to the characteristics of the individuals, how the impact of the demographic and attitudinal individual attributes is modulated by the peculiarities in the format and content of the questions. To this end we wanted to take advantage of the abundant and varied catalog of surveys of the CIS to raise a methodology based on the analysis of a large number of studies of opinion. Thus we have access to questions from diverse formats and contents, made to individual's representative samples of the population.

Thus, the aim of this study is twofold. On the one hand, we analyze the effect that the design of the questions and questionnaires has on the non-response to questions about attitudes and political views of the barometers of the CIS. On the other hand, we study whether the design of these questions and questionnaires modulate the effect of the demographic attributes of individuals on the non-response.