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Explaining Interviewer Effects on Survey Unit Nonresponse: A Cross-Survey Analysis

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MOTIVATION/AIM

Previous research on interviewer effects on survey unit nonresponse show a great variability across surveys in findings, survey characteristics, and explanatory variables available for analyses. This calls for a more orchestrated effort in explaining interviewer effects on survey unit nonresponse.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Are there similarities in the factors explaining interviewer effects on unit nonresponse across surveys?

DATA & METHOD

- We use 4 face-to-face surveys, all conducted in approximately the same time period in Germany by TNS Infratest Sozialforschung.
- Across the four surveys, we estimate the same models, in which we examine the same interviewer characteristics and control for the same sample composition characteristics.

	Study information	Fieldwork period	Sampling frame
PIAAC	Germany implementation 2011	August 2011 - March 2012	Local community registers of individuals
GIP 2012	Face-to-face recruitment 2012	May 2012 - August 2012	Database of areas, listing of households in areas
SHARE	German refresher sample 2013	February - September 2013	Local community registers of individuals
GIP 2014	Face-to-face recruitment 2014	April 2014 - August 2014	Database of areas, listing of households in areas

RESULTS

	PIAAC	GIP 2012	SHARE	GIP 2014
Contact rate (%)	82,2	85,9	97,7	80,3
ICC Contact	20,6	18,5	60,6	17,2
Cooperation rate (%)	59,6	50,7	34,9	54,1
ICC Cooperation	2,1	12,8	5,2	17,2

- The interviewers employed in the four surveys are rather similar with regard to:
 - Most of their socio-demographic characteristics
 - Work experience
 - Working hours
 - Behavior and reporting about deviations from standardized interviewing techniques
 - How they achieve response
 - Reasons for working as an interviewer
- We identified a high variability of interviewer characteristics that explain interviewer effects on survey unit nonresponse across the surveys.

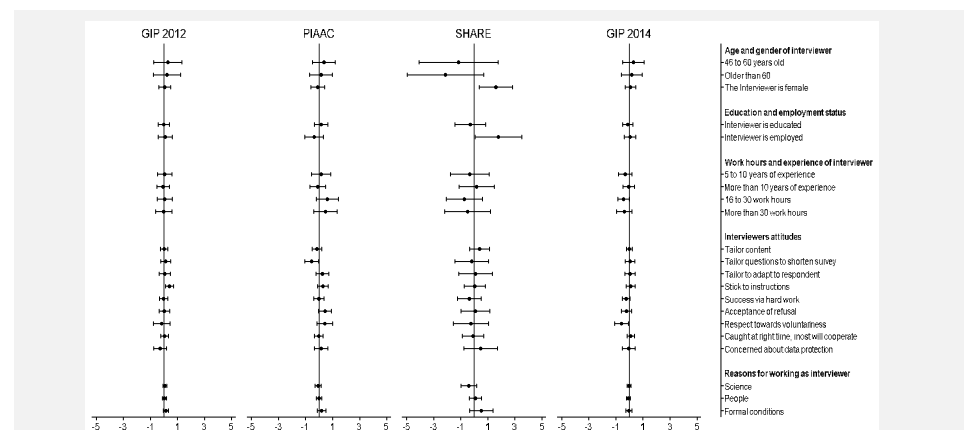


Figure 1. Coefficient Plot for the Odds Ratios of Successful Contact, Multilevel Logistic Regression, Across Surveys, one Interviewer Characteristic per Model

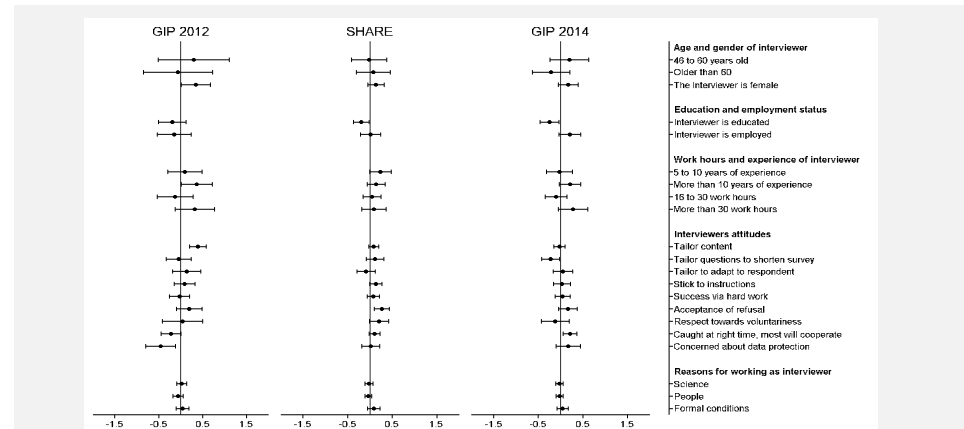


Figure 2. Coefficient Plot for the Odds Ratios of Successful Cooperation, Multilevel Logistic Regression, Across Surveys, one Interviewer Characteristic per Model

CONCLUSION

- We can not find common interviewer characteristics explaining interviewer variance on unit nonresponse across surveys.
- Differences between the four surveys – such as topic, definition of the sample, target population, sponsor, research team, or survey specific interviewer training – could explain the high variability of explanatory factors of interviewer effects on survey unit nonresponse.