

ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF WEB-BASED AND PAPER-BASED SURVEY METHODS: TESTING ASSUMPTIONS OF SURVEY MODE AND RESPONSE COST

Response to surveys is an important factor for many evaluations. Results of studies of response to web-based and paper-based surveys have been mixed. A study was developed to measure the difference in response rate between web-based and paper-based survey administrations. The difference in cost of each survey administration was also calculated per response. An employment survey was designed and disseminated to the United States membership of the American Evaluation Association. The membership was divided into three groups: web-based, paper-based, and mixed mode (providing the survey in both web- and paper-based form). Response rates were tabulated using a formula proposed by the American Association of Public Opinion Research. The cost per response was also calculated by administration mode. The mixed mode survey administration in which respondents have access to both the paper-based and web-based survey provided the greatest response rate. The web-based administration mode resulted in the most cost effective mode. Further research is suggested to determine the role of saliency and web-based reminders.

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