

# Mapping nonresponse

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## Abstract

Increasingly high nonresponse rates in survey research are a persistent threat to data quality. Nonresponse increases the costs of surveys, may lead to underrepresentation of specific groups, if nonresponse is selective, and may lead to incorrect outcomes when analyzing the relationship between different variables, if nonresponse is related to the core variables of the survey. In a recent survey of the SCP high quality fieldwork methods were deployed to achieve a high response rate. Additional information was collected on all sample persons and on the data collection process. A subsequent survey among the persistent refusers of the original survey again yielded a high response rate. The integrated data make it possible to study the differences between different types of respondents and nonrespondents. In the analyses different regression techniques were used that belong to the general toolbox of survey researchers. Besides, non-linear multivariate techniques were used to cope with ordinal variables, to construct indices from variables characterized item missing values and for presentation purposes. As it turned out non-linear analysis was especially helpful to present an overview of variables related to nonresponse and thus can be a useful addition to the traditional way of presenting tables with betas and significance levels.

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