

The digital divide among Twitter users and its implications for social research / Grant Blank

Abstract: Hundreds of papers have been published using Twitter data but no previous paper reports the digital divide among Twitter users. British Twitter users are younger, wealthier and better educated than other Internet users, who in turn are younger, wealthier and better educated than the offline British population. American Twitter users are also younger and wealthier than the rest of the population but they are not better educated. Twitter users are disproportionately members of elites in both countries. Twitter users also differ from other groups in their online activities and their attitudes. These biases and differences have important implications for research based on Twitter data. The unrepresentative characteristics of Twitter users suggest that Twitter data are not suitable for research where representativeness is important such as forecasting elections or gaining insight into attitudes, sentiments or activities of large populations. In general, Twitter data seem to be more suitable for corporate use than for social science research.

Adopting, networking and communicating on Twitter. A cross-national comparative analysis / Maurice Vergeer

Abstract: Twitter is one of the most popular online social network platforms for political communication. This study explains how political candidates in five countries increase their online popularity and visibility by their behavior on Twitter. Also, the study focuses on cultural differences in online social relations by comparing political candidates in five countries in the East and West: South Korea, Japan, United Kingdom, Canada and the Netherlands. Findings show that signing up to Twitter as early as possible increases one's online popularity, as predicted by the process of preferential attachment. Candidates actively following citizens and sending undirected tweets also increases the group of followers. This doesn't apply however to conversational tweets, which decreases the number of a candidate's followers slightly. South Korea, having a collectivistic culture, shows higher levels of reciprocity on Twitter, although this does not increase the group of followers. In other countries, including collectivistic Japan, candidates reciprocate less frequently with citizens, effectively using Twitter more as a mass medium for broadcasting.

Effective Sampling From Social Media Sites and Search Engines for Web Surveys: Demographic and data quality differences in surveys of Google and Facebook users / Michael J. Stern, Ipek Bilgen, Colleen McClain, & Brian Hunscher

Abstract: With proliferation of web surveys, the relative affordability of recruitment and increasing nonresponse in other survey modes, nonprobability methods are increasingly being accepted by researchers and government offices alike. However, research needs to more fully understand how the demographic characteristics

respondents may depend heavily on the source of sample, mode of recruitment, and context of the survey experience. As a first step in exploring the potential implications of recruitment source on response quality, we use data from a web survey fielded in 2013 to compare data quality indicators in survey data from the two recruitment platforms (Google and Facebook advertisements). In so doing, taking into account demographic differences that may arise from various steps in the recruitment process, we explore the effect of demographics, device and technology usage, incentives, and recruitment platform on data quality and response strategy. Our results show differences between platforms in comparability to national benchmarks, breakoffs, completion time, non-substantive answers, and numeric response strategies. Importantly, some variation in substantive responses was explained by demographic differences related to mobile device usage, which varied by recruitment platform. With the use non-probability samples on the rise, future work should build from these results to more directly assess the role of recruitment source in data quality.

Using multilevel models to explore predictors of high school students' nonresponse in experience sampling method (ESM) studies / Michael Broda

Abstract: This study uses multilevel generalized linear models to examine predictors of high school students' nonresponse when using the experience sampling method (ESM), a form of momentary data collection that captures participants' situational thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Because ESM approaches often seek to generalize and compare participants' emotional states across days and times, it is important to understand how and when participants may miss response opportunities, and further to explore how this response bias may limit generalizability of findings. Results from this study, conducted in three mid-Michigan high schools in 2013-2014 with a sample of 141 students, indicate that time of day and day of week are significantly related to a given participant's odds of nonresponse. Specifically, ESM "prompts" occurring after school and over the weekend had much higher odds of being missed by participants, even after controlling for other covariates such as race/ethnicity, gender, and person-level emotional trends. These findings demonstrate that day and time contextual factors are significantly related to odds of nonresponse, researchers using these approaches that seek to compare widely different time contexts should be mindful of possible generalizability concerns.

Web vs. mobile web – an experimental study of device effects and self-selection effects / Florian Keusch & Ting Yan

Abstract: Due to a rising mobile device penetration, Web surveys are increasingly accessed and completed on smartphones or tablets instead of desktop computers or laptops. Mobile Web surveys are also gaining popularity as an alternative self-administered data collection mode among survey researchers. We conducted a methodological experiment among iPhone owners and compared the participation and response behavior of three groups of respondents: iPhone owners who started and completed our survey on a desktop or laptop PC, iPhone owners who self-selected to complete the survey on an iPhone, and iPhone owners who started on a PC but were requested to switch to iPhone. We found that respondents who completed the survey

on a PC were more likely to be male, to have a lower educational level, and to have more experience with Web surveys than mobile Web respondents, regardless of whether they used the iPhone voluntarily or were asked to switch from a PC to an iPhone. Overall, iPhone respondents had more missing data and took longer to complete the survey than respondents who answered the questions on a PC but they also showed less straightlining behavior. There are only minimal device differences on survey answers obtained from PCs and iPhones.

Reports and Communications

Exploring the role of demographics and psychological variables in Internet addiction / Sulaiman Ainin, Noor Ismawati Jaafar, Mohammad Asraf, & Farzana Parveen

Abstract: In today's fast changing world, the Internet plays a major role in people's lives. Apart from its benefits, the Internet also has serious negative consequences which include the issue of Internet addiction. This study explores the role of demographics (e.g., age, gender and occupational position) in relation to Internet addiction. In addition, the influence of individual psychological variables (loneliness, shyness and pro-active personality) on Internet addiction was also examined. A structured questionnaire consisting of items representing loneliness, shyness, pro-activeness, Internet addiction and demographics was used to collect the data from one thousand working adults in selected organizations. Chi-square tests were used to investigate the effect of gender, age and occupational positions on Internet addiction. The influence of variables such as loneliness, shyness and pro-activeness on Internet addiction was analysed using partial least squares modeling (PLS-SEM). The results demonstrated no significant differences in terms of Internet addiction between the genders. However significant differences were found in Internet addiction depending on age and occupational positions. The study also found positive relationship between loneliness, shyness, pro-activeness and Internet addiction. The findings of this study add empirical evidence to the existing literature in respect of the correlation between age, gender, occupational position, psychological characteristics (loneliness, shyness and pro-activeness) and Internet addiction.