

Questionnaire design in Mixed-mode - the use of open or closed questions



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Some facts about the Political Party Preference survey

- May and November since 1972
- Purpose of the survey: To describe the current political opinion in Sweden
- Three panels a' 3 000 persons. Each person is participating three times.
- Telephone interview

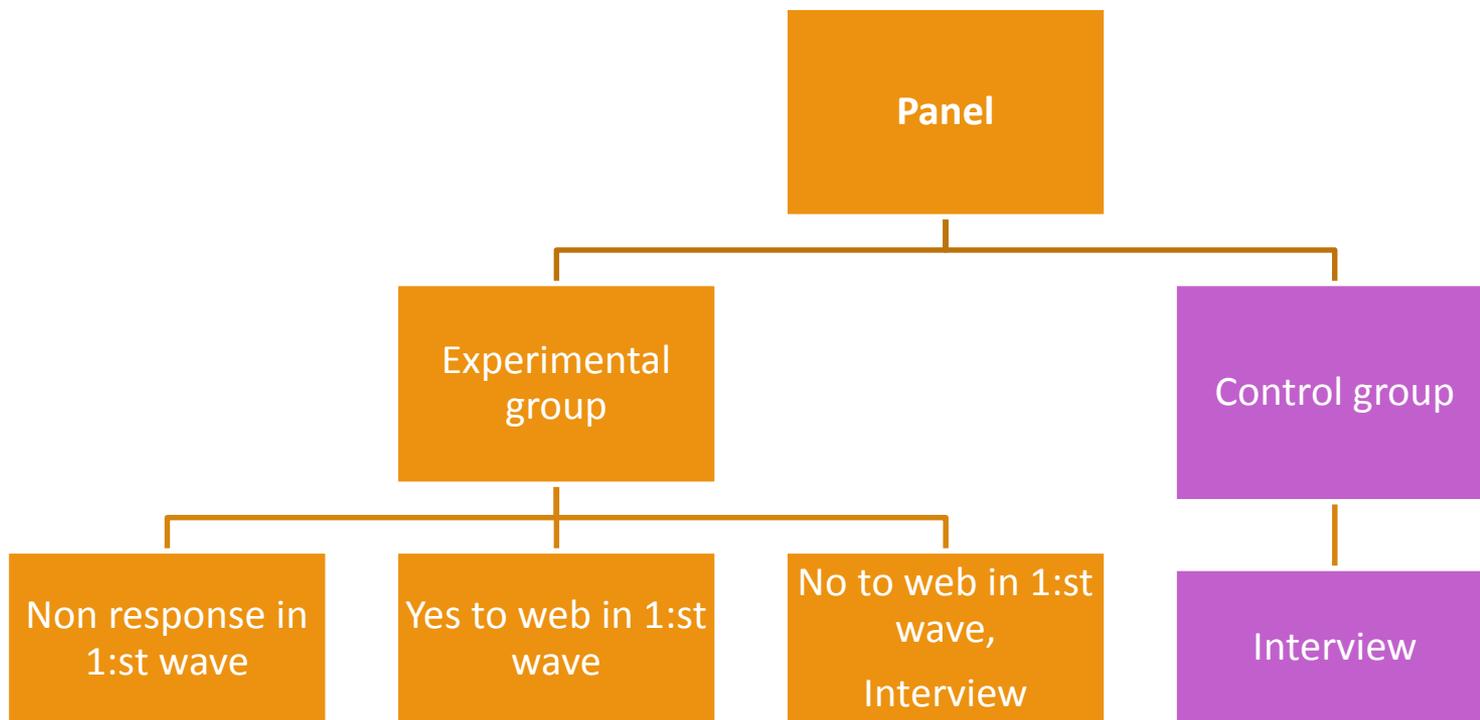


Some facts about the Political Party Preference survey

- May a
 - Purpose political
 - Three partici
 - Telephone interview
- PROJECT:**
- Let respondents in 2:nd round choose to answer the questions on web.
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Experimental design





The 1st challenge...

Design the central question for the web

In Telephone:

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....





Design options for central question on web

1) Open-ended question

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....





Design options for central question on web

- 1) Open-ended question - with suggestions or not?

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....



Design options for central question on web

Open-ended with suggestions

What party would you vote for?

Social democrats

Vilket parti tänker du rösta på?

SO

Socialdemokraterna

Advantages

- Similar to an extent to telephone version
- Reduced burden (vs. open Q)
- Reduces coding

Disadvantages

- Open question quite rare in web surveys (smartphones, Ipad etc.)



Design options for central question on web

- 1) Open-ended question - with suggestions or not?
- 2) Closed question

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....

What party would you vote for?

VÄNSTERPARTIET (V)
SOCIALDEMOKRATERNA (S)
MILJÖPARTIET (MP)
CENTERPARTIET (C)
FOLKPARTIET (FP)
KRISTDEMOKRATERNA (KD)
MODERATERNA (M)
SVERIGEDEMOKRATERNA (SD)
OTHER PARTY. Which?

DON'T KNOW





Design options for central question on web

- 1) Open-ended question - with suggestions or not?
- 2) Closed question - **How to order response alternatives?**

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....

What party would you vote for?

VÄNSTERPARTIET (V)
SOCIALDEMOKRATERNA (S)
MILJÖPARTIET (MP)
CENTERPARTIET (C)
FOLKPARTIET (FP)
KRISTDEMOKRATERNA (KD)
MODERATERNA (M)
SVERIGEDEMOKRATERNA (SD)
OTHER PARTY. Which?

DON'T KNOW



Design options for central question on web

Closed question – Left wing/Right wing

What party would you vote for?

VÄNSTERPARTIET (V)

SOCIALDEMOKRATERNA (S)

MILJÖPARTIET (MP)

CENTERPARTIET (C)

FOLKPARTIET (FP)

KRISTDEMOKRATERNA (KD)

MODERATERNA (M)

SVERIGEDEMOKRATERNA (SD)

OTHER PARTY. Which?.....

Advantages

- Less burden than an open question
- Help for uncertain/unknowledgeable respondents
- Match respondents expectations

Disadvantages

- Differ from telephone version
- Does not counteract response-order effects

Design options for central question on web

Closed question – randomized order

What party would you vote for?

CENTERPARTIET (C)
SVERIGEDEMOKRATERNA (SD)
VÄNSTERPARTIET (V)
KRISTDEMOKRATERNA (KD)
SOCIALDEMOKRATERNA (S)
MODERATERNA (M)
MILJÖPARTIET (MP)
FOLKPARTIET (FP)

Advantages

- Cancel out response-order effects

Disadvantages

- No order -> higher burden
- Some orders -> negative reactions and confusion





The 2nd challenge...

Design the “don’t know” option





Design options for “don’t know” option

- 1) Include “don’t know” as a regular response option:** valid option for those who do not know but some might also pick this option due to satisficing (low motivation).
- 2) Take out “don’t know”:** those that don’t know then must skip the question or, incorrectly, pick an option on the response scale.
- 3) Include “don’t know” as similarly as in telephone interview as possible:** only offer “don’t know” under certain conditions, if the respondent try to skip the question etc.
- 4) Include “don’t know” but make it unattractive visually:** might signal that the option is valid only if it’s really needed. Some ways to apply this principle are to have the “don’t know” in parenthesis or distant from the other response options.





The 2nd challenge...

Open question:

What party would you vote for?

Don't know

.....

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....

DON'T KNOW





The 2nd challenge...

Open question:

What party would you vote for?

Don't know

.....

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....

DON'T KNOW





The 2nd challenge...

Open question:

What party would you vote for?

Don't know

.....

No answer → “soft” control

What party would you vote for?

Answer:.....

DON'T KNOW





The 2nd challenge...

Closed question:

What party would you vote for?

VÄNSTERPARTIET (V)

SOCIALDEMOKRATERNA (S)

MILJÖPARTIET (MP)

CENTERPARTIET (C)

FOLKPARTIET (FP)

KRISTDEMOKRATERNA (KD)

MODERATERNA (M)

SVERIGEDEMOKRATERNA (SD)

OTHER PARTY. Which?

DON'T KNOW





The 2nd challenge...

Closed question:

What party would you vote for?

VÄNSTERPARTIET (V)

SOCIALDEMOKRATERNA (S)

MILJÖPARTIET (MP)

CENTERPARTIET (C)

FOLKPARTIET (FP)

KRISTDEMOKRATERNA (KD)

MODERATERNA (M)

SVERIGEDEMOKRATERNA (SD)

OTHER PARTY. Which?

Or a “soft” control?





Design options for “don’t know” option

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Summary

The 1st challenge:

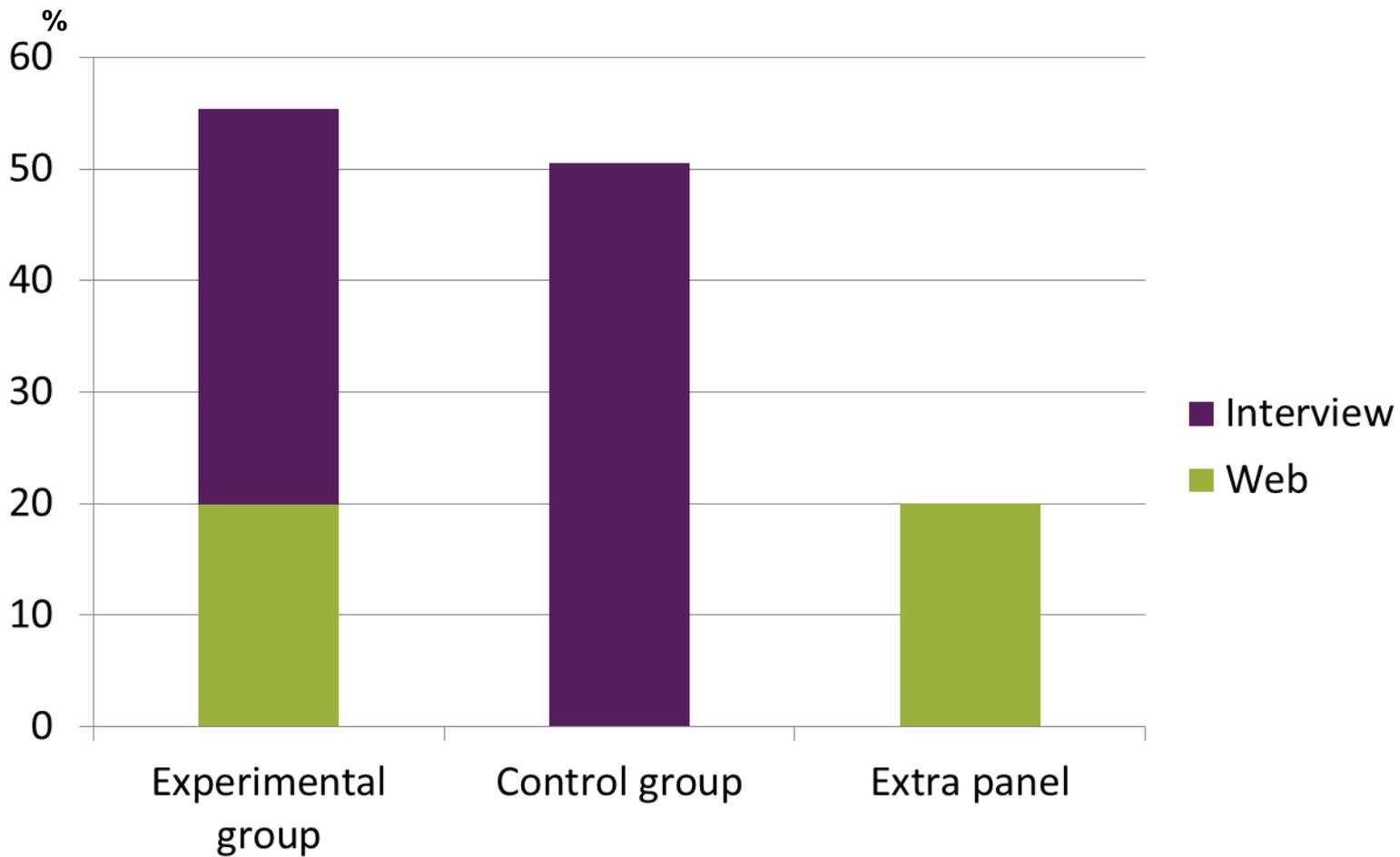
- 1) To design the central question for the web
 - Open question with suggestions
 - Closed question – political landscape

The 2nd challenge:

- 1) How to design the “don’t know” option
 - (OQ) Let resp. type DK with soft control
 - (CQ) Include don’t know as a regular option



Response rates





Preliminary results...

- In a panel survey we might be able to increase response rate (lower costs)
- Web → skewness towards middle aged and higher education
- No significant differences in “don’t know answers” between open and closed questions for web (few observations)
- No significant differences in “don’t know answers” between computer and smartphones (few observations)

The project continues for the May 2015 survey with bigger population...





Thank you for listening!

Feedback on our decisions?

Questions?

(I do allow all kinds of questions but I prefer cognitively tested ones)

