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Survey Attitudes and Survey Participation – and Vice Versa

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Survey Attitudes and Participation

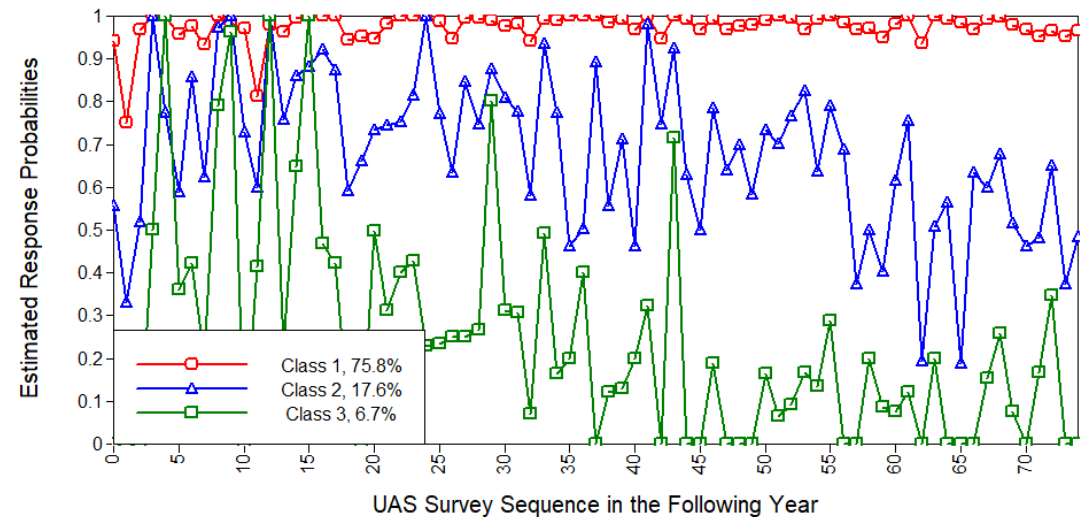
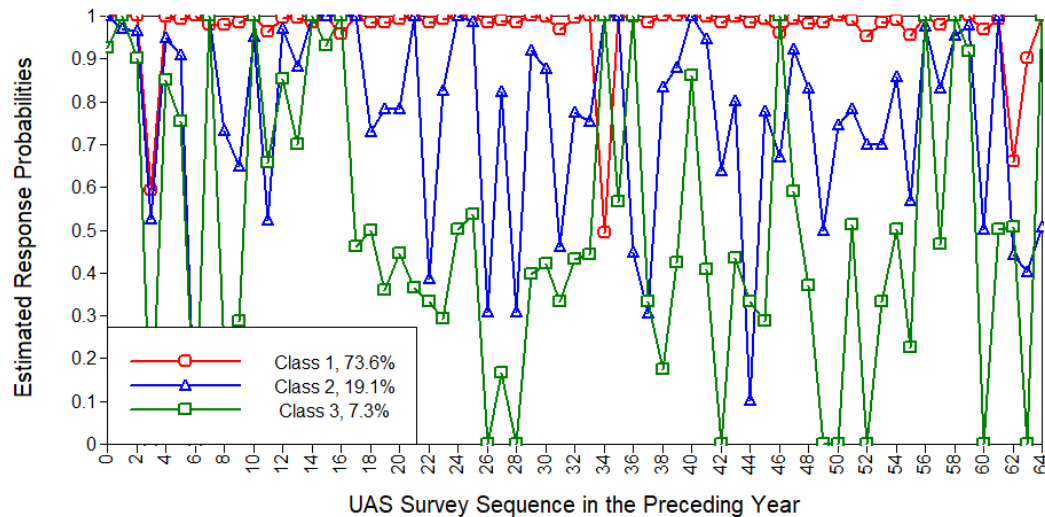
- Declining survey response rates have prompted interest in the impact of public attitudes toward surveys on willingness to participate
 - Is it *enjoyable* to complete a survey?
 - Is it *laborious* to answer many survey questions?
 - Would the results of a survey be *important* and *useful*?
- Recent study develops and validates the 9-item Survey Attitude Scale (SAS) in Germany and the Netherlands (De Leeuw et al., 2019)
- Dutch online panel participants are more likely to respond to surveys they perceive as more enjoyable, valuable, and less burdensome (Rosche et al., 2025)

SAS Measured in UAS 640

- Enjoyment
 - E1. I really enjoy responding to survey questionnaires through the mail or Internet
 - E2. I really enjoy being interviewed for a survey
 - E3. Surveys are interesting in themselves
- Value
 - V1. Surveys are important for society
 - V2. A lot can be learned from information collected through surveys
 - V3. Completing surveys is a waste of time
- Burden
 - B1. I receive far too many requests to participate in surveys
 - B2. Opinion polls are an invasion of privacy
 - B3. It is often exhausting to answer so many questions in a survey

Response Patterns

- For 1,015 UAS 640 panelists, we collected all invitations to other UAS surveys within one year *before and after* the UAS 640 completion date for each panelist
- On average for a panelist
 - 25 invitations received, 23 completed in the preceding year
 - 28 invitations received, 25 completed in the following year

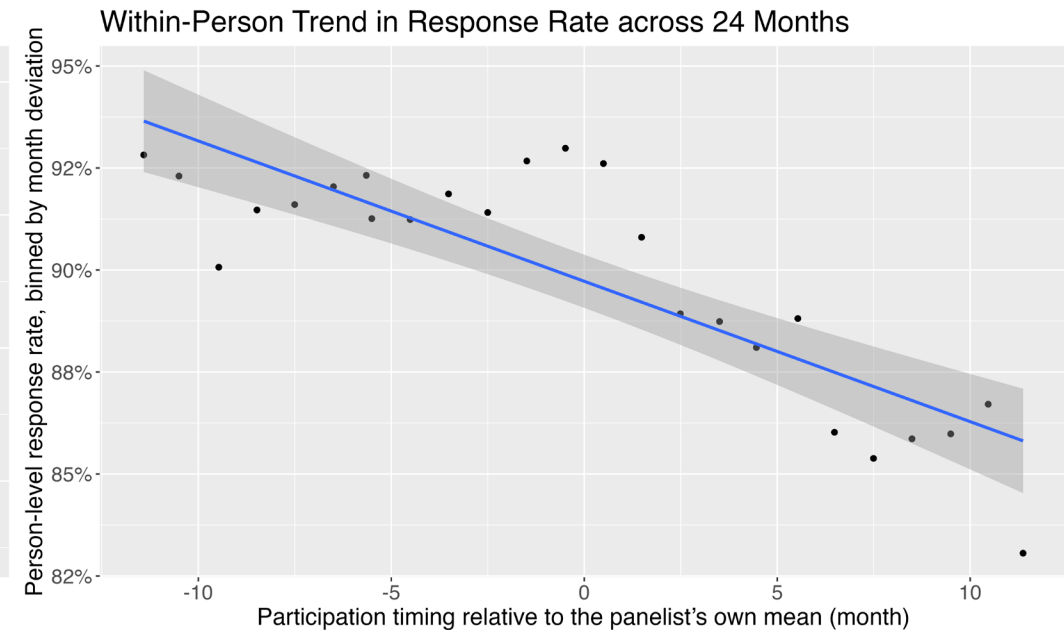
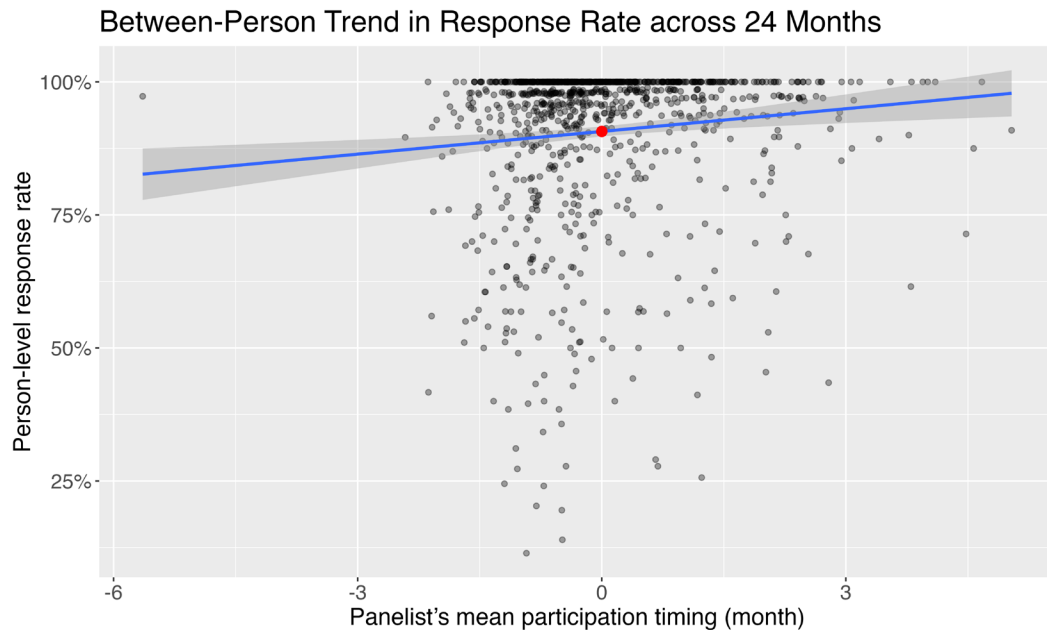


Link Survey Attitudes to Participation

- Survey invitations are nested within panelists, with substantial between-person variation in response rate
- Analyzed with two-level structural equation modeling using *Mplus*
 - *Within-person (invitation)* level
 - Binary response outcome
 - Timing, i.e., number of months (#days/30) before/after the completion of UAS 640
 - *Between-person (panelist)* level measured in UAS 640
 - SAS items
 - Demographics, including gender, age, education, white, live with partner, household size, household income
 - Contextual model → separate between- and within-person timing effect
 - Probit link → binary response outcome
 - Bayes estimator → GLMM convergence

Trend in Participation

- Panelists with later average participation timing (relative to the grand-mean across panelists) have a *higher* overall response propensity
- For the same panelist, invitations that arrive later than the panelist's own average participation timing are *less* likely to be completed



Participation Associated with SAS items?

- In the analysis prior to UAS 640, at the *between-person* level
 - SAS items serve as *dependent* variables
 - Person-specific random intercept serves as a *predictor*, capturing the latent response propensity at the reference time point (see Liu et al., 2021 for methodology)
- Within 6 or 12 months prior to UAS 640, panelists with **higher** response propensity tend to report **higher** agreement with the item
 - “*I really enjoy responding to survey questionnaires through the mail or Internet*” (b = 0.199 or 0.165)
- Within 6 months prior to UAS 640, panelists with **higher** response propensity tend to report **lower** agreement with the item
 - “*It is often exhausting to answer so many questions in a survey*” (b = -.196)

SAS Items Associated with Participation?

- Within 3, 6, or 12 months after UAS 640, panelists who score **higher** on the item *“I really enjoy responding to survey questionnaires through the mail or Internet”* tend to have **higher** latent response propensity (b = 0.121, 0.136, or 0.116)
- No other items are associated with participation after UAS 640

Discussion

- UAS panel is well-maintained, with high person-level response rates
- Survey attitudes may be associated with between-person variation in response rates
- Repeated measurements of survey attitudes would permit the investigation of
 - Association with within-person variation in response rates
 - Reciprocal effects using random intercept cross-lagged panel model (RI-CLPM)

Thank you

Thank you for your attention!

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