

Workshop in Survey Statistics

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Progress in survey science and practice
yesterday - today - tomorrow

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Abstract

To realize progress is a goal in every scientific field. This holds for survey science as well, in particular for its application in National Statistical Offices (NSO:s).

In well over one hundred years of existence, the field can point to several examples of periods and circumstances that triggered significant progress.

At the present time, frequently mentioned challenges for progress are:

- nonresponse is a serious threat to the validity of sample survey statistics;
- high cost is affecting the traditional sample surveys, where probability sampling have been a prominent feature;
- use of low cost alternative data sources, big data and others, is tempting, but raises unresolved questions about quality and validity of survey statistics produced in such ways.

This presentation offers some personal thoughts on progress realized in the field - especially in the last fifty years - as well as thoughts on how this may prepare for future progress, in the light of the challenges mentioned.

Key words: progress, valid statistics, high survey cost

Reference

Laudan, L. (1977) Progress and its Problems. Towards a Theory of Scientific Growth. Los Angeles: University of California Press.