THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF REMINDERS AND THE PROPORTION OF FULL RESPONSES IN ONLINE SURVEYS

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Abstract

Using the reminders is the approach to increase the survey response rate and the number of participants in online surveys. But not all participants complete the survey. So it is important not only to involve respondents in the survey but motivate participants to complete it and reduce item nonresponse. For this purpose reminders also can be used. We would like to find out how the number of reminders could correlate with the proportion of full responses in online surveys. To do this we use data of the monitoring survey UNiDOS (17th wave, November-December 2021). The survey was conducted separately for 1st year students and 2nd + year students (2-4 years of bachelor, 1-5 years of master degree) using LimeSurvey shell. Students received survey invitation by e-mails (5166 invitations for 1st year students and 15244 invitations for 2nd + year students). Then the respondents who did not pass the survey or incomplete filled in the questionnaire received reminders. The maximum number of reminders was 5. There are 31,9% of full responses from 1st year students and 15,5% of full responses from 2nd + year students.

Table 1. *The proportion of full responses depending on number of reminders, cumulative percentage*

	1st year students	2nd + year students
After invitation	7,6%	4,1%
After first reminder	17,5%	10,4%
After second reminder	25,3%	14,1%
After third reminder	28,1%	15,0%
After fourth reminder	31,9%	15,5%
After fifth reminder	31,9%	15,5%

As we can see from Table 1, 7,6% of full responses from 1st year students and 4,1% of full responses from 2nd + year students are received without reminders. The first reminder increases the percentage of full responses from 1st year students and 2nd + year students by 9,9% and 6,3% respectively. The second reminder increases the proportion of full responses from 1st year students and 2nd + year students by 7,8% and 3,7% respectively. The third reminder raises the proportion of full responses from 1st year students and 2nd + year students by 2,8% and 0,9% respectively. The fourth reminder raises the percentage of full responses from 1st year students and 2nd + year students by 3,8% and 0,5% respectively. And the fifth reminder no longer increases the proportion of full responses.

Each subsequent reminder tends to reduce the increase of full responses. The 2nd + year students were less motivated to complete the survey than 1st year students. The latter more often completed the survey without reminder, a little less often ignored the reminders. Also the proportion of full responses from 1st year students is more than the proportion of full responses from 2nd + year students. Thus, on the one hand reminders really increase the proportion of full responses in online surveys. On the other hand more motivated respondents respond to reminders somewhat better than less motivated ones.

Keywords: reminders, online surveys, full responses.

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