

What Predicts the Validity of Self-Reported Paradata?

Results from the German HISBUS Online Access Panel

Nadin Kastirke (kastirke@dzhw.eu), Swetlana Sudheimer (sudheimer@dzhw.eu), Gritt Fehring (gritt.fehring@web.de), Ulrike Schwabe (schwabe@dzhw.eu)

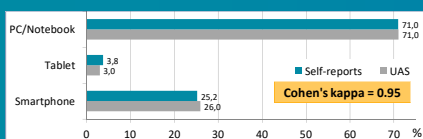
Do survey participants provide information about the device, operating system and web browser they use?

Paradata, such as the user agent strings (UAS), deliver important client-side information about the technical conditions of web surveys. Due to different reasons, i. e. data protection issues, UAS are not always available.

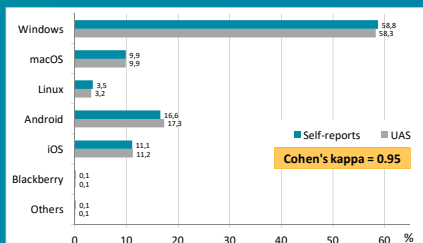
...and is this related to general attitudes towards surveys, the willingness to participate and distraction while answering?

(de Leeuw et al. 2010; subscales: enjoyment, burden, value; Struminskaya et al. 2018; Zwarun/Hall 2014)

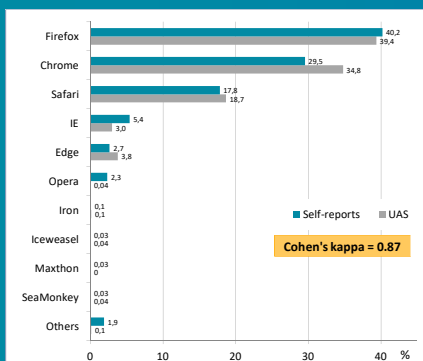
Device used



Operating system

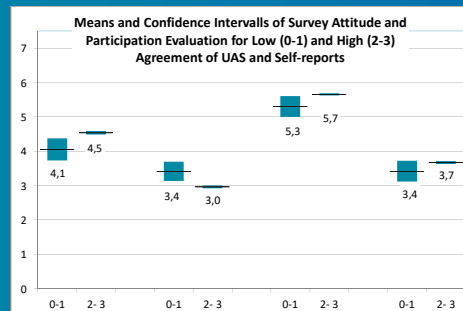


Web browser

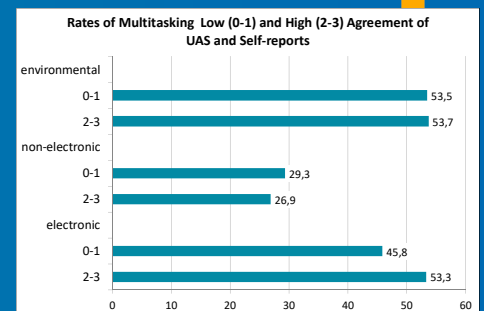


UAS and self-reported paradata were highly consistent.

Directly asking for the technical equipment is a promising way to get valid paradata.



Survey attitude, participation evaluation and multitasking vary little among low and high agreement of UAS and self-reports.



Ordinal Regression Analysis of Agreement of UAS and Self-reports

Predictor	Odds Ratio	Test statistic
Survey enjoyment	1.01	p = .815
Survey burden	0.98	p = .705
Survey value	1.11	p = .136
Participation evaluation	1.01	p = .846
Environmental multitasking	0.92	p = .512
Non-electronic multitasking	0.62	p < .001
Electronic multitasking	1.54	p < .01

Notes: n=2,487; based on robust standard errors; covariates: gender, study subject, Big Five personality traits (Rammstedt et al. 2013); depV agreement: 0=none, 1=one of three, 2=two of three, 3=all of the three

Survey attitude and participation evaluation do not predict agreement of UAS and self-reports. The chance for agreement of UAS and self-reported paradata is lower with non-electronic multitasking and higher with electronic multitasking.

Non-electronic multitasking may distract individuals from answering. Electronic multitasking may indicate technical skills that put survey participants into the position to correctly answer paradata questions.

Data & Methods

HISBUS Online Access Panel: a periodic cross-sectional study of students at German higher education institutions conducted by the DZHW

2,894 HISBUS panelists with UAS known to us were categorized according to Rossmann/Gummer 2016.

Cohen's kappa and **multivariate regression analysis** were computed.