**Against All Odds: On the Robustness of Probability Samples Against Decreases in Response Rates**

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**Abstract:** Responses rates in surveys with probability samples have decreased in the last decades, but has this decrease caused a decline in sample quality? Our paper addresses this question with an analysis of methodological data describing 776 surveys from four cross-national survey projects: European Quality of Life Survey, European Social Survey, European Values Study, and International Social Survey Programme, between 1999 and 2020. Based on a theoretical model of factors that shape unit nonresponse and unit nonresponse bias, we estimate causal effects of historical time on both, nonresponse and nonresponse bias, as well as the contribution of nonresponse to nonresponse bias. Analyses show that the decline in response rates was not accompanied by an increase in nonresponse bias, which is a reassuring result for all social survey users.