

**Supplemental material for “Do Distractions During Web Survey Completion Affect Data Quality? Findings from a Laboratory” by Alexander Wenz in Social Science Computer Review**

**Appendix A. Questionnaire**

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	<b>Question wording</b>
Q1	<p>Which of the following activities were you doing for the past 12 months to feel good and healthy? Please check all that apply.</p> <p><i>I tried not to overeat; I exercised; I tried to relax, avoid stress; I went to the gym or swimming pool; I took a contrast shower; I went to a health resort; I tried to eat healthy food; I took vitamins; I saw a doctor; I consumed alternative medicine products; I bought food with low levels of cholesterol, fat, calories, or artificial food additives; I walked outdoors</i></p> <p>Source: Mavletova (2013), adapted</p>
Q2	<p>What is your favourite vegetable?</p> <p><i>Green beans; Broccoli; Kale; Carrots; Spinach; Other, that is [Textbox]</i></p> <p>Source: Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS) Panel, Nonresponse and Measurement Error in Mobile Web Surveys, 034</p>
Q3	<p>What is the main reason you eat vegetables?</p> <p><i>They are in my food already; I like colours in my meals; Other, please specify below [Textbox]</i></p> <p>Source: Peytchev and Hill (2010)</p>
Q4	<p>Do you have any hobbies? If so, what are these?</p> <p>If you do not have any hobbies, please leave this question blank.</p> <p><i>[Textbox]</i></p> <p>Source: Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS) Panel, Nonresponse and Measurement Error in Mobile Web Surveys, 032, adapted</p>
Q5	<p>In this question, you can see a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved during the past week. Please indicate how much of the time during the past week <i>None or almost none of the time; Some of the time; Most of the time; All or almost all of the time; Don't know</i></p> <p>... you felt depressed?</p> <p>... you felt that everything you did was an effort?</p>

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... your sleep was restless?

... you were happy?

... you felt lonely?

... you enjoyed life?

... you felt sad?

... you could not get going?

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, E8-E15, adapted

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Q6 Please indicate to what extent

*0 = Not at all; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6 = A great deal; Don't know*

... you get a chance to learn new things?

... you feel that people in your local area help one another?

... you feel that people treat you with respect?

... you feel that people treat you unfairly?

... you feel that you get the recognition you deserve for what you do?

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, E35-E39, adapted

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Q7 Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?

*0 = Extremely unhappy; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 = Extremely happy;*

*Don't know*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, C1

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Q8 Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Please rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

I see myself as ...

*Disagree strongly; Disagree moderately; Disagree at little; Neither agree nor disagree; Agree a little; Agree moderately; Agree strongly*

Extraverted, enthusiastic

Critical, quarrelsome

Dependable, self-disciplined

Anxious, easily upset

Open to new experiences, complex

Reserved, quiet

Sympathetic, warm

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Disorganised, careless  
Calm, emotionally stable  
Conventional, uncreative

Source: Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann (2003), adapted

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Q9 How well can you concentrate if something in the background is distracting you?

*1 = Extremely well; 2; 3; 4; 5 = Extremely badly*

Source: Schepers (2007), adapted

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Q10 How quiet must the environment be in order for you to study effectively?

*1 = Extremely quiet; 2; 3; 4; 5 = Not quiet at all*

Source: Schepers (2007), adapted

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Q11 Please indicate to what extent the following statements apply to you.

To what extent...

*1 = A great deal; 2; 3; 4; 5 = Not at all*

... will music in your immediate environment disturb your concentration?

... will noise in your immediate environment disturb your concentration?

... will chatter in your immediate environment disturb your concentration?

... are you dependent on absolute silence if you want to concentrate?

... will people moving around in your immediate environment distract your attention?

... would it distract you if other people in the room spoke softly while you are studying?

... would the noise of a TV in an adjacent room distract you from your studies?

Source: Schepers (2007), adapted

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Q12 How easy or difficult do you find it adapting to loud music whilst trying to solve a problem?

*1 = Extremely easy; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7 = Extremely difficult*

Source: Schepers (2007), adapted

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Q13 For each of the following statements please indicate to what extent they apply to you. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers.

*Strongly disagree; Disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Agree; Strongly agree*

I would prefer complex to simple problems

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I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking

Thinking is not my idea of fun

I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities

I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is likely chance that I will have to think in depth about something

I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours

I only think as hard as I have to

I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long-term ones

I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them

Source: Cacioppo, Petty, and Kao (1984)

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Q14 For each of the following statements please indicate to what extent they apply to you. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers.  
*Strongly disagree; Disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Agree; Strongly agree*

The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me

I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems

Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much

I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve

The notion of thinking abstractly appeals to me

I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought

I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort

It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works

I usually end up deliberating issues even when they do not affect me personally

Source: Cacioppo, Petty, and Kao (1984)

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Q15 Before we proceed, we have a question about how you are feeling.

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Recent research on decision making shows that choices are affected by context. Differences in how people feel, their previous knowledge and experience, and their environment can affect choices. To help us understand how people make decisions, we are interested in information about you. Specifically, we are interested in whether you actually take the time to read the directions; if not, some results may not tell us very much about decision making in the real world. To show that you have read the instructions, please ignore the question below about how you are feeling and instead check only the ‘none of the above’ option as your answer. Thank you very much.

Please check all words that describe how you are currently feeling.

*Interested; Distressed; Excited; Upset; Strong; Guilty; Scared; Hostile; Enthusiastic; Proud; Irritable; Alert; Ashamed; Inspired; Nervous; Determined; Attentive; Jittery; Active; Afraid; None of the above*

Source: Berinsky, Margolis, and Sances (2014)

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Q16 In your opinion, what is the ideal age for a girl or woman to get married and live with her spouse?

*[Textbox]*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, D28a, adapted

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Q17 In your opinion, what is the ideal age for a boy or man to get married and live with his spouse?

*[Textbox]*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, D28b, adapted

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Q18 Before what age would you say a woman is generally too young to get married and live with her spouse?

*[Textbox]*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, D34a, adapted

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Q19 Before what age would you say a man is generally too young to get married and live with his spouse?

*[Textbox]*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, D34b, adapted

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Q20 The following statements are about men and women and their place in the family. How much do you agree or disagree with each of them?

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*Strongly agree; Agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Don't know*

A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family.

Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children.

When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to do a job than women.

When there are children in the home, parents should stay together even if they don't get along.

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 2, G6-G9, adapted

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Q21 How much do you personally trust each of the following institutions?

*0 = No trust at all; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 = Complete trust*

The UK Parliament

The legal system

The police

Politicians

Political parties

The European Parliament

The United Nations

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, B4-B10, adapted

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Q22 On the whole how satisfied are you with the present state of the economy in the UK?

*0 = Extremely dissatisfied; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 = Extremely satisfied; Don't know*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, B25

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Q23 Now thinking about the UK government, how satisfied are you with the way it is doing its job?

*0 = Extremely dissatisfied; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 = Extremely satisfied; Don't know*

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, B26

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Q24 And what do you think overall about the state of health services in the UK nowadays?

*0 = Extremely bad; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 = Extremely good; Don't know*

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Source: European Social Survey (ESS), Round 3, B29, adapted

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Q25 Do you think that US President-elect Donald Trump should be allowed to give speeches at British universities?

*Yes; No*

Source: Peytchev and Hill (2010), adapted

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Q26 Do you think that UK Prime Minister Theresa May should be allowed to give speeches at US universities?

*Yes; No*

Source: Peytchev & Hill (2010), adapted

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Q27 A bat and a ball cost £1.10 in total. The bat costs £1.00 more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?

*[Textbox]*

Source: Frederick (2005)

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Q28 If it takes 5 machines 5 minutes to make 5 widgets, how long would it take 100 machines to make 100 widgets?

*[Textbox]*

Source: Frederick (2005)

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Q29 In a lake, there is a patch of lily pads. Every day, the patch doubles in size. If it takes 48 days for the patch to cover the entire lake, how long would it take for the patch to cover half of the lake?

*[Textbox]*

Source: Frederick (2005)

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Q30 What is your gender?

*Male; Female*

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Q31 What is your age?

*[Textbox]*

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Q32 What is your ethnic group?

*White; Asian or Asian British; Arab; Black or Black British; Mixed; Other, please specify [Textbox]*

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Q33 What is your current level of study?

*Undergraduate (BA, BSc, LLB, BEng); Postgraduate Taught (MA, MSc, MRes, LLM, MEng, MBA); Postgraduate Research (PhD, MPhil); Other, please specify [Textbox]*

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Q34 What is your department at the University of Essex?

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*Biological Sciences; Computer Science and Electronic Engineering;  
Economics; Edge Hotel School; Essex Business School; Government;  
Health and Human Sciences; History; Human Rights Centre;  
Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities; International Academy;  
Institute for Social and Economic Research; Language and Linguistics;  
Law; Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies; Mathematical Sciences;  
Philosophy and Art History; Psychoanalytic Studies; Psychology;  
Sociology*

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Q35 What course are you studying?  
*[Textbox]*

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Q36 Why have you chosen to study *[Q35 response]* at the University of Essex?  
*[Textbox]*

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Q37 Is English your first language?  
*Yes; No*

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Q38 Overall, how much attention were you able to pay to the survey?  
*1 = A lot of attention; 2; 3; 4; 5 = No attention at all*  
Source: Zwarun and Hall (2014), adapted

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Q39 How distracted did you feel by the things going on around you while  
completing the survey?  
*1 = Not distracted at all; 2; 3; 4; 5 = Extremely distracted*  
Source: Zwarun and Hall (2014), adapted

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Q40 How private did you feel the survey was?  
*1 = Completely private; 2; 3; 4; 5 = Not private at all*  
Source: Couper et al. (2003), adapted

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Q41 Finally, what did you think of this questionnaire?  
*1 = Certainly not; 2; 3; 4; 5 = Certainly yes*  
Was it difficult to answer the questions?  
Did you understand the questions?  
Did the questionnaire make you think?  
Was the topic interesting?  
Was the questionnaire too long?  
Did you enjoy answering the questions?  
Is the survey important for science?

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Source: Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS) Panel, Nonresponse

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and Measurement Error in Mobile Web Surveys, 071, 073-075, adapted

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Q42 If you were to complete this survey again, which device would you choose to use?

*Laptop or desktop PC; Tablet; Smartphone*

Source: UKHLS Innovation Panel, Wave 8, Sandiford, Othman, adapted

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Q43 If you would like to make any additional comments about the survey, please use this space. *[Textbox]*

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## **Appendix B. Description of respondent characteristics**

*Personality.* The Big-Five personality traits are measured with the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (Gosling et al., 2003). The scale consists of one question (Q8) that measures each of the five personality dimensions with two items, one of which is reverse-coded. For each dimension, a score is created by taking the mean of the two items.

*Need for cognition.* The respondent's need for cognition, the extent to which they enjoy and engage in thinking (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982), is measured with the 18-Item Need for Cognition Scale (Cacioppo et al., 1984). The scale is implemented in two questions (Q13-Q14) with nine items each, half of which are reverse-coded. To create a score, an exploratory factor analysis has been conducted on the 18 items using the principal-factor method without rotation. One factor had an eigenvalue over 1 and explained 80.8% of the variance. The factor scores were used to measure the respondent's need for cognition.

*Susceptibility to distractions.* Ten items adopted from the Attention Questionnaire Scale III on Distractibility (Schepers, 2007) were used to measure the respondent's susceptibility to distractions. The items were implemented in four questions (Q9-12) and ask respondents to self-report to what extent distractions affect their concentration. To create a score, an exploratory factor analysis has been conducted on the ten items using the principal-factor method without rotation. One factor had an eigenvalue over 1 and explained 99.3% of the variance. The factor scores were used to measure the respondent's susceptibility to distractions.

*Language ability.* Respondents were asked whether English is their first language (Q37) which is used as a proxy for language ability.