Wiki Surveys: Open and Quantifiable Social Data Collection

Description

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Abstract: In the social sciences, there is a longstanding tension between data collection methods that facilitate quantification and those that are open to unanticipated information. Advances in technology now enable new, hybrid methods that combine some of the benefits of both approaches. Drawing inspiration from online information aggregation systems like Wikipedia and from traditional survey research, we propose a new class of research instruments called *wiki surveys*. Just as Wikipedia evolves over time based on contributions from participants, we envision an evolving survey driven by contributions from respondents. We develop three general principles that underlie wiki surveys: they should be greedy, collaborative, and adaptive. Building on these principles, we develop methods for data collection and data analysis for one type of wiki survey, a pairwise wiki survey. Using two proof-of-concept case studies involving our free and open-source website www.allourideas.org, we show that pairwise wiki surveys can yield insights that would be difficult to obtain with other methods.

Also explained in detail in this Vimeo video: https://vimeo.com/51369546

Category

1. Journal article
2. Video
3. Website

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