

# **Considering Survey Response from the Dual-Motive Model Perspective**

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# Organization of the paper

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3. Factors to encourage survey participation
4. Behavioral Economics (BE) & Metaeconomics (dual-motive model)
5. Implication of dual-motive model to survey response
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# 1. Introduction

- Central question → what motivates people to respond to survey questions?
- Answer depends on *who* you ask
  - economist, sociologist, psychologist
    - Extrinsic versus intrinsic motivations
- This paper explores this question through the lens of BE using the dual-motive model.

## 2. Theories of survey participation

Focus on: (i) motivation to participate in surveys &  
(ii) methods to increase cooperation.

### 1. A cost-benefit economic perspective

– rationally based: views participation as a matter of

Costs (short or long surveys)

versus

Benefits (being paid, or receiving some other kind of payoff, e.g., from the study results)

Costs < Benefits  participate

→ important but is *not* enough in providing a sufficient handle on survey cooperation\* (Weisberg, 2005, Dillman et al., 2009)



(cont.)

## 2. Social exchange theory

- explains social actions of individuals by the returns these actions are expected to bring. The theory is based on:
  - exchange and reciprocity of favors (Leeuw, Hox, and Dillman, 2008).
  - establishing trust that the other party will provide a valued reward in the future, *although not necessarily to the respondent*.
- a monetary incentive can be seen as a kindness that evokes a norm of reciprocity
  - the nature of the incentive is less important than the act of giving itself (Groves and Couper, 1998).



(cont.)

### 3. Psychological models

- The base of these models comes from such sources as behavioral reinforcement, Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, and cognitive dissonance, etc.
  - \*Altruism → views survey participation as a helping behavior for a stranger.
- people are motivated by different **Extrinsic** and **Intrinsic** considerations in developing their responses to different situations (Dillman et al., 2009).

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#### 4. **Leverage-saliency theory** (Groves, Singer&Corning's, 2000)

- recognizes that in considering whether to participate different individuals are affected by:

↓  
**Leverage:** different aspects  
of the survey

↘  
**Saliency:** how much  
emphasis is put on each  
aspect by the surveyor

#### Different “drivers”:

- Incentives
- topic of the survey
- authority of the sponsor
- personal community involvement etc

### 3. Factors to encourage survey participation

#### Monetary incentives

**Noncontingent:** pre-paid

**Contingent :** promised upon completion

#### Response rates

- Noncontingent - better at obtaining survey cooperation
- **Even small** monetary incentives increase the response rates (\$1-5; a feeling of social obligation\*)
  - Note: this small amount is not enough to compensate for the burden of respondents who complete the survey

burden  $\approx$  time + effort

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- The effect on cooperation of \$1 vs \$0 is the *greatest* of any 1-dollar increment thereafter.
  - **diminishing returns with larger amounts are observed**
    - with large amounts (closer to the actual value of the task) → it becomes an economic exchange



a lessened social obligation to reciprocate by cooperating.

(Trussell and Lavrakas, 2004; Fox, Crask and Kim, 1988; Church 1993, Amstrong, 1975; Yu and Cooper, 1983, Hopkins and Gullickson, 1992)

(cont.)

## Nonmonetary incentives

- An incentive encourages participation - people feel they should reciprocate for the **reward** they receive by completing the survey (Dillman et al, 2009).

↓  
psychological

↘  
material

- Possible ways of providing **rewards** to survey participants:
  - showing respect to them (showing positive regard)
  - thanking them for participating
  - asking for their help/advice (making them feel important by helping others)



## (cont.)

- showing that their contribution is recognized
- sending info about survey, sharing with the results of study
- explaining how results will benefit *them & others*  
(importance of participation)
- supporting their values as represented by their group attachment
- giving them tangible incentives (a token of appreciation)
- making survey interesting
- providing them social validation by emphasizing that people similar to them have participated and telling them opportunity to respond is scarce



## 4. Behavioral Economics & Metaeconomics

- Generally, what is the difference b/n traditional economics & BE?
  - traditional economics does NOT incorporate all the findings in the behavioral fields & neuroscience
    - In the past 100+ years & especially past 15 years a tremendous progress in behavioral & neuroscience fields about the actual nature of human nature has been made.
- Kahneman & Tversky, two early contributors to “psychological economics”, suggest a shift in the tendency, in the direction that economics is taking.



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Main assumptions in **traditional** economics → agents are:

- Rational, self-interested, calculative
  - always utility or profit maximizers

**BE** recognizes that humans:

- can NOT always be rational, selfish, calculative & maximize each step/decision in their lives
- have sense of fairness, loyalty, reciprocity, altruism, self-sacrifice, moral values, biasness, feelings in general etc. – completely ignored in traditional economics

Kahneman & Tversky (1981) Kahneman et al (1986, 1997)

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## Metaeconomics (dual-motive model, i.e., I-We model)

We-ness: shared–other interest }  
I-ness: self-interest } → People have joint,  
dual interests

- Some people might be more oriented to the self-interest, some more oriented to the other-interest and still others somewhere in between.
- The same person might sometimes be more selfish, and sometimes more joining in unity with others depending on the circumstances (i.e., dual interests are jointly at work)

(Lynne 1999, 2006; Cory & Lynne 2006)

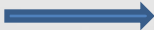


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- The notion that individuals have more than one tendency/motive/interest being pursued is commonly found in philosophy, social science, and, recently, in neuroscience.
- Evolutionary biology suggests a biologically based instinct to 2 tendencies egoistic self-interest & empathetic other-interest, with a third tendency to integrate, balance, control the other two
  - Biological evidence for dual motive theory.

Cory (1999; 2000; 2004) Levine (2006) Camerer, Loewenstein, Prelec (2005)

## 5. Implications of dual-motive model to survey response

- people may care about  Cash incentives  
Topic/ sponsorship  
Communities etc
- A variety of rewards might matter
  - there are many different influences on whether people will response to a survey, and it is NOT only about *self-interest* (of profit)
- By focusing on only one of the interests (I or WE) while ignoring others unnecessarily limits ones' ability to obtain responses\*.



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- This fits with the metaeconomic contention of inherent conflict & sacrifice in both domains of interest, with rational choice bounded by joint tendencies to pursue:
  - egoistic-hedonistic based self-interest (I) &
  - empathy-sympathy based shared-interest (We)



## 6. Conclusions

- It will likely be best if the several different theories are considered & implemented together.
- It is also important to understand that there are a variety of incentives and each of them can be explained by a different survey participation model
  - when trying to figure out what motivates people to respond to the survey we can **not** overlook the fact that people have dual motives
    - Specifically, there is We-ness (shared-other interest) involved and not only I-ness (self-interest), as explained by metaeconomics.

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- I-We model holds a lot of potential in helping make sense of survey response.
  - the pursuit of these 2 joint interests, a mix of I & WE
  - all the 4 theories on survey participation are captured.
  
- To understand **what motivates people to respond to survey questions** - one needs to perform an interdisciplinary study.



## 7. Suggestion/preliminary analysis for an extension

- To analyze the survey response of about **9,000 farmers** who were surveyed by different payment methods during the last several years, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
  - surveyed by both using and not using monetary incentives
- Preliminary results are the following:
  - a \$2-bill in the request to fill out a survey produced almost as much response as offering \$30, albeit the \$30 increased the rate.
  - increasing the offer from \$40 to \$80 produced virtually no additional response.

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- This is consistent with the literature and with this paper's analysis - *the dual-motive model at work*.
  - If only **I-ness** was in place farmers would be profit maximizing and would respond to the surveys when they are offered higher payment.
  - If only **We-ness** was in place then they would not care about the payment at all.
  - BUT it seems that they **do** care about the payment (because the \$30 increased the response rate compared to \$2), but **not** that much (because increasing the offer from \$40 to \$80 produced virtually no additional response).

Thank you!