

Survey Climate and Trust in Scientific Surveys – Recent Developments and Controversial Issues

Workshop at the University of Kassel – Department of Social Sciences
October 4 and 5, 2022

Call for Papers

SCOPE AND TOPICS OF THE WORKSHOP:

In our complex and interconnected world, there is a strong need for databased scientific approaches to solving diverse local as well as global problems. However, to transform scientific recommendations successfully into policy measures, societal trust in scientific methods and results is required. Yet, mistrust toward scientific results seems to be on the rise in recent years. A prominent example is the disbelief in the severity of and acceptance of scientific measures against the coronavirus in some societal groups around the globe. In a democracy, surveys can be an important tool for measuring public opinion and informing political decision-makers about the views of their constituents. Yet, decreasing survey participation, attempts to manipulate polls, and misleading accusations of “fake polls” as well as polls carried out not in accordance with established scientific standards, put the validity of the gathered data in jeopardy. If the survey climate continues to be on the decline, this will have drastic consequences for survey-based research since both policymakers as well as the recipients of political interventions have to believe in the accuracy of the data. Therefore, as long as surveys remain the most used scientific method of getting a broad picture of public opinion within a democratic society, researchers may need to worry at least as much about whether results of surveys will be recognized and used for evidence-based policymaking as about the accuracy of survey data.

Against this background, this two-day workshop aims to bring together current conceptual and empirical research on the following topics:

Survey Climate: What is the current state of the survey climate? What caused changes? What can be done to foster a positive survey climate, both in terms of increasing survey participation and increasing the quality of survey data?

Trust in Surveys: What can be done to increase trust in surveys and their results? Which are determinants of participation and giving truthful answers that can be used to strengthen the quality of survey data? How is declining trust in surveys related to the declining trust in science?

Surveys and Society: If and how is political participation linked to trust in science and the generalized attitudes towards surveys? What is the role of surveys in the democratic process? Can process-based data (e.g., digital trace data) help to mitigate the survey climate problem?

Open Session: All related issues in the broader context of this workshop’s theme are welcome, too.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Prof. em. Dr. Edith de Leeuw (Utrecht University)
Prof. Dr. Michael Traugott (University of Michigan)

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

We encourage the submission of advanced research ideas as well as work in progress, especially from (Ph.D.) students and young scholars. The workshop is held in English, it is free of charge and open to participants with accepted paper presentation, only. The organizing team is able to feature three **Student Travel Awards** of 300 Euros.

The application should include

- a) an abstract of the paper that will be presented (up to 500 words);
- b) if applicable, a confirmation of a student status to be eligible for the student travel award for students currently enrolled in a study program (including PhD students).

All submitted abstracts will be under a peer review for their novelty, technical quality and impact.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Please submit your application by email (surveyclimate@uni-kassel.de) **before June 8, 2022**. Letters of acceptance will be sent to participants in **July 2022**.

To enhance the discussion, a handout of approximately 3-4 pages and/or the slides of the presentation should be prepared by **September 22, 2022**. This material will be distributed to all participants in advance.

Further information about the workshop can be found here:

<https://uni-kassel.de/go/surveyclimate>

We plan to publish a special issue in a peer-reviewed journal on the workshop topic in 2023. Details about the special issue will be provided during the workshop.

We look forward to your submission and welcoming you at the University of Kassel.

ORGANIZING TEAM:

Bettina Langfeldt (University of Kassel)
Niklas Jungermann (University of Kassel)
Thorsten Euler (DZHW)
Ulrike Schwabe (DZHW)
Henning Silber (GESIS)
Bella Struminskaya (Utrecht University)

SUPPORTER:

