

Conjoint analysis of individual preferences over the internet

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Conjoint analysis is used to investigate preferences and decision making. Through the last two decades it has gained growing interest in market research. In conjoint analysis for each attribute-level a partworth is determined by decomposing global multiattribute judgments. Reliability and validity of this method is determined by several characteristics of the task (cf. number and complexity of concepts) and of the subject. Validity of different methodological variants has been demonstrated. Nevertheless, little is known about the influence of different preference elicitation procedures on results in conjoint analysis. This is especially true for using the internet although it has gained growing interest in market research (Saltzman & MacElroy, 1999). We conducted an online conjoint analysis testing reliability and validity on multiple criteria. Each of 9226 subjects was asked to make 30 graded paired comparisons. The results were compared to a conjoint analysis conducted through a traditional computerized personal interview. Possible methods to limit the drop-out of subjects and to improve the validity of conjoint-data will be discussed.

The goal of this paper is to give users of conjoint analysis an example for using this method in online-research. Moreover it is shown what problems have to be regarded and how valid the data will be.

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