

FEDERAL COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY
NONRESPONSE BIAS SUBCOMMITTEE

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) Nonresponse Bias Subcommittee is to: (1) identify and summarize nonresponse bias studies involving federal surveys since the issuance of the 2006 OMB Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys; (2) develop a set of guidelines and best practices for nonresponse bias analyses and reporting; and (3) monitor the impact of the newly developed guidelines on nonresponse bias analyses and reporting.

2. BACKGROUND

In 2006, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys requiring that all Federal surveys with a unit response rate of less than 80 percent conduct an analysis of nonresponse bias. Since 2006, Federal surveys have increased activities involving analyses of nonresponse bias; however, the quality and style of the reports have greatly varied in terms of methodology, rigor, and reporting.

In 2016, the FCSM chartered the Nonresponse Bias Subcommittee to help assess the overall impact of OMB's Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys. The Nonresponse Bias Subcommittee was tasked with identifying and summarizing nonresponse bias studies involving federal surveys since the issuance of the 2006 OMB Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys; and developing a set of recommendations and best practices for nonresponse bias analyses and reporting.

3. SCOPE AND APPROACH

FCSM subcommittees are established to explore aspects of statistical methodology and produce a specific product within a prespecified time frame. These products may include research reports, workshop reports and guidance or recommendations. This FCSM Nonresponse Bias Subcommittee will:

- a. Conduct a systematic review of nonresponse bias studies involving federal surveys. The Subcommittee will:
 - i. Collect studies including peer-reviewed research papers, published book chapters, conference proceedings, published government reports or memoranda, and other grey literature materials of nonresponse bias

studies involving Federal surveys since the 2006 OMB guidance were considered for inclusion.

- ii. Extract information from the collected documents on the following attributes: a) general characteristics, including agency sponsorship, response rates, type of survey, and mode of data collection; b) types of nonresponse bias assessment method(s) used; c) target of the nonresponse bias analyses (i.e., sample composition, survey estimates, or both); and d) whether post-survey nonresponse adjustments appeared to reduce bias in final estimates.
 - iii. Summarize the extracted data in a searchable database.
 - iv. Write a report summarizing the findings of this systematic review.
- b. Based on findings from the systematic review, the Subcommittee will develop a set of guidelines and best practices for nonresponse bias analyses and reporting. The Subcommittee will:
- i. Publish the guidelines as an FCSM report.
 - ii. Upon completion of the report, the Subcommittee will facilitate an FCSM workshop to share examples and promote best practices.
- c. Monitor the impact of the newly developed guidelines on nonresponse bias studies by reviewing submitted studies on an annual basis. To accomplish this goal, the Subcommittee will collaborate with the FCSM to create a mechanism by which researchers are encouraged to share their studies of nonresponse bias.
- d. Explore opportunities for conducting experiments and or simulation studies within and across surveys and agencies to compare results of different adaptive design, responsive design, and weighting techniques on bias reduction.

4. PROPOSED DELIVERABLES AND DATES

This FCSM Nonresponse bias Subcommittee will be responsible for generating: (1) a report summarizing the findings from a systematic review of nonresponse bias studies in 2019; (2) a report providing a set of guidelines and best practices for nonresponse bias analyses and reporting for federal surveys in 2020; and for (3) organizing a workshop to share examples and promote best practices in 2021.

5. SPONSOR

This FCSM Nonresponse bias Subcommittee serves under the auspices of the FCSM and is subject to direction from it. There will be regular contact with FCSM through the FCSM member serving as a co-chair or the temporary FCSM membership for the Chair(s) of the group, to be determined at the discretion of the FCSM co-chairs.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

The FCSM co-chair of this Subcommittee serves as a liaison to FCSM.

7. GROUP MEMBERS

Membership in the FCSM Nonresponse Subcommittee is open to all interested Federal personnel with expertise and interest in statistical methods related to nonresponse bias. The subcommittee chair/co-chairs will select from among the membership individuals to join specific research projects teams, based on expertise.