Use of Paradata to Improve Survey Quality: Standardized Indicators across Survey Modes and Types

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Paradata in Multi and Mixed Mode Surveys

- Three nonexclusive categories based on the objectives:

1. Paradata that are the same or closely aligned across modes, such as
   - Response rates
   - Cost
   - More seldom, estimates of measurement error (e.g., GPA)
   - Examples of such paradata systems at RTI—Nirvana and CARI

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2. Paradata that are informative about switching sample members, sample groups, and the entire sample to another mode, such as

    - Productivity metrics (e.g., IPH, HPC)
    - Prior outcomes and patterns (case histories)
    - Estimated response propensities (case level and aggregate)
    - E.g., student surveys

Paradata in Multi and Mixed Mode Surveys

3. Optimization of data collection within mode, such as

   ▪ Productivity metrics by interviewer (e.g., IPH, HPC)

   ▪ Outcomes by interviewer (e.g., refusal rates)

Standardizing Paradata Metrics

- Use of rates (standardized, but lack criteria and can be subjected to confounding factors)

- Use of the (element) variances of paradata estimates

- Accounting for extraneous/confounding differences through statistical models

Research Objective

- Being able to standardize a metric does not make it useful

- Too many metrics, even when informative, can become burdensome and lose effectiveness in identifying problems

- Identify a problem, develop metrics that can quantify it, devise a plan to remedy identified problems, monitor routinely

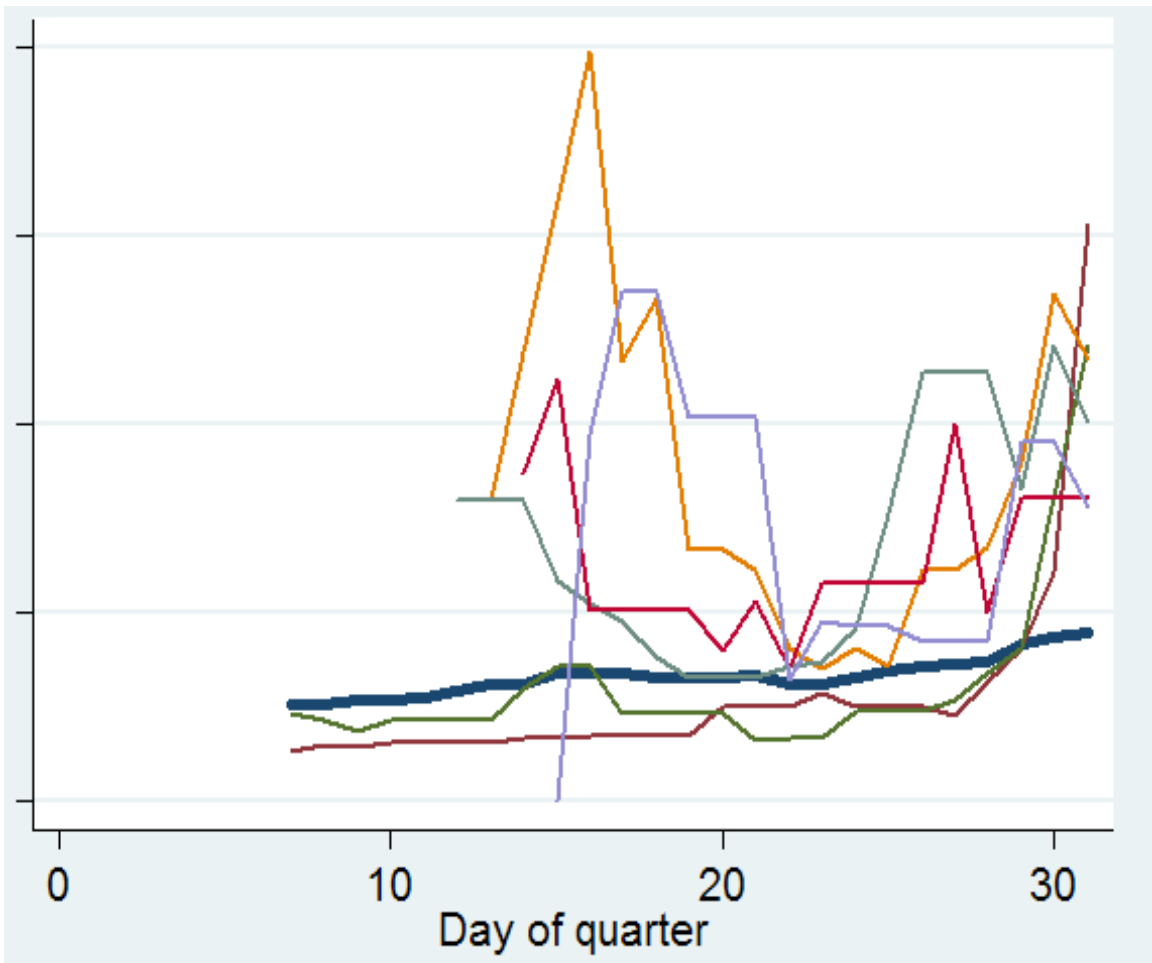- Example: Interviewers in a centralized CATI
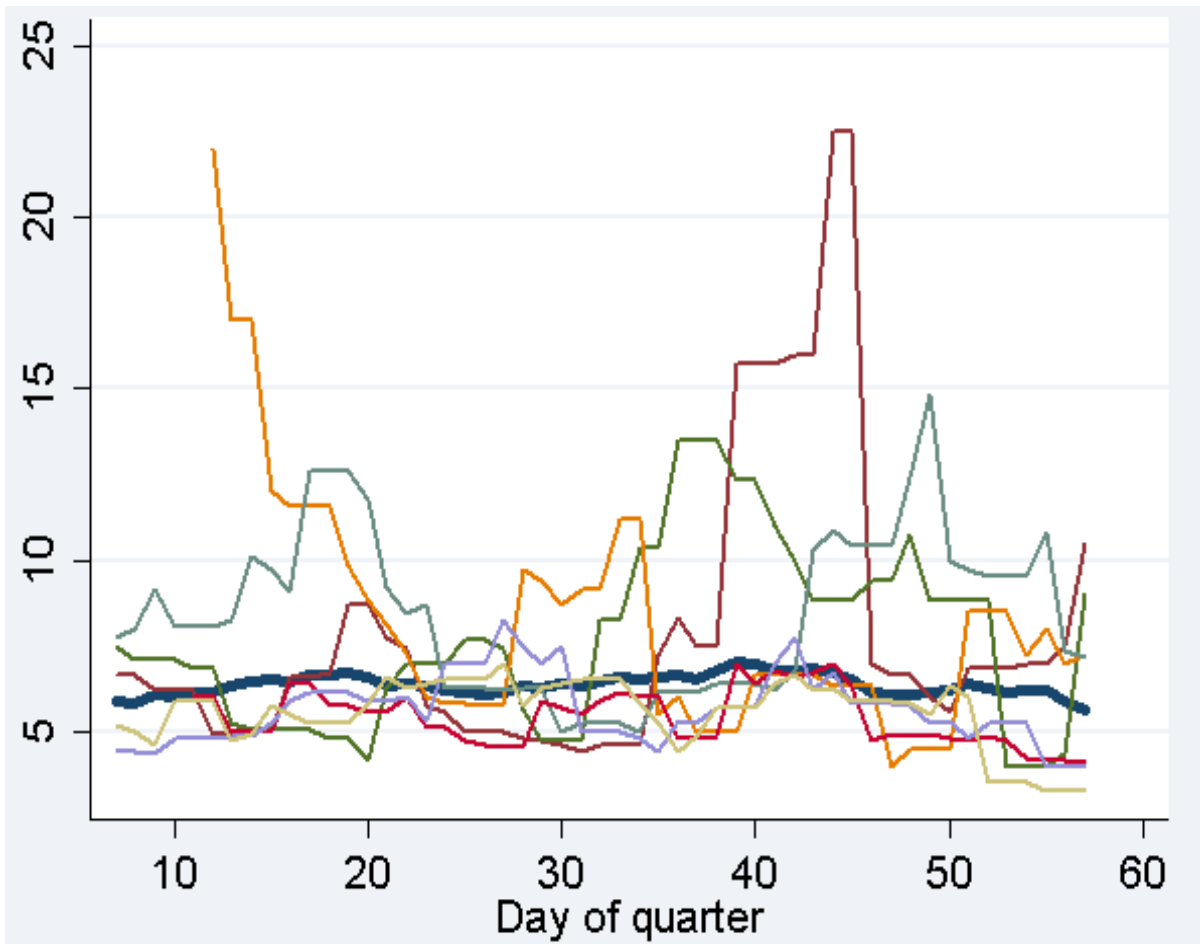
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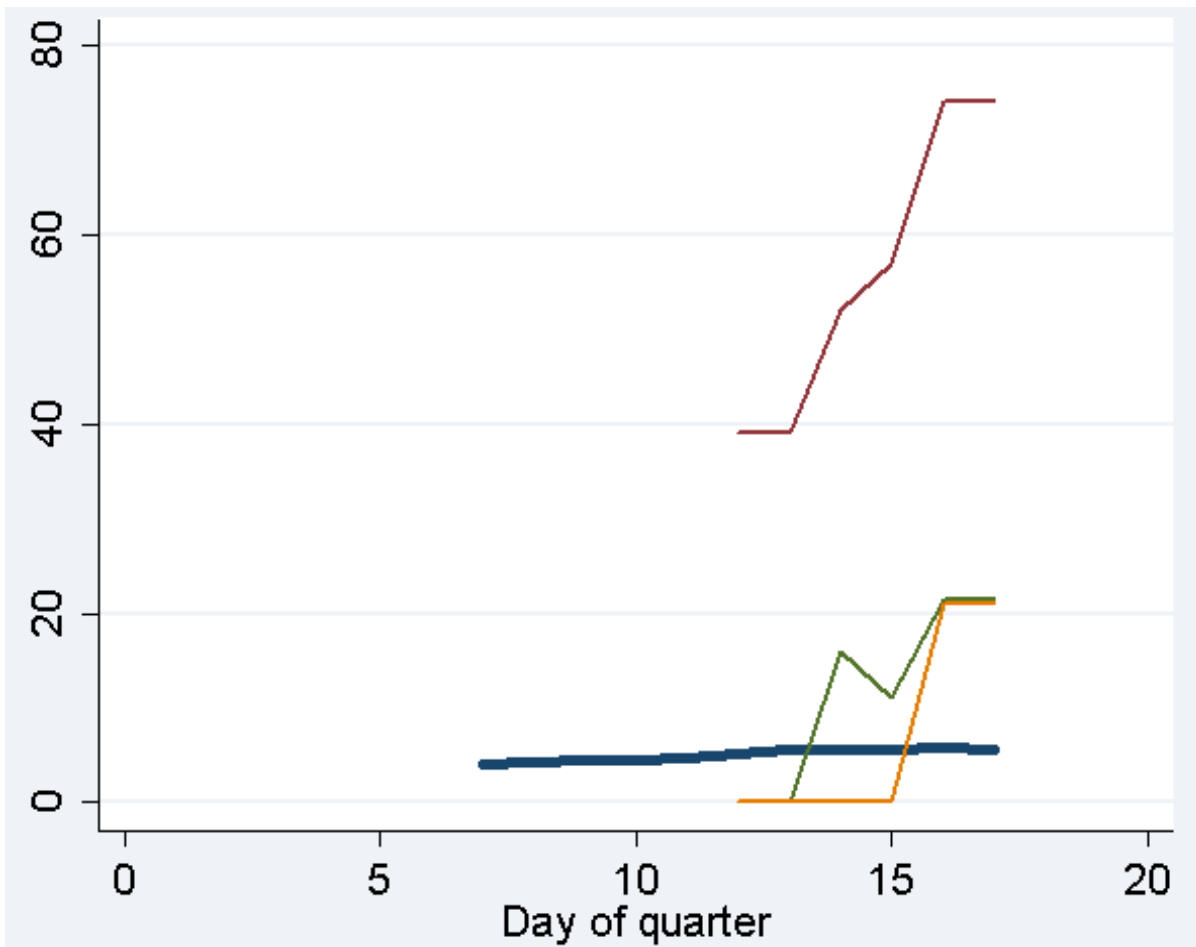
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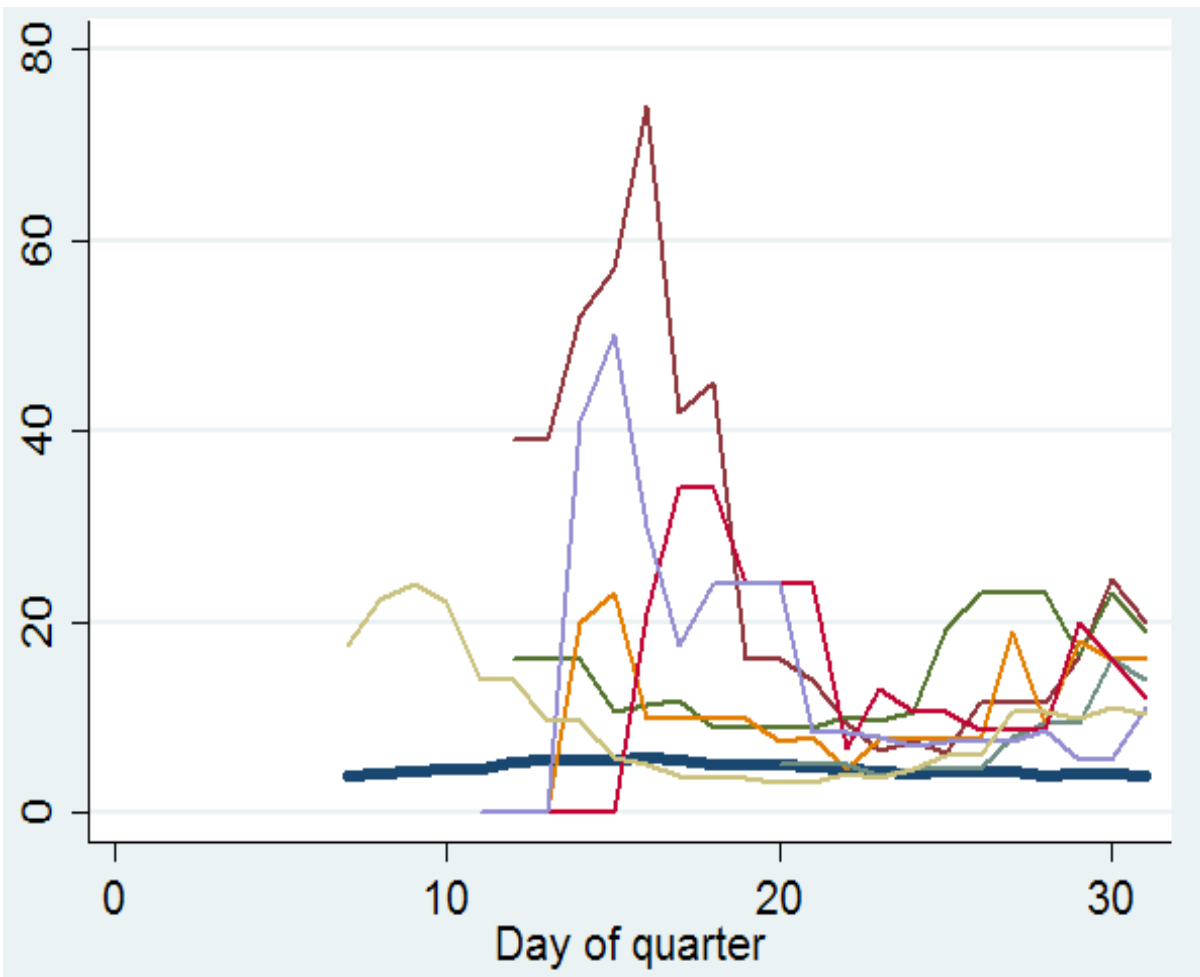
Time per complete

Time spent on a section

Use of paradata in this example

- Set bounds and adjust

- Infer cause of problem from multiple dashboard metrics

- Implement plan to address likely problem

- Example: Short administration time and high incentive uptake may suggest the interviewer is conveying an undesirable behavior to the respondent

Thank you

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