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ENHANCING SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE QUALITY USING CODE OF CONDUCT REMINDERS

ABSTRACT

A key challenge for self-administered questionnaires (SaQ) is ensuring quality responses in the absence of a marketing professional providing direct guidance on issues as they arise for respondents. While numerous approaches to improving SaQ response quality have been investigated including validity checks, interactive design, and instructional manipulation checks, these are primarily targeted at situations where expected responses are of a factual nature or stated preferences. These interventions have not been evaluated in scenarios that require higher levels of engagement and judgment from respondents. While professional marketers are guided by codes of conduct, there is no equivalent code of conduct for SaQ respondents. This is particularly salient for SaQ that require higher levels of reflection and judgment, since in the absence of professional guidance, respondents rely more on their individual ethical ideologies and experience, leaving SaQ responses potentially devoid of the standards that normally set the expectations around data quality for marketing professionals. As marketing professionals are unable to provide guidance directly in a SaQ context, the approach used in this study is to offer varying levels of professional marketing guidance indirectly through specific codes of conduct reminders that are easily consumable by SaQ participants. We demonstrate that reminders and ethical ideologies moderate the relationship between the participant's experience with SaQ and compliance with a code of conduct. Specifically, SaQ respondents produce

fewer code of conduct infractions when receiving reminders than the control group, and this improves even more when the reminders coincide with the SaQ task. The paper concludes with implications for theory and practice.

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