> However, it has occurred to me that, if I manually override the
> final disposition code to refresh the case in order to allow my
> neighbor to be recruited into the study, the sample case represented
> by his household's telephone number would be treated differently
> than all other cases are.

Jonathan,

I think you answered your own question. Scientific sampling is based
on the rigorous implementation of a transparent, systematic (and
preferably random-based) protocol. Bringing your neighbour into the
sample would break that protocol.

Benoît Gauthier, mailto:gauthier@circum.com
Réseau Circum inc. / Circum Network Inc.
Nouvelles/News http://circum.com

74, rue du Val-Perché, Gatineau, Québec (Canada) J8Z 2A6
+1 819.770.2423 télec. fax: +1 866.873.0382

Visitez / visit http://evaluationcanada.ca/

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The media in the US has played up the surging opposition in today=s voting in Venezuela reporting that the opposition brought out = =93hundreds of thousands=94 of people two days ago and that Chavez supporters = rallied =93tens of thousands=94 yesterday. As in the earlier recall referendum there have been widely discrepant polls, the most recent showing the referendum passing 60:40, but earlier polls by others showing very narrow differences. No one knows if these poll discrepancies represent sampling problems, corruption=97as apparently occurred last time--or actual shifts in public opinion (an article today in the San Francisco Chronicle suggests that a CIA memo containing a plan for an insurrection if the referendum wins narrowly, published by the Venezuelan government, could have shifted opinion more in favor) Below are a series of impressive photos of the Caracas =93red march=94 in support of Chavez = and the reforms.

Marc Sapir MD, MPH
510-848-3826
marcsapir@comcast.net

-----Original Message-----
From: Waldo [mailto:pwaldo36@charter.net]
Sent: Sunday, December 02, 2007 9:37 AM
To: waldo
Subject: Photos-Red March in Venezuela

Marea roja cubri=F3 de punta a punta las calles de Caracas en apoyo a Ch=E1vez


Caracas, 30 Nov. ABN (Mariana Serrano).- Desde tempranas horas de la ma=F1ana de este viernes, una magn=E9fica marea roja integrada por = cientos de miles de seguidores del proceso revolucionario cubri=F3 de punta a punta la ciudad capital para dar apoyo contundente al S=ED,S=ED a la = reforma constitucional.

Las avenidas Bol=E1var, M=E9xico, Universidad, Lecuna, San Mart=EDn y = todas las estaciones del Metro de Caracas se vieron repletas del pueblo venezolano, tanto de esta capital como del interior del pa=EDs, quienes =
se trasladaron a esta ciudad para mostrar su apoyo contundente al presidente de la República, Hugo Chávez Frías, y al Proyecto de Reforma Constitucional.

Muchos marcharon hacia la Av. Bolívar

Luego de recorrer una de las avenidas más grandes de Caracas, Chávez se declaró que "Venezuela dijo SÍ".

Vista de la Av. Bolívar de Este a Oeste cubierta por una marea roja que apoya el SÍ a la Reforma Constitucional. La concentración fue convocada por el líder revolucionario Hugo Chávez.

Vista aérea de la Av. Bolívar y Lecuna

Al fondo se ve parte de la Av. México y Lecuna, con la concentración central en la Av. Bolívar

La alegría plena de las calles de Caracas

Desde la tarima el presidente Chávez anunció que si el Gobierno de Estados Unidos activa la operación "Tenaza", le ordenó al ministro de Energía y Petróleo, Rafael Ramírez, suspender la suministro de petróleo a ese país.

El cierre de campaña por el SÍ cubrió la Av. Bolívar, demostrando que el pueblo revolucionario apoya la Reforma Constitucional.
Greenberg Quinlan Rosner has an opening for a Field Associate in our Washington, DC office.

The Field Department is a support function that coordinates and monitors quantitative and qualitative research. Field Associate will assist analysts with determining sampling method and quota design, research and calculate turnout models, communicate with vendors, both domestically and abroad (calling houses and focus group facilities) and monitor the quality of their work daily, oversee recruitment and logistics for focus groups, inform analysts and programming of progress of research, gather population demographics to assist with weighting and projections, control costs, maintain ever changing master research schedule. Also at times may require face to face training of vendors on methodology, execution of survey instrument and needs for data delivery.

Ideal candidate should have knowledge of survey research, experience in data collection techniques including phone, mail and web based studies. Campaign experience a plus. Must have excellent communication skills, and be detail oriented. Ability to work fast, accurately and creatively under tight timelines and high pressure is essential. Must be willing to travel domestically or internationally. Intermediate Excel and MS Office knowledge needed, Bachelor's degree accepted. SPSS/STATA skills a plus, language skills plus plus.

BASELINE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STAFF

Accuracy and Attention to Detail

We pride ourselves on a long history of accurately predicting election dynamics and outcomes. We are committed to providing our clients with a top-quality product that is correct and complete. To ensure that our
work is accurate, we place a premium on paying attention to every detail and showing concern for all aspects of the job, no matter how small.

Belief in Our Mission=
We are committed to progressive goals, ideas and leaders. We embrace diversity and believe in social justice for all.  

Communication=
We clearly communicate information and seek out answers in a respectful, professional manner. In our fast-paced environment it is critical to keep others informed and engaged. Forging and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues and clients is essential.

Intellectual Curiosity=
We believe in always asking "why". The desire to learn drives us to think more deeply and thoroughly on all issues. Our curiosity leads to the exploration and innovation that allows us to remain a leader in our field.

Strong Work Ethic=
We are dedicated to working hard and going the extra mile for our clients and our colleagues. This commitment comes from the internal motivation, initiative, intensity and energy that we bring to our individual roles. We do not shy away from difficult tasks; we dedicate ourselves to doing whatever it takes to get the job done well.

Teamwork=
We accomplish everything as a team. We rely on, and are accountable to, each other. Our level of responsibility and dedication to the team is unique and binds us in our common goals. This allegiance to the team means always being able to trust and count on our peers.

Please submit resume and cover letter to jobs@gqrr.com.

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Date: Mon, 3 Dec 2007 09:52:43 -0500
Reply-To: Leo Simonetta <Simonetta@ARTSCI.COM>
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: Leo Simonetta <Simonetta@ARTSCI.COM>
Subject: Iowa - Robo-calling Political tele-marketing with Voice recognition
Comments: To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="US-ASCII"
Apparent pro-Huckabee third-party group floods Iowa with negative calls
Politico
http://www.politico.com/blogs/jonathanmartin/1207/Apparent_proHuckabee_thirdparty_group_floods_Iowa_with_negative_calls.html

A newly-formed group claiming to support Mike Huckabee hit the phones of Iowa Republicans tonight with an automated push-poll attacking Huckabee's GOP opponents and praising the former Arkansas governor.

Officials representing the Iowa campaigns of Fred Thompson, John McCain and Rudy Giuliani all said that their supporters contacted them to complain about the calls. A spokesman for Romney's campaign said they had gotten reports of calls, but did not know of anything negative being said about their candidate.

For each target, the pattern was the same -- a recorded message using voice recognition technology asked the recipient if they would participate in the caucuses, considered themselves pro-life and thought marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Then the dirt came, right after those called were asked which candidate they were backing.

For all three, the calls were phrased in the same manner: "If you knew that..."

But different candidates were targeted with different attacks.

SNIP

--
Leo G. Simonetta
Director of Research
Art & Science Group, LLC
6115 Falls Road, Suite 101
Baltimore MD  21209

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Greetings,

We will soon be doing a statewide phone substance use/abuse survey of people 12 and older in randomly selected homes. The client recently decided he would like to include questions that will allow for GIS analysis. We plan to include these location questions at or near the end of the interview.

I would appreciate any advice others may have regarding the efficacy of asking for street address after asking questions about illegal drug use. We have had varying success asking for nearest cross-street in other studies (too many people reporting major intersections) and zip code would be disappointingly vague for the types of analysis we hope to do.

My thanks in advance for any help,

Jim

Jim Wolf  jamwolf@iupui.edu
Dear colleagues,

I am looking for references on research about spotting fake entries to self-administered surveys. I am not talking about false responses (reporting that I voted when in fact I didn't), but about people who should not be taking the survey in the first place but do so anyway in the hope, for instance, of receiving the incentive that is attached to the survey.

I am aware of methods to detect fraud in an accounting setting using the significant digit law, but I don't know of any research on methods to detect fraudulent (self-administered) survey participants.
If anybody knows of any references, please contact me off list. Anybody interested in this topic can also contact me off list and I will provide you with any reference I was given.

Thank you much in advance.

Best regards,

Dominic

*******************************************************************************

Dominic Lusinchi
Consultant

Far West Research
Statistical Consulting

San Francisco, California

* Telephone: 415-664-3032
* Email: dominic@farwestresearch.com
* Web: www.farwestresearch.com
*******************************************************************************

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--
Date: Mon, 3 Dec 2007 13:31:43 -0500
Reply-To: Leo Simonetta <Simonetta@ARTSCI.COM>
POLL: Afghans' Criticism of U.S. Efforts Rises; In the Southwest, Taliban Support Grows

ABC News/BBC/ARD National Survey of Afghanistan

http://abcnews.go.com/PollingUnit/story?id=3931809&page=1
or
http://tinyurl.com/2yd9q2

Frustrated by ongoing violence and uneven development, Afghans have grown sharply more critical of U.S. efforts in their country - and in the beleaguered southwest, support for the Taliban, ousted from power six years ago, is on the rise.

Overall, 42 percent of Afghans rate U.S. efforts in Afghanistan positively, down steeply from 68 percent in 2005, and 57 percent last year. For the first time, this national ABC News/BBC/ARD survey finds that more than half of Afghans disapprove of U.S. efforts.

SNIP

--
Leo G. Simonetta
Director of Research
Art & Science Group, LLC
6115 Falls Road, Suite 101
Baltimore MD  21209

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Please post:

Data Research Analyst

The Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

Position Summary

The Data Research Analyst is a member of the Pew Research Center's Project on Social and Demographic Trends. This position is primarily responsible for conducting statistical analysis, preparing the findings of that analysis for consumption, reviewing pertinent literature, and acting as a clearing house for department inquiries, information and records. This position reports to the Executive Vice President.

Primary Responsibilities

- Statistical analysis for reports, including primary and secondary data;
- Prepare materials for reports and presentations, including preparation of memos, tables and graphs based on findings;
- Perform literature reviews and prepare background materials;
- Respond to outside queries; and
- Additional responsibilities to include playing a central role in maintaining the center's administrative records.

Required Education/Experience

B.A./B.S. degree is required (Master's or Doctoral degree preferred) with a concentration in Sociology, Political Science or Economics;

Coursework in statistics or experience with statistical analysis;

2-3 years experience for candidates with no post-graduate degree. Preference will be given to relevant research experience, such as the application of statistical analysis to problems in the social sciences;

Thorough knowledge of SPSS, Excel, Word and other programming skills are
essential to job performance;

Demonstrated ability to work with consistent accuracy on a deadline;

Ability to synthesize materials for senior staff;

Knowledge of how to display data in easy-to-understand ways in tables and charts; and

Strong analytic ability, writing and organizational skills.

Application Procedure

Applicant should send a complete resume and cover letter (indicating where you learned of the opening) to:

Ms. April McWilliams
Human Resources Director
Pew Research Center
1615 L Street, NW Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

Responses can also be faxed to 202-419-4339 or e-mailed to careers@pewresearch.org

We are an equal opportunity employer.

Thanks very much,

Jeanie Harper
Administrative Assistant, AAPOR
P.O. Box 14263, Lenexa, KS 66285
18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061

Phone: (913) 895-4601
Fax: (913) 895-4652
Hi,

I'm wondering if anyone has research around scales used in call center satisfaction. I work at PayPal and we're trying to determine whether to keep the scale below

Very satisfied =
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied =
Dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

or align with our corporate market research group and use

Excellent
Very Good
Good
Fair
Poor
Don't know

I know later will drop our scores, which we'll have to justify internally.

Just looking for some guidance from the seasons pros. thanks for any feedback.

Jen Wulf
CSAT Manager
PayPal, Inc an eBay Company
Why not take the telephone numbers of completed interviews (excluding cell, I guess -- I'm not an expert) and run them through reverse directory lookups so you get the physical address. Then run the addresses through software telling you the geo data. This will work with only a fraction of cases but it may be a substantial fraction and, depending on the particulars, it is possible a case could be made that they're an unbiased fraction. Care would be needed to insure that none of this violates representations made to obtain cooperation in the interview or otherwise conflicts with applicable restrictions. This could be done without even raising the topic with respondents.

James P. Murphy, Ph.D.
J.P. MURPHY & COMPANY
Post Office Box 150
Princeton, NJ 08542
610 408 8800
www.jpmurphy.com
jpmurphy@jpmurphy.com
asking for street address after asking questions about illegal drug use. We have had varying success asking for nearest cross-street in other studies (too many people reporting major intersections) and zip code would be disappointingly vague for the types of analysis we hope to do.

My thanks in advance for any help,

Jim

=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=

Jim Wolf  
jamwolf@iupui.edu

Director, Survey Research Center at IUPUI
Clinical Associate Professor of Sociology
Indiana University School of Liberal Arts
719 Indiana Ave - Suite 260
Indianapolis, IN  46202
Voice: (317) 278-9230   Fax: (317) 278-2383
http://src.iupui.edu

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Date:         Mon, 3 Dec 2007 19:05:33 -0500
Reply-To:     "Langley, Ronald" <langley@EMAIL.UKY.EDU>
Sender:       AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:         "Langley, Ronald" <langley@EMAIL.UKY.EDU>
Subject:      Re: Satisfaction Scales in Call Center Research
Comments: To: Jennifer Joseph Wulf <jenniferljoseph@HOTMAIL.COM>, "AAPORNET@ASU.EDU" <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
In-Reply-To:  <BAY135-W28736F2A571A02EE324AF3BF6C0@phx.gbl>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit

Hello,
The "excellent to poor" scale is highly unbalanced in favor of getting a favorable response because people with an opinion that is not extreme will gravitate toward the middle (good). It is meaningless if you are truly interested in an unbiased measure of customer satisfaction.

Ronald E. Langley, Ph.D.
Director, Survey Research Center
University of Kentucky
302 Breckinridge Hall
Lexington, KY 40506-0056
Phone: (859) 257-4684
FAX: (859) 323-1972
http://survey.research.uky.edu

-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@ASU.EDU] On Behalf Of Jennifer Joseph Wulf
Sent: Monday, December 03, 2007 2:49 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: Satisfaction Scales in Call Center Research

Hi,

I'm wondering if anyone has research around scales used in call center satisfaction. I work at PayPal and we're trying to determine whether to keep the scale below

Very satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

or align with our corporate market research group and use

Excellent
Very Good
Good
Fair
Poor
Don't know

I know later will drop our scores, which we'll have to justify internally.
Just looking for some guidance from the seasons pros. thanks for any feedback.

Jen Wulf

CSAT Manager
PayPal, Inc an eBay Company
Of course, folks can go on all day about how to choose the right scale. Hey, if everyone agreed on a universally correct scale, there would be no need to have a conference in May. What would we present papers about? We would all start with "In our paper, we are testing the effect of use a 10-point scale vs. a 7-point scale in a survey of... aw, heck, we all know the 7-point scale is right, I'll just skip to the conclusions". ;-) 

Anyway, a few issues here:

--Satisfaction scale (satisfied to dissatisfied) vs. Performance scale (excellent to poor)
--Balanced (symmetric around a midpoint) vs. unbalanced (skewed in one direction)
--Even vs. odd (both are odd)

I would agree with Dr. Langley's statement below that you will get more favorable responses in the second scale (unbalanced performance) if you are looking at Top 2 box, etc.

However, I would STRONGLY disagree that results are "meaningless" simply due to the use of an unbalanced scale. As with nearly everything, it seems situational. If I was doing a customer satisfaction survey in which I knew that the results will be 90+% positive based on prior surveys (like some transactional surveys), I might suggest an unbalanced scale to differentiate among the positive responses or I might suggest a balanced scale with more points.
As a total aside, I love walking in the room to help design a new survey and then, when discussing scaling, someone fires out the "research says... [insert 'you're not supposed to use a midpoint', 'all the top companies are using an X-point scale', etc.]. I feel like dumping the entire AAPOR conference materials at their feet and asking them to find research that doesn't contradict each other on those topics.

Larry

-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@asu.edu] On Behalf Of Langley, Ronald
Sent: Monday, December 03, 2007 7:06 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: Re: Satisfaction Scales in Call Center Research

Hello,

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Ronald E. Langley, Ph.D.
Director, Survey Research Center
University of Kentucky
302 Breckinridge Hall
Lexington, KY 40506-0056
Phone: (859) 257-4684
FAX: (859) 323-1972
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-----Original Message-----
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Sent: Monday, December 03, 2007 2:49 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: Satisfaction Scales in Call Center Research

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Jen Wulf
CSAT Manager
PayPal, Inc an eBay Company

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http://www.microsoft.com/windows/shop/specialoffers.mspx?ocid=TXT_TAGLM_CPC_MediaCtr_bigscreen_102007

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I've always used numbers instead of words wherever possible. Following George Miller's "Magical Number 7 plus or minus 2", I would suggest that
you ask for a rating from 1-5, with one end denoting "Very Satisfied"
and the other "Very dissatisfied", and no definition for the numbers 2,
3, and 4. If the respondent asks for clarification, you can say that
it's a scale with an equal distance between each number.

Nat Ehrlich, Ph.D.
Research Specialist
Michigan State University
Institute for Public Policy and Social Research
Office for Social Research
321 Berkey Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
517-353-2639
-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@asu.edu] On Behalf Of Jennifer Joseph
Wulf
Sent: Monday, December 03, 2007 2:49 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
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Don't know
I know later will drop our scores, which we'll have to justify
internally. Just looking for some guidance from the seasons pros. thanks
for any feedback.

Jen Wulf

CSAT Manager
PayPal, Inc an eBay Company

Put your friends on the big screen with Windows Vista(r) + Windows
Live(tm).
Huckabee denounces supporters' push-polling in Iowa

By Dana Bash
or
http://tinyurl.com/yqqj3a

CNN Washington Bureau

DES MOINES, Iowa (CNN) -- Mike Huckabee boasts about running an above-the-mud campaign that does not smear his GOP rivals, but a group founded by some of his supporters appears to be doing just that.

The group, Common Sense Issues, launched a series of automated calls to Iowa Republican voters Sunday. The calls offer negative information about Huckabee's rivals and positive information about the former Arkansas governor.

The group's executive director, Patrick Davis, dubbed the calls "personalized educational artificial intelligence," and admitted they are designed to promote Huckabee.

"We believe that Mike Huckabee has the character and the record to put this country on the right path," Davis told CNN, "a path that is healthier physically, fiscally and culturally."

The calls directed Iowa voters to the group's Web site, "trusthuckabee.com," which allows visitors to sign up to be a Huckabee precinct captain, an important organizing position for the Iowa caucus.

Huckabee denounced tactics, known as "push-polling," and urged the group to stop the calls.
On Dec 3, 2007, at 5:26 PM, James P. Murphy wrote:
> Why not take the telephone numbers of completed interviews
> (excluding cell,
> I guess -- I'm not an expert) and run them through reverse
> directory lookups
> so you get the physical address. Then run the addresses through
> software
> telling you the geo data. This will work with only a fraction of
> cases but
> it may be a substantial fraction and, depending on the particulars,
> it is
> possible a case could be made that they're an unbiased fraction.

I would love to hear an argument for under what conditions they would be unbiased. (I hope that did not come out challenging and snotty; I genuinely would be interested in a reasonable justification.)

I've done those steps above, but always assumed it was introducing tons of bias. The "hit rate" of available addresses varies wildly from county to county in my state.

Colleen Porter
Gainesville, FL
JOB DESCRIPTION

Department:
Research

Position:
Research Associate

Reports To:
Research Manager

Supervises:
N/A

Position Status:
Exempt

Employment Status:
Full-Time, Regular

Travel:
Occasional

Salary Range:
$30,000 - 40,000 annually

Position Goal: Through the work of the Research Associate, NACCRRA will develop policies and products to promote the goals of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies in delivering high quality child care and early education to the nation's families. To accomplish this, the Research Associate will be a part of the research team that analyzes child care and early education data to assess child care related issues for policy purposes and evaluate child care referral, subsidy and training programs.

General Function: NACCRRA is the national non-profit network of more than 800 CCR&R agencies. Located in every state across the U.S., CCR&R agencies provide families, child care providers, and public and corporate leaders with information, training, resources, and critical data about child care in their communities. The Research Associate will assist in collecting and analyzing data, developing and conducting surveys, creating data entry and management systems to capture research and evaluation data, managing the data collected from various child care referral, subsidy and training programs, analyzing the data and translating the information into publications for use by NACCRRA's members and other stakeholders.

Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree in a social science or other relevant field required; at least one year of experience in a professional capacity; experience or training in use of major data processing software package, preferably SPSS; knowledge and understanding of statistical and mathematical concepts; extensive computing skills in the Windows environment, particularly with a variety of database applications, such as Microsoft Access; demonstrated interest and/or background in early care and education or child/family policy issues; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; attention to detail; strong organizational skills; excellent interpersonal skills; and the ability to work both as part of a team and individually while meeting deadlines in a multi-tasking environment.

Desired Qualifications: Experience processing complex survey data; knowledge of survey research principles and practices; experience working on on-going data collection projects and maintaining long-term databases; experience with data analysis and report writing; and experience providing technical assistance to a membership organization.

General Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Assist with data collection activities.
2. Conduct data analysis in SPSS and various database applications and perform and/or assist with routine data management and analysis and interpretation as specifically assigned.
3. Create and maintain various databases and create products as output from those databases.
4. Assist in the design, review and testing of the survey instruments.
5. Assist in creating data collection forms for various program evaluation projects and create data entry and maintenance systems for these forms.
6. Assist with research on national, state and local child care trends and use the data to compile policy briefs and other documents to support NACCRRA's overall mission.
7. Serve as a liaison to NACCRRA's membership community by responding to requests for research information.
8. Assist in the creation of reports which present and analyze NACCRRA data, and other data collected by NACCRRA.
9. Participate in planning surveys and evaluating/interpreting results utilizing detailed knowledge of research procedures and practices.
10. Assist with proposals for research funding.
11. Participate in preparing NACCRRA activities and materials that promote the organization, its mission, the public policy agenda, and the research agenda.
12. Prepare Power Point presentations on research findings.
13. Perform miscellaneous job duties as assigned.

Please submit resume with cover letter and writing samples to apply for this position.

To: Mousumi Sarkar @ mousumi.sarkar@naccra.org

NACCRRA is an Equal Opportunity Employer / Drug-Free Workplace

Thank you,

Jeanie Harper
Administrative Assistant, AAPOR

P.O. Box 14263, Lenexa, KS 66285
18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061

Phone: (913) 895-4601
Fax: (913) 895-4652
I've been asked to stir a hornet's nest of sorts. For those working with media, have you negotiated what method elements to disclose in print and what can be disclosed online? At the heart of the issue is precious space and sometimes giving exact question wording consumes many column inches. I'd just like a round-up of thoughts. Thanks! JAS

J. Ann Selzer, Ph.D.
Selzer & Company
520 42nd Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50312
515.271.5700

This e-mail address if for purposes of this list. Otherwise, contact me at JASelzer@SelzerCo.com


*************************************************************************
Check out AOL's list of 2007's hottest products.
(http://money.aol.com/special/hot-products-2007?NCID=aoltop0030000000001)

*************************************************************************

Date: Wed, 5 Dec 2007 07:58:03 -0800
Reply-To: Rob Daves <rob_daves@YAHOO.COM>
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: Rob Daves <rob_daves@YAHOO.COM>
Ann,

When I ran The Minnesota Poll, we took care of that issue the following way:

1. Publish a short (5-8 inch) small-type methods box that had nearly everything in the AAPOR Standards of Disclosure except for question working.
2. Use the charts accompanying the story in print to publish the wording of key questions.
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4. Provide filled-in questionnaires and outcome rates to anyone who requested them.
5. Archive the data (datasets, marginals, questionnaires, etc.) with a public source, most recently the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota.

Hope this helps. All best wishes...

Rob

---------------------
Robert P. Daves
Daves & Associates Research
Past President, American Association for Public Opinion Research
5412 Hampshire Drive
Minneapolis MN 55419
612-822-0085
rob_daves@yahoo.com

----- Original Message ----
From: J. Ann Selzer <JAnnSelzer@AOL.COM>
To: AAPORN@ASU.EDU
Sent: Wednesday, December 5, 2007 9:14:38 AM
Subject: Disclosure

I've been asked to stir a hornet's nest of sorts. For those working with media, have you negotiated what method elements to disclose in print and what can be disclosed online? At the heart of the issue is precious space and sometimes giving exact question wording consumes many column inches. I'd just like a round-up of thoughts. Thanks! JAS
J. Ann Selzer, Ph.D.
Selzer & Company
520 42nd Street
Des Moines, Iowa  50312
515.271.5700

This e-mail address if for purposes of this list.  Otherwise, contact me at
JASelzer@SelzerCo.com


******************************************************************************
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---------------------------------------------------------------------
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Problems?-don't reply to this message, write to: aapornet-request@asu.edu

Date:         Wed, 5 Dec 2007 11:53:23 -0500
Reply-To:     Phil Meyer <pmeyer@EMAIL.UNC.EDU>
Sender:       AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:         Phil Meyer <pmeyer@EMAIL.UNC.EDU>
Subject:      Re: Disclosure
Comments: To: Rob Daves <rob_daves@yahoo.com>
Rob's solution is a good one and goes well beyond what the AAPOR code requires. Every few years some smart-aleck graduate student publishes an article accusing some news medium or other of violating the standards by not including every methodological detail with every story about a poll. As I have said in most editions of "Precision Journalism," that would make the footnotes longer than the story in most cases. The intent of the standards -- and I was present at their creation -- was to require disclosure upon the request of any interested person who asks. It was never intended that every detail be included with every story.

When Karen Jurgensen was editor of USA Today, we had some fun with the Newspaper Research Journal after it published a piece criticizing the paper for not meeting AAPOR standards in its poll stories. We content-analyzed the Journal and found that its performance was no better! See "Beating Disclosure to Death," Newspaper Research Journal, Summer 1991.

Phil Meyer
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J. Ann Selzer, Ph.D.
Selzer & Company
520 42nd Street
Des Moines, Iowa  50312
515.271.5700

This e-mail address if for purposes of this list. Otherwise, contact
me at
JASelzer@SelzerCo.com


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hottest
products.
(http://money.aol.com/special/hot-products-2007?NCID=aoltop00030000000001)

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aapornet-request@asu.edu

Phil and Rob's suggestions are fully concordant with AAPOR's recently published "Frequently asked questions about disclosure," which might be of some general help to JoAnn. That's on the AAPOR website at http://www.aapor.org/disclosuresfaqs?search=disclosure

Tom

--On Wednesday, December 05, 2007 11:53 AM -0500 Phil Meyer <pmeyer@EMAIL.UNC.EDU> wrote:

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As an example, consider the widely reported S&P/Case-Shiller Price Index year-over-year home price changes.

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Standard & Poor's Fact Sheet also shows that over the past 10 years, home prices soared far above the S&P 500 Index. 
http://www2.standardandpoors.com/portal/site/sp/en/us/page.topic/indices_csmahp/0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,1,1,0,0,0,0,0.html
Metro-by-metro spreadsheet also available here.

In the AP story below, some markets are singled out as having the steepest declines year-over-year. I have added in [brackets], not the indexes but current indexes minus 100 or the 7-year percentage increases since January 2000. The increases are surprising.

Nick Panagakis

S&P: Home prices plummet at steepest rate in 21 years
Associated Press

8:09 AM CST, November 27, 2007

NEW YORK

U.S. home prices fell 4.5 percent in the third quarter from a year earlier, the sharpest drop since Standard & Poor's began its nationwide housing index in 1987 and another sign that the housing slump is far from over, the research group said Tuesday.

The index also showed that prices fell 1.7 percent from the previous three-month period, the largest quarter-to-quarter decline in the index's history.

The S&P/Case-Schiller quarterly index tracks prices of existing single-family homes across the nation compared with a year earlier.

A separate index that covers 20 U.S. metropolitan areas dropped 4.9 percent in September from a year earlier, with 15 metro areas posting declines. Only five metro areas -- Atlanta, Charlotte, N.C., Dallas, Portland, Ore., and Seattle -- showed an increase in prices, but S&P noted that the pace of the rise is decelerating.

[% increases since 2000]
Tampa and Miami led the index with the lowest year-over-year declines at 11.1 percent and 10 percent [+110% and [+150%], respectively. It also showed drops in San Diego of 9.6 percent [+123%]; Detroit, 9.6 percent [+11%]; Las Vegas, 9 percent [+113%]; Phoenix, 8.8 percent [+105%]; and...
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The S&P's 10-area index decreased 5.5 percent in September from the previous year.

Last week, the National Association of Realtors said that sales of existing homes fell in 46 states in the third quarter. However, the trade group said home prices rose in 93 of the 150 metropolitan areas surveyed.

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Dear Nick:

I actually disagree with your comments. Since recent home buyers often have put next to nothing down, a 2.5% drop for them is cataclysmic. In fact, they would be better off walking away from their house. Let's say one bought a house for 500,000 and put 5 percent down. If prices dropped 5% in one year, one would actually lose 100% of your equity.

On our particular block, many people bought just before the drop starting after 1987 stock market crash. The drop was well over 20% and was not recouped for about 10 years. In that situation if one put 20% or less down they would be better walking away.

With the sub-prime loans a smaller drop will do the trick, and many of those loans include balloon payments (total payouts), which means that one is expecting either a big run-up in housing prices, income or both. If the prices trend down, one has foreclosures.

I wrote on the coming housing bust in NY in September, here is the link.
Here is Shiller:

Robert Shiller is worried about your home's value, and that's not good. A finance and economics professor at Yale, Shiller proved he could see a crash coming with his book "Irrational Exuberance," which forecast the end of the 1990s stock bubble and hit bookstores in March 2000 - almost to the day the Nasdaq started to collapse.

Today, Shiller believes homes are roughly as overvalued as stocks were then and, once again, he's worth listening to. A research company he co-founded, Case Shiller Weiss, created the definitive index of housing prices. A newer venture, MacroMarkets, designs ways to hedge against risks like falling home values.

I should note that the 2nd edition of Irrational Exuberance forecasts a crash in real estate.

Andh

-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@asu.edu] On Behalf Of Nick Panagakis
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2007 1:04 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: Numbers In The News

This has nothing to do with polls or methodology, but more about how the media handle numerical data.

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----------------------------------------------------
Archives: http://lists.asu.edu/archives/aapornet.html
Vacation hold? Send email to listserv@asu.edu with this text:
I did not mean to imply that year-over-year data shouldn't be reported.

I am saying that year-over-year data shouldn't be the only thing reported.

It's a question of balanced coverage, some perspective for most readers or viewers.

Nick

Andrew A Beveridge wrote:

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This is part of our standard Terms & Conditions of Contract with all clients.

Bob Worcester

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From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@asu.edu] On Behalf Of J. Ann Selzer
Sent: 05 December 2007 15:15
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
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515.271.5700

This e-mail address is for purposes of this list.  Otherwise, contact me at JASelzer@SelzerCo.com


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============================================================================
I am posting this for a colleague of mine. His question: "Is there an industry standard for cleaning data across time in a longitudinal study? Specifically, looking at inconsistencies in self-reported substance use from one survey to the next? For example, what are we supposed to do when someone who used alcohol at T1 reports never having used at T3?"

I would appreciate any experience/approaches to handle this.

Thanks!
--Matt

Matthew W. Courser, Ph.D.
Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation--Columbus Office
phone: (614) 466-0124
(502) 634-3694, x7381
fax: (614) 995-4223
e-mail: mcourser@pire.org

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Problems?-don't reply to this message, write to: aapornet-request@asu.edu
Re your comment: On the one hand I think your point is well taken in that trends are important but need to be contextualized to be meaningful. But on the other hand take a look at this link to a NY Times article by Paul Krugman. The near panic upon the financial markets isn't based upon the numbers (i.e. housing sale prices nor even foreclosures) you refer to but upon the as yet unchartable impact on major financial institutions of the sub-prime situation. If a panic develops it will be for the reasons that Krugman specifies I think, and the apparent 7 year stability of housing value accretion is no more useful to people in this context than the year to year decline in housing prices presently being highlighted. The problem is bigger than skewed info in that there is not yet good information on what is happening throughout the economy. Maybe Doug Henwood could put in 2 cents on this as it's his field of expertise.

Marc

Subject: NYT Paul Krugman on the financial crisis ahead

Paul Krugman | Innovating Our Way to Financial Crisis
http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/120407H.shtml
Paul Krugman, writing for The New York Times, says: "The financial crisis that began late last summer, then took a brief vacation in September and October, is back with a vengeance. How bad is it? Well, I've never seen financial insiders this spooked - not even during the Asian crisis of 1997-98, when economic dominoes seemed to be falling all around the world."

Marc Sapir MD, MPH
510-848-3826
marcsapir@comcast.net

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============================================================================
Matthew,

I would appreciate it if you would post a summary of your responses. This is a matter of interest to me as we are now working on a longitudinal study.

Pam Wells
Vice-President, Survey Operations
Decision Information Resources, Inc.
2600 SW Freeway, Suite 900
Houston, Texas 77098
713.650.1425 x 137 (o)
713.650.1576 (f)
www.dir-online.com
-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@asu.edu] On Behalf Of Matthew Courser
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2007 5:54 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: Data cleaning standards in a longitudinal survey

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--Matt

Matthew W. Courser, Ph.D.
Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation--Columbus Office
phone: (614) 466-0124
(502) 634-3694, x7381
fax: (614) 995-4223
email: mcourser@pire.org

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Problems?-don't reply to this message, write to: aapornet-request@asu.edu
Hi Folks,

I have a client who's looking for a conjoint specialist to design a questionnaire for them. I believe the client needs either an ACA or MaxDiff questionnaire.

If you'd like to be considered, please reply to me off the listserv, and I'll forward your information on to the client.

Thanks,

Ken

--
Kenneth Pick
Kenneth.Pick@yahoo.com

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Jan Werner Data Processing
NY Times article on cellphones in sampling

Date: Fri, 7 Dec 2007 09:13:43 -0500
Reply-To: jwerner@jwdp.com
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: Jan Werner <jwerner@JWDP.COM>
Organization: Jan Werner Data Processing
Subject: NY Times article on cellphones in sampling
Comments: To: AAPORNET <aapornet@asu.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Today's NY Times contains a fine article by Megan Thee on some of the issues cellphones present in polling:

Cellphones Challenge Poll Sampling
By MEGAN THEE
Published: December 7, 2007

With more American households giving up their old-fashioned land lines and using cellphones for all calls, public opinion researchers are facing a challenge of how to make sure they are getting representative samples when conducting polls.

-----

Although the article doesn't delve very deep, it does describe in terms that laymen can understand many of the problems that have been discussed on AAPORNET recently, with appropriate quotes from the usual suspects.

You can read it at:

or:

http://tinyurl.com/3amtto

Jan Werner

----------------------------------------------------
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Today, the National Center for Health Statistics updated our most recent estimates of the size of the population without landline telephones.
These estimates are based on National Health Interview Survey data collected from January - June 2007.

Please note that the telephone service questions were changed in the 2007 NHIS questionnaire, which had the intended effect (greatly reduced item nonresponse). These changes, which are described in the report, should be considered when evaluating recent trends in household telephone status.

--Stephen--

Stephen J. Blumberg, Ph.D.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics
Hyattsville, Maryland
sblumberg@cdc.gov

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The next conference of the RC33 of the International Sociological Association (ISA) will be hosted in Naples in September 2008 (http://www.rc332008.unina.it/).

Please find attached a call for papers for the session "Methods of Evaluating the Quality of Data Collection in Surveys".

Deadline for the submission of papers: 17th of February 2008.

Kind regards
Emanuela Sala
The next conference of the RC33 of the International Sociological Association (ISA) will be hosted in Naples in September 2008 (http://www.rc332008.unina.it/).

Please find below a call for paper for the session "Methods of Evaluating the Quality of Data Collection in Surveys".

Deadline for the submission of papers: 17th of February 2008.

Session organisers:
Emanuela Sala, Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex
S.C. Noah Uhrig, Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex
Yfke Ongena, University of Twente

Contents:

The quality of survey data is of concern to social scientists and policy makers alike. It is determined by many aspects of the survey process including sampling, patterns of response and non-response as well as survey design and data collection procedures. The evaluation of survey features such as question design and administration techniques is an openly debated issue because the quality of resulting survey data can be multidimensional, difficult to define and difficult to measure. Our session focuses on methods adopted to evaluate survey data collection techniques, cognitive interviewing or behaviour coding for instance, and how such methods can be applied to recent developments in survey data collection such as event history calendar interviewing, dependent interviewing, or data collection modes. The main aims of this session are, therefore, to discuss, compare and contrast the methods used to evaluate aspect of survey design and to explore future changes in the development of such methods in an environment of innovations in data collection procedures and designs.
Papers that address the following issues are welcome:
- Theoretical issues concerning the methods of evaluating data collection procedures and survey design.
- Applications of the different methods used to evaluate data collection procedures and survey design such as cognitive interviewing, conversation analysis, behavioural coding, expert review, interviewer debriefing, etc.
- Particularly to recent developments in both data collection practices and questionnaire construction.
- Comparisons and contrasts between various evaluative methods.
- Limits of the methods currently available.
- Future development in the methods used to evaluate survey data collection procedures and survey design generally.
- Papers that address other aspects of the methods to evaluate data collection procedures in surveys will be taken into consideration.

Organisation of the call for papers:
An abstract (max 250 words) should be sent to Emanuela Sala (esala@essex.ac.uk) by the 17th of February 2008. The abstract should clearly specify:
- a) the motivations for the study,
- b) the aims of the paper,
- c) the nature of the data used,
- d) the methods used and
- e) any findings or results, if available. Please indicate also your name, your e-mail address, your institutional affiliation and up to three keywords.

Notification of the accepted papers will be given by e-mail by the end of March 2008. A draft of the paper must be sent to Emanuela Sala (esala@essex.ac.uk) by 15th of July 2008.

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an abstract (max. 350 words) is required [plus completed simple form, =
below, and resume], I hope the deadline is workable. If you intend to =
submit and will need a couple of extra days, please let me know. =

Corinne Kirchner (ck12@columbia.edu)

Call for Papers:
Panel at the "Language & Society" Research Committee of the =
International Sociological Association =
Meeting September 5-8, 2008, Barcelona, Spain

Panel 6. New Language Forms in Computer-Mediated-Communications: "Net =
Lingo" and Related Developments
Panel Organizer:
Corinne Kirchner, Ph.D., Columbia University, Sociomedical Sciences =
and Sociology. Tel: 1-212-873-5776 E-mail: ck12@columbia.edu

This panel seeks papers on the nature, status, users and uses of new =
language forms in CMC (computer-mediated communications, including cell =
phones, etc.) Variously labeled "IM-Speak" "TXT or SMS talk", or "Net =
Lingo" (the term used here, intending to be inclusive), this language =
form is a shorthand that emerged with electronic communication =
technologies, and functions across the traditional divide of written =
and spoken discourse.

Net Lingo is sufficiently close to its origins, but far enough along, to =
offer a rare opportunity for sociological study of language change. =
There is still a need for basic descriptive work (e.g., to test and =
expand an incipient taxonomy of Net Lingo? s nature and uses). On the =
other hand, already a rich array of issues relates to the spread of Net =
Lingo across demographic subgroups (from teen-agers to "prime working =
ages"), across national boundaries, and across institutional (e.g., =
economic markets; educational; political). Furthermore, evidence of =
standardization (e.g., dictionaries) and etiquette norms deserve to be =
compared and contrasted with those processes in dominant language =
development.

The following listing intends not to limit but to suggest the wide =
range of specific topics on which papers are sought for the panel in =
Barcelona:
--Efforts to improve definitions and classification of CMC language =
types and uses.
--Theories and methods of analysis of Net Lingo and its uses.
--Uses of Net Lingo in demographic subgroups (e.g., age-related groups; =
groups defined by occupational status and roles, educators, journalists, =
mid- and upper-level managers)
--Modes and structures of dissemination and social control over Net =
Lingo: e.g., types and developers of dictionaries, rule books, didactic =
accounts for potential users and for "clueless" role-partners of users ( =
e.g., parents, teachers of teenagers)
--Given growing adoption of Net Lingo in business transactions, how does =
it facilitate or complicate globalization of markets? For example, explore TXT-ing for social and business purposes among users of =
English as a second language.
--Effects of Net Lingo on the "digital divide" e.g., As the code enters spoken discourse, does it tend to equalize or marginalize non-users?
--Entry of graphics and numbers into the orthography of Net Lingo. Is there evidence of grammaticalization in Net Lingo?
--Effects of CMC on patterns of discourse at the micro-level, e.g. in turn-taking, civility, error-repair, etc.

Please submit an abstract (350 words maximum) and the completed form below by December 20*, 2007 to: Corinne Kirchner, ck12@columbia.edu

Contact C. Kirchner if you have questions. For descriptions of 5 other panels in the Language & Society sessions, go to:
www.staff.hum.ku.dk/smo/2007-Panels-fr.htm

For more info on the Barcelona conference:
http://www.isasociology.org/barcelona_2008/

Surname:
First name:
Second Name:
Titles:
Position:
Affiliation:
Address:
Tel. & Fax Number:
E-mail:
Title of paper:
Abstract (350 word maximum)
Five key-words
Resume with Main Scientific Publications (2-3) if any

----------------------------------------------------
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Date: Tue, 11 Dec 2007 13:05:21 -0500
Reply-To: Stefanie A Bzdusek <BzdusekS@GAO.GOV>
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: Stefanie A Bzdusek <BzdusekS@GAO.GOV>
Subject: Tracking wait times with automated telephone systems?
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-Disposition: inline
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit

I am trying to determine how wait times for toll-free callers to automated telephone systems are most frequently measured. By elapsed time from auto pick-up to reach a live operator? By segments: intro, individual segments
selected following intro, etc.? Others?

As a follow-up, what are the most commonly requested/used variables used in reports based on these calling wait time measurements?

And finally, how reliable are these measurements? What steps are typically taken to assess the reliability of the measures?

If there are any recent papers on wait time measurement benchmarks that would provide this type of information, I would be grateful for the reference.

Thanks in advance for any advice or assistance,

Stefanie A. Bzdusek
Government Accountability Office
202-512-6869
bzduseks@gao.gov

---

PRINCIPAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

The American Institute of Physics is seeking a Principal Research Associate who will be responsible for project management of surveys related to the education and careers of scientists. Successful candidate must be able to manage a research team, direct multiple projects simultaneously, and work with clients. Responsibilities include research design, sampling, questionnaire development, oversight of data collection, and development of analytical strategies. The senior researcher will author reports, proposals, and disseminate results to the scientific community. Experience with web and paper surveys is highly desirable. Knowledge of advanced statistics and evaluation studies a plus.
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Administrative Assistant, AAPOR
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18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061
Phone: (913) 895-4601
Fax: (913) 895-4652

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December 12, 2007

The Executive Council of the Washington-Baltimore Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (DC-AAPOR) is thrilled to announce that Helen M. Crossley has been selected as the recipient of the inaugural DC-AAPOR Annual Outstanding Achievement Award. Ms. Crossley was chosen in recognition of her many contributions to the survey research profession, and for her outstanding service - locally, nationally, and internationally - to the broader research community. Her legacy in the profession truly reflects the ideals and values that the DC-AAPOR chapter holds in the highest regard.

In addition to being a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) in its founding years, Ms. Crossley was Secretary-Treasurer of the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) from 1956-57, the first female President of WAPOR (from 1961-62), the second President of DC-AAPOR (from 1977-78), and Secretary-Treasurer of AAPOR from 1973-74 and 1974-75. Quite importantly, Ms. Crossley's early involvement in DC-AAPOR helped lay the foundation for a local chapter of AAPOR that has grown and thrived for 30 years. She has also remained active in all three organizations, serving until recently as WAPOR's official historian.

Ms. Crossley began her career in 1942 at the Office of War Information, before spending several years employed in the War Food Administration, in the radio ratings industry, and in the Attitude Research Branch of the Armed Forces Information and Education Division of the Department of Defense. She conducted survey research for the Department of Defense in Germany from 1950-53. In 1955, Ms. Crossley joined the United States Information Agency (USIA) and increased her focus on issues related to survey research. Her efforts at USIA (in collaboration with David Nolle and Elaine Farmer) resulted in 3,000 reports of international public opinion surveys to be declassified and preserved at the National Archives. She was with USIA until 1960, when she went to Korea as part of what is now the AID program. In 1963, Ms. Crossley returned to the private sector to do research consulting, including political polling projects with her father, Archibald M. Crossley.
Ms. Crossley earned her bachelor's degree from Radcliffe and her master's degree from the University of Denver. It was at the University of Denver where she conducted research in the Opinion Research Center and worked on the pioneering Denver Community Survey (directed by Don Cahalan). In 1950, she coauthored with Hugh J. Parry the seminal POQ article "Validity of Responses to Survey Questions."


In recognition of this honor, Ms. Crossley will receive a commemorative plaque and an honorary lifetime membership in DC-AAPOR. Please join us in extending our sincere congratulations to Helen.

Best Regards,

Paul Guerino,
Chair, DC-AAPOR Outstanding Achievement Award Committee

Adam Safir
President, DC-AAPOR

Most Hispanics: Immigration Debate Hurt

WASHINGTON (AP) - Most Hispanics say the immigration debate and Congress' failure to overhaul immigration laws has hurt them, and many fear deportation for themselves, a relative or close friend, a poll showed Thursday.

The survey, conducted by the nonpartisan Pew Hispanic Center, found that Hispanics in the United States are generally satisfied with their own lives and optimistic about the future. Yet many are wary of negative reactions prompted by heightened attention to illegal immigration in Congress and the presidential campaign trail, and they increasingly cite discrimination as a problem.
Wondering if anyone has any experience conducting research among Native American populations living on reservations. Just looking for any suggestions or insight that might help us in the research planning or process. Please contact me directly at _rfarbman@edisonresearch.com_ (mailto:rfarbman@edisonresearch.com). Thanks Rob

Rob Farbman
Edison Media Research
Bah, Humbug: Holiday Polling Woes
By ALAN FRAM - 2 hours ago
AP

WASHINGTON (AP) - Santa Claus may be coming to town, but lots of people will be leaving or otherwise hard to reach in Iowa and New Hampshire. That makes for plenty of nervous pollsters preparing to take late soundings on the presidential race during the frenzied holiday period.

SNIP

http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iLMX3h1WYDSAFl5s0G5_89GWwzyD8THDD6O0

or

http://tinyurl.com/25bjnh

--
Leo G. Simonetta
Director of Research
Art & Science Group, LLC
6115 Falls Road, Suite 101
Baltimore MD  21209

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The report from the DC-AAPOR Workshop on Nonresponse Bias in Household Survey is now available. The workshop was held earlier this year and featured presentations and discussion of the research published in the special nonresponse edition of Public Opinion Quarterly (December 2006). The report contains a full transcript as well as summaries of each presentation.


Happy Holidays,
Courtney Kennedy

Program in Survey Methodology
University of Michigan
ckkenned@umich.edu
586.202.3635

Apparent Huckabee Backers Smear McCain
N.H. Phone Campaign Starts as Poll, Then Turns to Anti-McCain Ad
By JAKE TAPPER
ABC News

http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/Vote2008/story?id=4005347&page=1

Bernie Campbell, a 26-year-old public school teacher in Laconia, N.H., was eating dinner at home Friday night with his wife, a graduate student at Dartmouth, when he got a phone call.

"Would you like to participate in a 60-second poll on the New Hampshire
primary?" the automated voice asked.

Campbell, a West Lebanon, N.H., co-chair for the presidential campaign of Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., figured what the heck, it was just 60 seconds.

After he told the automated caller that he intended to vote in the Jan. 8, 2008, New Hampshire GOP primary, that he considers himself pro-life, and that he intends to vote for McCain, the poll took on a decidedly negative tone, Campbell told ABC News.

"It was a series of questions that you would associate with a push poll," Campbell said, referring to the negative campaigning technique of pretending to be a pollster gathering information from voters when really the intention is to spread negative information about a rival.

SNIP

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--
Leo G. Simonetta
Director of Research
Art & Science Group, LLC
6115 Falls Road, Suite 101
Baltimore MD  21209

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Dear Colleagues:

I have seen a journal article reference a code book publication produced by Michigan's ISR (Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan) that describes a protocol for coding a person's employment position in terms of its social status or prestige relative to alternative jobs on a scale from 1 to 100 or something like that.
Is anyone familiar with this publication? If so, do you know what it is called and, most importantly, how I might get my hands on a copy of it?

Regards,
Jonathan

Jonathan E. Brill, Ph.D.
General Manager, ORANJ BOWL(sm) Panel Research Program
Associate Director, Research Call Center & Panel Research
NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE FOR SUCCESSFUL AGING
School of Osteopathic Medicine
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey
42 East Laurel Road, UDP Suite 2300
Stratford, New Jersey 08084
Telephone (direct): 856.566-6727
Fax (research group): 856.566-6874
E-mail: brillje@umdnj.edu
www.oranjbowll.info

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Dear AAPOR members -

The last issue of Public Opinion Pros is now posted to our website at

www.PublicOpinionPros.com
We hope you have enjoyed reading our magazine these past three years. It has been a great pleasure to have worked with so many of you in producing it.

All best wishes -

Lisa

Lisa Ferraro Parmelee, Ph.D.
Manager, LFP Editorial Enterprises, LLC
Editor, Public Opinion Pros
www.PublicOpinionPros.com

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We will soon be surveying the parents of patients in Riley Hospital for Children. One of the things we would like is a robust measure of the severity of the illness of the child. This would be asked of parents who are reporting anonymously (i.e. current protocol does not include access to patient records).

The standard self-report of one's overall health (excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor) seems a bit too subjective when dealing with chronically ill children who may have recently rallied. On the other hand, more clinical assessments like the Duke Univ Severity of Illness scale would be inappropriate for these respondents.

Advice from those with experience would be most appreciated.

Thanks,

Jim

Jim Wolf                jwolf@iupui.edu<mailto:jwolf@iupui.edu>
Director, Survey Research Center at IUPUI
Clinical Associate Professor of Sociology

Indiana University School of Liberal Arts

719 Indiana Ave - Suite 260

Indianapolis, IN  46202

Voice: (317) 278-9230   Fax: (317) 278-2383

http://src.iupui.edu

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Date:         Tue, 18 Dec 2007 15:28:04 -0500
Reply-To:     "James P. Murphy" <jpmurphy@JPMURPHY.COM>
Sender:       AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:         "James P. Murphy" <jpmurphy@JPMURPHY.COM>
Subject:      Re: Severity of Illness Scale
Comments: To: "Wolf, James G" <jamwolf@IUPUI.EDU>, AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
In-Reply-To:  <62661625119C1E4F8F5329FD4A6EBDB21C84CB734B@iu-msg-mbx01.ads.iu.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit

The highest level of competence I have ever seen in questionnaire construction for surveys of hospital patients was from the Picker Institute -- www.picker.org. There might be material of theirs that you could adapt.

James P. Murphy, Ph.D.
J.P. MURPHY & COMPANY
Post Office Box 150
Princeton, NJ  08542
610 408 8800
www.jpmurphy.com
jpmurphy@jpmurphy.com

-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@ASU.EDU] On Behalf Of Wolf, James G
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2007 2:02 PM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: Severity of Illness Scale

We will soon be surveying the parents of patients in Riley Hospital for Children. One of the things we would like is a robust measure of the
severity of the illness of the child. This would be asked of parents who are reporting anonymously (ie. current protocol does not include access to patient records).

The standard self-report of one's overall health (excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor) seems a bit too subjective when dealing with chronically ill children who may have recently rallied. On the other hand, more clinical assessments like the Duke Univ Severity of Illness scale would be inappropriate for these respondents.

Advice from those with experience would be most appreciated.

Thanks,

Jim

=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-

Jim Wolf                jamwolf@iupui.edu<mailto:jamwolf@iupui.edu>
Director, Survey Research Center at IUPUI
Clinical Associate Professor of Sociology
Indiana University School of Liberal Arts
719 Indiana Ave - Suite 260
Indianapolis, IN  46202
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Date:         Wed, 19 Dec 2007 14:39:24 -0500
Reply-To:     Claire Durand <Claire.Durand@UMONTREAL.CA>
Sender:       AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:         Claire Durand <Claire.Durand@UMONTREAL.CA>
Subject:      call for Papers
Comments: To: AAPORNET@ASU.edu
John Goyder and myself are organizing sessions on Attitudes Towards Surveys at the 7th International Conference on Social Science Methodology to be held in Naples, Italy, September 1-5, 2008. Abstracts proposal should be sent to Claire.Durand@umontreal.ca with copy to John.Goyder@uwaterloo.ca.

Attitudes towards surveys as an area of research have flourished recently. The sessions aim to present the most recent developments in research regarding the role played by attitudes towards surveys. One focus is to better understand the determinants of attitudes towards surveys. What are the characteristics of those who believe – more or less -- in surveys? Are these characteristics related to attitudes towards public institutions, governments, etc.? Are they related to what the surveys tell, i.e. whether they give information with which one agrees? How do people perceive the role of surveys, in particular during electoral campaigns and in determining public policy? The second set of questions pertains to the consequences of attitudes towards surveys. Are they related to survey non response? Do they play a role in opinion change? These are some of the topics on which papers will be welcome.

You will find complementary information (general call for papers, guidelines, etc.) on the Conference website: http://www.rc332008.unina.it/nina.it/

Best,

Claire Durand
professeur titulaire,
directrice des études supérieures,
http://www.mapageweb.umontreal.ca/durandc
Département de sociologie,
Université de Montréal
C.P. 6128, succ. Centre-ville,
Montréal, H3C 3J7

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Looking through powerpoints, postings and papers aplenty for the codes when suddenly it dawned on me that perhaps some charitable soul might have a list or link already checked twice and willing to share. Give me some time for Christmas shopping, won't you?

Cheers,

John Lee

--
John Lee P. Holmes
Survey Operations Manager
Center for Survey Research
A Unit of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
Mess Mail: PO Box 400767
University of Virginia
http://www.virginia.edu/surveys
Work tel: 434-243-5225 (w/Voice Mail)
CATI Lab: 434-243-5226
Facsimile: 434-982-5524

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Date: Thu, 20 Dec 2007 03:26:12 +0000
Reply-To: steehc@BELLSOUTH.NET
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: "Charlotte G. Steeh" <steehc@BELLSOUTH.NET>
Subject: Re: Cell Phone-specific aapor codes - anyone got a handy list?
Comments: To: John Lee Holmes <jlh2r@VIRGINIA.EDU>, AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit

John,
An AAPOR committee is currently working to add a section on disposition codes for cell phone surveys to its Standard Definitions publication. Unfortunately this won't be available until the spring. In the meantime, one recent publication treats cell phone dispositions specifically. The citation is:
Best,
Charlotte

-------------- Original message from John Lee Holmes <jlh2r@VIRGINIA.EDU>:

> Looking through powerpoints, postings and papers aplenty for the codes
> when suddenly it dawned on me that perhaps some charitable soul might
> have a list or link already checked twice and willing to share. Give me
> some time for Christmas shopping, won't you?
>
> Cheers,
>
> John Lee
>
> --
> John Lee P. Holmes
> Survey Operations Manager
> Center for Survey Research
> A Unit of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
> Mess Mail: PO Box 400767
> University of Virginia
> http://www.virginia.edu/surveys
> Work tel: 434-243-5225 (w/Voice Mail)
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Does anyone have a reference or could provide a "simplistic" rule as to when one would apply weights to survey data? We have a 10% difference between the survey data and the population in terms of one characteristic of interest (type of respondent). Is this enough of a difference to justify assigning weights?

Thanks in advance.
Special Journal Issue Analyzes Challenges of Cell-Only Americans to Survey Research

(see http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/vol71/issue5/index.dt#ARTICLES)*

Washington DC - December 20th, 2007 -- The growing number of Americans who are 'cell-only' is raising questions about the ability of survey researchers to report accurately on voters' intentions and other key issues. Addressing some of the challenges around incorporating cell phone numbers into surveys is a special edition of Public Opinion Quarterly, the professional journal of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR).
"The percentage of adults living in cell-only households has been rising steadily since 2003," said Stephen J. Blumberg, Ph.D. A senior scientist at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, he oversees the federal research that tracks cell phone usage, and is the co-author of the article examining the impact of this phenomenon on low income and younger adults. "If the percentage of adults living in cell-only households continues to grow at the rate that it grew from 2003 through 2006, it would exceed 25% by the end of 2008."

An estimated 15 percent of Americans are now 'cell-only', according to the NCHS, with renters and younger adults disproportionately represented.

"The growing number of cell-only households is not yet creating serious biases for most survey estimates," said Scott Keeter, Ph.D., director of survey research for the Pew Research Center and a co-author of an article on the impact of the growing cell-only population. "But it does create problems for surveys focused on the attitudes and behavior of young people. All of us who do landline-based surveys have seen a big drop in the number of younger respondents over the past few years."

Despite the growing importance of including cell phones in surveys, idiosyncratic aspects of the telecommunication services and the regulatory environment in the U.S. make it difficult - and expensive - for survey researchers to do so.

The special issue of POQ explores various challenges and offers insights into likely solutions. For example, some articles suggest that future U.S. telephone surveys of the public using only landline numbers are likely to be inaccurate (i.e., contain non-ignorable bias).

Other articles demonstrate that it may not be enough to add a sample of cell-only people to a landline sample because people may not be equally likely to take incoming calls on each type of telephone.

"We will see considerable growth in the next five years in the methodological and statistical know-how used to survey those reached on their cell phones," said Paul J. Lavrakas, Ph.D., editor of the special issue, and co-author of an article summarizing the state of cell phone research in the U.S. "But there is a great deal that still must be learned before such surveys can reach the level of accuracy their sponsors need from them."

* if pasting into a browser, please close-up spacing between "http:" and "//"
Hello,

Earlier this month I presented a poster at PAPOR concerning a program I've been working on for simulating CATI survey time estimates. It's called "The Survey Simulator." I'm getting ready for the next round of development and would be grateful for any suggestions for improvements and additions.

The current version is a prototype and not designed to be especially user-friendly, but I think some may still find it a useful tool. I've had some success in reproducing actual interviewing time estimates from disposition reports across all call attempts. I'm working on more specific documentation on how to calculate these assumptions, but I think it will always take a little trial and error to determine what will work for any given organization.

The Survey Simulator is available at pri.sfsu.edu/svysim.html.

Here's a brief summary of the program:

The Survey Simulator is a prototype computer program designed to provide survey research practitioners with a useful simulation-based tool for cost estimation. The current version (0.32) was presented at the December 2007 meeting of the Pacific Association for Public Opinion Research (PAPOR) in San Francisco, CA. The program may be downloaded, distributed, and used at no cost within the terms of the user agreement distributed with the Userâ€™s Guide.

Current capabilities of the Survey Simulator include a simulated CATI survey with a wide variety of user-configurable settings, including response propensities at successive levels of contact, household enumeration, pretesting, and multilingual populations and interviewers. Control factors include number of completed interviews, response rate, number of completed shifts and efficiency (interviews per hour). The program works by defining a set of sample elements and a set of interviewers according to the configuration settings, then simulating a series of telephone interviewing shifts in which interviewers attempt calls and record dispositions and elapsed time. The output includes a listing of active settings, results for each shift, and final study results.
Any comments from colleagues who are involved with survey cost estimation would be very much appreciated; even if you don't have time to test the program it would be helpful to know what capabilities you would find most (or least) useful.

Happy holidays,

John Rogers

-------------------------------------------------------------
John D. Rogers, Ph.D.
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San Francisco, CA 94132
jdrogers@sfsu.edu
(415) 405-3800 (voice)
(415) 338-6099 (fax)

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Date:        Thu, 20 Dec 2007 16:05:08 -0500
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Sender:      AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:        John Lee Holmes <jlh2r@VIRGINIA.EDU>
Subject:     Cell Phone-specific aapor codes - anyone got a handy list - thanks
Comments:    To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=UTF-8; format=flowed
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Thank you to everyone who sent me some suggestions. The article by Callegaro et al., 2007. "Fitting Disposition Codes to Mobile Phone Surveys: Experiences from Studies in Finland, Slovenia, and the United States," Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series A, 170: 647 - 670 is very helpful. A special thanks to Dr. Callegaro for his assistance.

Best wishes for the holiday season,

John Lee
---

John Lee P. Holmes
Survey Operations Manager
Center for Survey Research
A Unit of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
Mess Mail: PO Box 400767
University of Virginia
http://www.virginia.edu/surveys
Work tel: 434-243-5225 (w/Voice Mail)
CATI Lab: 434-243-5226
Facsimile: 434-982-5524

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Reply-To: Claire Durand <Claire.Durand@UMONTREAL.CA>
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: Claire Durand <Claire.Durand@UMONTREAL.CA>
Subject: deadline: call for Papers
Comments: To: AAPORNET@ASU.edu
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For the following call for papers, the deadline is February 17, 2008. The website for the conference is http://www.rc332008.unina.it/
Apologies...

> John Goyder and myself are organizing sessions
> on Attitudes Towards Surveys at the 7th
> International Conference on Social Science
> Methodology to be held in Naples, Italy,
> September 1-5, 2008. Abstracts proposal should
> be sent to Claire.Durand@umontreal.ca with copy
> to JGoyder@watarts.uwaterloo.ca.
>
> Attitudes towards surveys as an area of research
> have flourished recently. The sessions aim to
> present the most recent developments in research
> regarding the role played by attitudes towards
> surveys. One focus is to better understand the
> determinants of attitudes towards surveys. What
> are the characteristics of those who believe –
> more or less -- in surveys? Are these
> characteristics related to attitudes towards
> public institutions, governments, etc.? Are they
> related to what the surveys tell, i.e. whether
they give information with which one agrees? How
do people perceive the role of surveys, in
particular during electoral campaigns and in
determining public policy? The second set of
questions pertains to the consequences of
attitudes towards surveys. Are they related to
survey non response? Do they play a role in
opinion change? These are some of the topics on which papers will be
welcome.

You will find complementary information (general
call for papers, guidelines, etc.) on the
Conference website: http://www.rc332008.unina.it/

Best,

Claire Durand
professeur titulaire,
directrice des études supérieures,
http://www.mapageweb.umontreal.ca/durandc
Département de sociologie,
Université de Montréal
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Reply-To:     "Thomas P. Duffy" <Thomas.P.Duffy.Jr@MACROINTERNATIONAL.COM>
Sender:       AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:         "Thomas P. Duffy" <Thomas.P.Duffy.Jr@MACROINTERNATIONAL.COM>
Subject:      MacroPoll Wireless Results
Comments: To: AAPOR <aapornet@asu.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="ISO-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit

Posted on behalf of colleagues at Macro.

Tom

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In October, Macro completed the first MacroPoll Wireless, a national omnibus
survey conducted with cell phone users. Two-hundred and fifty respondents
answered the survey, with over 100 reporting that they don’t have a landline.
Forty percent of the dual-users reported that they receive "all or almost all"
calls on their cell phone. Further, 61 percent reported that they don’t answer
or they screen calls on their landline.

Eight cell survey pioneers placed an eclectic set of questions on the survey with topics including political preferences, awareness and perceptions of current events, consumer expenditures, health and healthcare, and mobile phone and internet usage. Rounding out the very full 20-minute survey was a core set of questions that covered cell phone sharing, telephone usage and behaviors for landline (if applicable) and cell phone, and demographics.

We appreciate the very positive response to the first MacroPoll Wireless and want to keep the momentum going. We are running MacroPoll Wireless again in January 2008. We are hoping to build enough support to run 2 waves of 250 each (or 500 in total for those who want to get on both surveys). The survey will field from Jan 23-Jan 29 with data and tabs delivered on Feb 1.

Please contact me at randal.zuwallack@macrointernational.com or at 802-863-9600 for more information about funding some questions or about the survey itself (content, weighting methods, etc.)

Thanks and I hope to hear from you.

Randy

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Reply-To: "Vile, Matthew" <matthew.vile@GOODWILL.ORG>
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: "Vile, Matthew" <matthew.vile@GOODWILL.ORG>
Subject: Using non-monetary incentives
Comments: To: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@asu.edu>
In-Reply-To: <AAPORNET%20071220210009103.4A34@LISTS.ASU.EDU>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable

I need some advice from the group, I've got a client who has been =
incentivising their customer satisfaction surveys by offering an entry =
into a drawing for an in-store credit of $25. Oddly enough, this =
strategy appears to have worked since, out of the entire group, this =
particular client had the highest response count. After some further =
digging, I determined that the client was not making entry into the =
contest available to anyone who refused the survey (i.e. you must =
complete a survey to be entered) and this sent my antennae twitching. =
Isn't this practice mostly illegal? Anyone who could guide me to an =
accessible discussion of this practice would be most appreciated.

=20
Matthew A. Vile, PhD
Manager of Surveys and Data Analysis
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
(240) 333-5389
(301) 530-1516 (fax)

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Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: "Rucinski, Dianne" <drucin@UIC.EDU>
Subject: Incentives in Ghana, Nigeria and the Gambia
Comments: To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;charset=iso-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit

We are looking for incentive ideas for a training evaluation survey of health care providers (docs, nurses, outreach workers, etc.) in Ghana, Nigeria and the Gambia. Any advice or ideas off-line would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks,
Dianne Rucinski

--
Dianne Rucinski, Ph.D.
Naomi Morris Collaborative &
Institute for Health Research and Policy
School of Public Health
University of Illinois - Chicago
1747 W Roosevelt, rm. 558
Chicago IL 60608
312.355.1769

Date: Mon, 24 Dec 2007 10:22:21 -0500
Reply-To: Andrew A Beveridge <aabeveridge@GMAIL.COM>
Sender: AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From: Andrew A Beveridge <aabeveridge@GMAIL.COM>
Subject: FW: Happy Holidays and Gotham Gazette Column
Dear All:

My Gotham Gazette Column was just posted, and it includes links to Joe Salvo's and my presentations at the NYAAPOR in September. The first couple paragraphs and the link are below.

Happy Holidays.

Andy

http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/demographics/20071224/5/2386
Will the 2010 Census "Steal" New Yorkers?
by Andrew Beveridge
24 Dec 2007

Throughout the 1990s, New York City's population appeared to grow from about 7.35 million until it reached slightly over 8.0 million for the first time ever. Since then, growth continued, and by 2006 New York City was said to have somewhat in excess of 8.2 million people. As preparations ramp up for the 2010 Census, most would expect that that count will register New York City's continued gains. Yet when the Census numbers are announced, New York City's renewed growth could appear to have halted and even reversed -- not because fewer people actually live here but because of new Census procedures.

Censuses, including the ones in the United States, are really about two things: power and money. The main use of the count is to reapportion Congress and redraw lines for the state legislature and local government bodies. Simply put, every extra person in New York City (and by extension New York State) leads to extra power for the state and the city, and to additional government funds.

The growth in largely Democratic New York City in 1990s, as depicted by the Census, along with declines in population in more Republican areas upstate, led to a serious problem for the GOP-dominated State Senate. Instead of simply shifting some seats from Republican areas to Democratic ones, as the Census would seem to have indicated, the Senate tried to instead solve its dilemma by adding an extra seat to the body and forcing massive redrawing of lines in New York City, while keeping them largely intact in Long Island and upstate.

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At The Wall Street Journal, Carl Bialik, AKA The Numbers Guy, encourages his readers to look at the NewsU Course

http://blogs.wsj.com/numbersguy/

December 27, 2007, 10:43 am
A Polling Primer <http://blogs.wsj.com/numbersguy/a-polling-primer-245/>

As journalists and voters focus on next week's Iowa caucus, they'll be inundated with polling data. Sites such as Pollster.com<http://www.pollster.com/> and Real Clear Politics <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/> compile the latest primary polling numbers, while news sites including WSJ.com<http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/info-enlargePic07.html> distribute the numbers.

Before digesting all the data, reporters and readers may want to consult an online course with useful tips on interpreting and analyzing polls. Understanding & Interpreting Polls<http://www.newsu.org/Angel/section/default.asp?format=3Dcourse&id=3Daapor_polling07>, free with registration, is targeted at journalists but also useful for consumers of journalism =97 not just political coverage, but any reporting based on surveys. It was released by the Poynter Institute, a school for journalists in St. Petersburg, Fla., and American Association for Public Opinion Research (Aapor), a polling professional organization. The course explains how good polls can undermine =97 and trump =97 conventional wisdom=97, while bad polls mislead and can create bad journalism.

The goal of the course is to get its students "to understand that not all polls are equal," said Cliff Zukin, a survey expert at Rutgers and former president of Aapor who helped develop the course. Sometimes the best reporting on certain polls, he said, is the decision to not cover them.

---
Pat Lewis
Communications Director
American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)
1405 North George Mason Drive
Arlington, Virginia
Pushing Back on Push 'Polls'

Let's put an end to the insidious practice of "push polling!" If organizations want to conduct political telemarketing, then call it what it is--- *push calling*, calls designed to 'push' potential voters toward or away from a particular candidate. It's the opposite of legitimate polling, which is carefully designed to collect useful information. The difference is in the flow of information. Push calls are designed to influence your impression of a candidate based on the information they provide to you; surveys and polls want to elicit information from you.

Please, could those engaged in the practice of push calls quit including questions in an attempt to disguise the call as a legitimate poll? The addition of a question or set of questions to these calls is deceptive. In the end, push calls do serious harm to the survey and polling industry by aggravating the pool of potential respondents to the point they will no longer participate in legitimate surveys.

Many of us in the research industry have pointed out that while there is nothing new about push calls, what is new is that the practice is becoming far more widespread with the use of automated dialing combined with interactive
voice recognition (IVR)
Use of IVR alone does not constitute a push call---several survey and
polling organizations now use IVR systems for legitimate surveys. However,
for the recipient there are a couple of quick ways to tell if the call you
receive is a true push call. These calls tend to be quite short, provide
slanted information about a candidate or group of candidates, and do not
include any demographic questions. One additional feature of push calls:
They often are delivered to large numbers of recipients, far greater than
the number who would normally be called for a poll or survey.

In Iowa, things are already notching up with the announcement by Americans
for Legal Immigration PAC <http://www.alipac.us/article2820.html> reported
today by ABC's Jake Tapper, that they will begin push calls tonight---ABC
has the call
So, rather than trying to hide behind the cloak of legitimate polling, we
now see that advocate organizations are willing to issue a press release
about their push call campaigns.

As we begin 2008 and what is clearly going to be a hotly contested campaign
season, I urge recipients of these calls to recognize that these are NOT
polls but rather a thinly disguised attempt to manipulate your opinion. And
I urge those engaged in the practice to cease operating under the pretext of
a political poll---deliver your message if you must, but don't damn the
survey and polling industry along the way.

--
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Sender:       AAPORNET <AAPORNET@ASU.EDU>
From:         Dominic Lusinchi <dominic@FARWESTRESEARCH.COM>
Organization: Far West Research
Subject:      Re: The Numbers Guy Writes About AAPOR, NewsU Polling Course
Comments:     To: Pat Lewis <plewis@AAPOR.ORG>, AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
In-Reply-To:  <843d88cd0712271057kbdb7eb9xbe3508019e805efe@mail.gmail.com>
I apologize in advance to my colleagues who are members of the SRMSnet and might have read, some weeks ago, my diatribe regarding the way the 1936 Literary Digest poll is being reported.

I am disappointed that AAPOR is promoting a web site (http://www.newsu.org/Angel/section/default.asp?format=course&id=aapor_polling07), whose merits, otherwise, are undeniable, that reiterates inaccuracies about the failure of the 1936 Literary Digest poll.

On the page that gives examples of "bad sampling" (http://www.newsu.org/Angel/section/default.asp?format=course&id=aapor_polling07), in a paragraph entitled "A Notorious Polling Disaster", we read:

"Even samples that are selected at random can be hopelessly flawed if respondents are selected from a pool that is different than the population the researcher is attempting to measure. That was the case with the most famous polling disaster of all time: the 1936 Literary Digest presidential poll."

This statement gives the false impression that the Digest sample was random - which it certainly was not. It also implies that the Digest sample (mistakenly referred as "respondents") was selected from a pool that was "different" from the target population. We have no empirical evidence, that I am aware of, that would allow us to reach such a conclusion. By the way, the target population is the voting population (nearly 46M in 1936, total popular vote): we know that, if the past is anything like the present, IT (the voting population) is a biased "sample" of the voting-age population - in the U.S. at least.

The author of the text on this web page goes on to quote a Mr. Curtis, who writes, as many have before him: "The magazine surveyed more than 2 million people [the number of respondents to the poll, DL], chosen from the magazine's subscriber list, phone books and car registrations." These are not the only sources that the Digest used to compile its list. This statement merely repeats, as I said, what many have asserted before: that the Digest list was made up only of people who had phones or cars. As Maurice Bryson (The American Statistician, 1976, 30, 4, p.184-185) urged more than 20 yrs ago: Check your sources!

Mr. Curtis goes on to write: "Even though the sample was enormous, it was unrepresentative of the population of voters." We know that the sample was enormous (the Digest, we are told, mailed out around 10M ballots). But how do we know that it was unrepresentative?

Mr. Curtis concludes: "Not everyone could afford a phone or car during the Depression, and those who could afford cars tended to vote Republican in greater numbers than those who couldn't. As a result, the poll showed Republican Alf Landon beating the actual winner, Democrat Franklin Roosevelt." This statement continues to promote "selection bias" as the principal cause of the Digest's "fiasco". It is wrong!
I suggest that if we are going to use the 1936 Digest poll as an example of bad survey research, we should use it as an illustration of what happens when *nonresponse bias* occurs in a survey. (The response rate to the poll was 24%.)

The scant empirical evidence that exists indicates that *nonresponse bias* was to blame: respondents were very different in their voting intentions than nonrespondents were. The evidence I am referring to are two studies, both published in AAPOR's flagship journal the Public Opinion Quarterly: Don Cahalan, "The Digest Poll Rides Again!", Public Opinion Quarterly, 1989, 53, pp.129-133; and Peverill Squire, "Why the 1936 Literary Digest poll failed" Public Opinion Quarterly, 1988, 52, 125-133. Both studies have some serious limitations. Cahalan, who uses the soundest methodology (a telephone survey based on a random sample from the Digest list with a response rate of 80%), conducted his study in one city only! Squire analyzes the data from a Gallup poll. The "sample" is national, but it is based on the quota methodology.

The Gallup survey, as reported by Squire, does not, in my opinion, provide the data to conclude that selection bias in the original sample of 10 million used by the Digest was a serious issue. At most we can say that IF nonresponse bias had not been an issue, The Literary Digest should have been able to call the election in favor of FDR, but its estimate would have been off by a substantial margin - like other polls were.

It is ironic that AAPOR sponsors a web site (the polling course) that promotes an analysis of the 1936 Digest poll that is contradicted by authors published in POQ!

Let's heed Bryson's words and put an end to this *statistical myth*!

By the way: this is all meant in a friendly spirit as befits the season.

Happy New Year to all.

Dominic Lusinchi

Far West Research
Statistical Consulting
San Francisco, California
415-664-3032
www.farwestresearch.com


-----Original Message-----
From: AAPORNET [mailto:AAPORNET@asu.edu] On Behalf Of Pat Lewis
Sent: Thursday, December 27, 2007 10:58 AM
To: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
Subject: The Numbers Guy Writes About AAPOR, NewsU Polling Course
At The Wall Street Journal, Carl Bialik, AKA The Numbers Guy, encourages his readers to look at the NewsU Course

http://blogs.wsj.com/numbersguy/

December 27, 2007, 10:43 am
A Polling Primer <http://blogs.wsj.com/numbersguy/a-polling-primer-245/>

As journalists and voters focus on next week's Iowa caucus, they'll be inundated with polling data. Sites such as Pollster.com<http://www.pollster.com/> and Real Clear Politics <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/> compile the latest primary polling numbers, while news sites including WSJ.com<http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/info-enlargePic07.html> distribute the numbers.

[Image: poll]

Before digesting all the data, reporters and readers may want to consult an online course with useful tips on interpreting and analyzing polls. Understanding & Interpreting Polls<http://www.newsu.org/Angel/section/default.asp?format=course&id=aapor_polling07>, free with registration, is targeted at journalists but also useful for consumers of journalism - not just political coverage, but any reporting based on surveys. It was released by the Poynter Institute, a school for journalists in St. Petersburg, Fla., and American Association for Public Opinion Research (Aapor), a polling professional organization. The course explains how good polls can undermine - and trump - conventional wisdom, while bad polls mislead and can create bad journalism.

The goal of the course is to get its students "to understand that not all polls are equal," said Cliff Zukin, a survey expert at Rutgers and former president of Aapor who helped develop the course. Sometimes the best reporting on certain polls, he said, is the decision to not cover them.

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