



SURVEY RESEARCH

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COLLEGE OF URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS-UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

An Inquiry into Declining RDD Response Rates Part IV: Lack of Standardization

By Diane O'Rourke

In Spring 1998, the Survey Research Laboratory surveyed organizations on its List of Academic and Not-for-Profit Survey Research Organizations (LANSRO) as part of its efforts to improve response rates on telephone surveys, particularly random-digit-dial (RDD) surveys. This article is the fourth in a series on response rates to RDD surveys (see Vol. 29, Nos. 2 and 3, 1998, and Vol. 30, Nos. 2-3, 1999).

While the goal of SRL's survey was to discover factors related to the questionnaire, the interviewing staff, and the facility that are positively related to higher response rates, the results also provided interesting information on two points: First, response rates vary greatly among organizations, and, more troubling, *how* "response rates" are calculated varies greatly.

I had always suspected both points, but the actual array of data was amazing. Here was the rebuttal to the client who says, "Journal articles in my field all report response rates of 80 percent." To that I answer: "Show me the fine print." It is hard enough to get those kinds of response rates with list samples of cooperative

people who don't move nor change their phone numbers a lot. The inherent problems with "cold calling" are amplified when working with an RDD sample riddled with unassigned or questionable telephone numbers. Add to that the problems of working on a study where respondent eligibility is 5 or 10 percent, knowing that most refusals come *before* you can determine eligibility. *That* will destroy any chance of a reasonably high response rate. The problems described above are ones that we all suffer, although those of us who conduct much of our work screening for rare populations suffer more.

What is *not* universally equal, though, is the number that is being reported as the "response rate." No wonder my apples look worse than your oranges. For the survey of organizations, we knew we could not simply ask, "What is your typical response rate on a nationwide RDD survey?" Even assuming that most organizations use some variation of a standard CASRO (1982) or AAPOR (1998) response rate, there are enough valid variations in the formula to make comparing those rates problematic.

For example, when conducting English-only interviews, most organizations consider non-English-speaking households ineligible, defining their population as one of English-speaking households with telephones. However, some organizations do not do this, and, because these cases are considered eligible (and thus stay in the denominator of the formula), the response rate is depressed, particularly in geographic areas with large non-English-speaking populations.

Another major difference is in the treatment of "ring-no-answers." The phone rings and rings, with never an answer, not even an answering machine. Is it a

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residential phone number? Is it even an assigned phone number? Who knows? (While it is sometimes possible to find out, here we assume that this is not possible or not economically feasible.) Some organizations consider these cases ineligible after 5 calls, 10 calls, 20 calls, etc.; some consider them all potentially eligible. Many organizations weight their eligibility according to eligibility rates found among completed cases. However, *which* cases are used to determine this weight factor varies greatly. Consequently, it is impossible to compare response rates from two organizations or researchers without having the raw figures for each category, the definition of each category, and the formula that was used to calculate the rate.

To obtain a standardized rate for the survey analysis, we asked respondents to fill in a typical set of results to the presented categories. (For further description, see Part III, Vol. 30, Nos. 2–3, 1999). We then calculated a “moderate” response rate for each organization’s raw data. That is, we considered non-English speaking households ineligible and weighted the ring-no-answer cases by the known eligibility. The resulting response rates ranged from 5.8% (a quota sample), then from 22.2% to 70.1%. (mean of 46.8%, median of 50.0%). (I believe that these rates are somewhat high because some organizations that did not have experience with nationwide RDD studies gave me numbers for statewide or areawide ones. I checked the highest response rates by contacting the respondents and found this to be the case much of the time.) I assume that some of the variation in rate is due to cost-benefit decisions: How many contacts can the study afford? How much training and retraining of interviewers can be done?

Now, what about the variability in what is *called* the response rate? Each organization was asked how *they* calculate response rate, by having them fill in a formula using the presented categories. Surprisingly, almost one-half (44%) of the rates indicated were at least 2 percentage points higher than the “moderate” CASRO/AAPOR rate we had calculated (see Table 1).

The organizations indicating *lower* response rates do so because they are more conservative in classifying cases as ineligible. The most common reason for having a much higher response rate was because the formula used was actually for a *cooperation rate* (e.g., interviews divided by interviews + refusals, excluding all cases not contacted and finalized). This is certainly a quick way to shave 10 to 30 points off a nonresponse rate! While there certainly could have been some confusion about the task, the magnitude of these results is quite troubling.

Table 1.

	# of cases	%
2.0+ percentage points lower than CASRO/AAPOR rate	5	14.7
0.1–1.9 lower	5	14.7
0–1.9 higher	9	26.5
2.0–4.9 higher	3	8.8
5.0–9.9 higher	3	8.8
10.0–14.9 higher	3	8.8
15.0+ higher	6	17.7
Total	34	100.0

A committee of the American Association for Public Opinion Research is looking into better disclosure of rates, if not full standardization. Because there are good reasons for some of the differences, it is unlikely that researchers will agree to only one standard. However, it is reasonable to expect universal acceptance of definitions of critical terms, such as response rate and cooperation rate. While clients are often dismayed by the multitude of rates that get multiplied, divided, or added together to come up with a “response rate,” it is in their best interest to understand these rates, ask for a sample report with counts by categories, and decide if they agree with the calculations. In the same vein, individuals and organizations that request proposals should require clarification of desired or promised rates.

References

- American Association for Public Opinion Research. (1998). *Standard definitions: Final dispositions of case codes and outcome rates for RDD telephone surveys and in-person household surveys*. Ann Arbor, MI: Author.
- Council of American Survey Research Organizations Task Force on Completion Rates. (1982). *On the definition of response rates. CASRO Special Report*. Port Jefferson, NY: Council of American Survey Research Organizations.

Do you have comments on or responses to this article? Could your experiences or the experiences of your organization benefit others in the survey research community as they grapple with these issues? You may wish to write down your thoughts and submit them to Survey Research for consideration as a lead article in an upcoming issue (see page 9).



Further information on the studies described in this section should be obtained from the organizations conducting the studies at the addresses given at the beginning of each organization's listing. Neither Survey Research nor the Survey Research Laboratory can provide this information. Study summaries are accepted by the Survey Research newsletter with the understanding that additional information can be released to others.

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Kaposi's Sarcoma (KS) Study. This 4-year study's purpose is to identify the principal mode(s) of transmission of the newly discovered human herpes virus 8 (HHV-8) that is linked to development of KS. In addition to completing a self-administered questionnaire, 534 gay and bisexual men provide blood and saliva specimens and complete an oral examination. Year 1 has been completed. The National Institutes of Health is funding this study. *Principal Investigator:* Dennis Osmond (Univ. of California at San Francisco), *Field Director:* Susan Burns, *Administrative Coordinator:* Anne Benker.

Maternal and Infant Health Assessment. Almost 3,500 self-administered questionnaires with interviewer telephone follow-up were completed with a random sample of California women who had given birth four months prior to contact. Topic areas included prenatal care, nutrition, and access to medical insurance. Funded by the California Dept. of Health Services, this study is the first of 3 planned annual assessments. *Principal Investigator:* Paula Braveman (Univ. of California at San Francisco), *Project Manager:* Lisa Kermish, *Field Director:* Jackie Hayes.

Health and Ways of Living Follow-Up Study. Self-administered questionnaires with interviewer telephone follow-up were completed with 2,073 members of a cohort originally recruited in 1965 from Alameda County, CA. Study topics included health and mobility, social supports, mental health assessment, and spiritual involvement. Funding was provided by the National

Institute on Aging. *Principal Investigator:* George Kaplan (Univ. of Michigan), *Project Manager:* Lisa Kermish, *Field Director:* Jackie Hayes.

CONNECTICUT

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Farmland Preservation. CSRA conducted RDD telephone interviews with 604 Connecticut residents from a sample that was equally distributed among Congressional Districts. The survey, conducted February 1999 through January 2000 and sponsored by the Agricultural Economics Dept. at UConn, examined attitudes toward the importance of preserving farmland as open space. *Project Manager:* Nancy Barth.

Work Trends Quarterly Survey #5: Information

Technology. Focusing on attitudes toward technology in the workplace, this survey is one of a series conducted by CSRA and the John J. Heldrich Center at Rutgers Univ. In January, RDD telephone interviews were completed with 1,005 adults in the U.S. labor force. *Principal Investigators:* Kenneth Dautrich (CSRA) and Carl Van Horn (Rutgers), *Project Director:* Chase Harrison.

Substance Abuse in the Workplace. From August through October 1999, telephone interviews were conducted with 2,502 human resource managers at a random sample of U.S. for-profit businesses with 10 or more employees. Sponsored by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the survey measured policies toward substance abuse testing and treatment and the perceived impact of substance abuse on firm costs. *Project Director:* Chase Harrison.

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Statewide Poll on Public Education. A statewide poll on public education was conducted from October to

December 1999. Half of the 900 respondents interviewed by phone were parents of school-aged children, and the other half were not. An additional 300 interviews were conducted with a randomly selected group of Delaware educators. Topics included the quality of education in Delaware, educator and student accountability, discipline, and parental involvement. The study was sponsored by the Delaware Education Research and Development Center at the Univ. of Delaware. *Principal Investigator:* Edward Ratledge, *Project Coordinator:* Rebecca Bedford.

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey. Sponsored by Delaware's Health and Social Services Division of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this national survey measured health risk factors related to hypertension awareness, cholesterol awareness, diabetes, oral health, skin cancer, tobacco use and prevention, alcohol consumption, women's health, immunization, colorectal cancer screening, injury control, HIV/AIDS, and sexual behavior. Approximately 213 CATI surveys were completed each month from January to December 1999. *Principal Investigator:* Edward Ratledge, *Project Coordinator:* Rebecca Bedford.

Patient Satisfaction Survey. Approximately 150 interviews were completed each month from January to December 1999. Questionnaire items assessed respondents' satisfaction with their personal doctors or nurses, specialists, and their health insurance companies. Sponsored by the Delaware Health Care Commission, the study also addressed overall health issues. *Principal Investigator:* Edward Ratledge, *Project Coordinator:* Rebecca Bedford.

Active and Passive Tobacco Smoke Exposure, NAT2 Genotype, and Breast Cancer Risk. A case group of women who were diagnosed with breast cancer 2 to 6 months earlier will be selected from the Delaware Cancer Registry, and consent to participate will be obtained from both potential respondents and their physicians. A control group will be randomly selected from the general population of Delaware women over the age of 35 who have not been diagnosed with breast cancer. Topics include exposure to smoking, dietary habits, and physical activity as well as general health questions. Beginning in July 2000, approximately 700 interviews will be conducted, and a biologic sampling using self-administered buccal swabs will be obtained from consenting participants. The study is sponsored by the Delaware Division of Public Health and Johns Hopkins Univ. *Principal Investigator:* Edward Ratledge.

GEORGIA

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GeorgiaGain and Civil Service Reform. The state of Georgia is sponsoring this study of the impact of GeorgiaGain and Act 816. These mandates, implemented in 1995 and 1996, involved major changes in government employee performance evaluation processes and a new wage and salary structure. They also effectively ended the tenure system in civil service, declaring that all state employees hired after July 1, 1996, be in the unclassified service as at-will employees. Data will be collected through mail questionnaires with over 3,000 state government employees. *Principal Investigators:* J. Edward Kellough (Univ. of Georgia) and Lloyd Nigro (Georgia State Univ.), *Project Manager:* Brian Cannon.

Winter 2000 Georgia State Poll. The most recent edition of the quarterly Poll included approval ratings for various federal and state political figures as well as items on cell phone ownership and usage. Government and university clients also contributed items on current problems facing the state, attitudes toward and use of complementary and alternative medicine, and water quality and supply issues. About 800 CATI interviews were completed with randomly selected adult residents of Georgia. *Principal Investigator:* Gary Henry, *Survey Director:* Charlotte Steeh.

ILLINOIS

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CES Redesign/Small Area Estimation. CES is a program of monthly estimates of employment and production statistics that are among the country's leading economic indicators. As a subcontractor to the Illinois Dept. of Employment Security, NORC participated in the team recruited by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to implement statistical design changes to the federal/state cooperative program. The team developed a probability sample, which is being recruited by industry, and has researched methods for incorporating new

business establishments more quickly, alternative estimation processes, and variance estimation. Benchmarking, sample rotation, and other aspects of the program will be addressed as data from the new sample become available. NORC conducted simulations with Illinois data to test small area estimators and is now developing a software module to produce Illinois labor market employment estimates on a monthly basis. *Principal Investigator: Kirk Wolter, Project Director: Rachel Harter, Project Manager* (software development effort): Dan Walker.

Evaluation of Medicaid Managed Care. The District of Columbia Dept. of Health has funded NORC to conduct a survey of two population groups involved in D.C.'s Medicaid program. First, NORC staff are interviewing a representative sample of D.C. Medicaid recipients to gain the consumers' view of the care provided under Medicaid Managed Care (MMC) by D.C.'s seven participating medical care organizations. Respondents are asked about the services they have received, the ease of scheduling appointments, knowledge of grievance procedures, and satisfaction with information received from clinicians. Second, NORC is interviewing physicians who have had contracts with the D.C. MMC program to learn about their experiences and level of satisfaction with the program. A final report will help D.C. respond to the Health Care Financing Administration's requirements under Section 1915(b) of the Social Security Act. *Principal Investigator: Sam Schildhaus, Project Director: Sara Murphy.*

2000 General Social Survey (GSS). The 2000 GSS, with a target sample size of 3,000, is being fielded from February through April, and the new merged data set for 1972–2000 should be ready in November. The 2000 GSS follows the biennial, double sample design first adopted in 1994. The seven topical modules are on religion (including a repeat of the National Congregations Survey, sample frame construction first done in 1998), America's growing diversity (a study known as Multi-Ethnic United States or MEUS), the use of computers and the Internet, national security, freedom, health functioning, and risks related to HIV, such as sexual behavior and drug use. The two International Social Survey Program (ISSP) modules cover issues related to the environment and social inequality. The environment module replicates and extends the 1993 ISSP module on this topic and includes items on scientific knowledge, environmental activism, and attitudes on major issues. The social inequality module follows up on similar 1987 and 1992 modules and addresses earning differences across occupations, perceived and preferred social structure, and the basis of inequality. Thirty-four countries plan to field these two modules.

Principal Investigator: Tom Smith, Project Director: Alma Kuby.

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Neighborhood Violence Prevention Evaluation.

Through 400 CATI interviews conducted in March and April, SRL gathered information from residents of 4 Chicago neighborhoods on their perceptions of violence in their neighborhoods and what sort of violence prevention initiatives are underway. *Principal Investigator: Gary Slutkin* (Health Research and Policy Centers, School of Public Health, Univ. of Illinois at Chicago), *Project Coordinator: Martine Sagun.*

Survey of Health Behaviors and Disease Prevention in the Greater Lawn Community and Aurora.

This study's purpose was to assess health behaviors related to smoking, diabetes, health care access, nutrition, and physical activity. The questionnaire contained items from the 1997 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and from the Southwest Youth Collaborative, and from January through March, SRL conducted 400 CATI interviews in Greater Lawn and 400 in Aurora. *Principal Investigators: Susan Levy and William Baldyga* (Health Research and Policy Centers, School of Public Health, Univ. of Illinois at Chicago), *Project Coordinator: Holly Hart.*

Customer Satisfaction Survey. Funded by the Dept. of Health and Human Services and sponsored by the Southside Health Consortium, this study is assessing patient satisfaction with the Healthy Start services provided at 2 Chicago clinics. SRL assisted in the development of a questionnaire (which was also translated into Spanish) and trained the clinics' outreach workers in administering it to patients waiting in the lobby. Data collection is currently underway with 150 completes expected. SRL will also conduct 3 focus groups: one on childbirth classes, one on behavioral health services, and one on the Healthy Start consortia network. *Principal Investigator: Vince Champaign* (Southside Health Consortium), *Project Coordinator: Isabel Farrar.*

Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Sports Survey.

The purpose of this project, a replication of a 1993 SRL study, is to examine UIUC undergraduates' attitudes toward and interest in intramural, club, and

interschool sports. The instrument was mailed to 1,000 students, and CATI follow-ups are now being conducted with those students who failed to respond. The study is being sponsored by the UIUC Division of Intercollegiate Athletics. *Project Coordinator:* Jane Burris.

Health Behaviors in North and South Lawndale.

The instrument administered in the *Survey of Health Behaviors and Disease Prevention in the Greater Lawn Community and Aurora* is being administered to 2 additional communities in Chicago (North and South Lawndale). Using both RDD and reverse directory listings, SRL is conducting 400 CATI interviews in February through April. Again, the purpose is to assess health behaviors related to smoking, diabetes, health care access, nutrition, and physical activity. Funding is being provided by the Chicago Dept. of Public Health. *Principal Investigator:* Susan Levy (Health Research and Policy Centers, School of Public Health, Univ. of Illinois at Chicago), *Project Coordinator:* Amy DeGrush.

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32nd Indiana Poll. The Indiana Poll is a statewide RDD telephone survey of adult Indiana residents conducted twice yearly by CSR. The main purpose of the survey, which is sponsored by Indiana Univ., is to provide an accurate measurement of public opinion on issues of interest to the general public, policy makers, and social scientists. Topics for Indiana Poll 32 included the Y2K computer bug, hate crimes, state employment services, gambling, health insurance, domestic partner benefits, and general demographic questions. Between November 4 and November 23, 1999, 518 interviews, each lasting about 9 minutes, were completed. *Project Director:* John Kennedy, *Project Manager:* April Henry.

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Tri-County Residents' Opinions on Education in the Public Schools. CATI interviews were conducted in December 1999 with 1,012 residents of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties in South Carolina. The main goals of the research were to determine residents' evaluations of and ideas for the Tri-County

schools. *Assistant Director:* Lana Bandy; *Assistant Field Supervisor:* Brianne O'Brien.

Resident Opinions on Hamilton Southeastern Schools. To assess residents' opinions about the best way to handle the growing high school student population in Hamilton County, 823 CATI interviews were conducted with residents in December 1999. *Research Coordinator:* Jill Bakehorn, *Assistant Research Coordinator:* Andy Hutcherson.

Resident Opinions on Their Westside Neighborhood—"Post-Enhancement" Survey. In November 1999, 414 CATI interviews were conducted with Indianapolis residents, and 52 face-to-face interviews were conducted with residents of the Westside neighborhood on December 10. The research was conducted to evaluate whether residents' opinions about their neighborhoods, quality of life, and safety had changed after Keep Indianapolis Beautiful made enhancements. *Assistant Director:* Lana Bandy, *Research Associate:* Gabe Harley.

United Way Latino-Hispanic Survey. From December 15, 1999, to January 2, 2000, 379 telephone interviews and 229 face-to-face interviews were conducted with Latinos and Hispanics in the Indianapolis area. The research was conducted to find out the main demographic characteristics of the sample, to identify the main problems faced by Latinos in the area, and to identify the assets or strengths brought to the community by the population. *Director:* Brian Vargus, *Assistant Field Supervisor:* Brianne O'Brien.

Channel 8 Voter Survey. Paid for and sponsored by WISH-TV in Indianapolis, this survey polled voters in order to find out for whom they were likely to vote in the city's upcoming mayoral election. From October 1 to October 4, 1999, CATI interviews were conducted with 600 registered voters in Indianapolis. The study was conducted as part of a research and training project for students. *Director:* Brian Vargus, *Assistant Field Supervisor:* Andy Hutcherson.

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Family Time Use 1999/2000. Over the 9-month study period, SRC will conduct 1,200 CATI interviews with a nationwide sample of parents of children under 18 and

collect 7-day mail diaries from approximately 200 households. The main part of the telephone survey asks about the activities respondents engaged in during the preceding 24-hour period; other topics include time spent in various activities with children and issues related to parenting. Mail diaries collect information from parents and all children under 18 in households with two working parents with at least some college education and will record activities engaged in during 7 consecutive days. The study is being conducted for the Univ. of Maryland Sociology Dept. and sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. *Principal Investigators:* Suzanne Bianchi and John Robinson, *Project Coordinator:* Elena Tracy.

Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) 2000.

Approximately 2,500 CATI interviews with persons from five different populations, one of which is RDD, will be collected during early spring–late summer. The purpose of the study is to learn how the topics mentioned in the introduction affect cooperation rates. Topics are voting and participation in elections, education and schools, Medicare and health, and childcare and problems of parents. This study is being conducted for the Univ. of Maryland's JPSM. *Principal Investigators:* Robert Groves, Stanley Presser, and Sarah Dipko; *Project Coordinator:* Elena Tracy.

Genetic Technology and Health: Knowledge, Attitudes, Values, and Behavior. This study, currently underway, is a national list-assisted RDD survey intended to assess the knowledge and value preferences of the general public on genetic technology and health/disease issues. SRC will assist the principal investigators at the Univ. of Michigan Survey Research Center in preparing the sample, CATI programming of the survey instrument, pretesting, and conducting main data collection. The sample will yield approximately 1,800 interviews with an oversample of African Americans and Hispanics. Pre-notification letters, half of which will include a monetary incentive, will be sent to all households with names and addresses in an effort to achieve high cooperation and response rates. Spanish language interviews will be conducted with respondents who prefer to be interviewed in Spanish. In addition to descriptive analysis, the data collected will enable various methodological experiments. *Principal Investigators:* Eleanor Singer and Toni Antonucci (Univ. of Michigan), *Project Director:* Johnny Blair, *Assistant Project Coordinator:* Emily Diggins.

MASSACHUSETTS

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Organizational Determinants of HIV Care Improvement. Funded by the National Institutes for Health and performed under contract with Harvard Medical School, this longitudinal study is an evaluation of an intervention designed to improve the care of ambulatory patients diagnosed with HIV. CSR will participate in the development of instruments to collect information from administrators and clinical care providers at HIV clinics. A survey of administrators will be conducted in each of three consecutive years, the first year to establish baseline data and in subsequent years to evaluate the effect of the intervention. In addition, 5 clinicians from each of the 45 clinics will be surveyed concurrently. *Study Director:* Patricia Gallagher.

1999 Massachusetts Youth Tobacco Survey. This RDD survey of 733 Massachusetts youth 14 to 17 years old was funded by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health. It measured smoking prevalence, reactions to anti-smoking television advertisements funded by the Massachusetts program and by Phillip Morris, and exposure to tobacco advertising in stores. Results indicated that the rate of experimentation with tobacco has declined significantly since 1993 and that youth judge the Phillip Morris anti-smoking ads as significantly less effective than the Massachusetts ads, which depict people suffering from illness or loss due to smoking. Over 80% of youth reported recent exposure to tobacco advertising on store windows, inside of stores, and on billboards. *Study Director:* Lois Biener.

T-ACASI Experiment. Funded by the National Institutes of Health and performed under contract with Research Triangle Institute, this is a national RDD survey leading to 1,800 interviews with people aged 18 to 45. The questions are quite sensitive and deal with behaviors, including sexual behaviors and drug use, that are related to the spread of diseases such as AIDS. Half the interviews will be interviewer-administered CATI interviews, while half will be computer interviews using Telephone Audio Computer Assisted Self Interviewing (T-ACASI) technology. *Study Director:* Anthony Roman.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

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New Hampshire Policy Survey, November 1999.

The Survey Center conducted CATI interviews with 712 randomly selected adult New Hampshire residents in November for various clients. Topics included budget priorities in NH, the quality of higher education, the state university system, awareness of Parkinson's Disease, funding of primary and secondary education, the NH Presidential Primary, and Y2K. *Principal Investigator:* Andrew Smith.

New Hampshire Policy Survey, January 2000. In mid-January, 503 randomly selected adults living in New Hampshire were interviewed by CATI for various clients. Topics included child poverty, access to prescription drugs, and environmental issues. *Principal Investigator:* Andrew Smith.

Vermont Business Telecommunications Survey, January 2000. Between December 8, 1999, and January 12, 2000, CATI interviews were conducted with 403 randomly selected Vermont businesses for the Vermont Dept. of Public Service. Respondents were asked about current telecommunications status and future telecommunications plans. *Principal Investigator:* Andrew Smith.

"Breathe Easy" Pretest Survey, January 2000. Over 300 randomly selected adults between the ages of 18 and 40 from the Manchester area were interviewed using CATI for the American Lung Association of New Hampshire. This wave of the survey was designed to get baseline information on smoking attitudes and behavior before the "Breathe Easy" anti-smoking advertising campaign. The post-intervention survey will be conducted in June 2000. *Principal Investigator:* Andrew Smith.

New Hampshire Public Television (NHPTV) Survey, February 2000. CATI interviews with about 700 randomly selected NHPTV members were completed in February. Topics included benefits of NHPTV membership and advertising awareness. *Principal Investigator:* Andrew Smith.

WMUR/Fox News New Hampshire Presidential Primary Tracking Poll, January 2000. CATI interviews with more than 2,500 randomly selected likely New Hampshire primary voters were conducted between

January 20 and January 31 for WMUR-TV (Manchester) and FOX News. Press releases were provided daily of 4-day rolling sample results. *Principal Investigator:* Andrew Smith.

NORTH CAROLINA

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Spring 1999 Carolina Poll. Funded by the Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, this poll was conducted in March 1999. CATI interviews were conducted with 614 adult North Carolinians about a variety of topics, including voluntary associations, attitudes toward Hispanic and Asian migrants, and Internet use. *Poll Directors:* Donald Shaw (School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Univ. of North Carolina) and Beverly Wiggins.

Fall 1999 Carolina Poll. From October 23–30, 1999, CATI interviews were conducted with 717 adult North Carolinians about a variety of topics, including capital punishment, the lottery, the 2000 presidential election, reasons for paying attention to the news, handgun use and attitudes, and ratings of state politicians. The Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provided funding for the study. *Poll Directors:* Donald Shaw (School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Univ. of North Carolina) and Beverly Wiggins.

Spring 1999 Southern Focus Poll. The Spring 1999 Southern Focus Poll, co-sponsored by the UNC Center for the Study of the American South, the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* newspaper, was conducted February 1–April 12, 1999. CATI interviews were conducted with 828 Southerners and 404 non-Southerners about race relations. *Poll Director:* Beverly Wiggins.

Fall 1999 Southern Focus Poll. Co-sponsored by the UNC Center for the Study of the American South and the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, the Fall 1999 Southern Focus Poll was conducted September 22–November 17, 1999. CATI interviews were conducted with 842 Southerners and 402 non-Southerners about religious attendance and beliefs, attitudes about the South, time spent at home, Y2K, and race and ethnic relations. *Poll Director:* Beverly Wiggins.

Survey Research Soliciting Lead Articles for Upcoming Issues

The *Survey Research* newsletter is extending an invitation to those in the survey research field to submit original work on topics of interest to the survey research community—such as methods for reducing nonresponse, experience with Web surveys, and strategies for recruiting and maintaining interviewers—for inclusion in an upcoming issue. Submissions should be between 750 and 1,500 words and can be sent to krish@srl.uic.edu.

Research Triangle Institute

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Child and Adolescent Health Services and Insurance Survey. Funded through a grant obtained by researchers at UCLA from the National Institute of Mental Health, this study tested methods for obtaining information about mental health service use among youth in the Los Angeles area. RTI assisted UCLA by conducting CAPI interviews with parents and youth, mail surveys of mental health service providers and insurance providers, and hardcopy medical records abstraction. *Project Director:* Wendy Visscher.

Geographic Accessibility of Health Care in Rural North Carolina. This study was sponsored by the U.S. Agency for Health Care Policy and Research through a grant to the Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and examines the accessibility of health care services in 12 counties in the Appalachian mountains of western North Carolina. The geographic dimension of health care access is defined by respondents' health care and activity "spaces," i.e., where they go for health care and other daily activities. Data collection tools included customized maps and GPS devices. Approximately 1,060 PAPI household interviews were conducted during 1999. *Principal Investigator:* Wil Gesler, *Project Director:* Kristina Ahlen.

Health Behaviors Study. Funded under a grant received by a Univ. of Chicago investigator from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the *Health Behaviors Study* involves two studies of the Child and Adolescent Psychopathology (CAP) Rating Scale, a

new interview schedule developed from the NIMH Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children (DISC-IV). The first is a test-retest reliability study of two forms of the CAP, and the second will assess the comparability of the CAP and Standard DISC. Both studies will be conducted using CAPI. Full-scale data collection was conducted in early 2000. *Principal Investigator:* Benjamin Lahey, *Project Director:* John Loft.

OHIO

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The Ohio Closed Cases Survey. On behalf of the Ohio Dept. of Human Services (ODHS), CHRR is surveying 2,700 Ohio residents who stopped receiving public assistance for at least one month between October 1997 and March 1999. To ensure that the results provide a complete picture of the well-being of welfare leavers across the state, respondents are being drawn from 12 counties and cities selected by ODHS. Additionally, half of the respondents participated in Ohio's TANF program, called Ohio Works First, while the other half of the sample was drawn from the population classified as Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents. CHRR has contracted with the Center for Survey Research at OSU to conduct CATI interviews, and CHRR is fielding a staff of personal interviewers who will locate and conduct face-to-face CAPI interviews with respondents who could not be contacted by telephone. The survey collects information about respondents' employment and wage histories, education, job training,

financial hardships, childcare arrangements, and the health conditions and health insurance coverage of household members. Survey data will be merged with administrative data about employment, earnings, and assistance group composition. *Principal Investigator:* Randall Olsen, *Project Coordinator:* Traci Mach.

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The Ohio Poll. The Ohio Poll is a periodic RDD CATI survey. Sponsored by the University of Cincinnati, the February (n=837), May (n=840), and October (n=870) 1999 Polls asked Ohio adults questions on a wide range of issues, including the most important problem facing Ohio, consumer confidence, presidential and gubernatorial approval, and trial heats for the 2000 Ohio statewide primary and general elections. Individual surveys examined opinions on a number of other topics, including education alternatives, concealed carry handgun legislation, and a proposed constitutional amendment requiring a supermajority of the legislature to pass state tax increases (February); term limits (May); and child support delinquency and concerns about Y2K (October). *Director:* Alfred Tuchfarber (February, May Ohio Polls), *Co-Directors:* Kim Downing and Eric Rademacher (October Ohio Poll).

The Ohio Poll 2000 Primary Election Surveys. Two Ohio Poll 2000 Primary Election Surveys were conducted in 1999 (February: 609 registered voters, October: 606 registered voters) and two were conducted in early 2000 (January: 1,503 registered voters, February: 654 likely primary voters). Sponsored by the Univ. of Cincinnati, these surveys focused on the preferences of Ohio voters regarding the 2000 Ohio statewide primary and general elections. *Director:* Alfred Tuchfarber (February 1999 Ohio Poll), *Co-Directors:* Kim Downing and Eric Rademacher (October 1999 and February 2000).

The 1999 Distance Learning in Ohio Survey. The primary purpose of this survey was to determine Ohio residents' higher education goals, media and computer technology use, and interest in distance learning. RDD CATI interviews were conducted with 519 adults who have received some amount of college credit but lack a bachelor's degree. The survey was conducted during November 1999 for the Ohio Learning Network Survey. *Project Director:* Kim Downing.

Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) Resident Needs Assessment Survey. This is the fifth annual survey of residents intended to assess general

satisfaction with CMHA housing and maintenance, neighborhood and surroundings, and enforcement of CMHA regulations. CATI interviews were conducted in September and October 1999 with a list sample of 323 current adult residents of CMHA housing sites. *Project Director:* Kim Downing.

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Y2K Project. The Center conducted a six-month series of interviews designed to measure changes in cash holdings in anticipation of Y2K problems by adult English-speaking Ohioans. Part of the monthly Buckeye State Poll, the study was sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. The monthly RDD survey had 500–600 completions. *Principal Investigator:* Paul Lavrakas.

Gun Control. Sponsored by the *Columbus Dispatch*, the September Buckeye State Poll contained a module on gun control. The gun/violence measures had 748 completions and a margin of sampling error of $\pm 3.6\%$. *Principal Investigator:* Gerald Kosicki.

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Oregon Annual Social Indicators Survey (OASIS).

OSRL conducted an RDD survey of 416 Oregon residents November 19 through December 4, 1999. This year OASIS asked questions for the Oregon State Library and for researchers at Oregon State Univ. and the Univ. of Oregon. OSRL staff questions included items related to firearms, population growth in Oregon, drinking water, nuclear war, and the death penalty. *Principal Investigator:* Stephen Johnson, *Project Director:* Toshihiko Murata.

Oregon Household Telecommunications Survey.

Approximately 1,650 RDD interviews will be completed this winter for the Oregon Economic and Community Development Dept. This survey's goals are to assess Oregonians' ownership and use patterns of computers, telephones, and related technologies in order to better serve them and help project future needs. An additional

7 questions on the death penalty were added to the end of the survey for a Univ. of Oregon researcher. *Principal Investigator:* Patricia Gwartney, *Project Director:* Toshihiko Murata.

TEXAS

Center for Community Research and Development (CCRD)

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Waco Tribune-Herald Survey, Fall 1999. This CATI poll measured the actions, knowledge, and attitudes of 528 Waco-McLennan County adults toward consumer and media issues. *Coordinators:* Larry Lyon and Helen Powell.

Waco Independent School District (WISD) Survey, Spring 1999. This poll, part of the CCRD's continuing series of multi-client telephone surveys, queried residents about their attitudes and knowledge of WISD and local education issues. A total of 508 CATI interviews were completed with adults residing in the WISD school district. *Coordinators:* Larry Lyon, Tillman Rodabough, and Leslie Wilch McCallister.

Local Indicators/Needs Assessments Spring 1999, Update 6. This is an update of a study initially conducted in 1994 to assess the quality of life in Waco and McLennan County. Foci include economics, education, human services, health care, public safety, housing, transportation, environment, and recreation and culture (not all are included in each update). These local indicators compare Waco with several other peer communities and provide an assessment of Waco's standing compared to the state of Texas as a whole.

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The National Study of Families and Households (NSFH). This CATI survey is the third wave of longitudinal data collection for the NSFH. The comprehensive study of family life in the U.S. will interview a portion of the original sample and their young adult sons and daughters. Interviewers will administer the 45-60

minute instrument to approximately 9,000 respondents from households first interviewed in 1987-8 and re-interviewed in 1992-4. Funding comes from the Center for Population Research at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Additional funding is pending to interview additional sample. *Principal Investigators:* Jim Sweet and Larry Bumpass, *Project Director:* Debra Wright.

Truckee Watershed Study. This CATI survey has two components: 1) a re-interview with 400 respondents from an RDD sample who completed the 1998 version of the survey instrument, and 2) an additional 350 respondents from a new RDD sample. The interview asks about water supply and quality in the Truckee River Watershed. The project also includes two focus groups. Funding for this project comes from several sources, including the National Science Foundation. *Principal Investigator:* Craig Trumbo, *Project Director:* Debra Wright.

Wisconsin Behavioral Risk Factor Study. Funded by the Dept. of Health and Family Services, this project monitors the health and health-related behaviors of selected adults in Wisconsin households. The project consists of 6 modules on topics ranging from tobacco use to family planning, in addition to a series of core items. With sample added monthly, the Survey Center will survey about 2,560 households over 5 regions in 2000. The project also includes a minority oversample. *Project Director:* Eden Pudberry.

Wisconsin Family Health Survey. Also funded by the Dept. of Health and Family Services, this CATI project monitors the health and health-related behaviors of families in Wisconsin. Interviewers are gathering information from a family member as well as proxy reports on other family members' health. In addition to a series of core items, the project consists of 6 modules on topics ranging from tobacco use to family planning. About 2,400 households will be surveyed in 2000. The sample structure matches that of the *Behavioral Risk Factor Study*. *Project Director:* Melissa Marcello.

CANADA

Institute for Social Research York University

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A National Survey of the Gambling Habits of Canadians. The Institute is currently undertaking a large national study involving 3,000 RDD CATI interviews with households in each of the 10 Canadian provinces.

Approximately 400 respondents will be re-interviewed two weeks after the initial interview. Sponsored by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, the study examines the social and economic impact that gambling is having on individuals and society as access to and availability of gambling activities increase. *Project Manager:* David Northrup.

Physical Activity Monitor. The Institute recently completed a large national study on behalf of the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) with funding from Health Canada. Approximately 4,000 RDD CATI interviews were conducted. This study examined the importance of physical activity in the lives of Canadians and will help CFLRI provide up-to-date and reliable information to governments and the private sector on a wide range of issues associated with health and active living. *Principal Investigator:* Cora Craig (CFLRI), *Project Manager:* Richard Myles.

Hamilton Environmental Risk and Action Survey. On behalf of the McMaster Univ. Institute of Environment and Health and the Hamilton-Wentworth Public Health Dept., the Institute recently conducted more than 500 20-minute RDD CATI interviews with households in the Hamilton-Wentworth region. This study is investigating the impacts of air quality on individual and community well-being, and it also addresses the need to better understand the determinants of action around environmental issues. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada was also a sponsor of this study. *Principal Investigator:* Susan Elliott (School of Geography and Geology, McMaster Univ.), *Project Managers:* Sarah Wakefield (McMaster Univ.) and John Pollard (ISR).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

This section is reserved for calls for papers, announcements of new publications, conferences, and other items of interest to the survey research community.

Well Known Survey Research Laboratory Closes

After 40 years of providing research services to the public, the Univ. of Wisconsin-Extension's Wisconsin Survey Research Laboratory (WSRL) will be closing as of June 30, 2000. The Chancellor of the institution cited deficit problems and competition in the area as reasons for the shutdown.

Second International Conference on Establishment Surveys

The Second International Conference on Establishment Surveys (ICES-II) will be held June 18–21, 2000, at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo, New York. The first ICES in June 1993 convened more than 400 experts in the design and conduct of business, agricultural, and institutional surveys from 35 countries around the globe. The first conference formally documented the state of the art in 1993. Practitioners have implemented many new techniques since then. With the new millennium upon us, ICES-II is taking a forward look at methods for surveying businesses, farms, and institutions. Both invited as well as contributed sessions will occur at ICES-II, in addition to short courses and software demonstrations. Registration materials and a preliminary program can be found at the conference home page <http://www.eia.doe.gov/ices2/>. For more information, please contact the ICES-II Organizing Committee Chair John Kovar at Statistics Canada; 3-A, R.H. Coats Bldg.; 120 Parkdale Avenue; Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6, CANADA or send e-mail to kovar@statcan.ca. The phone number is 613-951-8615, and the fax number is 613-951-5711.

Call for Papers—*Field Methods*

The journal *Field Methods* announces a special issue on **research methods in product and service development**.

Articles should describe and explain qualitative and/or quantitative methods developed for data collection, management, and/or analysis. Authors are especially encouraged to examine recent methodological innovations in such areas as:

- experience sampling (so-called “beeper studies”)
- time allocation/time management methods
- scenario and task analysis
- network analysis
- computer assisted domain analysis
- direct observation
- unobtrusive observation
- object manipulation
- usability analysis
- proximity studies
- decision-tree analysis
- archival methods

This is only a suggested list of topics. Please feel free to call to discuss your ideas for contributions to this special issue. Contact Bryan Byrne at 650-565-8489 or

by e-mail at aguas@ix.netcom.com.

your area, visit <http://www1.jcu.edu/SOCIO/assocs.htm>.

The projected publication month is February 2001. Please submit the articles and reviews by June 2000 on a standard 3.5" floppy along with one hard copy version. Mail all submissions to Bryan Byrne, Special Issue Editor, *Field Methods*, 3895 La Selva Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Society for Applied Sociology Headquarters at Baylor University

The administrative office of the Society for Applied Sociology (SAS) is located at Baylor Univ., Waco, Texas, in the Center for Community Research and Development. Tillman Rodabough is the Executive Officer, and Vicki Northern is the Administrative Officer. Membership is open. Contact Tillman or Vicki for more information at larry_lyon@baylor.edu or see SAS on the Web at <http://www.appliedsoc.org>. *The Useful Sociologist*, the SAS newsletter, is published three times a year. To check meeting times, places, etc. of regional associations in

Society for Applied Sociology 17th Annual Meeting

The 17th Annual Meeting of SAS will be held at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda, August 10–13, 2000. Called Unity Meeting 2000, it will be a combined annual meeting of both the Society for Applied Sociology and the Sociological Practice Association. In addition, this meeting will immediately precede the American Sociological Association annual meeting (August 12–16, 2000), which will also be in Washington, D.C. Contact Vicki Northern at info@appliedsoc.org for more information.

53rd Annual Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques

The Survey Research Center (SRC) at the Univ. of Michigan's Institute for Social Research announces the 53rd Annual Summer Institute. The Summer Institute is

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a training program in survey research techniques conducted by SRC staff and other survey research specialists.

The Summer Institute offers graduate-level courses in two consecutive four-week sessions: June 5–30 and July 3–28, 2000. All courses will be offered at the Univ. of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus.

Several courses will be offered simultaneously in the Washington, D.C. area at the Univ. of Maryland in College Park through the Joint Program in Survey Methodology via a two-way interactive video system. (The Summer Institute office can provide further details about registration for these video courses, or you may contact the Joint Program directly at 301-314-7911.)

Courses are offered with or without graduate credit in eight-week, four-week, two-week, and one-week formats. Course topics include survey research techniques, questionnaire design, cognition and survey measurement, survey sampling, and analysis of survey data. For a list of courses and registration details, check the Summer Institute Website at <http://www.isr.umich.edu/src/si>. A brochure containing application materials became available in February 2000.

The Summer Institute also includes an eight-week in-depth program of study in sampling methods. The Sampling Program for Survey Statisticians combines university classes with practical application in research methods and office practice.

To receive a copy of our brochure, send an e-mail message to summers@isr.umich.edu, or contact James Lepkowski, Director, or Andrea Johns, Program Associate, at the Institute for Social Research, Univ. of Michigan, 734-764-6595 or by fax at 734-764-8263.

PERSONNEL NOTES

Survey Research reports on the new appointments and promotions of professional staff at academic and not-for-profit survey research organizations, as well as those of the for-profit organizations that are patrons of the newsletter.

Donna Eisenhower has joined the Survey Research Center at the Univ. of California at Berkeley as the Director of Survey Operations and as a Senior Research

Scientist. *Madonna Camel* has been promoted to Manager of Data Collection.

Michael Ornstein has been appointed Director of the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University. Dr. Ornstein is an Associate Professor of Sociology at York and has been Associate Director of ISR for many years.

Norman Bradburn is the new Assistant Director for the National Science Foundation's Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate. He succeeds Bennett Bertenthal, who has become Professor of Psychology at the Univ. of Chicago. Bradburn is also Vice President and Director of Research at the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the Univ. of Chicago.

At NORC, new Survey Directors *Anita Kneifel*, formerly of Abt Associates, and *Vassiliki Kakavas*, formerly at the Chicago/Cook County Community Health Council, have joined the staff. *Cathy Haggerty*, *Sally Murphy*, and *Missy Koppelman* have been promoted to Senior Survey Director-2. *Karen Grigorian*, *Paul Pulliam*, *Ann Cederlund*, *Bob Bailey*, *Sharon Myers*, *Rupa Datta*, and *Kymn Kochanek* have been promoted to Senior Survey Director-1.

At the Survey Research Laboratory at the Univ. of Illinois at Chicago, *Amy DeGrush* has been promoted to Senior Project Coordinator.

Sharon Kraft has joined the Center for Survey Research at The Ohio State Univ. (OSU) as Finance Manager. She was previously Administrative Associate with OSU's Supercomputer Center. *Jeffrey Stec* has assumed a new role as Research Associate after working for the Center as a Graduate Research Associate, a Senior Graduate Research Associate, and as a consultant while on fellowship through the OSU Economics Dept. Formerly a part-time Office Assistant, *Colin Odden* is now a Project Coordinator for the Center.

The Univ. of Cincinnati's Institute for Policy Research recently welcomed *Thomas Shaw*, formerly with NORC, as Research Associate and *Nancy Diemler*, previously with the University's Hoxworth Blood Center, as Business Manager.

Previous issues of *Survey Research* are available from the Survey Research Laboratory's webpage at <http://www.srl.uic.edu>.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

This section contains listings of employment opportunities in survey research organizations. Listings can be sent to the editors at the address in the newsletter or e-mailed to krish@srl.uic.edu. Survey Research does not charge a fee for these postings.

The Research Triangle Institute currently has openings for **Survey Managers** and **Senior Survey Directors** in their offices located in Research Triangle Park, NC; Washington, D.C.; Rockville, MD; and Chicago, IL. Survey Manager candidates must have a bachelor's degree with a background in social science research methods and 3+ years of experience in survey research design and implementation. Senior Survey Director candidates must have 10+ years of experience serving as a project director, principal investigator, or another senior management or scientific role on research contracts. RTI offers competitive salary and excellent benefits. Interested applicants should send resumé with salary requirements to Kirk Pate, Research Triangle Institute, P.O. Box 12194, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (or send e-mail to dkp@rti.org). To learn more about RTI, please visit our Web Site at <http://www.rti.org>. EOE/AA M/F/D/V.

The Center for Survey Research, Univ. of Massachusetts Boston, is seeking to hire a highly experienced **Manager of Telephone Data Collection Operations** for social science survey research projects. Responsibilities include overseeing recruitment, hiring, and training of an interviewer staff of 75; managing all survey data collection procedures, including planning, organizing and implementing procedures for multiple projects; reviewing and developing techniques for monitoring and enhancing interviewer performance; ensuring quality control; maintaining performance standards; and developing and implementing improvements and innovations in telephone data collection. Applicants must have extensive experience in a social science research organization, preferably an academic survey research organization, and have managed probability surveys with complex sample designs. Additionally, applicants must have the ability to interpret and use sample and interviewer productivity reports and in-depth knowledge and experience managing research studies using CATI software (CASES system desirable). Send resumé to Director, Center for Survey Research, Univ. of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02125-3393. Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

PUBLICATIONS

This section contains references for publications on survey research methodology. They are not available from Survey Research nor the Survey Research Laboratory.

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- * Survey Research Center, University of Michigan
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