

Travel Survey Methods

TRB Committee A1D10

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MARK YOUR TRB CALENDARS FOR :

National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) Workshop
 Sunday, January 12, 1:00-5:00pm
 Hilton—Lincoln East
 Roll out and early results from the 2001 NHTS!

A1D10 Committee Meeting
 Monday, January 13, 7:00-10:00pm
 Hilton—Map Room
 (see agenda P. 4)

 **NEW MEMBERS 'MEET AND GREET' AT 5:00 PM**

A1D10 Paper Session
Studies of Travel Survey Data Reliability and Validity
Tuesday, January 14, 1:30-3:15pm, Hilton—Lincoln West
 Moderator: Mark Freedman, Westat

Effects of Task Complexity and Presentation Format on the Validity of Stated Choice Responses for Respondents with Limited Literacy Skills *By Theo Arentze, Aloys Borgers, and Harry Timmermans (Eindhoven University of Technology, The Netherlands), Romano DelMistro, University of Pretoria, South Africa)*

Temporal Variability of Car Usage as an Input to the Design of Before & After Surveys *By A.J. Richardson, The Urban Transport Institute*

Impact of Internet Retrieval for Reducing Nonresponse in a Household Travel Survey *By Stacey Bricka and Johanna Zmud (NuStats)*

A1D10 Paper Session (joint call with Urban Data Committee)
Results from Recent GPS-Enhanced Household Travel Surveys
Tuesday, January 14, 3:45-5:30pm, Hilton—Lincoln West
 Moderator: Sean Doherty, Wilfrid Laurier University

Estimating Trip Rate Under-Reporting: Preliminary Results from the Ohio Household Travel Survey *By Bennett Pierce (Batelle), Jesse Casas (NuStats), Greg Giaimo (Ohio Department of Transportation)*

Conducting a GPS Survey with a Time-Use Diary *By Peter Stopher, Phillip Bullock, and Frederic Horst (Institute of Transport Studies, University of Sydney)*

The Impact of Trip Underreporting on VMT and Travel Time Estimates: Preliminary Findings from the California Statewide Household Travel Survey GPS Study *By Jean Wolf, Marcelo Oliveira, Miriam Thompson (GeoStats)*

Join us at **5pm on Monday, January 13** in the Hilton Lounge for cocktails to welcome our new committee members for 2002!

Kara Kockelman, University of Texas, Austin

Donna Murray, Washington Area Metropolitan Transportation Authority (WMATA)

Jeanne Stevens, Nashville Area MPO

Harry Timmermans, Eindhoven University

Chester Wilmot, Louisiana State University

“Challenging Times for Survey Methodologists”

Excerpts from Don Dillman’s presidential address, American Association for Public Opinion Research
The entire text can be found in Public Opinion Quarterly Fall 2002

The telephone, which once seemed the heir apparent to face-to-face interviews, is no longer an obvious choice for conducting many surveys. It is being adversely affected by the change in connectedness of telephone instruments from households to individuals and a cultural shift whereby people are able to control the telephone rather than vice versa, as was the case during its rise to prominence as a mode of data collection in the late 1970s to early 1980s. The Internet has not served as an immediate source of salvation. It is limited by restrictions on access, an inability to develop sample frames, and response rates that are mostly lower than those achievable by telephone. The current situation, seen from a methodologist perspective, has elements of being both the best and worst of times.

The five features described below encapsulate many of the factors that are reshaping the environment in which survey methodologists work. *These features are priorities that need to be addressed.*

“Our methods inevitably reflect the culture around us, much more than they represent anyone’s conception of what would be an ideal survey methodology.”

More survey modes from which to choose. When telephone-survey methods were being developed in the 1970s, many of us thought they would replace face-to-face methods more or less completely. That has not turned out to be the case, especially for surveys that require the highest quality household-sampling frames. Now, I hear similar pronouncements about internet surveys replacing all other modes, a future that I do not believe is likely. There are at least five survey modes in extensive use today— face-to-face procedures, telephone interviews, mail surveys, internet surveys, and touch-tone entry (or IVR) surveys.

Fitting the mode to the survey situation. The effect of these possibilities for administering questionnaires is to provide an unprecedented opportunity for tailoring the data-collection mode to the population and the survey problem, instead of the reverse procedure for fitting the problem to the survey mode. We live at a time in which surveyors are more likely to be creating a survey methodology that works best for their population than simply adopting a survey methodology recommended in survey texts. The trajectory of survey methodology is toward diversity rather than unity.

Greater use of mixed-mode designs. An important spin-off of the move toward matching modes to the survey situation is the mixing of survey modes for the collection of data from a single population. Several factors contribute to this situation. Lower response rates to surveys, and to telephone surveys in particular, are a driving factor. However, a more fundamental driver is the attempt to reduce costs, using modes for which the marginal costs per interview are less than would be the case for alternatives. A third factor that appears to be driving the trend toward mixed-mode surveys is the belief, not well researched, that offering individuals a choice of modes is likely to increase response rates.

More surveyors and survey organizations. When face-to-face methods were our dominant mode there were relatively few survey organizations in the United States. Few firms or agencies could muster the necessary resources for developing complex multistage sample designs that made such interviewing efficient. A major consequence of the development of viable telephone and mail-back methodologies for more survey situations was to expand the number of organizations that could conduct legitimate surveys. A negative impact of this proliferation of surveyors is for many of the new players not to understand, or appreciate, the need for controlling survey errors through sampling or coverage considerations.

A substantial increase in the number and importance of surveys. People are being asked to complete many surveys, sometimes on a daily basis. That which was once a rare experience has become an almost daily one for some people. The heavy use of surveys that now exists is much more a celebration of what we do than it is a situation to deplore. That’s because sample surveys provide an essential function for people, organizations, and society not provided by other means.

NEW RESEARCH

How do you measure a day? Best Practices for Online Diary Studies

(R. Roenick, Microsoft Corporation; KK. Davey and R. Harrison, Knowledge Networks)

Knowledge Networks and Microsoft Corp. conducted an online diary study to gain an understanding of customers' daily activities. The study used a unique, new time diary methodology developed by Dr. Norman Nie of Stanford (University) Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society (SIQSS). The method provided detailed time-use estimates without the respondent burden of a 24-hour diary. Rather than covering the entire day, the focus was on six randomly selected hours of the day—one in each of six time block (strata): night, early morning, late morning, afternoon, early evening and late evening. Each of these strata were broken down into half-hour periods and each period was extensively probed. The diary design was hierarchical, starting with broad activity groups and then, depending on the selection, funneling down to very specific tasks. Once the primary activity was identified, the following types of specific questions were asked: Where was the activity performed, with whom, how long, other activities, if a computer was used: details of software usage and Internet usage. The sampling design was structured to collect an even distribution of days of the week across the total sample and 6 hours over the course of the day for each respondent. Thus, the SIQSS diary was able to go into great detail about the social context of each activity without fatiguing the respondents. The activities measured were: work for pay, education/school, volunteer, housework, childcare, errands, shopping, TV/movies/music, books/magazines/newspapers, Internet (NOT work-related), email (NOT work-related), social activity, recreation/hobby, traveling, driving/commuting, eating, dressing/washing, and sleeping. Identified advantages of this methodology were: fast and more accurate, eases the respondent burden — skip patterns disappear, lists can be more exhaustive, less burden on analysis due to less coding and data cleaning, cost effective. For more information on the methodology, visit www.stanford.edu/group/siqss/Press_Release/internetStudy.html.

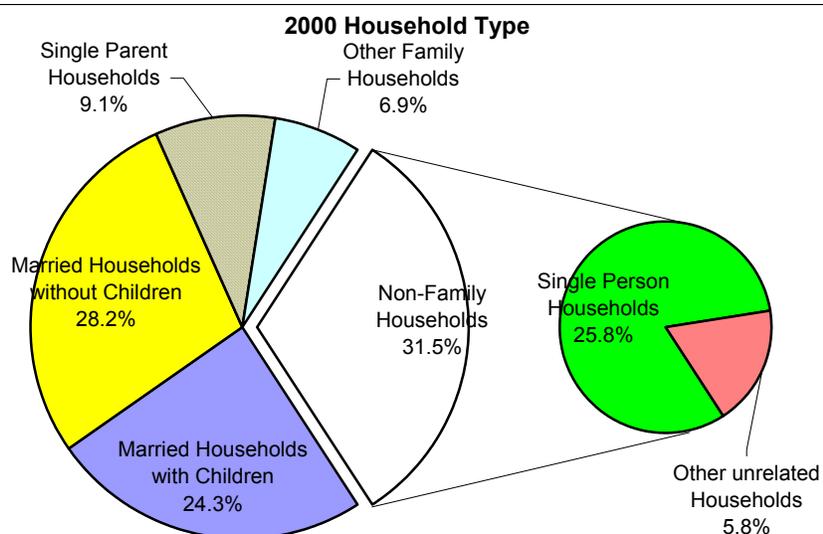
Excluding cell phone numbers from RDD samples may be further complicated in 2003, if as recent news reports have claimed, individuals will be able to switch their residential phone numbers to their wireless phones. Such a switch could make it virtually impossible to tell if a cellular phone or a residential phone has been called.

Beware of Placing Survey Research Calls to Cellular Telephones in US

The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA), one of the best known of the two federal do-not-call laws in the United States, prohibits "calls made to a cellular phone, without the prior consent of the person called if the call is made using an automated telephone dialing system and if the party is charged for the call." To avoid potential penalty, calls must be placed by "live" telephone interviewers instead of using automated dialing systems. Such systems can only be used if the person called has given prior consent. For further information on this issue visit the CMOR website at www.cmor.org.

NOTEWORTHY

For the first time, single person households are a greater proportion in the U.S. than married households with children.





Come at 7pm for Pizza!

Committee Agenda for A1D10

Monday, January 13

- 7:00 – 7:45pm Pizza & Committee Business
7:45 - 8:30pm Is RDD Dead? (Don Dillman, Washington State University (*invited*)
8:30 - 9:15pm Roundtable on Households Travel Surveys
(San Francisco Bay Area, London, Valencia)
9:15—9:45pm GPS-Enhanced Prompted Recall Pilot Studies (Sydney, St. Louis)

Mark Your Calendars for These Upcoming Events:

November 14-17, 2002
International Conference on Questionnaire Development, Evaluation, and Testing Methods (QDET). Charleston, SC.
www.jpism.umd.edu/qdet

January 16, 2003, at TRB Annual Meeting
Design and Application of a Travel Survey for European Long-distance Trips Based on an International Network of Expertise — Workshop sponsored by Committee on Traveler Behavior and Values (A1C04)

April 6 - 11, 2003
Ninth Conference on the Application of Transportation Planning Methods
Baton Rouge, Louisiana. www.ltrc.lsu.edu/TRBConference

Our mid-year meeting will be held in conjunction with this conference.

Suggested Theme Call for Papers 2004: TRUST in Travel Survey Research

Can we trust response rates to be indicators of data quality? Can we trust in the abilities of our sampling procedures to yield representative samples when practical impediments make non-response an increasing challenge? Can we trust telephone interviewing, Internet surveying or GPS data capture to yield valid data? Can we trust respondents to do their best to answer our questions accurately? Can we trust interviewers to do their jobs well?

Bring your suggested themes for Calls for Papers or committee-sponsored Round Tables or Panels to the annual committee meeting.

Nominate New Committee Members

A list of current committees can be found on the web site (see below for link). Nominated for membership in 2003 are:

Ben Pierce, Battelle, Columbus, Ohio
Jennifer Russo, MORPACE International, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Leslie Rimmer, Resource Systems Group, White River, Vermont

Other nominations are welcome!

NCHRP Research Statements

Our most recent submissions of Research Problem Statements (2001):
Estimating and Predicting Urban and Intercity Commercial Vehicle Movements
Transit Survey Synthesis (resubmitted, and under consideration as full TCRP).

Any ideas for 2003 submissions? Bring them to the committee meeting.

Paper Evaluation Criteria

Your thoughts on this simple evaluation criteria statement.

We will evaluate papers for the quality, originality, and completeness of the work represented in them. The A1D10 sessions should include cutting-edge research that further the development of the profession. Papers should evidence careful preparation and should represent work that is well underway.

Check out our updated committee web page at:
www.fhwa.dot.gov/ohim/trb/trbpage.htm

Special thanks to Bryant Gross, FHWA, for the web update

Committee members: Help us update the reports page by sending relevant links to Elaine Murakami, who will work with Bryant to get this page updated.