



Innovations in General Population Web Panel Surveys of Households to Improve Sample Coverage and the Response Rate

March 4, 2015

Michael J. Stern, Ph.D.
Fellow, Center for Excellence in Survey Research
NORC at the University of Chicago



What are we going to discuss today?

- Introducing the AmeriSpeak Panel
- Cover innovations in leveraging area probability sampling in recruiting households for web surveys
- Examine, advances in contacting, registering, and retention in of panel members.
- Address boosting probability-based panel survey response rates via non-response follow-up.
- Present NORC's standard sample quality report that will accompany NORC's web surveys
- Questions

What is AmeriSpeak?



- **AmeriSpeak is a household, multi-client panel to support NORC's mission to serve the public interest and improve lives through objective social science research that supports informed decision making.**
- Selected households are invited to join the panel by web and telephone and then participate in research studies approximately two to three times a month.

What are we going to discuss today?

- AmeriSpeak probability-based panel
 - Nationally representative panel of U.S. teens and adults.
 - Its initial offering will be a general population adult panel of 10,000 households across the country
- Development of custom online panels that can include specific population samples including military veterans and low-income households.

Leveraging area probability sampling for web surveys

- Stage 1: National Sample Frame
 - Area probability sample frame constructed by NORC to cover over 99 percent of U.S. households
 - Sample frame for ***General Social Survey***, ***Survey of Consumer Finances***, etc.
 - Sampling unit—is a National Frame Area (NFA), which is either an entire metropolitan area (made up of one or more counties) or a county (some counties were combined so that each NFA contains a population of at least 10,000)

Leveraging area probability sampling for web surveys

- The largest NFAs contain 56 percent of the population within 8 percent of the geographic area of the United States.
- Remaining areas are stratified into areas where street-style addresses and not (mostly rural areas)

Leveraging area probability sampling for web surveys

- Within the selected NFAs, the second stage sampling unit is a segment, defined either in terms of Census tracts or block groups, containing at least 300 housing units according to the 2010 Census.
- A stratified probability sample of 1,514 segments was selected with probability proportional to size.
- For most of the 1,514 segments, the USPS DSF provided over 90 percent coverage of the segment in terms of city-style addresses that are geo-codeable.

Leveraging area probability sampling for web surveys

- For the 123 segments where the DSF provided insufficient coverage, we enhanced the DSF address list with in-person listing.
- The National Sample Frame contains almost 3 million households, including over 80,000 rural households added through the in-person listing.

Leveraging area probability sampling for web surveys

- The 2015 AmeriSpeak panel sample consists of nationally representative housing units drawn from the 2010 NORC National Sample Frame.
 - National Frame updated annually with latest USPS DSF
- The panel sample of households includes an oversample of housing units in segments (Census tracts or block groups) higher in young adults and/or Hispanics and non-Hispanic African-Americans

Contacting, registering, and retention

- Two-stage recruitment process
 - Initial recruitment
 - Nonresponse follow-up recruitment (NRFUR)
- Initial Recruitment used to register by online or phone
 - Pre-notification 6"x11" pre-notification postcard alerting the household of their selection
 - USPS recruitment package in a large 9"x12" envelope with a cover letter, a summary of the privacy policy and FAQs, and a study brochure
 - Two follow-up post cards
 - Email contacts and telephone for matched sample units

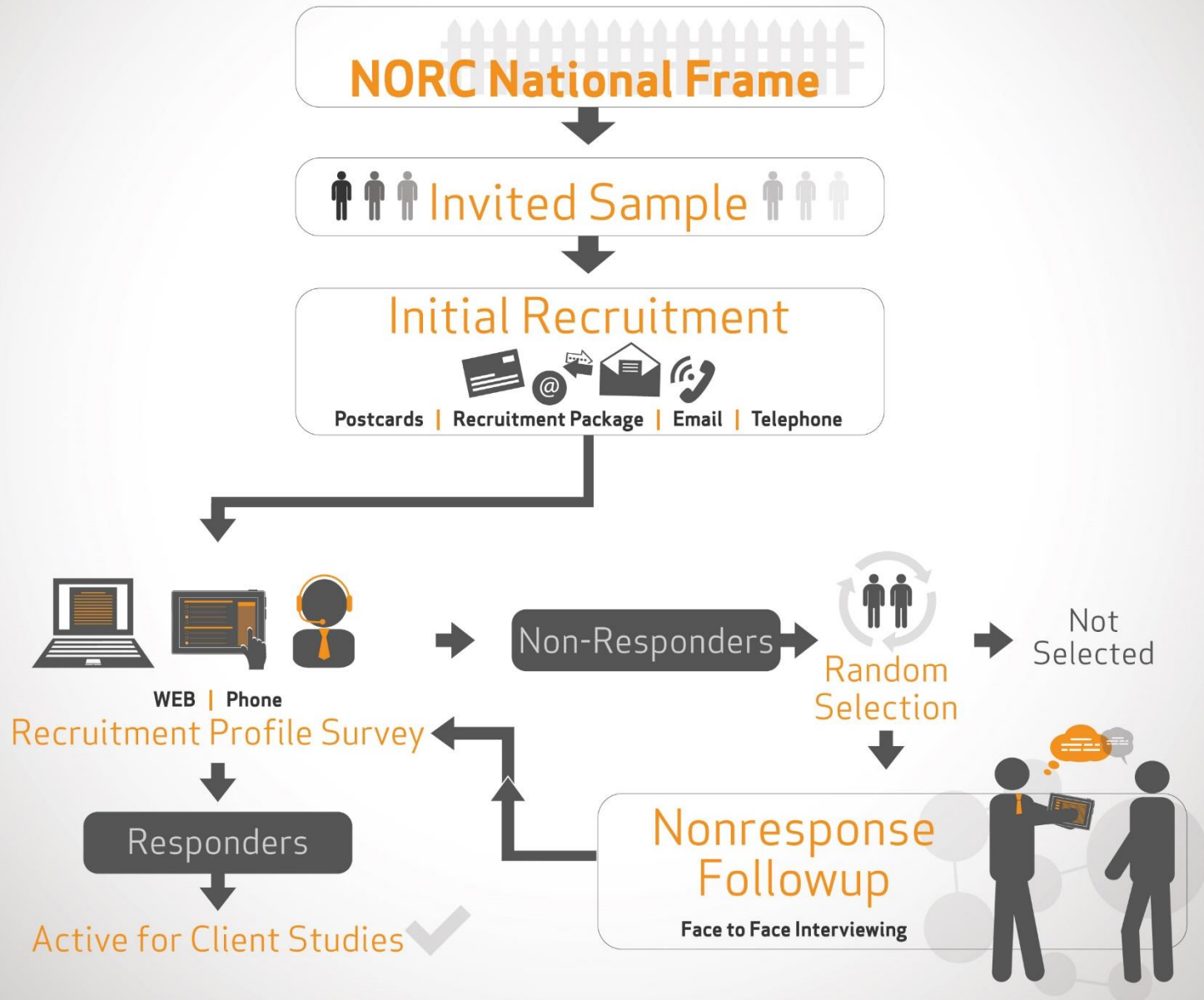
Contacting, registering, and retention

- Nonresponse Follow-up (after 10-weeks)
 - Randomly subsampled for the second stage (NRFUR)
 - Express mail a new recruitment package with an enhanced incentive offer
 - NORC field interviewers then make personal visits to the respondents' homes to encourage participation in AmeriSpeak.
 - during their personal visits, answer any questions about study participation and provide assistance as needed
 - (e.g., provide log-in instructions to the AmeriSpeak panel web portal, the toll-free AmeriSpeak phone number, etc.).

Contacting, registering, and retention

- Registering Households
 - NORC obtains and documents informed consent and agreement to the study's Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions during the registration process.
 - After registration is completed, AmeriSpeak panel members first complete an introduction survey of about 15 minutes by web or telephone
 - Survey provides a profile of the panelist household
 - Subsequent surveys collect other background such as public affairs, health services, health conditions, financial services, and computer and internet usage

AmeriSpeak Recruitment Methodology



AmeriSpeak Supports Multiple Modes and Contact Points for Client Studies

Web Mode

Access survey via log-into AmeriSpeak.org
or emailed study invitation

PCs

Laptops

Tablets

Smartphone
An alternative to
phone mode for
non-web households



Phone Mode

Addressing “web reluctant,” non-web and
low-literacy households

In-bound CATI

Out-bound CATI



NORC's standard sample quality report

- As a supporter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), NORC follows AAPOR standards for response rate reporting as published by AAPOR in its *Standard Definitions*
- NORC will report the AAPOR response rate in its NORC Card deliverable provided to AmeriSpeak clients

NORC's standard sample quality report

- The AmeriSpeak response rate is properly calculated to take into account each stage of the respondent participation process (recruiting, retaining, and surveying AmeriSpeak panelists).
- NORC calculates the response rate consistent with the weighted response rate methodology used in the American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

NORC's standard sample quality report

- Responses rates are a very narrow (and not particularly good) summary of impact of non-response on survey error.
- Objective of NORC Card is to present a fuller snapshot of survey response and potential bias
- Will supplement response rate reports with:
 - Comparison of HH characteristics of responders and non-responders based on commercial vendor assigned characteristics
 - Comparison of individual-level distribution of key characteristic versus expectations from Census or other Benchmarks
 - Data on breakoffs during the survey
 - Geographic summaries potential bias in respondents

OVERVIEW

Date of Report: March 2, 2015
Project Title: Health Satisfaction Survey
Project Number: NPPO.01.01
Prepared For: Amerispeak Management
Study Population: All Adults living in the United States

Start Date: 10/03/2014
End Date: 2/22/2015
Sample Units: 438
Completed Interviews: 264
Avg. Interview length: 18 min, 9 sec

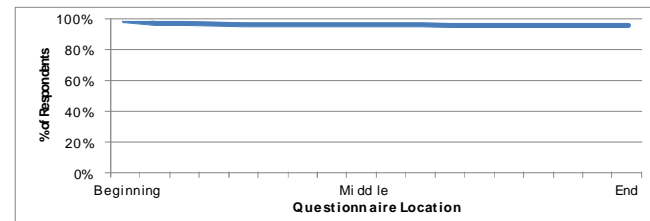
RESPONSE RATES

HH Recruitment Rate (RR3): 28 %
Member Recruitment Rate: 60 %
Survey completion Rate: 60 %

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

	Households	
	Sampled	Interviewed
Household Income		
Median Household Income	\$ 60,000	\$ 55,000
Age		
Median Age for Population 18+	51	48
Race / Ethnicity		
White (non -Hispanic)	84 %	75 %
Black (non -Hispanic)	8 %	12 %
Hispanic	12 %	8 %
Asian (non -Hispanic)	5 %	2 %
American Indian (non -Hispanic)	0 %	1 %
Pacific Islander (non -Hispanic)	0 %	1 %
Education Status		
Less than High School	13 %	6 %
High School Equivalent	28 %	16 %
Some College	28 %	38 %
Bachelor's Degree	19 %	21 %
Graduate Degree	12 %	19 %
Household structure characteristics		
Renter Occupied	23 %	30 %
Children in Household		
Households with 1+ under 18 years	24 %	41 %
Marital Status		
Currently Married	40 %	53 %

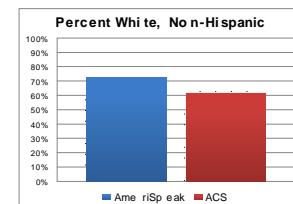
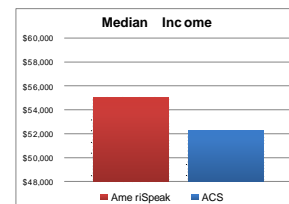
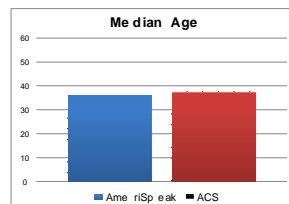
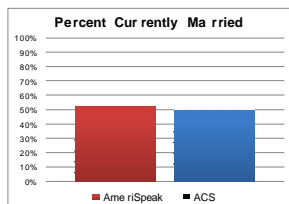
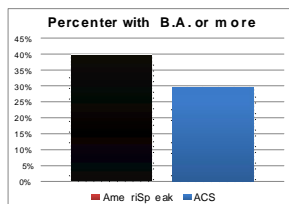
SURVEY BREAKOFF



POTENTIAL BIAS



INDIVIDUAL BENCHMARKS



Summary: AmeriSpeak Panel Features



Key Features	Notes
Sample Frame	Area probability sample using the NORC National Frame (same as General Social Survey)
Target Population	U.S. households, age 13 and older, English speakers, with Spanish language coverage added in 2016
Recruitment Methodology	Contact HHs by US. mail, email, and phone, with nonresponse follow-up by phone and in-person field recruitment by NORC field interviewers
Response Rates	25%+ panel recruitment AAPOR response rate; 70%+ study cooperation rate
Panel Sample Size	10K HHs in mid-2015; 20K HHs in 2016, 30K in 2017

Summary: AmeriSpeak Panel Features (continued)



Key Features	Notes
Study Mode of Data Collection	Web for approx. 85% of panel; phone mode for remainder to cover non-net, low literacy, low tech population, and HHs not having conventional web access allowed to participate by smartphone web
Panel Burden	Active panel management: Approximately 2-3 surveys or 45 minutes of survey participation per month
Profile / Background Data	AmeriSpeak collects in-depth HH and person-level background data for sample targeting, weighting and analysis: demographics, health conditions, health services access and utilization, social media usage, public affairs, etc.
NORC Card: Sample Quality Report Card	NORC Card deliverable provides quantitative assessment of non-response bias, sample representativeness analysis, AAPOR response rate, analysis of interview break-offs, etc.

Please Contact AmeriSpeak-BD@Norc.org for
more information

Thank You!



Innovation  DAYS

 insight for informed decisions™