Module 1: Introduction to Phone Surveys
Video 1 of 5: Module Overview and Phone Survey Mode

Florian Keusch
At the End of the Module Participants Should…

• …know the strength and weaknesses of phone surveys compared to other modes of survey data collection.
• …understand the implications of design decisions in phone surveys on data quality related to measurement and representation.
• …be familiar with different mixed-mode approaches that include a phone component.
• …be aware of factors influencing costs in phone surveys.
Phone Survey Mode

Introduction to Phone Surveys
What is a Phone Survey?

• A **survey** is a **systematic method** for gathering information from (a sample of) entities for the purposes of **constructing quantitative descriptors** of the attributes of the larger population of which the entities are members.

  Source: Groves et al. (2011)

• A phone survey uses the **phone mode** for data collection; involving interviewers contacting sample members by phone asking questions to collect information.

What is Meant by Mode?

- Combination of medium and agent involved in data collection
  - Medium = voice, text on screen, text on paper, video…
  - Agent = interviewer, self (respondent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administered by</th>
<th>Medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respondent (Self)</strong></td>
<td>Mail-out questionnaire, SAQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviewer</strong></td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FTF/Personal visit</td>
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*Interviewer administers non-sensitive questions
IVR – A Special Form of Phone Surveys

- IVR = Interactive Voice Response

Outbound or Recruit-and-switch Methods
- Interviewer initiates call
- Does persuasion, within-household selection, collects basic information
- Switches respondent to IVR system

Inbound Methods
- Respondent initiates calls
- No Interviewer involvement
# Dimensions of Data Collection Modes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewer Involvement</th>
<th>Contact with Respondent</th>
<th>Channels of Communication</th>
<th>Degree of Privacy</th>
<th>Technology Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interviewer-administered</td>
<td>• Direct</td>
<td>• Auditory only</td>
<td>• Low</td>
<td>• No technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interviewer present, self-administered</td>
<td>• Indirect</td>
<td>• Auditory + visual</td>
<td>• Medium</td>
<td>• Interviewer uses technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-administered</td>
<td>• None</td>
<td>• Visual only</td>
<td>• High</td>
<td>• Respondent uses technology supplied by survey organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Respondent uses own technology</td>
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</tbody>
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# Comparison of Phone to Other Survey Modes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lower interview costs than personal interviews</td>
<td>• Potentially lower coverage than personal interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– But more expansive than mail and web surveys</td>
<td>• Usually lower response rates than personal interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Higher degree of perceived anonymity and less social desirability</td>
<td>– Both can lead to bias and “less representative” samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More control over interviewers</td>
<td>• No use of visual stimuli (e.g., scales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Easy to implement multiple contact</td>
<td>• Less complex questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shorter field periods</td>
<td>• Interviews need to be shorter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mixed-Mode Designs

• Increasingly combinations of modes being used
  – e.g., moving from personal interviews to mix of personal and phone
• Goal: Optimizing trade-off among different sources of error and cost
• Different modes might be used in different phases of data collection, including communication with potential respondents
• Most relevant scenarios:
  – Respondents in different sub-groups get same questionnaire but in different modes (concurrent mixed-mode design)
  – Everybody gets questionnaire in same modes but mode varies over waves or within interview
Different Modes for Different Subgroups

• Concurrent-mixed mode
  – Usually determined by researchers who gets what mode; sometimes respondents can choose
  – Goal: Reduce coverage and nonresponse error

• Examples
  – Personal interviews for people living in regions with low phone coverage; phone interviews for everybody else

• Consequences
  – Questionnaires need to be adapted from visual to auditory administration
  – Mode effects on measurement confound with subgroups
Different Modes at Different Points in Time

• Use one mode for start of panel survey, another mode for later waves

• Consequence
  – Reduce costs
  – Confounding of time and mode effects on measurement

• Different modes for different parts of questionnaire
  – Example: Recruit-and-switch IVR for sensitive information

• Consequence
  – Improve data quality to heighten privacy of measurement
Survey Mode and Survey Error

- No one “best mode” for all situations
- Decisions on data collection method involve trade-offs on variety of different design aspects
- Mode as bundles of features
  - Sampling frame, sampling methods
  - Method of administration and mode of response
  - Training and supervision of interviewers
  - Contact and recruitment methods
- Mode affects full spectrum of error sources plus costs

→ Module 2
→ Modules 3 & 5
→ Module 4
→ Module 5
END OF VIDEO 1