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Panel Effects Exists? Results from a Year 2 Follow-up Experiment to Assess Panel Conditioning Effects in AmeriSpeak® Panel Surveys

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Outline

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Background
AmeriSpeak Panel, and Defining Panel Conditioning Effects
NORC’s AmeriSpeak Panel is a National Probability Based Sample, established in 2015.

Panel maintenance is a dynamic process, with the sample supplemented and refreshed regularly over time to grow the panel, compensate for panel attrition, and improve panel representation for specific subpopulations.
By the Numbers

49K Participating Households (50 States + DC)

1.2K+ Client Surveys Completed (Since June 2015)

24% Recruitment Response Rate (AAPOR RR3)

34% Recruitment Response Rate (For recruitment years with NRFU)
Do Panel Conditioning Effects Exist in AmeriSpeak?

- Panel conditioning is the change in a person’s survey responses that is influenced by their panel tenure and panel experiences.

- **Examples of Panel Conditioning Effects**
  - *Improve quality:* As their panel tenure increases Panelists may be more willing to offer an opinion, reducing no opinion and DK survey responses.
  
  - *Degrade quality:* More tenured Panelists learn to take surveys more quickly by refusing to answer survey questions more often than less tenured Panelists.
Research Constructs

Panel Conditioning
Conditioning Constructs

1. Will the willingness of offering an opinion increase as the panel tenure increases? (Decrease in Refused and DK responses)

2. Will the panelists become more knowledgeable and interested about topics that are asked frequently in surveys?

3. Will the panelists provide more extreme responses to attitudinal questions over time as their panel tenure increases?

4. Do the panelists provide more moderate and/or no opinion responses to attitudinal questions when they are first recruited to the panel?

5. Do the panelists provide more or less item non-response, speeding, and satisficing when they are first recruited to the panel?
Research Design
Research Design

(1) Fielded a multi-topic survey in 2021

- 18+ population
  - Oversample of less tenured panelists & Nonresponse Followup panelists (NRFU)
- Socio-economic topics and knowledge questions
- Compared estimates between Less and More Tenured panelists to assess panel conditioning effects
  - Accounting for socio-demographics associated with panel attrition
- Largely found no panel conditioning effects from Wave 1 analysis

(2) Fielded the same survey in 2022

- Compared survey estimates of panelists who completed both Wave 1 and Wave 2 surveys to assess panel conditioning effects
- N=4,916 Panelists completed both Wave 1 and Wave 2 surveys
Findings
Panel Conditioning Effects: Differences between Wave 1 and Wave 2 Responses
**Conditioning Construct 1:** Will the *willingness of offering an opinion* increase as the panel tenure increases? (Decrease in Refused, Don’t Know, Skipped responses)

- *No evidence of panel conditioning for construct 1*

### QUESTION* WORDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>WORDING</th>
<th>WAVE 1</th>
<th>WAVE 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q17C</td>
<td>[Immigration] How important are each of the following issues to you personally?... <em>Don’t Know</em></td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17E</td>
<td>[Terrorism and homeland security] How important are each of the following issues to you personally?... <em>Skipped</em></td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23D</td>
<td>[Women] Is there a lot of discrimination against each of the following groups, or not?... <em>Don’t Know</em></td>
<td>0.79%</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29</td>
<td>Public officials don’t care much what people like me think. Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?... <em>Skipped</em></td>
<td>0.70%</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
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* Attitudinal Questions with statistically significant difference between W1 and W2 for Construct. Among 37 total responses.
**Conditioning Construct 2:** Will the panelists become more knowledgeable and interested about topics that are asked frequently in surveys?

Q6*: Do you ever discuss politics with your family or friends?

*Attitudinal Question with largest statistically significant difference between W1 and W2 for Construct. Among 7 questions.*
**Conditioning Construct 3:** Will the panelists provide more extreme responses to attitudinal questions over time as their panel tenure increases?

Q1*: Generally, how would you say things are these days in your life? Would you say that you are...

* Attitudinal Question with largest statistically significant difference between W1 and W2 for Construct. Among 7 questions.
Conditioning Construct 4: Do the panelists provide more moderate and/or no opinion responses to attitudinal questions when they are first recruited to the panel?

Q18*: What is your overall opinion on each of the following? Kamala Harris

* Attitudinal Question with largest statistically significant difference between W1 and W2 for Construct. Among 9 questions.
Number of Estimates that Significantly Differ between Wave 1 and Wave 2

**Construct 1:** Will the willingness of offering an opinion increase as the panel tenure increases? (Decrease in Refused, DK, Skipped responses)

**Construct 2:** Will the panelists become more knowledgeable and interested about topics that are asked frequently in surveys?
Number of Estimates that Significantly Differ between Wave 1 and Wave 2

**Construct 3:** Will the panelists provide more extreme responses to attitudinal questions over time as their panel tenure increases?

**Construct 4:** Do the panelists provide more moderate and/or no opinion responses to attitudinal questions when they are first recruited to the panel?
**Conditioning Construct 5:** Do the panelists provide more or less item non-response, speeding, and satisficing when they are first recruited to the panel?

- **Assessment Metrics Across All Questions**

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<th>Metric</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
<th>Finding</th>
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<tr>
<td>Average of Item Nonresponse across Questions (Skipped)</td>
<td>0.63%</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
<td>Nonresponse is very small for both Waves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of “Don’t Know” Responses across Questions</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>No difference in DK responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Variance of Responses across All Questions</td>
<td>130.2</td>
<td>140.4</td>
<td>Little Evidence of Satisficing at Wave 2 compared to Wave 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of R’s who chose first response option on 70% or more of questions</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>Little evidence of satisficing due to straight-lining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of R’s who chose the idle option(s) for 70% or more of questions with 3+ responses</td>
<td>0.47%</td>
<td>0.57%</td>
<td>Little evidence of satisficing due to straight-lining</td>
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SUMMARY: CONDITIONING CONSTRUCTS 1-5

We largely find little evidence of panel conditioning effects in the AmeriSpeak study data between Wave 1 and Wave 2

- Similar finding as comparing less & more tenured panelists in Wave 1 data presented at 2021 AAPOR

- **Construct 1: Increase in willingness to offer an opinion at Wave 2?** – No evidence of a difference in willingness to offer an opinion between Wave 1 and Wave 2 responses

- **Construct 2: Increase in Knowledge at Wave 2?** – Wave 2 responses were found to be somewhat more accurate or that there was higher interest in survey taking for 5 out of the 7 questions.
  - Investigating further, parsing out results by more and less tenured panelists and by NRFU and nonNRFU status

- **Construct 3: Wave 1 responses more extreme as compared to Wave 2?**
  - No evidence that panelists may be more thoughtful/nuanced and not voicing opinions in the extreme between Wave 1 and Wave 2 responses.

- **Construct 4: Wave 1 responses more moderate/no opinion responses?**
  - No evidence that Wave 1 responses were more moderate than Wave 2 responses.

- **Construct 5: More or less item non-response, speeding, and satisficing at Wave 1?**
  - Item nonresponse & Don’t Know responses were small/ comparable between Wave 1 and Wave 2.
  - Variance of responses and straightlining metrics were small and comparable between Wave 1 and Wave 2.
    - Signals satisficing in Wave 2 likely not an issue
Thank you.

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Get Your Research Right

AmeriSpeak