

How Couples Meet and Stay Together Project

Overview

Knowledge Networks conducted a study focusing on how couples meet and do or do not stay together, on behalf of Stanford University. The study included a general population sample of persons aged 18+ and an oversample of those identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (GLB). To be eligible for the survey, a panelist needed to be in a couple at the time of contact and provide their consent to participate in the study.

To maximize the number of GLB respondents, three methods were used to identify and contact them. First, current Knowledge Networks panelists pre-identified as GLB on an internal profile survey were contacted. Second, prior panelists who had voluntarily withdrawn from the panel within the past three years and who were known to be GLB were contacted and asked to participate. Finally, panelists who had declined to answer the GLB identification question on the internal profile survey were contacted and re-asked the question at the beginning of the survey, with those identifying as GLB at that time continuing.

The survey was fielded between February 21 and April 2, 2009. Initial and resulting sample size, and completion rates for each sample group are provided below.

Sample Size and Completion Rate by Sample Group

Sample Group	Number Sampled	Number Screened	Screener Completion Rate	Number Eligible	Number Completed	Completion Rate for Eligible Cases
General Population	4,741	3,616	77%	2,377	2,377	100%
On-panel GLB	932	781	84%	528	528	100%
Withdrawn GLB	615	105	17%	84	84	100%
Initial ID Refusal GLB	640	397*	62%	20	20	100%
Total	6,928	4,899	71%	3,009	3,009	100%

*Of the 397 people screened, 359 were not eligible because they were not GLB. A total of 38 GLB-identified panelists continued, with 18 of these cases becoming ineligible because they were not in a couple.

The completion rate among eligible cases was 100%, not unexpected since to be eligible one had to actively provide consent for study participation. Also not surprising, the lowest screener completion rate was among the former GLB-identified panelists contacted for participation. If these cases are excluded from the screener completion rate calculation, the overall rate increases to 76%.

The size of the panel population from which the general population, on-panel GLB, and initial ID refusal GLB samples were drawn was 37,654 at the time of the survey. The size of the withdrawn population from which the withdrawn GLB respondents were identified was 19,853 at the time of the survey. Oversampling rates for GLB respondents were calculated on both a weighted and unweighted basis. These respondents were oversampled by a factor of 6.43 (weighted)/7.83 (unweighted).

Finally, some supplemental variables to facilitate identification of sample and respondent groupings and subsequent analysis are provided. For example, the QFLAG variable can be used to identify qualified, eligible cases, the Recsource variable can be used to identify the sample group/recruitment source for each case, and the GLB variable can be used to identify panelists who reported being GLB.

The table on the following pages shows the name and description of supplemental and profile variables included with the survey data.

Supplemental and Profile Variables (Note: Some variables names may have been changed in the production of the final dataset)

<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Variable Description</u>
weight1	Weight1: sample weights for total sample
weight2	Weight2: sample weights for all qualified respondents
weight3	Weight3: sample weights for all qualified GLB and non-GLB separately (2 groups)
weight4	Weight4: sample weights for genpop and augment samples weighted separately
weight5	Weight5: sample weights for all qualified respondents scaled from Weight4
tm_start	Interview start time
tm_finish	Interview finish time
QFLAG	DATA ONLY: Qualification Flag
GLBstatus	GLB status
Recsource	Recruitment source
ppgender	Gender
ppage	Age
ppagecat	Age - 7 categories
ppagect4	Age - 4 categories
ppethm	Race / Ethnicity
ppeduc	Education (highest degree received)
ppeducat	Education (categorical)
pphouse	Housing Type
pprent	Ownership Status of Living Quarters
ppincimp	HH Income (profile and imputed)
ppmarit	Marital Status
pphhhead	Household Head
pphhsiz	Household Size (from Recruitment)
ppt01	Total number of HH members age 1 or younger
ppt1317	Total number of HH members age 13 to 17
ppt18ov	Total number of HH members age 18 or older
ppt25	Total number of HH members age 2 to 5
ppt612	Total number of HH members age 6 to 12
ppwork	Current Employment Status
ppstaten	State (numeric)
ppreg4	Region 4 (based on state of residence)
ppreg9	Region 9 (based on state of residence)
ppmsacat	MSA Status
ppnet	Household Internet Access
ppQ14ARACE	Which of these races do you identify with most closely?

Variable Name	Variable Description
pphispan	Are you of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino descent?
ppRace_White	White
ppRace_Black	Black
ppRace_NativeAmerican	Native American
ppRace_AsianIndian	Asian Indian
ppRace_Chinese	Chinese
ppRace_Filipino	Filipino
ppRace_Japanese	Japanese
ppRace_Korean	Korean
ppRace_Vietnamese	Vietnamese
ppRace_OtherAsian	Other Asian
ppRace_Hawaiian	Hawaiian
ppRace_Guamanian	Guamanian
ppRace_Samoan	Samoan
ppRace_OtherPacificIslander	Other Pacific Islander
ppRace_SomeOtherRace	Some other race
pppartyid3	DERIVED: Political party affiliation (3 categories)
pppppa0042	Q22:Do you have any friends or relatives who you know to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual?
pppa0043	Q23: Are you, yourself, gay, lesbian, or bisexual?
pppppa0306	Q26a:Would you describe yourself as a born-again or evangelical Christian?
pppppa0046	Q26:What is your religion?
ppppcmdate	Date member completed Core Profile Survey
pppadate	Date member completed Public Affairs Survey
ppHHCOMP11_Member2_Age to ppHHCOMP11_Member15_Age	Member 2: Age through Member 15: Age
ppHHCOMP11_Member2_Gender to ppHHCOMP11_Member15_Gender	Member 2: Gender through Member 15: Gender
ppHHCOMP11_Member2_Relation to ppHHCOMP11_Member15_Relation	Member 2: Relationship to You through Member 15: Relationship to You

Knowledge Networks Methodology

Introduction

Knowledge Networks has recruited the first online research panel - KnowledgePanelSM - that is representative of the entire U.S. population. Panel members are randomly recruited by telephone and households are provided with access to the Internet and hardware if needed. Unlike other Internet research which covers only individuals with Internet access who volunteer for research, Knowledge Networks surveys are based on a sampling frame which includes both listed and unlisted numbers, and is not limited to current Web users or computer owners.

Knowledge Networks selects households using random digit dialing (RDD). Once a person is recruited to the panel, they can be contacted by e-mail (instead of by phone or mail). This permits surveys to be fielded very quickly and economically. In addition, this approach reduces the burden placed on respondents, since e-mail notification is less obtrusive than telephone calls, and most respondents find answering Web questionnaires to be more interesting and engaging than being questioned by a telephone interviewer.

KnowledgePanelSM Recruitment Methodology

Beginning recruitment in 1999, Knowledge Networks (KN) has established the first online research panel based on probability sampling that covers both the online and offline populations in the U.S. The panel members are randomly recruited by telephone and households are provided with access to the Internet and hardware if needed. Unlike other Internet research that covers only individuals with Internet access who volunteer for research, Knowledge Networks surveys are based on a sampling frame that includes both listed and unlisted phone numbers, and is not limited to current Web users or computer owners. Panelists are selected by chance to join the panel; unselected volunteers are not able to join the KN panel.

Knowledge Networks initially selects households using random digit dialing (RDD) sampling methodology. Once a household is contacted by phone and household members recruited to the panel by obtaining their e-mail address or setting up e-mail addresses, panel members are sent surveys over the Internet using e-mail (instead of by phone or mail). This permits surveys to be fielded quickly and economically, and also facilitates longitudinal research. In addition, this approach reduces the burden placed on respondents, since e-mail notification is less obtrusive than telephone calls, and allows research subjects to participate in research when it is convenient for them.

Knowledge Networks' panel recruitment methodology uses the quality standards established by selected RDD surveys conducted for the Federal Government (such as the CDC-sponsored National Immunization Survey).

Knowledge Networks utilizes list-assisted RDD sampling techniques on the sample frame consisting of the entire United States residential telephone population. Knowledge Networks excludes only those banks of telephone numbers (consisting of 100 telephone numbers) that have

zero directory-listed phone numbers. Two strata are defined using 2000 Census Decennial Census data that has been appended to all telephone exchanges. The first stratum has a higher concentration of Black and Hispanic households and the second stratum has a lower concentration relative to the national estimates. Knowledge Networks' telephone numbers are selected from the 2+ banks with equal probability of selection for each number within each of the 2 strata, with the Black and Hispanic stratum being sampled at a higher rate than the other stratum. Note that the sampling is done without replacement to ensure that numbers already fielded by Knowledge Networks do not get fielded again.

Telephone numbers for which Knowledge Networks is able to recover a valid postal address is about 60%-70%. The telephone phone numbers for which an address is recovered are selected with certainty; between one-half and one-third of the remainder were subsampled randomly depending on the recruitment period up until July 2005. In May 2007 subsampling was resumed at a rate of 0.75 of non-address households. The address-matched telephone numbers are sent an advance mailing informing them that they have been selected to participate in KnowledgePanelSM.

Following the mailing, the telephone recruitment process begins for all sampled phone numbers. Cases sent to telephone interviewers are dialed up to 90 days, with at least 10 dial attempts on cases where no one answers the phone, and on phone numbers known to be associated with households. Extensive refusal conversion is also performed. Experienced interviewers conduct all recruitment interviews. The recruitment interview, which typically requires about 10 minutes, begins with the interviewer informing the household member that they have been selected to join KnowledgePanelSM. If the household does not have a PC and access to the Internet, they are told that in return for completing a short survey weekly, the household will be given a WebTV set-top box and free monthly Internet access. All members in the household are then enumerated, and some initial demographic variables and background information of prior computer and Internet usage are collected.

As of August 2002, those RDD households that inform interviewers that they have a home computer and Internet access have been recruited to the panel and asked to take their surveys using their own equipment and Internet connections. Points, which can be redeemed for cash at regular intervals, are given to respondents for completing their surveys and take the place of a free WebTV and monthly Internet access provided to other panel households. Additional incentive points may be added to specific surveys to improve response rates or to compensate for longer surveys.

Prior to shipment, each WebTV unit is custom configured with individual email accounts, so that it is ready for immediate use by the household. Most households are able to install the hardware without additional assistance, though Knowledge Networks maintains a telephone technical support line and will, when needed, provide on-site installation. The Knowledge Networks Call Center also contacts household members who do not respond to e-mail and attempts to restore contact and cooperation. PC panel members provide KN with their email account and their weekly surveys are sent to that email account.

All new WebTV panel members are sent an initial survey to confirm equipment installation and familiarize them with the WebTV unit. For all new panel members, demographics such as gender, age, race, income, and education are collected in a follow-up survey for each panel member to create a member profile. This information can be used to determine eligibility for specific studies and need not be gathered with each survey. Once this survey is completed, the panel member is regarded as active and ready to be sampled for other surveys. Parental or legal guardian consent is also collected for conducting surveys with teenagers age 13-17 as part of the first survey.

Survey Administration

For client-based surveys, a sample is drawn at random from active panel members who meet the screening criteria (if any) for the client's study. The typical sample size is between 200 and 2000 persons, depending on the purpose of the study. Once selected, members can be sent an advance letter by email several days prior to receiving the questionnaire through their WebTV appliance or personal computer to notify them of an important, upcoming survey.

Once assigned to a survey, members receive a notification email on their WebTV or personal computer letting them know there is a new survey available for them to take. The email notification contains a button to start the survey. No login name or password is required. The field period depends on the client's needs, and can range anywhere from a few minutes to two weeks.

Email reminders are sent to uncooperative panel members. If email does not generate a response, a phone reminder is initiated. The usual protocol is to wait at least three days and to permit a weekend to pass before calling. Knowledge Networks also operates an ongoing incentive program to encourage participation and create member loyalty. To assist panel members with their survey taking, each individual has a personalized "home page" that lists all the surveys that were assigned to that member and have yet to be completed.

Survey Sampling from KnowledgePanelSM

Once Panel Members are recruited and profiled, they become eligible for selection for specific surveys. In most cases, the specific survey sample represents a simple random sample from the panel. The sample is drawn from eligible members using an implicitly stratified systematic sample design. Customized stratified random sampling based on profile data is also conducted, as required by specific studies.

The primary sampling rule is not to assign more than six surveys per month to members with the expectation that on average four surveys a month will be completed by a panel member. In certain cases, a survey sample calls for pre-screening, that is, members are drawn from a sub-sample of the panel (e.g., females, Republicans). In such cases, care is taken to ensure that all subsequent survey samples drawn that week are selected in such a way as to result in a sample that is representative of the panel distributions.