

Surveying High School Educators

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Introduction

A questionnaire can help with data collection and offer a broad and detailed insight into the phenomenon under consideration. To reach that end, careful planning must be taken prior to implementation. Bias can be introduced if the phrasing of questions is not well thought out. Careful word-crafting is needed to ensure that individuals do not misinterpret the meaning of questions, or choose to not respond because of the meaning the individual infers from a question. Just as important is selecting the vehicle for delivering the questionnaire. The mode of delivery has a direct impact on the response rate of your survey and in the potential quality of the responses. The survey below to collect information on which subjects high school educators find to be most conducive to online education takes these factors into account. Careful planning was made for both the mode of delivery, and the questions themselves, to optimize response rates and to minimize the introduction of bias into the data collected.

Survey Instrument

Mode of Delivery

A sixteen question survey was chosen as the research tool to collect data from high school educators in the State of New Jersey. We decided to use a sequential mixed-mode survey to keep the non-response rate as low as possible and also to obtain data of better quality than what is possible through a single mode (de Leeuw 2005). The modes we are utilizing are email and short message service (SMS) with an option to opt into a telephone interview.

An introductory email from the Department of Education requesting participation will be sent to the respondents; this email will include a link to the web survey. Non-responses will be followed up with reminders via email and SMS. Both the email and SMS will have links to the survey, and will include an option to respond with the word “phone” if the respondent prefers a

phone interview. Phone interviews will be scheduled and administered by staff within the firm. A web survey was chosen as the primary method due to budget constraints (Couper, 2011), though the option for a live telephone survey was included for those respondents who are not comfortable responding to the web survey. We will capture the data on which path was taken to complete the survey (email, SMS or phone) to include in the analysis of the data.

Time frame allocated to complete the survey is three weeks. The first follow up will be sent after one week. There will be two additional follow ups - one at the beginning of week three and another a day before the survey ends. The survey would be extended if the response rate is less than 2996, or if the response stratification by region and subject are not representative of the overall population.

Introductory Text

COVID-19 was a major disruption for the 2019-20 school year and educators around the nation scrambled to put together plans to complete the year. Unfortunately, it is likely that the need for social distancing and other safety measures, such as limiting building occupancies, will continue into the upcoming school year. The New Jersey Education Association would like your feedback in developing a strategy for the upcoming 20/21 school year that ensures the students of NJ receive the same outstanding educational experience while we navigate a post-COVID society.

In order to ensure the safety of our students, and educators, there may need to be a hybrid approach to the upcoming school year, with some classes taught online and others in-person. Please answer the questions below based on your experiences during the current school year, while also keeping in-mind that the upcoming year offers the opportunity for planned distance learning, rather than emergency online schooling. At the end of this survey, you will be asked for

your email address. This is to enter you into a drawing to earn a cup of Starbucks coffee every day for a year. It will not be shared with the NJEA, and all of your responses will remain anonymous. Remember, you are a vital resource to the State of New Jersey and your opinion counts.

Explanation of Incentives:

To demonstrate our appreciation for your time, respondents will be entered into a drawing to earn a cup of Starbucks coffee every day for a year. The total budget amount of \$2200 is allocated for this drawing.

Survey Questions:

“To begin, we would like to learn a little about you.”

1. In what year were you born? (drop down menu of years)

 

2. What best represents your gender?

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Other

☐ Prefer not to answer

3. In which county of New Jersey do you currently reside?

4. My home internet is consistently available whenever I need it to teach.

☐ Strongly agree

☐ Somewhat agree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

5. I have the hardware (computer, webcam, mic, headphones) required to teach from home.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

“Now we would like to ask you questions about your experience teaching.”

6. In which county of New Jersey do you currently teach?

7. How long have you been teaching? Consider the broad time-frame, even if there have been breaks in your work experience. Consider the broad time-frame, even if there have been breaks in your work experience.

- ☐ 0 - 4 years
- ☐ 5 - 9 years
- ☐ 10 - 14 years
- ☐ 15 - 19 years
- ☐ 20+ years

8. Which of the following best describes the primary subjects that you teach?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Arts | <input type="radio"/> Physical Education |
| <input type="radio"/> English | <input type="radio"/> Science |
| <input type="radio"/> History | <input type="radio"/> Technology |
| <input type="radio"/> Language Arts | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> Mathamatics | |

(if Other)

9. The primary subject I teach is conducive to online learning.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

10. Students are as attentive during online instruction for this subject as they were on premise.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

11. Students are mastering material for this subject through online instruction as well as they were on premise.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

12. Students participation online is equal to participation on premise.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

13. The online instruction I currently offer includes the following approaches.

Reply by choosing the Yes or No option.

	The online instruction I currently offer includes the following approaches for this subject		I believe the following methods are effective for this subject		Ideally, the online instruction I would want to offer in 2020-21 includes the following approaches for this subject	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Interacting asynchronously (web documents, discussions, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Live discussions with classmates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Synchronous class with instructor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students viewing pre-recorded videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
One on one web meetings with students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. How much of your curriculum did you need to reformat to take it online?

- ☐ Less than 20%
☐ 20 - 39%
☐ 40 - 59%
☐ 60 - 79%
☐ 80 - 100%

15. What if anything is restricting you from teaching 100% online? Please consider all factors which may be relevant, such as labs, student presentations, discussions, etc. (Please list potential constraints below).

16. To be entered into the Starbucks drawing, please provide us your email address:

Conclusory Text

Thank you for taking precious time out of your day to complete this survey. Your feedback is crucial in helping the State of New Jersey provide educators like yourself the tools to continue to effectively teach in the upcoming school year.

Conclusion

The above survey has been designed to collect information on which subjects high school educators find to be most conducive to online education. We have selected a mixed-mode sequential survey which utilizes the web, SMS or telephone. It is our objective that these modes will have a positive impact on the response rate and quality of the responses. An earnest request for respondents' participation is paired with the offer to enter a drawing for a prize once the survey is completed. We have opted to ask questions which cover respondents' demographic information as well as their experience teaching online. In conclusion, careful planning was made for both the mode of delivery and the questions themselves to optimize response rates and to minimize the introduction of bias into the data collected.

Reference:

de Leeuw, Edith. (2005). To Mix or Not to Mix Data Collection Modes in Surveys. *Journal of Official Statistics* 21(2):233–55.

Couper, M. P. (2011). The Future of Modes of Data Collection. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75(5), 889-908. doi:10.1093/poq/nfr046