

ISS 305:002
Evaluating Evidence:
Becoming a Smart Research Consumer

10. Evaluating Non-Experimental Evidence (Survey Research)

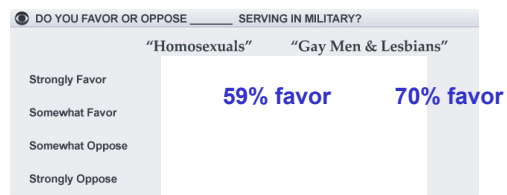
Reminder: Turn on your I<CLICKER

Q1: Why is a random (or probability) sample important in survey research?

- What is a probability sample?
 - REMEMBER!
- Random Sampling: Each person in population has an equal likelihood of being in your study
 - Not necessary for a true experiment
 - Important for **generalizability**
- Random Assignment: Each person in your sample has an equal likelihood of being in any condition.
 - Assign conditions so that they are independent of the participant.
 - Necessary for a **true experiment to establish causality**

Question Wording

- Do you favor or oppose homosexuals serving in the military?
- vs.
- Do you favor or oppose gay men and lesbians serving in the military?



Question Wording

- Do you support homosexuals serving openly in the military?
44% favor
- vs.
- Do you support gay men and lesbians serving openly in the military?
58% favor

Question Wording

Loftus & Palmer (1974)

- Showed film of a car accident to participants
- Ps then asked, “How fast were the cars travelling when they _____ into each other?”
- [*contacted, hit, bumped, collided, smashed*]
- Results:
- **Smashed group said 40.8 mph**
- **Contacted group said 31.8 mph**

Question Wording

Anchoring - **Final judgments and behaviors are assimilated or become more similar to an initial anchor value**

Are the chances of nuclear war greater or less than 1%?

[Are the chances of nuclear war greater or less than 90%]

What are the chances of nuclear war?

Low anchor	No anchor (control)	High anchor
10.8%	19.1%	25.7%

Question Wording

Some things to keep in mind...

Avoid Loaded (or Leading) Questions

- Designed to elicit a certain response
 - Should the mayor spend more tax money to keep the city's excellent streets in super shape? (**Leading**)
 - How much do you think tuition will go up next year? (**Leading**)
 - Are you still wasting your life in that same dead end job? (**Loaded**)

