Welcome!

Week 3: Sampling and Surveys

TA: Jennifer Lin

PS 210: Introduction to Empirical Methods

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Homework 1

- Conceptualization and Operationalization
- Introduction to Causality

So you want to conduct a survey?

What you Need

1. A **RANDOM** Sample

2. Good Survey Questions

3. Skills to analyze survey data

What is Random? What is a Sample?

What is a Sample?

First, we need to figure out what is the **Population**

What is the group of things we are interested in?

What is the **Unit of Analysis**

Picking a Sample

- Your sample should resemble the population

Picking a Sample

Convienence Sample

Sampling of Convenience: Select cases that are easily accessible

- Stand outside of dining hall and interview everyone trying to go in
- Sit outside the laundry room and interview everyone who visits while you are there
- TV Polls -- Be it on FOX, MSNBC, CNN

Picking a Sample

Quota Sampling

Quota Samples are where you modify the convenience sample to make it more like the population

AKA **Non-probability sampling**

Picking a Sample

Quota Sampling

Picking a Sample

Quota Sampling

Using the COVID States Project as an Example...

- We want to know political attitudes and behaviors of people in each US State
- We conduct online samples to get respondents from each US State
- Each state has a quota of 300-500 per wave, depending on size
- Within each state, we do race, gender and age cross tabs so that each bucket gets a fix number equivalent to their percent in the state.

EXAMPLE: If young white women make up 15 percent of the entire population of Florida, then we try to get 15% of the 400 respondents from Florida who are young white women.

Picking a Sample

Random Samples

Random Sampling is where each case has an equal and known probability of being selected

- Random Digit Dialing
- Random Number Generator

Picking a Sample

Random Samples

Examples of Surveys that use this method

- American National Elections Studies
- Kaiser Family Foundation (Random Digit Dialing)
- Axios IPSOS

Picking a Sample

Random Samples

Law of Large Numbers: Random Sampling gives us a good approximation of the population with a large enough population

When we randomly sample from a population, the sample and the population gets arbitrarily similar on many characteristics

Picking a Sample

Random Samples

- Simple Random Sample
- Cluster Sample -- select full subgroups
- Stratified Random Sample -- select *within* subgroups

Issues with Surveys

- **Non-Response**: People just don't want to do it

Ways to address it

- Nudge people again
- Give them progressively more money

Issues with Surveys

- **Hard to Reach Populations**: People who are difficult to contact to interview -- can be from a variety of reasons including lack of internet access or minority status in population

Examples

- People who live in rural areas
- Flat Earthers
- closeted LGBTQ+ members

Getting Hard to Reach Samples

Snowball Sampling

- Getting potential participants from current participants
- Often used in network studies

Getting Hard to Reach Samples

Respondent- Driven Sampling

- Go where the participants are (or might be)
- EXAMPLE: GO to rural areas to connect with participants

Questions?