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

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AmeriSpeak
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION*</th>
<th>WORDING</th>
<th>WAVE 1</th>
<th>WAVE 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q17C</td>
<td>[Immigration] How important are each of the following issues to you personally?...Don’t Know</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?...Skipped</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?...Don’t Know</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?...Skipped</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Num of Questions</th>
<th>No Difference</th>
<th>Wave 1 More Extreme Responses</th>
<th>Wave 2 More Extreme Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Num of Questions</th>
<th>No Difference</th>
<th>Wave 1 More Moderate Responses</th>
<th>Wave 2 More Moderate Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**: CONDITIONING CONSTRUCTS 3-4
**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**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
</tr>
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Summary
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.

Get Your Research Right

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