

## **ITSEW 2009**

### **Session 5 Notes: Floor Discussion**

**Note: I tried to include names for people with comments and questions, but missed some of them.**

Chair: Sarah Nusser

Talk 1: Stephanie Eckman, "Coverage Rates and Coverage Error when Interviewers Create Frames"

Discussion:

Comment (Clyde): as a suggestion, in trying to deal with nonresponse and coverage at the same time, if you consider nonresponse and error in probability of selection for units (i.e. not incorporate groups of residences), it would be the same thing as what you're considering (you can conceptualize it as coverage error). You can think of it as a unit being missed. What to do with the problem? You could impute or impose a nonresponse adjustment. Implicitly you can get a response from these units even if you don't interview. It might help to look at things from that framework.

Question (Paul): Of the organizations in U.S., what proportion use interviewers vs. a separate group of individuals? Wouldn't it make a difference if a separate group did enumeration (other than interviewers)? Is this a personnel issue to you? You might be working on a problem with a personnel issue instead of a statistical issue.

Response: Westat uses different people for that (i.e. people with different skill sets). Other branches may not.

Comment (Paul): use postal address lists, start from that framework. It may not work well in rural areas though. You may want to consider how that works for your research. Census looks at missing units (dual frame estimation). Are you going to try to use something like that?

Response: Yes, we could do dual or triple frame system. Ideally we would get 5 listings for every segment. Housing missed by everyone wouldn't be captured, but we could see how many out of 5 catch each unit.

Comment: It's difficult to study why certain units are missed one time or another. They did it in the 50s and tried it again in the 90s. Understanding why it happens is tough.

Talk 2: Michael Weinhardt, "The Different Roles of Interviews: How Does Interviewer Personality Affect Respondents' Survey Participation and Response Behavior?"

Question (Clyde): This happens over and over. Some of the notoriously bad interviewers are students. It could be age, but may be other reasons. We did interviewing and hired people out of work (i.e. actors and political science students). They think it would be a glamorous job, but soon find out that it's not just talking politics. They figure that out and quit or we want them to quit. If it's a political survey you run into those problems.

Question: Focusing on attrition bias. Brendal's work on this could be useful. His result says that there isn't any attrition bias, contrary to the belief.

Question: Was the big 5 sent to them along with survey from the employer? The big 5 has a lot of face validity. So if this is from my employer, it may have an effect on how they answer.

Response: Yes it was from the employer. This may be a problem I just have to live with.

Question (Jaki): You starting off talking about 5 characteristics separately. Were you just looking at characteristics separately? You could look at it in subgroups. There are correlations but they are so small. That may change if you look at subgroups. Maybe just focus on the tails of the distributions. Then you may see something.

Response: Interaction between respondent and interviewer is something I could look at.

Comment (Paul): Some of the interactions (which as you said you haven't considered yet) could be pretty important. As interviewers become more experienced they can conduct a better interview.

General Discussion: All comments and questions in the general discussion focused on Stephanie's talk.

Question (Lars): Have you thought about developing a listing process much like a response process? It could serve as a framework. From there you could define an optimal listing process.

Response: That's where I'd like to see this go: try to see in what cases you see a listing method. Then do some checking.

Question (Mary): You talk about housing units in coverage sampling. They searched further (in Census work). They searched some in surrounding blocks some in the blocks. They found a lot of new units (so geo-coding errors were evident). Census keeps a master list. At beginning of Census, they go to the list and download information. They map back to the master list. Census would have a lot of operations where they start with one list, but modify it (take out, put in, etc.). It would be informative to find out what's going on there.

Response: At first you wonder how people could disagree about addresses. But in reality it's a big concern.

Question: We miss things in an area frame, but assume it's complete. You were looking at missing households, but did you also look at missing people? We are going to mail or phone people and do a completely different screening to compare it to interviewer information.

Response: No, they just focused on households.

Question: Have you looked at British literature on this coverage topic? They have done work on this.

Response: Do you have any names/references? (response: didn't have any examples on hand).