

the Respondent **the Respondent**

SIG on Survey Research in Education
Spring 2008

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About Your Membership
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Your SIG expiration date should be concurrent with your AERA expiration date.
Review the inside Membership Directory for AERA details about your SIG membership.
Send corrections and updates of your information for the SIG & AERA to
bacharya@aera.net at AERA.

the Respondent is published three times a year by the Special Interest Group on Survey Research in Education of the American Educational Research Association. (*the Respondent* is not an official publication of the AERA.) The purpose of the SIG is to provide a forum for educational researchers who are interested in improving survey methods, fostering communication among survey researchers, and promoting the development and dissemination of scholarly work in research methods.

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Contribute to *the Respondent*

Send news about your job, changes in your life, feedback to our officers, and news you would like to share with SIG members.

Deadlines for newsletter submissions

June 2 for the summer 2008 issue
September 15 for the fall 2008 issue

Send your contributions to *the Respondent* to:

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Visit our SIG SRE web site at:
www.as.yosu.edu/~gunapala/surveyed/index.html

Production and mailing of *the Respondent* is provided by ACT, Inc.

We hope you'll share this newsletter with colleagues, graduate students, and others who may be interested in SIG activities. Be sure to point out that the SIG sessions at the annual AERA Conference are a marvelous venue for professionals and graduate students to present research papers concerning survey research methodology. You might also mention that SIG membership fees are reduced for graduate students and that the SIG awards stipends to selected graduate students whose papers are selected for presentation at SIG sessions.

A FEW WORDS FROM YOUR SIG CHAIR

In writing this column, my interest is to go beyond the exhortations to become involved in the SIG by trying to highlight issues with ramifications for survey research, especially in the education environment. So, indulge me please; consider yourself urged to get involved, to attend the SIG sessions at the Annual Meeting, and to join us for the Business Meeting on Thursday evening in New York. And now, I progress to a brief point for us to ponder:

Survey Research, a Tool for Assessment in Higher Education Accreditation

A majority of our members have a close connection to higher education as faculty members, students who may have an interest in the professorship, or administrators or consultants who do work with higher education. In today's landscape, escaping the pervasive presence of the calls for assessment in higher education is difficult. All of the regional accrediting bodies and most of the disciplinary accrediting bodies have made assessment a central element in the accreditation process. Frequently on campuses around the country, the response is to suggest that we conduct a survey to address one or another of the pressing assessment needs that we have.

This presents a ready made opportunity for those of us with interest in survey research to become involved. There is a need for someone with expertise in survey methodology to be involved to ensure that the data derived from the surveys are of high quality. I would like to remind us of some time-honored concepts to keep in mind and to provide an example of why the need for expert guidance is so critical.

- Pay attention to the perception that a survey is an easy way to gather data on a topic. While this may be true, it is critical to keep in mind that a survey may not be the best way to gather the information. The data derived from a survey may suffer from lack of validity if the survey is not an appropriate procedure.
- In creating a survey, the first order of business is to ensure that the survey validly reflects the domain of interest. Therefore creation of the survey demands an iterative critical examination of items and the domain to ensure likelihood of content validity.
- To have confidence in the representativeness, and hence the validity, of the survey undertaken, it is necessary to have a reasonable sampling procedure. Often this is not the case because convenience drives the sampling decisions.
- Finally, interpreting the results of a survey requires diligence to make sure that those results are interpreted in a way that is supported by the procedures and the nature of the data that were actually obtained.

We might look at Knowledge Surveys, a tool that is gaining in popularity on campuses as a means of providing evidence to accreditors, as one example. In a Knowledge Survey, respondents (typically students) are given a series of items and asked to rate their knowledge of that item. Sometimes it is phrased as a rating of knowledge, but many experts suggest that it more appropriately be phrased as confidence in the knowledge the individual possesses **or their ability to readily**

access that knowledge. The Knowledge Survey may be global – encompassing an entire course or program, or specific – encompassing a smaller unit of instruction such as a day’s lesson. In practice, a Knowledge Survey is frequently given as a pre-assessment and as a post-assessment.

The Knowledge Survey is a useful tool, yielding data on an individual’s or group’s perceived knowledge in an area, serving as an organizer for the information included in instruction, clarifying learning outcomes, stimulating thinking about the content, and providing a measure of **perceived** knowledge. When used as a pre-assessment, the information may be used to guide instruction – based on the **assumption** that it reflects actual knowledge.

That, of course, is a shaky assumption. Many experts promoting Knowledge Surveys point out that the Knowledge Survey is not a test and, consequently, not a true measure of knowledge. That message often fails to be heeded. Interpretations are made, and conclusions are drawn as if those surveys were true measures of knowledge. The fact that the results reflect self-perceptions is often overlooked.

So, here is the challenge to those with expertise in survey research. We have an opportunity to become more involved in the process. Whether we work on campus or as external consultants, we have the expertise to help ensure that the various constituencies are aware of the possibilities and the limitations of surveys in obtaining data for higher education assessment. We have the opportunity to be involved in making sure that when surveys are used they are or are not appropriate data gathering tools. We can provide assistance in the design stages so that instrument construction, sampling, and other procedures are reasonable to ensure validity. Finally, we can be the voice that advocates for accurate interpretation of results so that the conclusions may be substantiated by the reality of the process.

So, fellow survey researchers, no matter what your specific position, the current demand for assessment to serve accreditation purposes in higher education gives you an opportunity to provide your expertise. We can make a difference in the quality of the surveys that are done and in the accuracy of the conclusions drawn. We have the chance to make this an opportunity for those involved in survey research in education to take a leadership role.

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Graduate Student Advisors

Help your students expand dissertation and scholarly presentation opportunities by including research conducted via survey to include a survey methodological issue(s). The SIG provides an excellent venue for graduate students and opportunity to debut professional presentations of high quality work.

We hope you'll share this newsletter with colleagues, graduate students, and others who may be interested in SIG activities. Be sure to point out that the SIG sessions at the annual AERA Conference are a marvelous venue for professionals and graduate students to present research papers concerning survey research methodology. You might also mention that SIG membership fees are reduced for graduate students and that the SIG awards stipends to selected graduate students whose papers are selected for presentation at SIG sessions.

SIG ON SURVEY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION
AERA 2008 CONFERENCE SESSIONS
NEW YORK APRIL 9-13

We are happy to share with the members of the SIG the schedule of sessions for the 2008 Annual Conference in New York. I would like to thank each of the participants for their role in creating such a strong opportunity for us to learn from each other. The authors of the papers have obviously expended a great deal of effort to do the research and to prepare it for sharing, The session chairs will be making sure the session flows smoothly, and I am sure the discussants will be providing thoughtful, constructive commentary on each of the papers.

Finally, I would like to thank the reviewers for their work in reading the various proposals, making their recommendation whether to accept the paper, and providing insightful suggestions so that the authors could use that feedback to make their presentations even stronger. The following individuals were involved in the review process: Julie Alonzo, Jack Barnette, Kelly Bradley, Ric Brown, Patricia Busk, Hui-Ling Chen, Julie Combs, Kerri Cox, Mary Dereshiwsky, Kristen Dicerbo, Christine Distephano, Ying Du, Gunapala Edirisooriya, William Fisher, Kathy Green, Gail Hughes, George Johanson, Tony Lam, Cristina Martinez, Mya Martin-Glenn, Randy McClanahan, Brandt Pryor, Marilyn Seastrom, Steve Sierra, Laura Stapleton, Kenneth Stichter, and Andrew White,.

So take a look at the sessions, choose to attend them all, and be sure to thank all those people who worked so hard to make this program a reality. Enjoy the conference and your trip to New York!

Applications of Survey Research Methods in Education

Scheduled Time: Thu, Mar 27 - 12:25pm - 1:05pm **Building/Room:** Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers / Metropolitan Ballroom, Metropolitan East, 2nd Floor
Chair: Gunapala Edirisooriya (Youngstown State University)

Measuring Time and Implementation in the Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative, Megan Toby (Empirical Education, Inc.).

Second Look: A Research Platform for Second Life, Anthony Cocciolo (Teachers College, Columbia University).

The Usefulness of Investing in More Fully Mathematical Survey Research: Applying Probabilistic Models to Develop Curricula, Sharon G. Solloway (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania), William P. Fisher (Avatar International, Inc.).

Using Goodman's SDQ to Improve Behavior and Emotions of Children in Schools, Tim Hobbs (Dartington Social Research Unit).

Methodological Issues in Survey Research as Applied in Educational Settings

Scheduled Time: Fri, Mar 28 - 2:15pm - 3:45pm **Building/Room:** Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers / Executive Conference Center, Conference Room E, Lower Lobby
Chair: Kelly D. Bradley (University of Kentucky)

A Meta-Regression of Survey Response Rates in Counseling and Clinical Psychology, Kathy E. Green (University of Denver), Pamela S. Van Horn (University of Denver), Monica Martinussen.

Development and Validation of a Writing Dispositions Scale for Elementary and Middle School Students, Carolyn L. Piazza (Florida State University), Carl F. Siebert (Florida State University).

Effects of Survey Web Page Design and Reward Methods on College Students' Participation, Yanling Sun (Montclair State University).

Evaluation and Implementation of Web Surveys in School-Based Settings, Robin Tepper Jacob (University of Michigan), Lesli Scott (University of Michigan), Ashley Bowers (University of Michigan).

Survey Non-Response and Ratings Bias for Online Course Evaluation, Carolyn G. Fidelman (Center for Applied Linguistics).

Discussant: Gail D. Hughes (University of Arkansas - Little Rock)

Discussant: Edward W. Wolfe (Virginia Tech University)

Scaling and Measurement Issues in Survey Research

Scheduled Time: Thu, Mar 27 - 4:05pm - 5:35pm **Building/Room:** Hilton New York / Concourse D, Concourse Level
Chair: Andrew A. White (National Center for Education Statistics)

Using Measurement Principles to Construct and Restructure a Teacher Perception Survey, Jessica D. Cunningham (University of Kentucky), Kelly D. Bradley (University of Kentucky).

The Impact of Incorrect Responses to Reverse Coded Survey Items, Gail D. Hughes (University of Arkansas - Little Rock).

Investigating the Controversy on Analyzing Data Measured by Likert-Type Scales, Young-Hoon Ham (The University of Tennessee - Knoxville).

Agree-Disagree: A "Strongly Disagreeable" Response Scale, Hunter Gehlbach (Harvard University).

Discussant: Jack Jackson Barnette (The University of Alabama)

Discussant: William P. Fisher (Avatar International, Inc.)

SIG - Survey Research in Education SIG Business Meeting

Scheduled Time: Thu, Mar 27 - 6:15pm - 8:15pm **Building/Room:** Crowne Plaza Hotel Times Square / Times Square Ballroom, Section A, Lobby Level.

**Presentation Abstracts
for the
AERA 2007 SIG on Survey Research in Education Sessions**

Here are the abstracts of all the papers. If you are author, remember to submit your paper to the conference website by March 15 so that the discussants can access and review your work.

Using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to Measure the Behavior and

Emotional Health of Children in Schools in the UK

Tim Hobbs, Michael Little & Dwan Kaoukji

This article describes the application of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) as a tool for understanding the nature and prevalence mental health disorders in schools within a local authority in the UK. Teachers from 24 primary schools completed the SDQ on behalf of 1,204 children. Illustrative data are presented to highlight its relevance to policy-makers and schools. The article discusses the ways in which the data may be used to improve mental health and school performance by considering where resources are best allocated, by challenging expected patterns of mental health and by using data to inform the design, implementation and evaluation of strategies and services to improve mental health.

Measuring Time and Implementation in the Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative

Megan Toby (Empirical Education, Inc.)

A series of four surveys was deployed to teachers participating in a randomized control trial (RCT) evaluating the Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI). The goal of this RCT is to provide state decision-makers with evidence of whether their state-developed curriculum produces gains in student test scores. Questions measuring how teachers spend classroom time are crucial to characterizing fidelity to the initiative and informing outcome data. However, constructing questions that make sense to teachers across a variety of contexts proved to be quite challenging and the end result was a collection of many invalid responses.

Second Look: A Research Platform for Second Life

Anthony Cocciolo (Teachers College, Columbia University)

The purpose of this paper, and its accompanying project, is to investigate the question: how do we do research in virtual worlds? This paper will begin by reviewing some of the ways that research has been conducted in virtual worlds, followed by identifying a need within this domain, and concluding with an thorough analysis of Second Look, the project meant to attend to this identified need.

The Usefulness of Investing in More Fully Mathematical Survey Research: Applying Probabilistic Models to Develop Curricula

Sharon G. Solloway (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania)

William P. Fisher (Avatar International, Inc.)

Reports the results of two survey instruments developed as platforms for refining course curriculum development implementing a rating scale model. All scaling and fit analyses were performed using the Winsteps software and testing for the invariant internal consistency of the data using information-weighted and outlier-sensitive mean square model fit statistics. Measures and calibrations from Winsteps were then studied statistically with SPSS v. 14. Results establish significance for both Mindfulness and Mindsets results at $< .05$. Measure changes corroborate journal entries. Meaning that journal entries establishing varying intensities of engagement with mindfulness practice and/or mindset orientations are corroborated with matching measures from pre to post on the logit ruler. Paper includes the relationship of survey results to refinements in course content.

A Meta-Regression of Survey Response Rates in Counseling and Clinical Psychology

Kathy E. Green (University of Denver)

Pamela S. Van Horn (University of Denver)

This paper reports results of a meta-regression of survey response rates in published research in counseling and clinical psychology from 1985-2005. The overarching purpose of this study was to assess the relative contribution of variables controllable by the researcher and those less amenable to researcher control to prediction of response rate. Past meta-analyses of survey response rates have consistently found that use of one or a handful of moderators failed to result in

residual variance in response rates explainable by sampling error alone, thus limiting generalizability of results and also limiting our understanding of the joint effects of multiple moderators. The present study reports results of meta-regressions conducted to (a) compare variance in reported response rate accounted for by five conceptual groupings of variables (response facilitation techniques, survey format and reporting quality, sampling method, respondent characteristics, and dissemination) and (b) determine if residual variance was homogeneous. Results showed variance explainable from coded variables was less than 20% but that residual variance was homogeneous and that prediction was strongest for researcher-manipulated variables including response facilitation techniques. In light of declining response rates, researchers in clinical and counseling psychology may need to consider more systematic use of response facilitation techniques.

Development and Validation of a Writing Dispositions Scale for Elementary and Middle School Students

Carolyn L. Piazza (Florida State University)

Carl F. Siebert (Florida State University)

This purpose of this paper is to report the development and validation of the Writing Dispositions Scale (WDS), a self-report instrument for measuring affective orientations toward writing. Survey data from a sample of 854 elementary and middle school students were collected and randomly split to facilitate both an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The findings of the EFA demonstrated that an 11 item Writing Dispositions Scale has good internal and content reliability, and good discriminant validity. The CFA supports the item selection of the EFA, and demonstrates excellent factorial validity and reliability. The analyses confirmed that writing dispositions are related to affective stances of confidence, persistence, and passion toward writing.

Effects of Survey Web Page Design and Reward Methods on College Students' Participation

Yanling Sun (Montclair State University)

This study investigated how survey Web page design (single-page and multiple-page design) and reward methods (no-incentive, incentive, and lottery) effect college students' participation in Web-based surveys. A sample of undergraduates was randomly selected and split into two groups based upon the survey Web page design. Participants in each design were then randomly assigned into three groups based on the reward method. The data analysis was conducted to identify if there was

significant difference in response rate, number of answered items, and time duration to complete a survey across the two types of design and three reward groups. Some additional findings are presented as well. Limitations, conclusions, recommendations for future study are provided.

Evaluation and Implementation of Web Surveys in School-Based Settings

Robin Tepper Jacob (University of Michigan)

Lesli Scott (University of Michigan)

Ashley Bowers (University of Michigan)

This paper represent a first effort to obtain more systematic information about the potential effectiveness of using web-mode in place of paper-mode for school based studies by exploring the effect of web-mode on coverage, sampling and non-response error. Data for this study were obtained from questions added to a traditional mail-mode survey of 600 school principals and from a short web-survey of 500 elementary school principals that asked about internet access and experience with web-mode surveys. Findings suggest that switching from traditional mail-mode to web-mode does not increase coverage or non-response error and has the potential to reduce sampling error.

Survey Non-Response and Ratings Bias for Online Course Evaluation

Carolyn G. Fidelman (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Survey nonresponse and survey ratings bias have often been confounded by practitioners. Low response rates, especially those occurring with increasing use of online surveys, are causing a great deal of worry. The present study shows that some online surveys may, in fact, be more robust against nonresponse bias than other modes. The author has conducted a study of online course evaluation in 13 courses with 640 students using what is known as a rich sampling frame to provide rare insights into nonresponse. Logistic regression methodology paired with hierarchical linear modeling demonstrates one way to determine where bias is occurring, if at all.

Using Measurement Principles to Construct and Restructure a Teacher Perception Survey

Jessica D. Cunningham (University of Kentucky)

Kelly D. Bradley (University of Kentucky)

A collaborative research model is applied to the development of a survey instrument for a distance learning program for middle school science teachers (Newton's Universe). This instrument was constructed to determine teachers' perception of the training, while also gauging their interest in implementing aspects of the training into their classrooms. Applying the Rasch rating scale model, an initial round of data was analyzed in a pilot study of the original instrument. A measurement team offered suggestions based on empirical results and these were combined with the practical knowledge of the science researchers and classroom educators to re-tool the instrument. An additional round of data was then used to evaluate the updated survey. This study provides a hands-on approach to measurement.

The Impact of Incorrect Responses to Reverse Coded Survey Items

Gail D. Hughes (University of Arkansas - Little Rock)

This experiment explored the impacts of "incorrect" responses to reverse coded survey items by taking responses to Likert items and reversing the responses. Sample size, number of "reverse coded" items, and percentage of participants responding "incorrectly" to the "reverse coded" items were manipulated to examine the impacts on internal consistency reliability estimates and scale means. Results suggested that "incorrect" responses to reverse coded items can have a significant impact on analyses. Specifically, "incorrect" responses increased the variability and, thereby, gave the illusion of more reliable scores. Dependent t-tests revealed significant differences between original scales means and scale means when only 1 item was reversed. Therefore, researchers should use reverse coded items with extreme caution.

Investigating the Controversy on Analyzing Data Measured by Likert-Type Scales

Young-Hoon Ham (The University of Tennessee - Knoxville)

Likert scaling has been the most widely used method of measuring psychological attitudes and other education-related variables. Despite its popularity, there seems to be little consensus about what statistical methods should be applied to analyze Likert-type scale data. Some researchers argue that parametric tests should be avoided because the nature of Likert-type scale data is ordinal, neither interval nor ratio. However, across a variety of academic fields, it is common to find research that employs parametric tests rather than non-parametric tests in analyzing Likert-type scale data. This paper investigates the controversy associated with statistical analysis for Likert-type scale data. Each of the competing perspectives (measurement vs. statistics) is discussed based on the literature review. Recommendations for educational research are provided.

Agree-Disagree: A “Strongly Disagreeable” Response Scale

Hunter Gehlbach (Harvard University)

Although commonplace, questionnaires using response scales that range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” are usually discouraged by survey design experts. This study examines four hypotheses why these “agree-disagree” response scales might produce less accurate data. Results provide support for two of these ideas. First, data indicated that respondents struggled to distinguish between “strongly disagree” and “disagree” as well as between “strongly agree” and “agree,” resulting in an unevenly spaced response scale. In addition, results showed that “agree-disagree” response scales appear to partially measure “agreeableness” in addition to the construct that researchers are actually trying to measure. This research provides empirical evidence that scholars may wish to rethink their reliance on these types of response scales in survey research.

SIG on Survey Research in Education Business Meeting Agenda

Thursday March 27, 2008, 6:15-8:15 pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel Times Square

Ballroom, Section A, Lobby Level

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Business Secretary Reports**
- 3. Program Chair Report**
- 4. Newsletter Editor Report**
- 5. New Business**
- 6. Old Business**
- 7. Honors Awards**
- 8. Graduate Student Award**
- 9. Executive Board Election**
- 10. Close**

Nominees for AERA SIG-SRE 2008-2009 Executive Board
Gunapala Edirisooriya, Nominations Chair

Chair: Dr. Steve Siera

Steve is an Associate Professor of Education and Director of Masters Programs in Education at Saint Martin's University, teaching educational research, classroom assessment, philosophical foundations, psychological foundations, and models of teaching. Before joining the faculty at Saint Martin's, Steve was Director of Research and Assessment for the Kent School District (Washington) for 9 years.

Steve has been involved with the SIG since a presentation at the 1988 conference. He has been a regular reviewer, session chair, session discussant, and session presenter. He was Program Chair for the 1994 and 1995 Annual Meetings as well as for 2005 and 2006. He previously served as Chair of the SIG for 2 years in 1995-1997. Steve is the current Chair of the SIG.

Program Chair: Dr. Kelly D. Bradley

Kelly is an assistant professor (currently completing the T&P review) in the Department of Educational Policy Studies & Evaluation at the University of Kentucky where she teaches research methods (including survey methods), measurement, and statistics courses. Her research is anchored in quantitative evaluation and measurement. Underlying these methodological interests is her passion for the math and science teaching profession, specifically supply and demand issues, including professional development and quality in the classroom.

Kelly has been a member of the Survey SIG for six years and currently serves as the Business Secretary. She values the support that the SIG has offered to her and is honored by the opportunity to serve the SIG and aid its growth. Kelly is the current Business Secretary.

Business Secretary: Dr. Hui-Ling Chen

Hui-Ling is the Director of Institutional Research at Saint Anselm College where she plays a vital role in accomplishing the goals and initiatives of the college by providing the college with accurate data for decision-making. She leads and manages the collection and assessment of institutional data in collaboration with a wide range of academic and non-academic units. She is responsible for designing and implementing internal research; project evaluation; trend assessment; performance benchmarking; and monitoring of progress in key areas.

Her research interests include validation of survey instruments, differential item functioning, student learning outcome assessment, and growth models. Hui-Ling has been a member of the SIG since 2005. She is honored by the opportunity to serve the SIG.

Nominees for AERA SIG-SRE 2008-2009 Executive Board (Continued)

Communication Coordinator:Dr. Randy McClanahan

Randy is a Senior Research Associate in ACT's Survey Research Services department where she develops standardized and customized survey instruments, working extensively with external clients as well as various ACT departments on selected survey projects. She leads many survey projects and writes interpretive reports and executive summaries for clients.

Randy is currently serving as the SIG's Newsletter Editor and during her 20 years as a SIG member, has served as Chair, Program Chair, and Business Secretary. She has also served as a session chair, panel member, and presenter in several SIG sessions and serves regularly as a proposal reviewer.

As provided in the SIG bylaws, the election of officers will take place at the SIG Business Meeting, which will be held in New York City, on Thursday, March 27th, 6:15 pm - 8:15 pm at Crowne Plaza Hotel Times Square, Times Square Ballroom, Section A, Lobby Level. If you will not be attending the Annual Meeting in New York City or will not be able to attend the SIG Business Meeting, you may vote by absentee ballot by requesting a ballot form from the current Chair, Dr. Steve Siera. The ballot must be completed and returned on or before March 17, 2008. To obtain an absentee ballot, please contact: Dr. Steve Siera, Chair, SIG/Survey Research, Associate Professor, Education Division, Saint Martin's College, 5300 Pacific Avenue, Lacey, WA 98503, Tel: 360-438-4589, ssiera@stmartin.edu

Upcoming Workshops

Questionnaire Design & Use
April 17-18, 2008 - Orlando, FL
Double Tree Castle Hotel

May 1-2, 2008 - Minneapolis, MN
Marriott Minneapolis Airport

Analyzing & Reporting Questionnaire Data
Date TBD - Orlando, FL

Date TBD - Minneapolis, MN

For more information or registration materials, contact Anderson, Niebuhr & Associates at:
(651) 486-8712 or (800) 678-5577 Email: Jennifer@ANA-Inc.com Register on-line! www.ana-inc.com



Marsha Niebuhr & Jack Anderson

Primer on Survey Research: **AUTHORS WANTED**

A few years ago, the SIG decided to pursue a project to develop an online Primer of Survey Research to be linked from the SIG website. Entitled: *Thesaurus on Survey Research in Education*, a few articles have been included. Progress has not been as rapid as we had envisioned. We decided to pursue an additional approach to jump start the project. We are soliciting brief articles that will be published in *The Respondent* and then included in the Primer. It is our goal to include two or three briefs per issue.

Steve Siera has agreed to assist Randy McClanahan, editor of *the Respondent*, on this project. He will receive articles submitted, consult with the *Primer* editors on the appropriateness of the submitted work, make edits as needed, forward the articles to Randy for *the Respondent*, and also forward the articles to Gunapala for inclusion in the Primer.

If you would like to author a brief, please submit it to Steve (contact information, p. 4). We would love to have your contributions. We also plan to invite individuals to submit a targeted brief. For example, we might solicit a brief based on a presentation made at AERA. We want to have a full complement of articles covering basic concepts in survey research plus some more advanced briefs as well.

The *Thesaurus on Survey Research in Education* (SRT) is designed to be an online repository of brief reports concerning topics of interest to survey researchers. SRT is sponsored by the SIG / Survey Research in Education, a Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Each report contains a definition of the term or issue in question, an overview of the current scholarship regarding the topic, references, and suggestions for further reading. The format is patterned after the ERIC Digests, a dynamic and ever expanding collection of brief reports on a wide variety of topics of interest to educational researchers and practitioners. The intended audiences for SRT include students of educational research as well as educational practitioners, evaluators, and researchers who are seeking knowledge about survey research in education. SRT attempts to provide these audiences a starting point for the investigation of survey research methods.

Reports are not intended to be the final or only word on a particular issue. Rather, SRT encourages multiple entries on the same topic. The thesaurus will be updated periodically and, therefore, can serve to stimulate dialogue about issues relevant to those who apply survey research methods in the field of educational research. SRT also will have links to other resources that can provide additional information for those interested in beginning to understand and investigate survey research topics.

(continued on page 18)

Primer on Survey Research: **AUTHORS WANTED** (CONTINUED)

Call for Submissions

The editors of the *Thesaurus on Survey Research in Education (SRT)* invite authors of papers presented at the annual meetings of the AERA to submit brief reports, based in part on their presentations, that can contribute to the discussion of relevant topics. In the absence of AERA Annual meeting proceedings, SRT helps document the topics covered by sessions sponsored by the SIG / Survey Research in Education, as well as those of other related SIGs. Authors of presented papers are also offered a type of publication outlet that recognizes their contribution to the success of the annual meetings. In addition, the editors invite submissions from the community of educational researchers and practitioners. Submissions are not confined to the terms already listed in the thesaurus.

Topic Suggestions

Almost any topic related to survey research will be considered for the project. A few ideas for starters include the following.

- Analysis issues
- Conducting web-based surveys
- Confidentiality vs. anonymity
- Dealing with missing data
- Increasing response rates
- Questionnaire design
- Sampling procedures
- Selecting response types

Submission Guidelines

Submissions are limited to 2 pages per report (12 point font, single spaced, not including references and suggested readings). Prospective authors are encouraged to look at ERIC digests as a model. Submissions should include the following: 1. a definition of the term or issue, 2. an overview of the scholarship on the issue, 3. references, and 4. suggestions for further reading.

Submissions should be emailed to Steve Siera: ssiera@stmartin.edu

Please check your name and e-mail in this newsletter's membership list. We are now including only e-mail contact information in this list. If you find name and/or e-mail corrections that need to be made, contact AERA, Attn: Bidyut Acharya or e-mail bacharya@aera.net.

About Your Membership

The AERA Special Interest Group (SIG) on Survey Research in Education provides a forum for educational researchers seeking to improve survey research methodology.

Activities Supported by the SIG

- **Paper, Round Table, Poster, and Other Exciting Presentations** at AERA Annual Meetings on topics such as *Sampling Procedures Used for National Surveys of Public School Teachers* and *The Combined Effect of Personalized Appeal and Pre-Coding of Personal Data on Questionnaire Return*
- **Invited Addresses** at AERA featuring speakers such as Don Dillman, Seymour Sudman, and Jack Anderson and Marsha Niebuhr
- **SIG Business Meeting and Social Hour** during which members discuss professional and personal interests
- **SIG Newsletter** published three times a year with information about SIG activities and members as well as current issues and research related to survey methodology

Opportunities for Active Involvement in the SIG

- **Chairing or serving as a Discussant** for an AERA session
- **Contributing** features to *the Respondent*
- **Serving** as a SIG officer or committee member
- **Reviewing** AERA Annual Meeting presentation proposals

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