

Collecting social data: Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic

Agenda

Tuesday, 14 July 2020
10:00-12:00

Ms Lebogang Shilakoe, Social Surveys Africa

*Constructing representative samples for telephone surveys:
debating strategies and creative solutions*

Dr Benjamin Roberts, Human Sciences Research Council

*Truth be in the field: experiences and lessons from the South
African Social Attitudes Survey*

Mr Solly Molayi, Statistics South Africa

*Some thoughts on the immediate and longer-term impact of
COVID-19 on Stats SA's household survey program*

Reflection:

*What are we compromising
and what are we gaining?*

Ms Lebogang Shilakoe, Social Surveys Africa – Q&A

- 1) From Mambwe Hara: Lebo, please elaborate on pre recorded video/audio how do these work? *You essentially record videos or audios of yourself running the team prior to the actual training day(s)*
- 2) From Naiema: How did they sign in? *On the designated project WhatsApp group. The key to this working is actually monitoring their submissions and holding the team accountable, or everyone will report that they're starting work whilst doing other things.*
- 3) From Ghouwa Ismail: How did the check in and signing out work *(see answer to Q2)*
- 4) From Dominique Alyssa Drying: How have fieldworkers been received by respondents? Are respondents welcoming to fieldworkers or reluctant to engage? *During the lockdown daily telephonic interview completion rates have been higher than usual (especially under Level 5), the number of respondents who opt to reschedule interviews to a more convenient time has probably dropped by over 70%. Having listened to some interview audios, I also think people really do want to vent on some issues. So depending on the topic you're collecting data on, this might vary slightly.*
- 5) From Nandi Jacobs: how was consent handled ? *We've been getting verbal consent on most of our studies after info sheets are read to respondents, an additional consent question on the questionnaire. But you have the option of sharing a consent form link and having them sign on their phones, this is possible on KoboToolbox.*
- 6) From Stanford de Jong: Nice insight, Lebo! IS this one solution you use? <https://mysurvey.solutions/> *Glad you could take something away from that, and indeed it is! Survey Solutions does quite a lot we usually use it for interview geofencing*
- 7) Candy Day: How did you do immediate scoring in Google Form quizzes? Is it built in or was an additional add-in used? *It's built in, if you go under the Google Form templates you should find a quiz template there.*
- 8) Sarah Charlton: What sort of incentives do you use? *We use a wide variety, in the past we've used grocery store vouchers, VISA gift cards, Airtime and data via Smartload, clothing store vouchers – consider your respondents' demographics and what would most likely appeal to the majority as well as your budgetary restrictions.*
- 9) From Anyway Chingwete: How did you ensure representative samples for your surveys. *This squarely depends on whether our methodology requires a perfectly random sample or not, convenience sampling is easier but we do always ensure that we keep track of the quota of respondents reached to ensure that our sample distribution is fair across gender, race, and socio-economic standing variables, as well as spatially.*
- 10) Clementine "Clemee" Machika: How do you know when to offer incentives vs when not to ? *We usually don't offer incentives on issues of public interest, and on projects where we assist community members in collecting and analysing their own data. But if we notice that our sample completion is moving too slowly, we do incentivise participation.*
- 11) Ragi Bashonga: How would you go about developing a database when you are switching from community field research to telephonic research? Also, does this affect representivity. *To ensure that you still draw a randomised sample of respondents, I would recommend having a few of your field researchers go to those specific stands that you have sampled to collect contact details of the person sampled, and seek the consent of the potential respondents to participate and be called by another field researcher for a telephonic interview. The initial investment will definitely be worth it because this can be foundation you lay to having a research panel that you share questions with when you need answers. To avoid interview fatigue you could snowball for other people so you don't keep sending questions to the same group.*
- 12) Ntokozo Yingwana: In the end may you please list here the softwares/tools you mentioned in your presentation? *Slides will be shared*
- 13) sclaasen: We include a question on the questionnaire to obtain consent
- 14) From Nandi Jacobs: no signatures necessary? for consent? (see Q5)

And many thank you messages for a great presentation!

Dr Benjamin Roberts, HSRC – Q&A

- 1) Kathy Brown: Regarding ethical protocols: Do your fieldworkers receive any form of diversity training regarding LGBTQ+? I have worked with your most recent dataset and it seemed like gender and sex were often conflated, was wondering if this was respondents only or also a fieldworker issue. *They have received training, but this remains a challenging issue.*
- 2) Julia: How do you think increased response rates impact of comparability of data over time?
- 3) Nandi Jacobs: are there any specific reasons for the improved response rates?
- 4) Elmarie: Is the survey data publicly available for metro level?
- 5) Mahlomola lengolo: What was the sample size (number of interviews) for eThekweni Municipality?
The survey uses province and geotype within province as stratification variables. The subsamples within specific municipalities, metros is probably too small for your purposes, producing confidence intervals of point estimates that are not helpful. Reliance on the Quality of Life Survey data from GCRO, eThekweni, etc is therefore a better bet. These could be related to provincial and national averages on common measures from SASAS to provide a broader perspective.
- 6) Kathy Brown: In your most recent available dataset, I noticed that the grounds for discrimination excluded HIV/Aids status, pregnancy status, culture or marital status. Was this a conscious decision? If so, why was this decision made?
- 7) Kathy Brown: You include many gender options for respondents, but the sex options are only male and female. Why is this?
- 8) Julia de Kadt: What are likely/potential implications of these global interruptions in social data collection?
- 9) Julia: Are the COVID specific questions available publicly? (from the ESS)
Julia, the ESS Covid1-9 questions can be found at the following link: <https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/singlenew.html?a=/about/news/essnews0089.html>
- 10) Karen Kotschy: Any pointers to survey data available or planned for rural areas in the Eastern Cape would be greatly appreciated. Thanks.
- 11) From Nandi Jacobs: fieldwork training after lockdown and Covid. how will processes be altered, and what kind of knowledge may fieldworkers need?
- 12) Kathy Brown: How do you collect your data - i.e. through paper forms, devices etc?
Hi Kathy, we collect our data using handheld devices with face-to-face interviewing. We migrated from paper-based to computer-assisted personal interviewing in 2018.

Mr Solly Molayi, StatsSA – Q&A

- Julia: What sort of lengths are you looking at for CATI/CAWI questionnaires? Will you be losing much content?
- Answer: Definitely yes. We are busy trimming our questionnaires to facilitate the new data collection methodology. The plan is have aprox. 20/25 minutes per interview. Thanks
- Julia: any thoughts around ethics of using previously collected contact info for recruitment?
- Answer: Stats SA's data collection is governed by the Statistics Act (no 6 of 1999) which, amongst other things, requires Stats SA to maintain confidentiality and prohibiting the organisation from sharing any information that could be used, even inadvertently, to identify respondents. That is why, for instance, census data is not released at enumerator area level, and why all survey unit record data is anonymised.
- Kathy Brown: which remote data collection modes are you considering? I have recently used KOBO for a project with the UNHCR which we found to be quite effective –
- Answer: for now the plan is to transit CAPI (face-to-face) to CATI with plan to introduce anther modes later e.g. CAWI. Thanks
- Tara: Will SASQAF framework be updated to include multimodal quality criteria?
- Answer: Definitely, the framework will be adjusted according. Thanks
- Tara: is StatsSA considering partnering with external data collection agencies as part of the multimodal approach, given the history of conducting all the surveys in-house?
- Answer: Stat SA will partner with private companies and agencies in situations where we cannot muster the required expertise within the organisation.
- HammondA: Thank you Solly -are you considering data fusion approaches in your multi-mode frameworks?
- Answer: Yes, it is something that is in our radar. It is something that we planning to introduce it in future. Thanks
- Sheona Claasen: Hi Solly, I have undertaken telephonic interviews and online interviews using Survey Solutions. Happy to share learning points. Warm regards. Sheona Claasen, NMBM
- Answer: That will be great, please drop me and email. Thanks