

Working the Net

Go to a web search engine and look up "validity and reliability." Describe to the class the new insights you gain into these important concepts.

Go to the Internet and look up Nielsen Total Measurement. What exactly is Nielsen measuring? How is the construct measured? How might one determine validity and reliability?

Real-Life Research

10.1 Beer Drinkers' Tastes Change With the Season

What a time to be alive—at least according to beer drinkers. Nearly nine in 10 (88 percent) beer drinkers agree that it's a great time to be a beer lover. When looking more closely at what it is about beer they love so much, 70 percent say they enjoy trying new types of beer and nearly two in three (64 percent) are fans of local brews. The latter is especially true of craft beer drinkers, 86 percent of whom are fans of local beer, compared to 77 percent of those who prefer import beers and 60 percent of domestic non-craft beer drinkers.

Those in their 30s stand out from the crowd in their passion for beer. Among beer drinkers in this age group, 95 percent say it's a great time to be a beer lover and 85 percent enjoy trying new types of beer. They're also more passionate fans of local brews than the average beer drinker (76 percent).

These are some of the results of The Harris Poll of 2,115 U.S. adults (ages 21 and older, including 913 who drink beer at least several times per year, surveyed online).

As the weather changes, so do the taps, with spring seasonal brews replacing the winter drafts. When it comes to beer style, lagers are tops, with 30 percent of beer drinkers saying a lager is their preferred choice. However, 40 percent of beer drinkers say their favorite beers change with the season. Millennials may welcome the change most as they're more likely than any other generation to modify their tastes with the seasons (56 percent vs. 42 percent Gen Xers, 26 percent Baby Boomers, 21 percent Matures).

"It's certainly a good time to be a beer lover," says Danelle Kosmal, VP of Nielsen's Beverage Alcohol Practice. "As Americans continue to enjoy some of their favorite traditional lagers, they also have a seemingly unlimited set of options when it comes to styles and new flavors. Whether it's with a new session IPA, a farmhouse sale or a refreshing summer flavor, there are plenty of reasons for beer lovers and brewers alike to be excited about their opportunities in beer."

Perhaps just as critical as the contents of your pint glass is what's on the plate next to it. Pizza tops the list of foods beer drinkers say is the best to eat while sipping a cold one (28 percent), which comes as no surprise since a separate Harris Poll found that pizza also ranked as the No. 1 comfort food and beer beats out all other alcoholic beverages the top alcoholic beverage to wash down a slice. Burgers (10 percent) and wings (7 percent) round out the top three favorite foods to pair with a beer.⁵

Questions

- ✓ 1. What is the construct or constructs in the research? Give a constitutive definition.
- ✓ 2. What levels of measurement could the researchers have used? Give examples.
3. What could have been used to measure reliability?
4. How might the researchers approach the measurement of validity?
5. What could be done to measure construct validity?

Environmental benefits and reducing monthly bills are also key motivators for consumers to install connected home products, with 38 percent pointing to reduction in home energy bills as a benefit. Fifty-nine percent of Americans also indicated they worry about their energy consumption.

Despite growing awareness of connected home products like thermostats, Americans are concerned about keeping their personal information secure online (82 percent) and worry that the technology in their home will quickly become outdated (43 percent). Understandably, they are willing to pay extra for high-quality electronics in their homes (63 percent). Bottom line, Americans just want the technology in their home to work well together (86 percent).

Awareness of connected home brands gradually increases with household income levels. However, across multiple income levels, more than half of Americans can name at least one connected home brand. When asked which brands in the "connected or smart home" space came to mind, 21 percent named Nest as the top brand, followed by Apple (12 percent) and Samsung (8 percent).

Questions

1. Using the data from the research results, write six questions that could have been used to gather the information.
2. What questions might have been asked on a screener to determine if an individual was qualified to respond.
3. Write three demographic questions that could have been used in the survey.

12.2 Sonic Goes Mobile

Sonic Drive-In has recently reviewed information for a number of surveys involving various types of product evaluations. All

the surveys were completed online with customers recruited from their proprietary panel. In addition to the actual survey data and other information, the online interviewing system captures the browser that the respondent used to complete the survey. Analyzing the "browser used" data, Sonic has observed a slow but steady increase in the number of individuals completing the survey on mobile browsers, including tablets and smartphones. The most recent results show a big jump in this percentage from a year ago, with an average of nearly 30 percent of the more recent surveys completed on mobile browsers.

Several managers have attempted completing some of these surveys using their own tablets and smartphones. They like the idea that using these platforms increase the options for the consumer and that these devices permit consumers to take the surveys at times and in places when and where they previously could not. However, their experiences in testing the surveys on their mobile devices have suggested that they may need to change the way they design questionnaires to accommodate smartphones and tablets.

Questions

1. What are the impediments and difficulties associated with completing surveys on mobile devices?
- ✓ 2. What changes does Sonic need to make in its survey designs to take advantage of these new survey platforms?
3. What about mixing survey results taken on laptop computers and those taken on mobile devices? What cautions, if any, would you have?
4. Might the inclusion of mobile devices, along with laptops and desktops, improve the quality of the sample? Why do you say that?

Real-Life Research

13.1 The Research Group

The Research Group has been hired by the National Internet Service Providers Association to determine the following:

- What specific factors motivate people to choose a particular Internet service provider (ISP)?
- How do these factors differ between choosing an ISP for home use and for business use?
- Why do people choose one ISP over the others? How many have switched ISPs in the past year? Why did they switch ISPs?
- How satisfied are they with their current ISP?
- Do consumers know or care whether an ISP is a member of the National Internet Service Providers Association?
- What value-added services do consumers want from ISPs (e.g., telephone support for questions and problems)?

The Research Group underbid three other research companies to get the contract. In fact, its bid was more than 25 percent lower than the next lowest bid. The primary way in which The Research Group was able to provide the lowest bid related to its sampling methodology. In its proposal, The Research Group specified that college students would be used to gather the survey data. Its plan called for randomly selecting 20 colleges from across the country, contacting the chairperson of the marketing department, and asking her or him to submit a list of 10 students who would be interested in earning extra money. Finally, The Research Group would contact the students individually with the goal of identifying five students at each school who would ultimately be asked to get 10 completed interviews. Students would be paid \$10 for each completed survey. The only requirement imposed in regard to selecting potential respondents was that they had to be ISP subscribers at the time of the survey. The Research Group proposal suggested that the easiest way to do this would be for the student interviewers to go to the student union or student center during the lunch hour and ask those at each table whether they might be interested in participating in the survey.

Questions

1. How would you describe this sampling methodology?
2. What problems do you see arising from this technique?
3. Suggest an alternative sampling method that might give the National Internet Service Providers Association a better picture of the information it desired.

13.2 Florida National Bank

Florida National Bank (FNB) operates branches in 65 cities and towns throughout Florida. The bank offers a complete range of financial services, including Visa and MasterCard credit cards. FNB has 62,500 people in the state using its credit cards. Based on their original applications, it has certain information about these individuals, including name, address, zip code, telephone number, income, education, and assets. FNB is interested in determining whether there is a relationship between the volume of purchases charged on credit cards and demographic characteristics of the individual cardholder. For example, are individuals in certain parts of the state more or less likely to be heavy users of the card? Is there a relationship between a person's income and his or her level of card usage? Is there a relationship between the person's level of education and card usage? The data could be used to more effectively target offerings sent through the mail if significant relationships are found. Paul Bruney is the research director for FNB, and he is currently in the process of developing a design for the research. If you were Bruney, how would you answer the following questions?

Questions

1. How would you define the population of interest for the study?
2. What sampling frame(s) might you use for the project?
3. What procedure would you use to select a simple random sample from the sampling frame you chose above?
4. Would it make sense to use a stratified sample in this situation? Why or why not? How would you approach the process of developing a stratified sample from the sampling frame you chose?
5. Could you use the sampling frame to draw a cluster sample? How would you go about it? Would it make any sense to do this?
6. Which of the three probability sampling methods just mentioned would you choose for this study? Why would you choose that option?