

An International Study of Meetings with Study Response Panelists: Sampling from Multiple Recruitment Sources

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Method

This study examined meeting characteristics and perceptions of meetings. Participants were recruited from the StudyResponse research participant panel as well as a wide variety of other recruitment sources (e.g., snowball sampling, university alumni newsletters, email distribution lists). Multiple recruitment strategies were employed to maximize the likelihood of obtaining a diverse international sample, representing a range of occupations. Members of the StudyResponse panel were offered a chance to win one of four cash prizes of \$50 as a raffle incentive. Participants from the other recruitment methods were not offered an incentive.

Potential participants were asked to complete one of two surveys via the Internet. Individuals who attended at least one meeting that day were asked to complete an “end-of-the-day survey” to examine the effects of meetings on daily well-being. Those who did not attend a meeting that day (but attend work-related meetings) or who did not plan on completing a survey at the end of the day, were asked to complete a different survey. This second survey examined the individual’s perceptions of the typical meetings they attend, as well as the organization’s “attitudes” toward meetings. Both surveys took approximately 20 minutes to complete, and they were roughly parallel in content, but differed largely in the level of analysis. StudyResponse panelists were recruited to complete both surveys.

Response Information

Email recruitment messages were sent to 3400 members of the StudyResponse panel in 10 waves (500 in the first two waves, 300 in subsequent waves). Follow-up reminders were sent one week after the first two waves and approximately two to three weeks after the final waves (to minimize potential non-response around the Thanksgiving holiday). Approximately 2700 panelists received follow-up reminders.

Survey 1: End-of-the-day Survey

The full sample size (representing all recruitment sources) for the end-of-the day survey was 866 respondents; 18 of these were deleted because they were identified as duplicates based on StudyResponse ID numbers. This resulted with a sample size of 848, 662 (78.1%) of whom were StudyResponse panelists. A total of 380 additional participants were removed from the sample because they did not meet the criteria of attending at least one meeting that day (n=188 indicated 0 meetings and n=192 left the items regarding the daily

meetings blank). The number of ineligible participants did not significantly differ between the StudyResponse panel (n=308, 44.9%) and the respondents recruited from other methods (n=72, 44.4%), $\chi^2 = .01$, df (1), $p > .05$.

The other objective for the study was for individuals to complete the survey at the end of the work day (within one hour of the end of the shift). Although the time of survey completion was recorded (according to Central Time), it was not possible to confidently screen out participants based on whether they actually completed the survey at the end of the day (e.g., due to possible differences in shift schedules or differences in international time zones within and across countries).

The final sample size was 468 after removing ineligible participants: 378 (80.8%) of the sample was from StudyResponse and 90 (19.2%) participants were from other recruitment sources. Eight of these StudyResponse panelists did not report a valid ID that could make them eligible for incentives, but they were identified as members of the panel based on another item in the survey that asked how they learned about the study.

The StudyResponse database respondents had a mean age of 37.55 ($SD = 10.12$). More women (65.6%) took part in the survey than did men (26.5%)¹. A majority of the sample was from the United States (71.5%), but 22 other countries were also represented among respondents from this panel (e.g., 7.9% UK, 5.8% Australia). A total of 73.9% reported working full-time and 13.5% were self-employed. Respondents from this panel represented a good cross-section of occupational sectors (e.g., 15.4% education, 12.8% health care) and organization types (i.e., 32.3% private for profit (not quoted on stock exchange); 22.4% private for profit (quoted on stock exchange), 20.3% public, and 12.2% private not for profit).

Overall, participants attended an average of 1.51 meetings ($SD=.89$) on the day they completed the survey. Participants primarily completed the end-of-the-day survey on a Wednesday (29.5%) or a Thursday (27.8%).

Survey Two: Typical Meetings

A total of 1,631 individuals participated in the second survey. Ten of these respondents were removed from the dataset because they were identified as duplicates based on StudyResponse ID numbers². Of the remaining 1,621 participants, 520 (32.1%) were recruited from the StudyResponse panel; 384 (73.8%) of these individuals reported a StudyResponse ID number and the others were identified as StudyResponse participants based on their answer to another item on the survey. One quarter of the sample (25.4%) was eliminated because they submitted surveys that were almost entirely blank. There was a significant difference in the distributions of those who left the survey blank and those who completed the survey based on the survey recruitment sample. Of the 520 StudyResponse participants, 17.1% (n=89) submitted nearly blank surveys, and in the non-StudyResponse members of the total sample, 29.3% (n=323) did so, $\chi^2 = 27.83$, df (1), $p <$

¹ 37 StudyResponse participants did not indicate their gender.

² These deletions are primarily from one respondent who submitted the survey 6 times.

.001. Perhaps this is due in part to the use of an incentive with the StudyResponse panelists and the fact that they have agreed to complete social science surveys.

Thus, the final sample included 1,209 participants, comprising 431 (35.6%) panelists from StudyResponse.com and 778 (64.4%) participants recruited from other sources. The StudyResponse participants reported a mean age of 36.9 ($SD=10.63$) and a majority was female (68.9%).³ These participants worked an average of 35.34 hours per week ($SD=14.48$), and attended an average of 2.86 ($SD=2.93$) meetings per week.

A wide span of countries was represented among StudyResponse panelists, with 79.4% indicating they worked in the United States. Twenty-four other countries were also represented, with the largest percentage 6.7% from Australia. In addition, a broad range of occupational sectors were represented, with the largest percentages reporting education (13.7%), health care (12.8%) and finance/insurance/real estate (10%). As with the first survey, participants worked in a variety of organizational types: 33.4% private for profit (not quoted on the stock exchange), 24.4% private for profit (quoted on the stock exchange), 19.3% public (e.g., government), and 14.4% private not for profit. Finally, 13.9% of the sample was self-employed.

Observations

This study suggested several possible recommendations for maximizing the use of the StudyResponse panel in social science research. The first concerns the use of the panel along with other recruitment methods. In both surveys, some individuals who reported a valid StudyResponse ID number indicated that they learned about the survey from another source (e.g., “other e-mail distribution list”); this response option was located prior to “StudyResponse.com” in the item. Similarly, other individuals reported learning about the survey from StudyResponse.com or typed in a response to “other source” that indicated a different reference to the panel (e.g., e-mail from Elizabeth Weiss), but did not report a StudyResponse ID number. These findings suggest that when using more than one recruitment strategy, it may be useful to have both a close-ended and open-ended (e.g., “other, please specify”) item requesting how participants learned about the study in addition to requesting their study response ID number. In this way, the researcher can have a better understanding of the sample composition, as some individuals may have either learned about the study from more than one source or be familiar with a term other than “StudyResponse” in reference to the panel.

Further, Survey 1 (the end-of-the day survey) requested participants to provide their StudyResponse ID numbers at the beginning of the survey and Survey 2 requested this information in the last item of the survey. Although neither of the surveys had large numbers of duplicate responses, there were comparatively more in Survey 1. This may suggest that it is preferable to request the ID numbers at the end of the survey. However, note that Survey 1 had comparatively fewer missing ID numbers; it is unclear if this is related to when the ID number is requested in the survey completion process. Additional results using different locations of the ID number request may be beneficial.

³ 4.6% did not report their sex.