Are Mode Preferences Real?¹

By

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Introduction

A long-standing notion within survey research is that most respondents have a preference for a particular survey mode. Shortly after the development of telephone data collection methods, Groves and Kahn (1979) found that respondents tend to prefer one data collection mode over another. Because respondents may prefer one mode to another, many survey researchers have assumed that response rates, and general goodwill and attitudes about the questionnaire, can be improved by catering to the preferences of potential respondents, oftentimes by providing a choice between different modes (see Shih and Fan 2007; Dillman, West, and Clark 1994; Diment and Garrett-Jones 2007; de Leeuw, Hox, and Dillman 2008).

In recent years, the Internet has become an increasingly more enticing medium for survey research. Switching mail or telephone surveys to the web has many benefits; web questionnaires are significantly less costly for researchers and could potentially reduce the burden put on respondents. More surveys are now conducted using the web, with varying results. However, web surveys of the general public have not yet effectively achieved response rates that are equivalent to those of mail questionnaires or other forms of surveying (Manfreda et al. 2008; Shih and Fan 2007) and coverage is limited. When given a choice, it appears that most respondents still prefer other modes of response to the Internet (Shih and Fan 2007; Diment and

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² Morgan Millar and Allison O’Neill were graduate assistants and Don A. Dillman was Regents Professor and Deputy Director for Research in the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center when this report was written.
Garrett-Jones 2007). Thus, in order to achieve the best response rates, some prior research suggests surveyors should continue to cater to people’s preference for mail questionnaires.

The analyses presented in this report address the issue of mode preference and its implications for survey response rates. This research utilized a mixed-mode web and mail survey experiment. One purpose of this study was to develop methods for improving response rates for web surveys. The experiment results imply that it is possible to achieve relatively high web response rates using several techniques. In this report we discuss these methods and the results of the experimental treatments included in this study. Additionally, our data reveal some surprising effects of survey mode on respondents’ mode preference, which suggest that relying on people’s stated preferences may not be a necessary or important method for deciding which survey mode to utilize. In light of these findings, we believe the web is a viable option for conducting certain surveys of the general public. To further understand the usefulness of web surveys, we also examine factors that may influence the likelihood of respondents choosing a web questionnaire over another option. We conclude by summarizing what this research tells us about effectively implementing web surveys.

Previous Research on Survey Mode Preferences and Response via Web

Very few studies examine individuals’ stated survey mode preferences. Most researchers infer preferences from respondents’ actions: when given mode alternatives, respondents’ mode choices are assumed to be their mode preferences (see Shih and Fan 2007; Diment and Garrett-Jones 2007; Dillman, West, and Clark 1994). Web response rates are lower than mail response rates, suggesting that when given a choice, most people prefer to respond to a questionnaire via mail rather than over the Internet (Shih and Fan 2007; Diment and Garrett-Jones 2007).
However, because of the web’s potential for reducing study costs, it is in survey researchers’ interest not to dismiss the Internet as a promising survey mode. Some studies indicate that respondents who choose to reply via web are different from those who reply using mail (Diment and Garrett-Jones 2007; Zhang 2000). This suggests that factors other than preferences alone may be shaping individuals’ mode choices. This research begins to examine respondents’ preferences for web and what factors influence their likelihood of choosing to respond to Internet questionnaires.

The Lewiston-Clarkston Quality of Life Survey

The Lewiston-Clarkston Quality of Life Survey was conducted via web and mail from November 2007 to January 2008 on a random sample of 2,800 residential addresses in an area that encompasses the twin cities of Lewiston, Idaho and Clarkston, Washington. The sample for this survey was obtained from the United States Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File (DSF). The DSF is a computerized file containing all residential addresses that receive delivery from the USPS. The use of postal mailing addresses as a sampling frame is advantageous compared to the commonly-used telephone-based sampling methods, which have become increasingly problematic as more and more households are opting to discontinue land-line telephone service in favor of cell phones (Smyth, Dillman, Christian, & O’Neill, Forthcoming). Currently 17.5% of American households have only wireless telephones, which is an increase of 2% from 2006 (Blumberg and Luke 2008). Additionally, it is not feasible to contact individuals through the Internet because email addresses lack the structure needed for generating random samples (Dillman 2007). Therefore, the DSF appears to be a better option than the telephone for generating a random sample of the general public.
The substantive content of the questionnaire included items to assess respondents’ views on a variety of community-related issues including the quality of life in the community. However, a primary purpose of this survey was to determine why some respondents avoid the Internet, and if it is possible to convince such individuals to respond via web. The 2,800 questionnaires were divided into six treatment groups. Each of these groups was composed of different sets of mailings in order to emphasize response by mail or web. Due to what we suspect were delivery problems affecting two of the treatment groups, only the four remaining treatment groups will be discussed here and used in these analyses. The exclusion of the two problematic groups reduces the sample size to 1,800.

The assumption that respondents prefer certain modes of response, particularly paper questionnaires sent via mail, prevents the use of web questionnaires. Nevertheless, not much research has explicitly examined these preferences. To address the lack of knowledge about respondents’ mode preferences, a question which asked, “If you could choose how to answer surveys like this, which one of the following ways of answering would you prefer?” was included at the end of the questionnaire. Respondents had a choice between web, mail, or telephone as preferred modes of response. One interest driving this research was whether we could encourage people to respond to a mode they do not necessarily prefer, and how responses to this question may vary based on other respondent characteristics, such as demographics and familiarity with the Internet. We examine the relationship between this variable and other respondent characteristics to gain a better understanding of what influences individuals’ mode preferences and in turn devise methods for making web surveys more appealing to the general public.
Each treatment employed four contacts. These contacts were designed to emphasize either mail or web response to differing degrees based on the treatment group. The four treatment groups received varying levels of encouragement to choose one mode or the other. For Group A, the “Mail Preference (with web mention)” group, the mailings suggested that mail response was preferred, but instructions for filling out the questionnaire online were also provided in each contact. Group B was also a “Mail Preference” group, but for this treatment, the web questionnaire option was not mentioned until two weeks after the initial mail questionnaire was sent. Group C, the “Web Preference” group, asked respondents to fill out the web version and did not mention the paper option until two weeks after the initial survey request. Finally, Group D was an “Equal Preference” group in which respondents were told that the choice of either the web or mail questionnaire was up to them.

The first mailing was a pre-letter informing the sampled households that they had been selected to answer a questionnaire, when it would arrive, about how long it would take to complete it, and that a token of appreciation would be sent to thank them for their participation. This mailing was the same for each of the four groups (see Appendix I).

The second mailing provided either the paper questionnaire or the web address information. For the mail preference with web mention group and the mail preference group (see Appendix I), this mailing included an explanatory letter, a $5.00 incentive, a copy of the questionnaire, and a stamped return envelope for the questionnaire. Group C (web preference) received the letter, the incentive, and a small card displaying elaborated instructions for how to reach and complete the survey on the web. Group D (equal web and mail preference) received the letter, the incentive, the elaborated instructions, a copy of the survey, and a stamped return envelope.
The second mailing letters informed recipients of why the survey was being conducted, how they had been selected to respond, who in the household should complete the questionnaire (the adult [aged 18 or older] who had had the most recent birthday), approximately how long the questionnaire would take to complete, that responses are confidential, and who to contact in the event of problems or questions (see Appendix I). These letters also explained the $5.00 incentive and thanked the recipients for their time and responses. These letters also varied slightly by treatment group to reflect the different emphasis on mail or web. The Group B sample did not receive any additional information about the web version of the questionnaire at this time. However, the letters sent to households in Groups A, C, and D contained information about the web version of the questionnaire, including the web address and an access code number. The first group was not given any elaborations on these instructions, but the web preference group was informed that responding over the web would be quicker and more accurate. An explanation of the elaborated instructions card was also given to Group C in the hopes that it would make completing the questionnaire on the web less intimidating. The letter for Group C also explained that if respondents wished to have a paper copy of the questionnaire, it was possible to contact the study director and request one. Group D recipients were given two options for responding and respondents were told that the choice of how to respond, either by mail or web, was entirely up to them. Also, they were informed that if they wished to complete the web questionnaire, the elaborated instructions could help them do so.

The third contact was a reminder postcard (see Appendix I). Each of the postcards reminded the recipients of the mailing they had received the previous week, thanked them if they had already completed and returned the questionnaire, and explained that if the questionnaire had not been completed, the adult in the household with the most recent birthday should complete it.
as soon as possible. Groups A and B were also informed that if they had lost or did not receive a questionnaire, they could call the study director and request another. Group A was also reminded of the possibility of completing the questionnaire on the web and was once again given the website and an access code. Group C’s postcard asked recipients to complete the web questionnaire, provided the address and the access code, and then stated that if the household did not have Internet access, they could call and request a paper questionnaire. Group D was informed that if they had lost or did not receive a questionnaire they could request one if they wished to respond in that format. They were also informed that they could respond by web and given the website and access code.

The fourth (and final) mailing included a letter, a replacement copy of the paper questionnaire, and a stamped return envelope for the questionnaire (see Appendix I). Groups A, B, and D also received the card with elaborated instructions. The letters informed the non-responders that as of yet, their responses had not been received and that those who had responded had given very useful information. They were also told that their responses could help the results of the survey be more accurate. They were reminded to have the adult with the most recent birthday be the one to complete the questionnaire, and were instructed to send a note or a blank questionnaire back in the return envelope if they wished not to participate. Groups A and B were also notified of the possibility of responding over the web. They were given the website and access code with brief instructions stating how easy it was to complete the web questionnaire. Group C was sent this information, a reminder of the elaborated instructions, as well as the replacement questionnaire for those without Internet access. Group D received the additional information about the web questionnaire, and was also given a brief reminder about the elaborated instructions card.
To make participants feel more comfortable about responding to the questionnaire, each mailing included a notice that this project had been approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board. Recipients were provided with contact information for the IRB in case they had questions about their rights as a participant. A variety of visual design elements and cues were employed in the mailings to increase appeal and to personalize the materials, since names are not available in the DSF. Every letter contained a small picture of the survey area near the signature to create a sense of familiarity for the respondents. The letters were printed on WSU stationery and the postcards and elaborated instructions contained the WSU logo so that their appearance would be more official and trustworthy. The outgoing envelopes were also designed to further increase the feelings of familiarity and trust in respondents. Each envelope used address labels with WSU logos on them, as well as additional labels with the survey title and the same picture that was included on each of the letters. The elaborated instruction cards were designed to be colorful and eye-catching, and included images of the web survey in the hopes that the combination of these instructions and images would make responding by web much less intimidating for some respondents without being insulting to those who are comfortable with the web.

The mail questionnaires were also designed with familiarity and visual attractiveness in mind (Appendix II). The small picture that was on the letters and the envelope labels was enlarged to cover most of the front page of the survey. The entire survey was printed in color; each question was enclosed in a rectangle of light blue, which matched the shade on the front and back covers. There were 51 questions on nine pages, covering topics such as views of the community, ownership and use of technology, and general demographic information. The back cover had four additional photographs of recognizable sights from the survey area, a message
thanking respondents for completing the survey, and a large writing space for any additional comments respondents might have had about the survey or any of the survey topics.

The web questionnaire was designed to resemble the appearance of the mail questionnaire as much as possible. The entry page had the same light blue shade and the picture from the cover of the paper questionnaire. Every page of the web survey had a light blue banner at the top of the screen with the survey title and one of the pictures from the back cover of the paper survey. The picture in the top banner changed after every ten questions so that the web respondents could see all of the images that the mail respondents did. Every question in the survey was given its own screen on the web, so respondents did not have to scroll down in order to answer questions. At the end of the web survey, respondents were provided with a large text box for additional comments about the survey or survey topics and were thanked for their participation. They were then taken to a screen which thanked them for their time and stated that they could either choose to go back and review the answers to their questions, or they could click the final ‘next’ button and submit all of their answers. If they selected ‘next’ they were taken to a final screen which said that their completed questionnaire had been received. However, this web survey used paradata, meaning that even if a respondent did not click the final ‘next’ button, their responses would still be received.

Overall, this survey experiment was designed to see if we could contact respondents through mail but then “push” them to fill out the questionnaire on the web. By using a unified approach between mail and web, we constructed a web questionnaire that resembled the mail version to ensure similarity between the two modes. By offering enhanced instructions for completing the web questionnaire (Appendix II), we also attempted to reduce uncertainty and confusion for respondents less familiar with the Internet. Finally, in the web preference group,
we tested whether withholding the mail option would push people who otherwise would choose mail to respond via web.

Survey Response Rates

We obtained an overall response rate of 62% for the four treatment groups under consideration in this paper. The response rates for each treatment group are displayed in Table 1. This table shows that the Mail Preference group had the highest response rate of 71%. The response rate for the Equal Preference group was 63%, the Mail Preference with web mention group had a response rate of 61%, and the Web Preference group’s response rate was 55%. While the Web Preference group response rate is lower than the other groups, it is a respectable response rate for a web survey, which suggests it is possible to drive more respondents to the web. Indeed, by looking at the figures in Table 1, we see that we were able to push 41% of this group to respond via web, which is much higher than the percentages who opted for web when given a choice (in Groups A and D). This suggests that adopting methods such as withholding mail and emphasizing the ease of web may be useful tools for increasing Internet survey response rates.

**Table 1: Response Rates by Treatment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Mail Preference (with web mention)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>61***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Mail Preference</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Web Preference</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>55***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Equal Preference</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>63***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Response rate significantly different from Treatment B at p <0.001

Respondent Mode Preference
One concern that prevents the use of web questionnaires is the assumption that respondents prefer paper questionnaires sent via mail rather than Internet questionnaires. To get a better understanding of such preferences, at the end of this survey we asked respondents “If you could choose how to answer surveys like this, which one of the following ways of answering would you prefer?” Respondents had a choice between web, mail, or telephone. Table 2 shows a breakdown of respondents’ answers to this question about mode preference. Very few respondents (about 1.2%) indicated that they prefer telephone. Because we did not include a telephone mode in this survey, these respondents are not included in the following analyses.

**Table 2: Respondents’ Stated Survey Mode Preference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode Choice</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filling out a paper questionnaire sent by mail</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filling out a questionnaire on the Internet</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answering questions over the telephone</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total n 969**

Note: Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**Chi-Square Tests of Association**

Our first step in analyzing the association between mode preference and other respondent characteristics was to conduct a series of Chi-square tests. Chi-square tests are useful in assessing the relationship between two given variables because they indicate whether or not responses are distributed evenly among each category of a cross-tabulation. If the test indicates that responses are in fact not distributed equally, this suggests that the two variables in question co-vary in some manner.
First we tested the relationship between respondents' stated mode preference and several
demographic variables. These variables include respondent age, employment status, education
level, income, gender, and marital status. The results of the tabulations are displayed in Table 3.
This table shows that each of the demographic variables tested, excluding gender, is significantly
related to mode preference. This suggests that demographic factors may in some way influence
the survey mode people prefer.

**Table 3: Cross Tabulation of Mode Preference and Respondent Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-65</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2=57.871^{***}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2=54.402^{***}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Graduate</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Year Degree</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv. Degree</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next we examined the relationship between stated mode preference and a variety of variables related to respondents’ familiarity and comfort with the Internet. We hypothesized that respondents who are more at ease and familiar with using the web would be more likely to prefer to fill out questionnaires over the Internet. Cross-tabulations of mode preference were performed with the variables Frequency of Internet Use, Frequency of Internet Assistance, Concern about Computer Viruses, Fear about an Online Scam, Preferring to do Something over the Internet versus Some Other Way, Internet Connection in the Home, and Type of Internet Connection in
the Home. The results of these Chi-square tests are displayed in Table 4. Each of these variables is significantly related to mode preference. Thus, factors associated with familiarity and ease of using the Internet may also influence respondents’ likelihood of preferring web questionnaires.

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Mode Preference and Internet Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet Use</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several Times a Day</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Day</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several Times a Week</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Week</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Month</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>08%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; Once a Month</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>03%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>01%</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 173.331 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need Assistance when Using Internet</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the Time</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>07%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 25.122 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear Computer Virus</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Little</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 10.746 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear Online Scam</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>823</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We also were interested in understanding the relationship between mode preference and the actual mode of response completed. The results of this test are contained in Table 5. There is a strong relationship between mode completed and mode preferred. This is an interesting finding in light of the fact that our experimental treatments were designed to push people to complete the questionnaire via a specific mode, and that only in the Web Preference group did we get a substantial number of respondents to fill out the web questionnaire. Thus, a simple model of preferences shaping mode choice does not reasonably explain this association.
Table 5: Cross-Tabulation of Mode Preference and Mode Completed

Percentage of Respondents in Each Category
Who Preferred Mail or Web

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode Completed</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 524.471^{***} \]

*** \( p < 0.001 \)

To explore this relationship further, we next limited the analysis to just respondents from the Web Preference treatment group, who were “pushed” to web and from whom the mail option was withheld for the first few weeks of the study. The results from this cross-tabulation (Table 6) are even more striking. Nearly all respondents who completed a web questionnaire report preferring web. Because these individuals were pushed to web, it is unlikely that so many preferred it initially. This is evident from looking at other treatment groups, in which respondents were given a choice of mode. In these groups, many fewer respondents opted for web, suggesting that in general most individuals will choose mail over web. But, if we push respondents to go to web, not only will they do so, but they might also end up liking it.

Table 6: Cross-Tabulation of Mode Preference and Mode Completed, for Web Preference Group

Percentage of Respondents in Each Category
Who Preferred Mail or Web

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode Completed</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>08%</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multivariate Analyses

In order to get a better understanding of the relationship between stated mode preference and the other variables tested in the Chi-square analyses just reported, multivariate logistic regression models were constructed. Regression models are beneficial because they allow us to account for multiple variables which affect mode preference simultaneously. Therefore, we can assess the impact of any given variable net of the effects of all other variables tested.

Logistic regression methods were utilized because our outcome variable, mode preference, is dichotomous. Web preference is coded as 1 and mail preference as 0. All variables analyzed in the cross-tabulations above were included in this series of tests, with the exception of employment status. However, in order to simplify the interpretation of results of the regression models, a few of the variables were re-coded for this set of analyses. Respondents’ marital status is coded as a binary variable, with a value of 1 if married and a value of 0 if the respondent falls into any other category. Also, instead of using the ordered categories of respondent age as seen above, in the multivariate models we use the respondents’ actual age, in years.

The results of these analyses are displayed in Table 7. Model 1 regresses mode preference on respondent demographic variables. This model indicates that respondent age has a statistically significant, negative effect on the likelihood of preferring the web mode of response. Thus, older individuals are less likely to state they prefer web. Model 1 also indicates that education level has a significant, positive effect on the likelihood of preferring web. Respondents

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3 We excluded employment status from the multivariate models due to its high collinearity with respondent age. It appears as if the significant relationship between employment status and mode preference is an artifact of the “retired” category, which likely represents older respondents.
with higher levels of education are more likely than those with lower levels of education to state they prefer to fill out surveys over the Internet. Respondent income also positively affects likelihood of preferring web; individuals with higher income are more likely than those at lower income levels to prefer web surveys. Finally, Model 1 shows that individuals who are married are more likely to prefer web than are other, non-married respondents. Respondent gender does not have a significant effect on mode preference. This model containing demographic variables explains approximately 11% of the variation in respondents’ stated mode preference.

Table 7: Logistic Regression Models Predicting Mode Preference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEPENDENT VARIABLE</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey mode completed</td>
<td>4.766***</td>
<td>(0.411)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internet Familiarity and Use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of internet use</td>
<td>0.267**</td>
<td>0.260**</td>
<td>0.469**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.087)</td>
<td>(0.091)</td>
<td>(0.143)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing internet assistance</td>
<td>-0.197</td>
<td>-0.088</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.130)</td>
<td>(0.138)</td>
<td>(0.201)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about computer virus</td>
<td>-0.216</td>
<td>-0.215</td>
<td>-0.352*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.122)</td>
<td>(0.126)</td>
<td>(0.177)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of online scams</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.110)</td>
<td>(0.114)</td>
<td>(0.159)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose the internet to do things</td>
<td>1.305***</td>
<td>1.414***</td>
<td>2.233***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.195)</td>
<td>(0.204)</td>
<td>(0.370)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High speed internet connection</td>
<td>0.428</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td>0.455</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.244)</td>
<td>(0.258)</td>
<td>(0.384)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Demographics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.033***</td>
<td>-0.017*</td>
<td>-0.031**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>0.181**</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.054)</td>
<td>(0.071)</td>
<td>(0.101)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.108*</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.048)</td>
<td>(0.067)</td>
<td>(0.099)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.226</td>
<td>-0.177</td>
<td>-0.291</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.148)</td>
<td>(0.193)</td>
<td>(0.280)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.584***</td>
<td>0.674**</td>
<td>0.566</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Model 2 assesses the impact of the variables representing respondents’ familiarity and frequency of use of the Internet on stated mode preference. Two of these variables have a statistically significant effect on mode preference when they are all included in the model simultaneously. The first of these variables is the frequency of Internet use. Respondents who use the Internet frequently are more likely than those who do not to prefer web questionnaires. Also, respondents who indicated that they choose to do things over the Internet rather than some other way are also more likely than those who do not to prefer online surveys to mail questionnaires. The other variables included in this model, frequency of needing Internet assistance, concern about computer viruses, fear of online scams, and having a high speed Internet connection in the home, do not have statistically significant effects on mode preference in the multivariate context. This model of Internet-related variables accounts for about 16% of the variation in respondent mode preference.

In Model 3 we include all the demographic variables in addition to the Internet variables. The results of this model are substantively similar to those of the previous two, with two exceptions. Model 3 shows that respondents’ education level and income no longer significantly affect mode preference after accounting for the Internet-related variables. Assessing the effects of both sets of variables simultaneously slightly increases the explanatory power of the model; Model 3 accounts for 19% of the variation in mode preference.

Model 4 adds in the final variable, actual mode of response completed by respondent. This variable by far has the greatest explanatory power of any variable tested in any of these
models. Respondents who completed the web questionnaire are much more likely than those who
did not to prefer web surveys to mail surveys. The addition of this variable to the model
dramatically increases the pseudo r-squared; this model explains about 53% of the variation in
mode preference.

Implications of the Association between Mode Completed and Mode Preferred

It appears as if completing a questionnaire via a specific mode encourages a respondent
to then prefer that mode. This relationship is robust to the consideration of a host of other
pertinent variables which are associated with mode preference, including demographic measures
and indicators of respondents’ familiarity and use of the Internet. The strong association
observed between mode completed and mode preferred causes us to question the substantive
meaning of respondents’ stated mode preferences. If, as this study suggests, we can encourage
respondents to prefer one mode (web) over another (mail) by simply pushing them to respond to
that mode, then stated preferences may not necessarily be a critical factor to consider in survey
design.

The assumption that respondents prefer other modes over web may be keeping survey
researchers from fully adopting web-based surveys. Yet this study demonstrates that in spite of
these notions, it is not only possible to get a reasonable response rate to a web questionnaire but
also that once respondents have experienced it, they will prefer it. Exploring the usefulness of
web surveys is likely a fruitful avenue for future survey research. Additionally, these results
suggest that our main task may not be to cater to assumed respondent preferences (and thus offer
mail or some other mode of response) or to wait until we see evidence that more individuals are
expressing preferences for web questionnaires. Rather, perhaps the task is to design surveys which “push” respondents in the direction we wish them to proceed.

Who Can be Pushed to Web?

Although we suggest that it is possible to receive relatively high response rates with a web survey, and that web is a feasible option for survey research to pursue, there definitely are limitations to relying on web-based surveys. Beyond the fact that web response rates are not quite equivalent with mail response rates, the question of who is willing to respond to web questionnaires remains an important and critical factor that can influence survey quality. Although the Internet has become increasingly prevalent in the lives of many individuals, a significant portion (about 30%) of the US population still does not have Internet access in the home (Pew 2007). Thus, no matter how much emphasis surveyors place on pushing respondents to fill out a web questionnaire, certain people have no choice but to respond via mail.

Further, some individuals who have access to the Internet are still unwilling to respond to web questionnaires. To get a sense of who is willing to respond to web and who is not, t-tests for mean differences in key demographic variables between web and mail respondents in the Web Preference group were performed. The results of these tests are displayed in Table 8. This table shows that among the respondents of the Web Preference group, those who replied via mail and those who replied via web are significantly different on key demographic variables. Mail respondents are significantly older than web respondents. They also have lower levels of education and lower incomes than web respondents. Further, mail respondents are more likely than web respondents to be female and married. These demographic differences are largely still apparent when we compare web respondents with just those mail respondents who have Internet
access in the home (this being the group of respondents who have the opportunity to respond via web but choose not to).

Table 8: Mean Differences between Web and Mail Respondents of the Web Preference Treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>51.38</td>
<td>61.56**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>3.86**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.43***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001 (two-tailed tests)

These demographic differences between response modes imply that only certain types of individuals are likely to respond to the push to fill out the web questionnaire. Survey researchers should be aware that while decent web response rates may be achieved, in a sample of the general public it is only possible to push particular types of individuals to use the Internet to fill out a questionnaire. Even when respondents have access to the Internet, certain demographic characteristics (such as older age, lower income or education levels, or being female or unmarried) suggest the individual is less likely to choose to respond via web. Thus the use of a web survey could result in nonresponse bias if alternate modes of response are unavailable. This confirms the usefulness of Mixed-Mode survey designs, in which web modes are used in conjunctions with more traditional modes such as mail (Dillman 2007).

Summary and Conclusions

This report outlined several new findings and the important implications they present for survey research. With the Internet becoming a more viable option for conducting surveys, it is important for us to understand the benefits and limitations of pursuing this mode of data collection. The analyses of data obtained through the experiments involved in the Lewiston and
Clarkston Quality of Life Survey suggest some surprising trends that are worth exploring in future survey research.

First, the results of our study suggest that it is possible to generate a decent response rate to a web survey of the general public by implementing a variety of survey design methods such as multiple contacts, the use of incentives, and “pushing” people to web by withholding the mail alternative. More importantly however, this study discovered that by pushing respondents to the web, we appear to shape their mode preference in favor of web questionnaires. The implications of this association are important. This suggests that mode preference, often considered to be a stable, concrete characteristic of respondents, may not necessarily be a meaningful concept. If we are able to shape people’s preferences by exposing them to specific modes, this suggests that past reports of mode preference may not have any effect on our likelihood of getting people to respond to web surveys. Thus, although most people state a preference for mail questionnaires, this does not mean that we are unable to get them to fill out web questionnaires, and in turn prefer them. This finding supports the strategy of ignoring preference and withholding the mail questionnaire from the initial request to respond.

All this implies that some ready-made survey mode preference is unlikely to dramatically affect a person’s choice of one mode or another. Instead, we are able to rather successfully push respondents to choose a given mode through a variety of methods. Thus, with proper survey design, getting people to respond to web surveys is a viable option. However, our other analyses suggest that it is also important to recognize that certain individuals, despite our emphasis on going to the web, are unable or unwilling to choose web over mail questionnaire response. Obviously, those without Internet access are unlikely to respond to a web questionnaire. Further, our analyses of demographic differences between web and mail respondents of the Web
Preference group suggest that those who are unwilling to go to web in spite of our push for them
to do so are quite different from those who did respond to the push to web. This illustrates that
we may be able to push a good deal of respondents to go to web, even if they typically would
not, but there will likely be a certain number who are in some ways different from other
respondents and thus refuse to use the web.

Future research should determine whether or not the design of the web survey pages and
insertion of the visual “enhanced” instructions shown in Appendix I has any effect on the
willingness of individuals to respond to the web questionnaire. In this experiment we made every
effort to ensure similarity between the web and paper versions and provided enhanced web
instructions to show what the web pages would look like, but more research is needed to confirm
that these features of the design did not influence response. Furthermore, future studies should
examine whether the push to web is more successful in certain types of samples, such as those
that are more or less knowledgeable about the Internet. Such analyses could better inform us of
the specific individual variables that affect mode choice.
References


Appendix I

Lewiston-Clarkston Quality of Life Survey Mailings
October 8, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<ADDRESS>
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

I am writing to ask for your help with an important study being conducted by Washington State University to understand the quality of life of residents in the Lewiston-Clarkston area. In the next few days you will receive a request to participate in this project by answering questions about your experiences living in the area and about important issues that currently face residents here.

We would like to do everything we can to make it easy and enjoyable for you to participate in the study. I am writing in advance because many people like to know ahead of time that they will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. This research can only be successful with the generous help of people like you.

To say thanks, you will receive a small token of appreciation with the request to participate. I hope you will take 10-15 minutes of your time to help us. Most of all, I hope that you enjoy the questionnaire and the opportunity to voice your thoughts and opinions about the Lewiston and Clarkston area.

Best Wishes,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director

This study has been reviewed and approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board for human subject participation. If you have questions about the study please contact the researcher listed above. If you have questions about your rights as a participant please contact the WSU IRB at 509-335-3668 or irb@wsu.edu.
October 8, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<ADDRESS>
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

I am writing to ask for your help with an important study being conducted by Washington State University to understand the quality of life of residents in the Lewiston-Clarkston area. In the next few days you will receive a request to participate in this project by answering questions about your experiences living in the area and about important issues that currently face residents here.

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October 8, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

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October 8, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<Address>
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

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Best Wishes,

Don A. Dillman
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SECOND MAILING
Group A: Mail Preference, Mention Web

October __, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<Address>
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

I am writing to ask for your help in understanding the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area and how residents are being affected by a variety of things from the availability of jobs and healthcare to the use of cell phones. The best way we have of learning about these issues is by asking all different kinds of people who live in the area to share their thoughts and opinions. Your address is one of only a small number that have been randomly selected to help in this study.

To help us make sure we hear from all different types of people who live in the area, please have the adult (age 18 or over) in your household who has had the most recent birthday be the one to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

We have also made the questionnaire available on the Internet in case you prefer to fill it out on the web. Doing that is easy: just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston

Your access code: <access code>

The questions should only take about 15 minutes to complete. Your responses are voluntary and will be kept confidential. Your names are not on our mailing list, and no one’s answers will ever be associated with the mailing address. If you have any questions about this survey of Lewiston/Clarkston area residents, please call Thom Allen, the study director, by telephone at 509-335-1511 or by email at sesrc@wsu.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board, and if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact them by telephone at 509-335-3668.

By taking a few minutes to share your thoughts and opinions about life in the Lewiston-Clarkston area you will be helping us out a great deal, and a small token of appreciation is enclosed as a way of saying thank you.

I hope you enjoy completing the questionnaire and look forward to receiving your responses.

Many Thanks,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director
SECOND MAILING
Group B: Mail Preference, Withhold Web Option

October __, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

I am writing to ask for your help in understanding the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area and how residents are being affected by a variety of things from the availability of jobs and healthcare to the use of cell phones. The best way we have of learning about these issues is by asking all different kinds of people who live in the area to share their thoughts and opinions. Your address is one of only a small number that have been randomly selected to help in this study.

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I hope you enjoy completing the questionnaire and look forward to receiving your responses.

Many Thanks,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director
SECOND MAILING
Group C: Web Preference, Withhold Mail Option

October _, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<ADDRESS>
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

I am writing to ask for your help in understanding the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area and how residents are being affected by a variety of things from the availability of jobs and healthcare to the use of cell phones. The best way we have of learning about these issues is by asking all different kinds of people who live in the area to share their thoughts and opinions. Your address is one of only a small number that have been randomly selected to help in this study.

To help us make sure we hear from all different types of people who live in the area, please have the adult (age 18 or over) in your household who has had the most recent birthday be the one to complete the questionnaire.

We are hoping that you will be able to complete the questionnaire on the Internet so that we can summarize results more quickly and accurately. Doing that is easy: just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston

Your access code: <access code>

To help, we have also enclosed step-by-step instructions that show examples of the questions included in the survey. We realize that some households may not have Internet access. If this is the case for you, we will send a paper version of the questionnaire for you to fill out and mail back to us. To get a paper version, please contact Thom Allen by telephone at 509-335-1511, and it will be sent to you shortly.

The questions should only take about 15 minutes to complete. Your responses are voluntary and will be kept confidential. Your names are not on our mailing list, and no one’s answers will ever be associated with the mailing address. If you have any questions about this survey of Lewiston/Clarkston area residents, or if you have difficulties answering on the Internet, Tom Allen, the study director, will be happy to help and can be reached by telephone at 509-335-1511 or by email at sesrc@wsu.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board, and if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact them by telephone at 509-335-3668.

By taking a few minutes to share your thoughts and opinions about life in the Lewiston-Clarkston area you will be helping us out a great deal, and a small token of appreciation is enclosed as a way of saying thank you.

I hope you enjoy completing the questionnaire and look forward to receiving your responses.

Many Thanks,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director
SECOND MAILING
Group D: Equal Preference

October _, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident 6. Equal Preference with enhanced web invitation

I am writing to ask for your help in understanding the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area and how residents are being affected by a variety of things from the availability of jobs and healthcare to the use of cell phones. The best way we have of learning about these issues is by asking all different kinds of people who live in the area to share their thoughts and opinions. Your address is one of only a small number that have been randomly selected to help in this study.

To help us make sure we hear from all different types of people who live in the area, please have the adult (age 18 or over) in your household who has had the most recent birthday be the one to complete the questionnaire.

To make it easier for people we are providing two ways to respond, both of which include the same exact questions. One way is to simply fill out the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope. The other is to keep the questionnaire and answer the questions on the Internet. Doing that is easy: just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston

Your access code: <access code>

We hope that giving a choice between paper and web makes it more convenient for you. It is entirely up to you which way you respond. If you choose to respond by web, we have also enclosed step-by-step instructions that show examples of the questions included in the survey.

The questions should only take about 15 minutes to complete. Your responses are voluntary and will be kept confidential. Your names are not on our mailing list, and no one’s answers will ever be associated with the mailing address. If you have any questions about this survey of Lewiston/Clarkston area residents, or if you have difficulties answering on the Internet, Tom Allen, the study director, will be happy to help and can be reached by telephone at 509-335-1511 or by email at sesre@wsu.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board, and if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact them by telephone at 509-335-3668.

By taking a few minutes to share your thoughts and opinions about life in the Lewiston-Clarkston area you will be helping us out a great deal, and a small token of appreciation is enclosed as a way of saying thank you.

I hope you enjoy completing the questionnaire and look forward to receiving your responses.

Many Thanks,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director
THIRD MAILING  
Group A: Mail Preference, Mention Web

October _, 2007

Last week a questionnaire was mailed to you because your household was randomly selected to help in a study about the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area.

If someone at your address has already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If, not, please have the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday do so right away. We are especially grateful for your help with this important study.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please call us at 509-335-1511 and we will get another in the mail for you today. Or, if you prefer to complete the questionnaire on the web, you can enter the following web page address in your Internet browser and then type in your access code to begin the survey.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston Your access code: <access code>

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman, Regents Professor and Deputy Director

THIRD MAILING  
Group B: Mail Preference, Withhold Web Option

October _, 2007

Last week a questionnaire was mailed to you because your household was randomly selected to help in a study about the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area.

If someone at your address has already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If, not, please have the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday do so right away. We are especially grateful for your help with this important study.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please call us at 509-335-1511 and we will get another in the mail for you today.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman, Regents Professor and Deputy Director
THIRD MAILING
Group C: Web Preference, Withhold Mail Option

October _, 2007

Last week a letter was mailed to you because your household was randomly selected to help in a study about the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area.

If someone at your address has already completed the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If, not, please have the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday do so right away. We are especially grateful for your help with this important study.

To complete the survey enter this web page address in your internet browser and then type in your access code to begin answering questions.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston Your access code: <access code>

If you do not have internet access, we would still like to hear from you. Please call us at 509-335-1511 and we will get a paper copy of the questionnaire in the mail for you today.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman, Regents Professor and Deputy Director

THIRD MAILING
Group D: Equal Preference

October _, 2007

Last week a letter was mailed to you because your household was randomly selected to help in a study about the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area.

If someone at your address has already completed the questionnaire, either by mail or Internet, please accept our sincere thanks. If, not, please have the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday do so right away.

If you would like to participate by mail but did not receive a questionnaire (or it was misplaced), please call us at 509-335-1511 and we will get another in the mail for you today. If you would like to participate by web, just enter this web page address in your internet browser and then type in your access code to begin answering questions.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston Your access code: <access code>

We are especially grateful for your help with this important study.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman, Regents Professor and Deputy Director
October _, 2007

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

Several weeks ago I sent a questionnaire to your household that asked about issues related to the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. To the best of our knowledge, it has not yet been returned. The comments of people who have already responded have gone a long way toward helping us better understand what people like and dislike about living in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. Many people have also taken strong stances on issues currently faced by residents here.

We are writing again because of the importance that your household’s questionnaire has for helping to get accurate results. We want to be sure that the thoughts and opinions of people like you are included in the final results. It is only by hearing from nearly everyone in the sample that we can be sure that the results truly represent Lewiston/Clarkston area residents. Therefore, we hope the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday will fill out and return the questionnaire soon. But if for any reason you prefer not to answer it, please let us know by returning a note or blank questionnaire in the enclosed stamped envelope.

We have also made the questionnaire available on the Internet in case you prefer to fill it out on the web. Doing that is easy: just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey. We have enclosed step-by-step instructions to help with this.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston Your access code: <access code>

A comment on our survey procedures. A questionnaire identification number is printed on the back cover of the questionnaire so that we can check your address off of the mailing list when it is returned. The list of addresses is then destroyed so that individual addresses can never be connected to the results in any way. Protecting the confidentiality of people’s answers is very important us.

We hope that you enjoy the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director

This study has been reviewed and approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board for human subject participation. If you have questions about the study please contact the researcher listed above. If you have questions about your rights as a participant please contact the WSU IRB at 509-335-3668 or irb@wsu.edu.
FOURTH MAILING
Group B: Mail Preference, Withhold Web Option

October _, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<Address>
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

Several weeks ago I sent a questionnaire to your household that asked about issues related to the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. To the best of our knowledge, it has not yet been returned.

The comments of people who have already responded have gone a long way toward helping us better understand what people like and dislike about living in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. Many people have also taken strong stances on issues currently faced by residents here.

We are writing again because of the importance that your household’s questionnaire has for helping to get accurate results. We want to be sure that the thoughts and opinions of people like you are included in the final results. It is only by hearing from nearly everyone in the sample that we can be sure that the results truly represent Lewiston/Clarkston area residents. Therefore, we hope the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday will fill out and return the questionnaire soon. But if for any reason you prefer not to answer it, please let us know by returning a note or blank questionnaire in the enclosed stamped envelope.

We have also made the questionnaire available on the Internet in case you prefer to fill it out on the web. Doing that is easy: just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey. We have enclosed step-by-step instructions to help with this.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston

Your access code: <access code>

A comment on our survey procedures. A questionnaire identification number is printed on the back cover of the questionnaire so that we can check your address off of the mailing list when it is returned. The list of addresses is then destroyed so that individual addresses can never be connected to the results in any way. Protecting the confidentiality of people’s answers is very important us.

We hope that you enjoy the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director

This study has been reviewed and approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board for human subject participation. If you have questions about the study please contact the researcher listed above. If you have questions about your rights as a participant please contact the WSU IRB at 509-335-3668 or irb@wsu.edu.
FOURTH MAILING
Group C: Web Preference, Withhold Mail Option

October _, 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

Several weeks ago I sent a letter to your address that asked for a member of your household to complete an Internet questionnaire about issues related to the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. To the best of our knowledge, it has not yet been completed.

The comments of people who have already responded have gone a long way toward helping us better understand what people like and dislike about living in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. Many people have also taken strong stances on issues currently faced by residents here.

We are writing again because of the importance that your household’s questionnaire has for helping to get accurate results. We want to be sure that the thoughts and opinions of people like you are included in the final results. It is only by hearing from nearly everyone in the sample that we can be sure that the results truly represent Lewiston/Clarkston area residents. Therefore, we hope the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday will fill out the questionnaire soon.

We are hoping that you will be able to complete the questionnaire on the Internet so that we can summarize results more quickly and accurately. Doing that is easy: just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston
Your access code: <access code>

To help, we have enclosed step-by-step instructions that show examples of the questions included in the survey. We have also included a paper copy of the questionnaire for those who are unable to complete it on the Internet.

A comment on our survey procedures. A questionnaire identification number assigned to each address so that we can check your address off of the mailing list when it is returned. The list of addresses is then destroyed so that individual addresses can never be connected to the results in any way. Protecting the confidentiality of people’s answers is very important us.

We hope that you enjoy the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor and Deputy Director

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October _ , 2007

<CITY> Area Resident
<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP-ZIP4>

Dear <CITY> Area Resident,

Several weeks ago I sent a questionnaire to your household that asked about issues related to the quality of life in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. To the best of our knowledge, it has not yet been returned.

The comments of people who have already responded have gone a long way toward helping us better understand what people like and dislike about living in the Lewiston/Clarkston area. Many people have also taken strong stances on issues currently faced by residents here.

We are writing again because of the importance that your household’s questionnaire has for helping to get accurate results. We want to be sure that the thoughts and opinions of people like you are included in the final results. It is only by hearing from nearly everyone in the sample that we can be sure that the results truly represent Lewiston/Clarkston area residents. Therefore, we hope the adult in your household who has had the most recent birthday will fill out the questionnaire soon.

To make it easier for people, we are providing two ways to respond. You can fill out the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope or you can answer the questions on the Internet. Doing that is easy; just enter this web page address in your Internet browser, and then type in your access code to begin the survey. We have enclosed step-by-step instructions to help with this.

http://www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston
Your access code: <access code>

A comment on our survey procedures. A questionnaire identification number assigned to each address so that we can check your address off of the mailing list when it is returned. The list of addresses is then destroyed so that individual addresses can never be connected to the results in any way. Protecting the confidentiality of people’s answers is very important us.

We hope that you enjoy the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman
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This study has been reviewed and approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board for human subject participation. If you have questions about the study please contact the researcher listed above. If you have questions about your rights as a participant please contact the WSU IRB at 509-335-3668 or irb@wsu.edu.
Appendix II

Web Survey Card Instructions
Lewiston-Clarkston Quality of Life Questionnaire
How to Find and Complete the Web Version of the Lewiston and Clarkston Area Quality of Life Survey

Here are the 5 steps you need to follow, and what you’ll see on your computer screen.

**STEP 1:** Go to your web browser and enter the Lewiston/Clarkston survey Web site in the address space. (Be sure not to type it into the Google space by mistake!)

www.opinion.wsu.edu/lewistonclarkston. Click the Enter key to go to Step 2.

**STEP 2:** Enter your personal access code (6 digits long) that we sent by postal mail, and click to go to Step 3.

**STEP 3:** This page explains how to go forward and backward in the survey and how to stop at any time and come back to finish later. When you are done reading, click NEXT (lower left corner of screen) to go to Step 4.

**STEP 4:** Here are examples of the survey questions. When you click NEXT the question that follows will automatically appear on the screen.

**STEP 5:** When you click NEXT after answering the last question, this screen will appear to let you know we have received your answers. We hope that you enjoy doing the survey.

Any questions? If so, please e-mail us at sesrc@wsu.edu or call us toll free at 1-800-833-0867.

If you would like to see a summary of results from the survey, you can request them by e-mail at sesrc@wsu.edu or by postal mail to: Lewiston/Clarkston Quality of Life Survey, SESRC, 133 Wilson Hall, PO Box 644014, Washington State University, Pullman WA 99164-4014. We hope to have them available in about two months.
Lewiston and Clarkston
Quality of Life Survey

An effort to understand the issues important to Lewiston and Clarkston area residents

To be completed by the adult (age 18 and over) in your household who has had the most recent birthday.

Social and Economic Sciences Research Center
Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99164
1-800-833-0867
We hope you will enjoy completing this survey about life in the Lewiston and Clarkston area, and we appreciate your help.
Q1. Approximately how many years have you lived in the Lewiston-Clarkston area?
- [ ] Years

Q2. Overall, how satisfied are you with living in this area?
- 1. Very satisfied
- 2. Somewhat satisfied
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Somewhat dissatisfied
- 5. Very dissatisfied
- 6. Not sure

Q3. How attached do you feel to the Lewiston-Clarkston area?
- 1. Very attached
- 2. Somewhat attached
- 3. Slightly attached
- 4. Not at all attached
- 5. Not sure

Q4. During the past five years, how much better or worse do you think Lewiston-Clarkston has become as a place to live?
- 1. A lot better
- 2. Somewhat better
- 3. No change
- 4. Somewhat worse
- 5. A lot worse
- 6. Not sure

Q5. How much better or worse do you think the local economy has become in the past five years?
- 1. A lot better
- 2. Somewhat better
- 3. No change
- 4. Somewhat worse
- 5. A lot worse
- 6. Not sure

Q6. How much better or worse do you think the area’s natural environment has become in the past five years?
- 1. A lot better
- 2. Somewhat better
- 3. No change
- 4. Somewhat worse
- 5. A lot worse
- 6. Not sure
Q7. What do you consider to be the most important issue affecting the quality of life in Lewiston-Clarkston today?

Q8. Below are several changes that residents of the Lewiston-Clarkston area have told us may be affecting the quality of life here. To what extent do you think each of the following has increased or decreased in the last five years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Increased a Lot</th>
<th>Increased a Little</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Decreased a Little</th>
<th>Decreased a Lot</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The availability of jobs that provide a livable wage</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The availability of good, affordable healthcare</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The willingness of residents to be involved in the community</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of illegal drug activity</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of crimes involving the use of firearms</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of salmon &amp; steelhead in the Snake &amp; Clearwater Rivers</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The availability of affordable childcare services</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9. If each of the following continue in the next five years, to what extent do you think the quality of life of residents in the Lewiston-Clarkston area will become better or worse?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>A Lot Better</th>
<th>Somewhat Better</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Somewhat Worse</th>
<th>A Lot Worse</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More people moving into Lewiston-Clarkston from other places</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More large retail chains such as Wal-Mart and Target moving into the area</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More gray wolves in the area</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater use of the Internet</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater use of cell phones</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More people using cell phones while driving an automobile</td>
<td>○₁</td>
<td>○₂</td>
<td>○₃</td>
<td>○₄</td>
<td>○₅</td>
<td>○₆</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q10. How much better or worse do you think the quality of life of Lewiston-Clarkston residents would become if the dams along the lower-Snake River were breached to allow water to freely flow through them?

- 1. A lot better
- 2. Somewhat better
- 3. No change
- 4. Somewhat worse
- 5. A lot worse
- 6. Not sure

Q11. Environmental protection and regulation is another issue we have heard discussed in the Lewiston-Clarkston area. Do you think environmental protections and regulations in the area are too strong, about right, or too weak?

- 1. Too strong
- 2. About right
- 3. Too weak
- 4. Not sure

Q12. Gray wolves were reintroduced into Idaho in the late 1990s and their numbers have been growing since. Currently, a proposal is being debated in Idaho that would remove gray wolves from the Endangered Species list and also allow open hunting on the wolves. Which one of the following do you agree with most?

- 1. Gray wolves should remain protected under the Endangered Species Act.
- 2. Gray wolves should be removed from the Endangered Species Act with restrictions placed on hunting them in Idaho.
- 3. Gray wolves should be removed from the Endangered Species Act without restrictions placed on hunting them in Idaho.
- 4. Not sure

Q13. How much of a threat, if any, do you think gray wolves pose to each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat Source</th>
<th>Major Threat</th>
<th>Minor Threat</th>
<th>No Threat at All</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents of the Lewiston-Clarkston area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other residents in Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pets and other domestic animals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm animals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife or game</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14. Have you or someone you personally know ever encountered a wolf in a natural area?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Q15. Have your animals or the animals of someone you personally know ever been attacked by a wolf?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
Q16. One of the biggest changes occurring in the Lewiston-Clarkston area that may impact the quality of life is the use of new technologies. Next we’d like to learn more about your experience and use of cell phones, computers, and the Internet.

Do you have a cell phone?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No → Skip to Question 20

Q17. How many years have you had a cell phone?


Years

Q18. Approximately how often do you personally use your cell phone?

- [ ] Several times a day
- [ ] Once a day
- [ ] Several times a week
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] Once a month
- [ ] Less than once a month
- [ ] Never

Q19. If you could not use your cell phone at all tomorrow, how much would this affect your daily routines and activities?

- [ ] A lot
- [ ] Some
- [ ] A little
- [ ] Not at all

Q20. Excluding yourself, how many adults and children in your household have a cell phone? If none, please enter a zero.

- [ ] Number of adults who have a cell phone
- [ ] Number of children who have a cell phone

Q21. How often do you use a personal computer for any reason?

- [ ] Several times a day
- [ ] Once a day
- [ ] Several times a week
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] Once a month
- [ ] Less than once a month
- [ ] Never → Skip to Question 23

Q22. When you use a personal computer, how often, if ever, do you need help or assistance?

- [ ] All the time
- [ ] Frequently
- [ ] Occasionally
- [ ] Rarely
- [ ] Never
Q23. How often do you use the Internet for any reason?

Q24. (If never) How much does each of the following influence your decision to never use the internet?

A. Lack of computer access
B. Cost of Internet service
C. Concern about getting a computer virus
D. Concern about being a victim of an Online Scam
E. Don’t know how to use the Internet

Q25. (If you use the Internet) When you use the Internet, how often, if ever, do you require help or assistance?

Q26. If you had a choice of doing something over the Internet or doing it some other way, which would you prefer?

Q27. Please indicate how often you use the Internet to do each of the following.
Q28. How often do you use the Internet to communicate with or find information about people and businesses within the Lewiston-Clarkston area?

01. Everyday  
02. Several times a week  
03. Several times a month  
04. Once a month or less  
05. Never

Q29. How often do you use the Internet to communicate with or find information about people and businesses outside the Lewiston-Clarkston area?

01. Everyday  
02. Several times a week  
03. Several times a month  
04. Once a month or less  
05. Never

Q30. To what extent has your use of the Internet helped you feel more informed about what goes on in the Lewiston-Clarkston area?

01. Much more informed  
02. A little more informed  
03. No more informed

Q31. To what extent has your use of the Internet helped you become more or less attached to the Lewiston-Clarkston communities?

01. Much more attached  
02. A little more attached  
03. No change  
04. A little less attached  
05. Much less attached

Q32. If you could not use the Internet at all tomorrow, how much would this affect your daily routines and activities?

01. A lot  
02. Some  
03. A little  
04. Not at all

Q33. When you use the Internet, how concerned are you about getting a computer virus?

01. A lot  
02. Some  
03. A little  
04. Not at all

Q34. How concerned are you about being a victim of an online scam when using the Internet?

01. A lot  
02. Some  
03. A little  
04. Not at all
Q35. Please indicate whether or not you use the Internet at each of the following locations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please specify):

Q36. Whether or not you personally use it, do you have an Internet connection in your home?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No → Skip to Question 40

Q37. If yes, what type of Internet connection do you have at your home?

- [ ] Dial-up
- [ ] DSL (Direct subscriber line)
- [ ] High-speed cable
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Not sure

Q38. How many years have you had an Internet connection in your home?

[ ] Years

Q39. Excluding yourself, how many adults and children in your household use the Internet in your home? If none, please enter zero.

- [ ] Number of adults who use the Internet in my home
- [ ] Number of children who use the Internet in my home

Q40. Do you currently have landline telephone service in your home?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No → Skip to Question 42

Q41. If yes, do you have each of the following services for your landline telephone?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone number listed in the telephone book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caller ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call blocking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q42. And now a few background questions to help us know if we've heard from all different kinds of people from the Lewiston-Clarkston area.

What month and year were you born?

MM YYYY

Q43. What is your gender?

1. Female
2. Male

Q44. Do you consider yourself...? (feel free to select more than one)

1. American Indian or Alaska native
2. Asian
3. Black or African American
4. White
5. Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
6. Other (please specify):
7. Prefer not to say

Q45. Which one of the following best describes your employment situation?

1. Employed full-time
2. Employed part-time
3. Unemployed, seeking employment
4. Unemployed, not seeking employment
5. Retired
6. Student
7. Other (please specify):

Q46. What best describes your highest level of education?

1. No schooling completed
2. Less than 12th grade
3. High school graduate (includes GED)
4. Some college, no degree
5. 2 year college degree (Associate, Technical, etc.)
6. 4 year college degree (Bachelor’s)
7. Graduate or professional degree (Master’s, Ph.D., M.B.A., etc.)

Q47. Which one of the following best describes your marital status?

1. Married
2. Living together, unmarried
3. Divorced
4. Separated
5. Widowed
6. Never been married
Q48. How many adults and children live in your household, including yourself?

☐ Number of adults who live in my house

☐ Number of children who live in my house

Q49. Which of the following categories best describes the total income of your family from all sources in 2006, before taxes?

☐ 1 Less than $10,000
☐ 2 $10,000 to under $25,000
☐ 3 $25,000 to under $50,000
☐ 4 $50,000 to under $75,000
☐ 5 $75,000 to under $100,000
☐ 6 $100,000 or more
☐ 7 Prefer not to say

Q50. Thank you for helping us by filling out this survey. We are always looking for ways to make our surveys more enjoyable and therefore would like to end by asking for your thoughts on a couple of survey-related questions.

If you could choose how to answer surveys like this, which one of the following ways of answering would you prefer?

☐ 1 Filling out a paper questionnaire sent by mail
☐ 2 Filling out a questionnaire on the Internet
☐ 3 Answering questions over the telephone

Q51. In an average year, approximately how many surveys do you think you fill out by mail, Internet, and telephone?

☐ Number by mail

☐ Number by Internet

☐ Number by telephone
Thanks again for completing this survey!

If you have any additional thoughts about any of the above topics or the survey itself, please share them here.