



# **SURVEY RESEARCH METHODS MODULE POLLING SLIDES**



# Public Opinion Polling Methods

AAPOR Standards and Roper Center Resources

# Introduction to Public Opinion Polling

**Public Opinion Polling:** systematic collection of individuals' views.



Central to democracy, policy, and social science



Guided by professional standards (AAPOR, Roper Center) Link: <https://www.aapor.org>



# History and Importance



First modern polls in 1930s (Gallup, Roper, Crossley)



Provided alternatives to informal straw polls



Public opinion polls influence media, politics, and policy

Link: <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu>

# Sampling in Public Opinion Polls

Probability sampling: ensures representativeness



Random digit dialing, address-based sampling



Challenges: declining response rates, cell-only households



Link: <https://aapor.org/publications-resources/reports/>

# Survey Modes



- Telephone (landline & cell)



- In-person interviews (e.g., ANES, GSS)



- Mail surveys



- Online/web-based surveys



- Mixed-mode surveys



Link: <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/ipoll>

# Questionnaire Design

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AAPOR guidelines stress clarity, neutrality, and balance

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Avoid double-barreled, leading, or biased questions

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Pretesting and translation for diverse populations

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Link: <https://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/Best-Practices>

# Transparency and Reporting

AAPOR Transparency Initiative: disclosure of methods

- Sample size, margin of error, field dates
- Question wording and order effects
- Link: <https://aapor.org/standards-and-ethics/transparency-initiative/>



# Ethical Standards



Voluntary informed consent



Protecting confidentiality



Avoiding push polls and deceptive practices



Link: <https://aapor.org/standards-and-ethics/>

# Using Roper Center Data



Roper Center archives 650,000+ poll questions since 1935



- Access to iPoll database for historic and contemporary polls



- Resource for teaching and research



Link: <https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/ipoll>

# Conclusion

Public opinion polls provide vital insights into democracy



High-quality polls depend on probability sampling, good question design, and transparency



AAPOR and Roper Center set the standards for credibility

<https://www.aapor.org>

<https://ropercenter.cornell.edu>