

### **Experiment**

The Olinger Group conducted an experiment to test various wording and scaling options for the measurement of satisfaction. We randomly presented five response sets and three questions about satisfaction with aspects of healthcare provision as part of a larger experiment on patterns of response dependent on question wording and structure. The total sample size is n=553 and each unique question, subject-response set pairing, was given to n=~100 respondents. The results reported here are based on approximately 1500 total responses.

### **Question Wording and Response Sets or Response Options**

“Are you satisfied with . . . ?” was the wording for the Yes-No question that included an “undecided” response. For the other four response sets the question was, “How satisfied are with... ?” Sat5 is a conventional, “Very Satisfied - Satisfied - Neither - Dissatisfied - Very Dissatisfied” response set. Sat6 is an unconventional, “Extremely Satisfied - Very Satisfied - Satisfied - Dissatisfied - Very Dissatisfied - Extremely Dissatisfied - N/A” response set. The last two response sets were numerical with only the end points identified with verbal labels. The first is, “Use the scale from 1-10, where 1 is Completely Dissatisfied and 10 is completely satisfied.” The second is, “Use the scale from 0-10 where 10 is Completely Satisfied and 0 is Completely Dissatisfied.” The latter two differ in two respects. The former has no true mid-point and the latter is presented with the most satisfied response (10) on the left side instead of the right side of the scale.

### **Respondent Satisfaction**

	Yes-No	Sat5 Top 2	Sat6 Top 3	S1-10 Top 5	S0-10 Top 5
Health Insurance Provider	81.0%	89.2%	86.1%	70.4%	86.1%
Family Doctor	93.1%	92.0%	88.9%	78.7%	90.1%
Local Pharmacy	96.7%	98.8%	93.8%	80.2%	88.9%

### **Hypotheses and Results**

The underived working hypotheses are that Sat6 will provide the highest percent satisfied and can be expected to give 90+% to a highly satisfying healthcare provider. Orange cells are the highest score; yellow cells are the second highest score. **Bolded** cells indicate 90+% satisfaction.

### **Conclusions**

It is interesting to note that fewer options seem to be better than more options in the sense of getting higher percentages of satisfaction when considering targets with *a priori* (before the fact) skewed distributions. This is very likely the result of the unwillingness to give lower scores, a form of acquiescence-bias that is mitigated by more positive options. Of course an exception to this conclusion is the performance of the S0-10 set which likely stems from the availability of a true mid-point and more viable options for those who are most nearly neutral.