

Abstract title (max 150 characters):

IMPROVING EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEYS OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOR CONDUCTED BY TELEPHONE

Abstract text (max 2000 characters):

Objective: This study assesses the impact of Telephone Audio Computer-Assisted Self Interviewing (T-ACASI) on the reporting of sensitive (mainly heterosexual) behaviors. **Methods:** A randomized experiment was embedded in a telephone survey that drew probability samples of the populations of the United States (N = 1543) and Baltimore city (N = 744). Respondents were randomly assigned to have questions asked either by a T-ACASI computer or by a human telephone interviewer. **Results:** Compared to interviewer-administered telephone surveys, T-ACASI obtained more frequent reporting of a range of mainly heterosexual behaviors that were presumed to be sensitive including recency of: anal sex (adjusted odds ratio [A-OR] = 2.00, $p < 0.001$), sex during menstrual period (A-OR = 1.49, $p < 0.001$), giving oral sex (A-OR = 1.40, $p = 0.001$), receiving oral sex (A-OR = 1.36, $p = 0.002$); and sexual difficulties for the respondent (A-OR = 1.45, $p = 0.034$) and their main sex partner (A-OR = 1.48, $p = 0.05$). T-ACASI also obtained less frequent reporting that respondent had a “main sex partner” (A-OR = 0.56, $p = 0.011$) and had discussed contraception prior to first sex with that sex partner (A-OR = 0.82, $p = 0.094$). For both males and females, T-ACASI obtained more frequent reports of first vaginal sex occurring at early ages (before ages 12 through 15). For males only, T-ACASI also elicited more frequent reports that first vaginal sex had not occurred at later ages (i.e., by ages 20 through 24). **Conclusion:** Compared to traditional, interviewer-administered telephone surveys, T-ACASI increases the likelihood that survey respondents will report sensitive heterosexual behaviors.

Mode of presentation (Abstract topics)

22 Track D: 33-Methodological issues and capacity-building in epidemiological and prevention research

16 Track C: 23-Observational epidemiological & socio-behavioural studies

Presentation method

Oral presentation preferred

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