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Title: The Impact of Interview Mode on Data Quality in the National Election Studies

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Data Set(s):

Abstract

This is an initial report of an investigation of the possible impact of changing interview mode on the quality of survey data collected for the National Election Study. We have completed quite a bit of data analysis for this project, but we hope to gain access to one additional data set to further explore the issues of interest to the Board of Overseers. In this document, we describe our findings thus far. We begin this memo by outlining theoretical perspectives on the type of impact mode might have on data quality. We focus on two principal possible problems, one involving the effort respondents devote to generating precise answers, and the other involving the degree to which respondents misleadingly portray themselves as more respectable and admirable and consistent with social norms than may in fact be true. Then, we will review some of the published empirical evidence on mode differences. And finally, we will report our own findings.