

Wolfgang Frese Survey Research Laboratory

In the past year, the Wolfgang Frese Survey Research Laboratory (SRL) collected data for twelve significant research projects. The SRL conducted two surveys in response to the global health pandemic. The first of these surveys assessed Mississippians' knowledge, attitudes, and practices concerning social distancing and their confidence in the state's ability to contain the spread of the virus. The second pandemic related survey focused on the Governor's efforts to increase access to broadband internet for children who were required to continue their education from home. This survey gauged the likelihood that customers of the 4-County Electric Power Association would subscribe to high speed internet if it was provided as a new service through the power company's existing infrastructure. Broadband internet service supplied through existing power lines is one of the fastest and most cost-effective approaches to providing high speed internet to rural areas that have few options for obtaining internet download speeds greater than 25 Mbps.

Aside from the two fast-tracked surveys in response to the health pandemic, the SRL continued collecting data for a wide range of research topics. The laboratory evaluated stakeholders' opinions of a national Oil Spill Workshop implemented by the Sea Grant programs and sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences. The SRL also documented the work history and challenges to employment of persons with visual impairments; recruited hundreds of individuals living in rural southeast Missouri to track their levels of physical activity; measured Mississippian's attitudes and opinions toward issues affecting children, such as education and access to healthcare; interviewed health care providers to better understand the practices of developmental health promotion, screening, and referral resources; measured the behaviors and opinions of Black Mississippians regarding nutrition, tobacco use, and infant feeding; evaluated public opinion of smoke-free options in Mississippi casinos; and measured the degree to which Mississippians live in smoke free homes, work in smoke free environments, and understand the health risks of using tobacco. Additionally, the SRL continued its work in collecting client satisfaction data for two state agencies that provide critical services to Mississippians in need. This year, the SRL completed its 18th annual client satisfaction survey for the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services and its 5th annual client satisfaction survey for the Mississippi Department of Mental Health.

The SRL has completed another successful year in contributing to the overall productivity of the Social Science Research Center. Dr. John F. Edwards began his thirteenth year of directing the SRL, with the continued assistance of Laura Grandfield as laboratory manager, Amanda Gochanour as research associate, and Izzy Pellegrine as programmer and methodologist. New staff members include Ashleigh Andrews and Grace Jaiyeola as shift supervisors. In the past year, the SRL also employed a staff of more than 40 telephone interviewers. Additionally, Dr. Wolfgang Frese continues to lend his expertise in survey methodology as an Emeritus Research Professor.

Mississippi COVID-19 Survey

In collaboration with the SRL, the Tobacco Control Unit at the Social Science Research Center designed a telephone-based survey to assess knowledge, attitudes, and practices concerning social distancing as well as confidence in the state's ability to handle the coronavirus outbreak. Additionally, the survey focused on the social distancing practices of tobacco users, given the evidence that smoking and vaping may increase the risk of a severe COVID-19 infection. This survey included responses from a representative sample of 1,200 adults residing in the state of Mississippi. Funding for this project was provided by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

4-County Electric Power Association Broadband Internet Survey

The SRL conducted a telephone-based survey on behalf of 4-County Electric Power Association. This probability-based survey included opinions from 400 Association members randomly selected from over 39,000 members who receive their electric service from 4-County. The purpose of this survey was to measure members' interest in subscribing to a 4-County broadband internet service if the Association built a broadband system that could provide internet services across 4-County's existing infrastructure.

Oil Spill Workshop Evaluation Survey

On behalf of the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, the SRL conducted a web-based survey of all participants of an Oil Spill Workshop implemented by the Sea Grant programs throughout the U.S. These workshops were sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's Gulf Research Program and the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative. The purpose of the survey was to measure the workshop participants' opinions regarding the relevancy of information provided by the workshop organizers and provide additional evaluation measures of workshop effectiveness.

NRTC Job Retention and Career Advancement Consumer Survey

On behalf of the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision, the SRL conducted a survey of individuals with visual impairments. SRL interviewers conducted unstructured interviews with 35 respondents who were blind or visually impaired to gather information regarding their work history and any challenges to employment that they may have faced due to their disability.

Multilevel Approaches for Promoting Physical Activity in Rural Communities

The SRL continued its partnership with the Prevention Research Center at Washington University in St. Louis to collect data for a large-scale research project funded by the National Institutes of Health. The purpose of this research is to better understand the physical activity practices of people living in rural southeast Missouri. The SRL recruited an additional 500 survey respondents for participation in a telephone-based survey that tracks the respondents' levels of physical activity over a three year period. This data collection effort is establishing a baseline measure of the respondents' engagement in physical activity and will continue to track related constructs during and following intervention methods designed to increase the physical activity practices of residents in rural communities across Missouri.

2019 Mississippi Children Survey

The SRL conducted a statewide survey of Mississippian's attitudes and opinions toward issues affecting children, such as education and access to healthcare. This telephone-based survey included a representative sample of 400 adults residing in the state of Mississippi. Funding for this survey was provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

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Mississippi Health Practitioners Survey

On behalf of the Mississippi Thrive! project at the Social Science Research Center, the SRL conducted a survey of health care providers' opinions and practices around developmental health promotion, screening, and referral resources. This web-based survey of approximately 3,500 healthcare providers included pediatricians, physicians' assistants, and nurse practitioners across the state of Mississippi. Funding for this survey was provided by a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Survey for the Gulf Coast Healthy Families, Mothers, and Babies Initiative

In collaboration with the SRL, researchers from the Mississippi Public Health Institute designed a telephone-based survey to measure the behaviors and opinions of Black Mississippians regarding nutrition, tobacco use, and infant feeding. A telephone-based survey was administered to a representative sample of Black adults residing along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties.

Public Opinion of Smoke-free Casinos in Mississippi

In collaboration with the SRL, the Tobacco Control Unit at the Social Science Research Center designed a telephone-based survey to measure public opinion of smoke-free options in Mississippi casinos. This survey included responses from a representative sample of 900 adults residing along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties. Funding for this project was provided by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

2018 Northwest Arkansas Quality of Life Survey

On behalf of the Tobacco Control Unit at the Social Science Research Center, the SRL administered the Mississippi Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control. Results from this survey assist researchers in better understanding the degree to which people in Mississippi live in smoke free homes, work in smoke free environments, understand the health risks using tobacco, and talk to their children about tobacco use. This telephone-based survey of the general public included a representative sample of 1,500 adults residing in the state of Mississippi. Funding for this research was provided by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

2019 Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation Client Satisfaction Survey

On a quarterly basis, the SRL conducts telephone-based interviews with approximately 250 individuals who received vocational rehabilitation services from the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) during the prior 12 months. This client satisfaction data assists the MDRS in program evaluation and development.

2019 MDMH Client Satisfaction Survey

On behalf of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (MDMH), the SRL conducted an online, tablet-based survey of client satisfaction. For a three-week period, all clients receiving mental health services throughout the state of Mississippi were provided with an opportunity to share their opinions about the quality of services they received from MDMH. The results of this survey are used to improve the quality of MDMH services.