



May 14, 2021

Baylor Religion Survey Methodology Report –

2021 Administration

Overview of Methodology

The results of the Values and Beliefs of the American Public survey are based on a mail and web survey conducted January 27 – March 21, 2021, with a random sample of 1,248 adults ages 18 and older, living in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Gallup randomly selected individuals to participate using an address-based sample (ABS) frame. Respondents had the opportunity to respond to the survey via web or paper. Surveys were conducted in English and Spanish. The final response rate to this survey was 11.3% (AAPOR1).

Samples were weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. Demographic weighting targets are based on the 2020 American Community Survey figures for the 18 and older population. The data were weighted to match national demographics of age, education, gender, race, ethnicity, and Census region.

Sample Design and Selection

Surveys were sent to 11,000 US households randomly selected from the ABS frame. ABS frames are built using the USPS delivery sequence file and provide near perfect coverage of US households. Within household selection instructions were included in the survey instructions to encourage random selection of respondents in households with more than one adult.

Gallup obtained the ABS sample from Marketing Systems Group (MSG), a database and survey sample vendor, who has access to the latest DSF (Delivery Sequence File) frame. The DSF of USPS (United States Postal Service) is a computerized database that contains all delivery point addresses, with the exception of general delivery, where carrier route or P.O. Box delivery is not available, and mail is held at a main post office for claim by recipients.

The sample was stratified into 12 strata as described in Table 1 below. As shown in Table 1, strata were formed based on density of specific subgroups: Hispanic, Black/African American, and younger adults age 18 to 34. The prediction of high-density Hispanic, African American or younger population was based on information available at the census block group level. Oversampling of subgroups was conducted to account for typically lower than average response rates from some subgroups and to ensure minimum coverage of these sub-populations in the sample. Sampling was done independently within each stratum.

The variable SAMPLE_STRATUM_KEY is the strata variable and indicates the stratum to which a case was assigned.

Table 1: Sample Stratification

Stratum	Race	Sample size	Number of completed surveys*
11	HD Hispanic - surname match - young - (known + predicted)	660	29
12	HD Hispanic - surname match - not young - (known + predicted)	550	55

13	HD Hispanic - surname match – unknown	880	36
21	HD Hispanic - no surname match - young - (known + predicted)	440	45
22	HD Hispanic - no surname match - not young - (known + predicted)	220	31
23	HD Hispanic - no surname match – unknown	880	66
31	HD black - young - (known + predicted)	550	35
32	HD black - not young - (known + predicted)	330	43
33	HD black – unknown	990	63
41	Other - young - (known + predicted)	990	156
42	Other - not young - (known + predicted)	1980	423
43	Other – unknown	2530	266
	Total		1248

*Only cases that could be assigned a weight are included in the counts.

Fieldwork

The survey was fielded using a self-administered instrument that was mailed to 11,000 randomly selected households. Respondents had the option to complete via paper or web. The paper survey instrument was a 16-page booklet, printed in black and white. The web survey was accessed via the survey URL and by entering the unique respondent ID. 63% percent of surveys were completed via paper and 37% were complete via web.

Gallup mailed pre-notification postcards with a web link to the survey on January 27th, 2021.

On February 1st, all selected households were sent the initial survey invitation packet. The survey invitation packet contained a cover letter which included the survey URL and unique access code, the paper survey booklet, a pre-paid business reply envelope (BRE), and \$1 USD cash token incentive.

Reminder postcards were mailed to all households on February 8th. The reminder postcard included the survey URL and access code.

On March 1st, a final survey packet was mailed to all households who had not yet returned a survey. This packet included a cover letter, another paper survey booklet, an additional \$1 incentive, and a BRE. The survey was closed on April 26, 2021.

All survey materials, including the cover letter, web survey and paper survey were translated into Spanish. Households flagged on the sample frame as “Hispanic” (typically because of a Hispanic surname match) received English and Spanish materials in all survey sends. Approximately 3% of surveys were completed in Spanish.

In some cases, respondents returned two completed surveys (for example, a web survey and a paper survey OR two paper surveys). Duplicate cases were cleaned out. Fully completed web surveys were given first priority, paper surveys second priority, and partially completed web surveys third priority. If two completed paper surveys were returned, the first return was retained in the data. Additionally, some people returned blank mail surveys. Blank surveys have been removed from the dataset.

The final response rate, using the AAPOR1 calculation, was 11.3%. Complete cases that could be assigned a weight are included in the numerator of the response rate calculation. Cases that were partially completed and could not be weighted due to missing demographics are not counted as completed interviews in the calculation.

It is worth noting that the survey was fielded during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many areas experienced significant postal delays related to the pandemic. This likely had an impact on response rates, and Gallup did see a significant decline in response rates on other mail surveys fielded during the pandemic.

Weighting of Sample data

Weighting was carried out to adjust for the probability of selection and to account for non-response.

In the first stage, base weights were constructed to account for the probability of selection. The base weight assigned to each respondent in each stratum was equal to the inverse of the probability of selection (or the sampling fraction) for that stratum. Base weights also accounted for the number of adults in the household.

In the next stage, the weights were then adjusted for non-response by a non-response weight adjustment factor equal to the ratio of the sample size and the number of completed surveys in each stratum.

The final step involved post-stratification weighting to restore proportionality among groups of the population that may have been overrepresented or underrepresented in the survey due to differential non-response or representation on the sample frame. In the process of post-stratification weighting, Gallup weighted the actual respondent cases, using a raking procedure, to match the known demographic characteristics of the U.S. adult population by geographic Census region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education. The target data for post-stratification weighting were obtained from the latest Current Population Survey (CPS) 2020 population projections.

Some respondents returned a survey but left most or all of the demographic questions blank. In these cases (n=88), the respondent could not be included in post-stratification weighting and have not been assigned a weight. However, these cases have been retained in the dataset.

Trimming of extreme weights were carried out to minimize the effect of large weights on sampling error. The design effect from weighting is 1.74.

The variable WEIGHT is the weight and should be used in analysis.