

Alternatives to Periodic Data Collection

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Workshop on Developing a Methodological Research Program for
Longitudinal Studies

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The Understanding America Study (UAS)

UNDERSTANDING AMERICA STUDY



The Understanding America Study (UAS) is a panel at the University of Southern California (USC) of approximately 6,000 individuals representing the entire United States. The study is an '*Internet Panel*,' which means that respondents answer our surveys on a computer, tablet, or smart phone, wherever they are and whenever they wish to participate.

The majority of the panel members have their own Internet access. The remaining panel members have been provided Internet access by USC through the provision of a tablet and/or an Internet subscription. At this time the UAS only asks surveys of adults aged 18 and over. It is not possible to volunteer for joining the UAS. We randomly select people around the country using postal codes.

Surveys are designed by research teams around the world; programmed and tested by our team at the Center for Economic and Social Research, translated into Spanish and then fielded.

Final datasets for finished surveys are posted on our site with sample weights (click on the "data" menu for full list of surveys).

Datasets of surveys that are still in the field may change and preliminary weights are available by request.

Detailed information on the Understanding America Study's [sampling and recruitment practices](#), [weighting](#), [pricing](#) and other information are available from the menus on this site. Our responses to the ESOMAR company profile questionnaire are [here](#).

For any other inquiries, please write to [us](#)!

The Understanding America Study (UAS)

Distinct features

- ▶ the UAS is address based (recruiting is not via internet)
- ▶ adaptive recruiting algorithm to move the sample closer to a target population
- ▶ base and post-stratification weights are provided
- ▶ every step is documented
- ▶ data is available in real time and surveys in the field can be monitored

The Understanding America Study (UAS)

Available information

- ▶ Cognitive tests, numeracy and financial literacy
- ▶ Personality (big five)
- ▶ Core HRS instrument (every 2 years)
- ▶ Knowledge about SSA programs
- ▶ Financial wellbeing (CFPB)

The Understanding America Study (UAS)

Data dissemination



UnderStandingAmericaStudy - Data Visualization Toolkit

Surveys

How to Guide



Welcome to the Understanding America Study - Data Visualization (UASVis) Toolkit

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The UAS Visualization Toolkit allows users to interactively explore these datasets on a variety of key indicators through interactive, customizable and animated charts, tables and maps.

These interactive visualizations are customized to each dataset and will be updated periodically.

Get Started

OR view

How to Guide



The Understanding America Study (UAS)

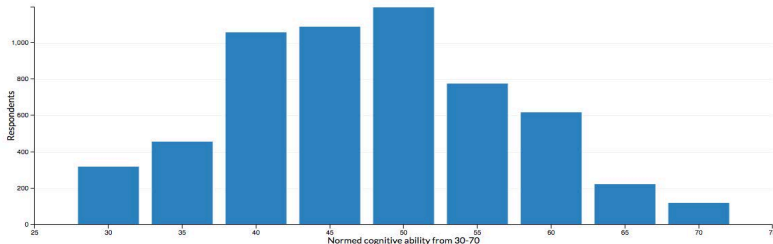
Data dissemination

[← Survey Home](#)

[Next →](#)

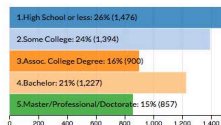
Q: Cognitive Ability: Numeracy

This numeracy scale is adapted from [Lipkus et al. \(2001\)](#). The IRT-based score is reported. [Source Questions](#)

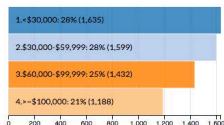


Filter By (limit 3): ☒ Education ☒ Household Income ☐ Labor Status ☐ Gender ☐ Race ☐ Marital Status ☒ Age ☐ US Citizen ☐ Working ☐ Retired ☐ Disabled
☐ Household members ☐ Live /w Partner

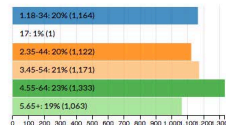
Education



Household Income



Age



The Understanding America Study (UAS)

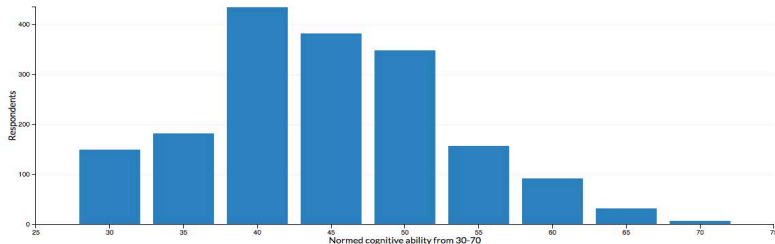
Data dissemination

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Q: Cognitive Ability: Numeracy

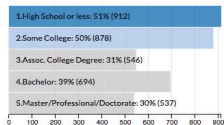
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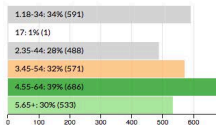
Education

Selected: 1.High School or less, 2.Some College [Reset](#)



Age

Selected: 3.45-54, 4.55-64, 5.65+ [Reset](#)



The Understanding America Study (UAS)

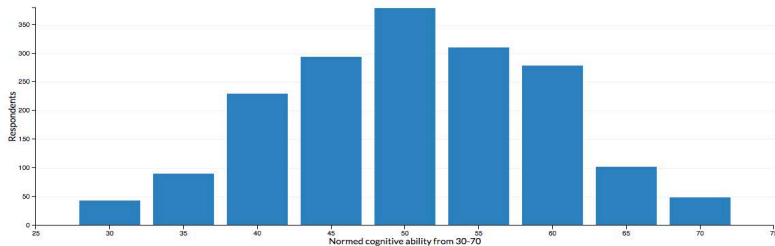
Data dissemination

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[Next →](#)

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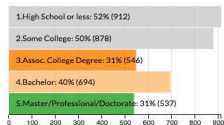
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Filter By (limit 3): ☒ Education ☐ Household Income ☐ Labor Status ☐ Gender ☐ Race ☐ Marital Status ☒ Age ☐ US Citizen ☐ Working ☐ Retired ☐ Disabled
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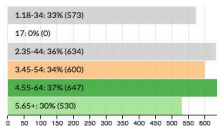
Education

Selected: 3.Assoc. College Degree, 4.Bachelor,
5.Master/Professional/Doctorate [Reset](#)



Age

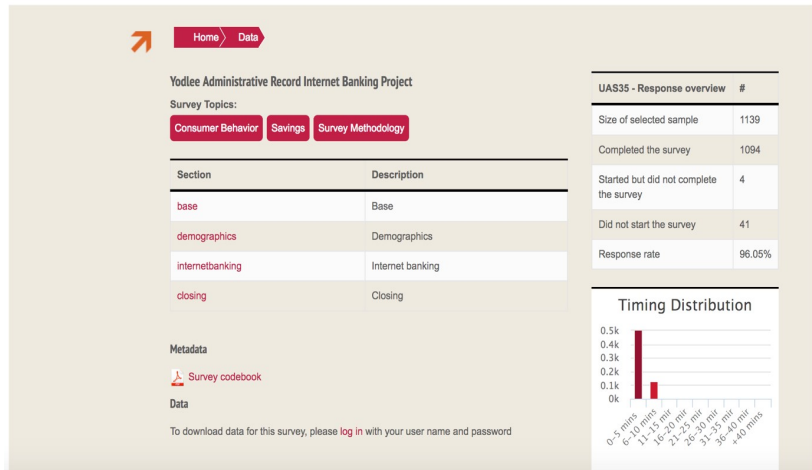
Selected: 3.45-54, 4.55-64, 5.65+ [Reset](#)



A New Approach to the Measurement of Economic Behavior

Consent survey

UAS 35



Consent survey: description

We are interested in how Americans spend their money and how they are doing financially. We would ask you to sign up with a custom made financial management web-site. The web-site has been developed in collaboration with one of the biggest financial management service companies in the world: Yodlee. For instance, Yodlee provides services to 12 of the 20 largest banks in the United States.

We will NOT have access to your passwords or any other identifying information; *this information will be safeguarded by Yodlee. We will use the data in the same way we use surveys you participate in: to make summary tables or graphs to better understand how Americans are doing. Just like the information you provide through surveys, you will be compensated for the information that you share with us.*

Consent survey: description

If you agree to participate, we will pay you \$25 just for signing up with the financial management web-site, plus \$5 for every one of your financial institutions that you add on the web-site.

For example, imagine you have a checking and a savings account with one financial institution, a credit card with another, a brokerage account with another financial institution, and a retirement account (such as a 401(K) or IRA) with yet another one. That means you have a total of 5 accounts at 4 financial institutions. You will earn \$20 ($4 \times \5) if you sign all 4 of your financial institutions up.

Every month after that, we will pay you \$2 per institution that you signed up to the web-site. That means the earlier you sign up all of your financial institutions, the sooner you can start earning money, just for letting Yodlee summarize information about your accounts for us. You'll get the monthly amount as long as you keep information about each institution current in the system.

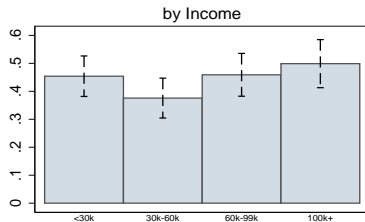
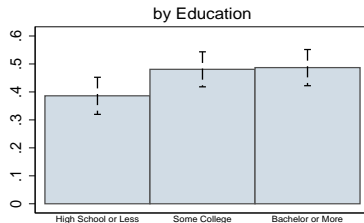
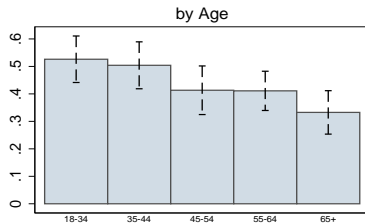
Hence, there are 3 basic steps:

- 1 Sign-up: create an account with the financial management web-site
- 2 Add financial institutions to the account
- 3 Maintain the account up-to-date

Experimental incentives are provided at each step.

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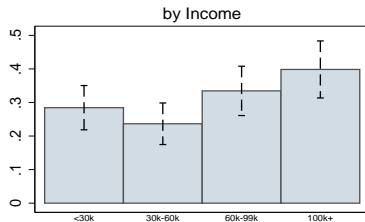
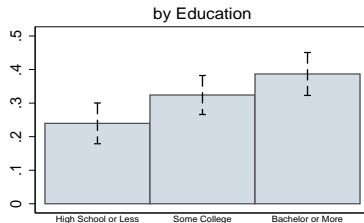
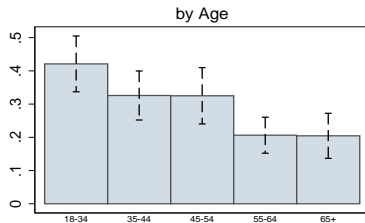
Consent to participate in the study



Overall consent is 45%

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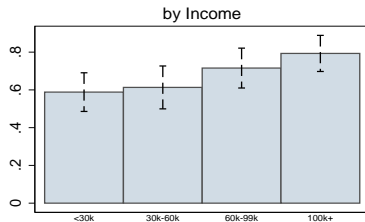
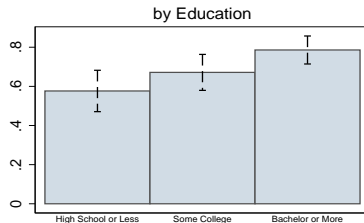
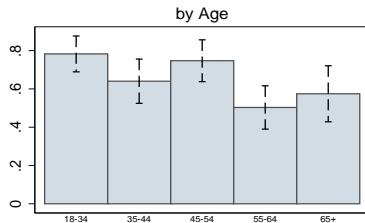
Unconditional sign-up to the study



Overall unconditional sign-up is 32%

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Sign-up to the study conditional on consent



Overall conditional sign-up is 68%

Consent and Sign-Up

Consent	Sign-Up		Total
	No	Yes	
No	583 (98.48%)	9 (1.52%)	592 (100.00%)
Yes	160 (32.00%)	340 (68.00%)	500 (100.00%)
Total	743 (68.04%)	349 (31.96%)	1,092 (100.00%)

Adding Financial Institutions

	Freq.	Perc.
No	216	61.89
Yes	133	38.11
Total	349	100.00

Determinants of Participation: Demographics

	Consent	Unconditional Sign-Up	Sign-up Conditional on Consent
Male	0.006	0.000	-0.015
Non-White	-0.049	-0.051	-0.053
Age 35-44	0.017	-0.015	-0.033
Age 45-54	-0.052	-0.052	-0.037
Age 55-64	-0.097**	-0.146**	-0.142**
Age 65+	-0.171**	-0.176**	-0.188**
Some College	0.058	0.082**	0.114**
Bachelor or More	0.050	0.085**	0.136**
Working	-0.037	-0.036	-0.057
HH Income 30-60k	-0.098**	-0.057	0.018
HH Income 60-100k	-0.118**	-0.064	0.030
HH Income 100k+	-0.088*	-0.030	0.073
<i>N</i>	1091	1091	500

Determinants of Participation: Online Banking Indicators

	Consent	Unconditional Sign-Up	Sign-up Conditional on Consent
Account at Fin Inst	-0.146**	-0.073	0.010
Internet Bill Payment	0.127**	0.034	-0.091
Internet Balance Check	0.036	0.154**	0.302**
Internet Transfers	0.110**	0.110**	0.088
<i>N</i>	1091	1091	500

Incentives

Scheme I (old)			
	Sign-Up	Add Institution	Monthly Payment
Treatment 1	\$10	\$2	\$1
Treatment 2	\$25	\$2	\$1
Treatment 3	\$50	\$2	\$1
Treatment 4	\$10	\$5	\$2
Treatment 5	\$25	\$5	\$2
Treatment 6	\$50	\$5	\$2

Scheme II (current)			
	Sign-Up	Add Institution	Monthly Payment
Treatment 1	\$5	\$3	\$1
Treatment 2	\$5	\$5	\$1
Treatment 3	\$5	\$10	\$1
Treatment 4	\$5	\$5	\$2
Treatment 5	\$5	\$10	\$2
Treatment 6	\$5	\$15	\$2

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Incentives - Scheme I

	Take-up Proportion	<i>N</i>
Sign-up incentive \$10	0.36	39
Sign-up incentive \$25	0.33	33
Sign-up incentive \$50	0.33	27
Add institution incentive \$2	0.41	17
Add institution incentive \$5	0.53	17

Incentives - Scheme II

	Take-up Proportion	<i>N</i>
Add institution incentive \$3	0.37	49
Add institution incentive \$5	0.40	111
Add institution incentive \$10	0.34	105
Add institution incentive \$15	0.38	50

Incentives - Scheme I vs. II

	Take-up Proportion	<i>N</i>
Old: sign-up incentive \$10-\$50	0.34	99
New: sign-up incentive \$5	0.32	997

Results summary

- There exist some barriers to participation related to age and education
- Experience with online banking matters both in terms of signing-up with the account aggregation service and adding an institution
- Monetary incentives do not seem to affect participation

Next Steps

- Phone contact to promote participation
 - Priority group 1: those who signed-up, but did not add an institution
 - Priority group 2: those who consented, but did not sign-up

- Visual aid to
 - address security/privacy concerns
 - guide respondents through the process of creating an account and adding financial institutions

- Promote the use of the help line in case of issues, questions or concerns

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A taste of the potential: a person's checking account over time

