JEWISH OPINION SURVEY
METHODOLOGY
REPORT

Prepared for American Jewish Committee

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OVERVIEW

The American Jewish Committee contracted with SSRS to conduct the American Jewish Attitudes about Antisemitism Survey from September 11 through October 6, 2019. The survey collected opinions of American Jewish adults on the current state of antisemitism in the United States, as well as what groups bear responsibility for the current state. Respondents were asked about their own personal experiences being the target with antisemitic verbal or physical attacks. In addition, questions regarding attacks on Jewish institutions, such as synagogues and schools were included.

The study collected data from a nationally representative sample of 1,283 respondents ages 18 or older and of Jewish religion or background. The sample consisted of a landline component (n = 599) and a cell phone component (n = 684). To correct for known biases due to sampling and non-response, SSRS data are weighted.

This report provides information about the methods used to collect the data and report the survey results.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The Jewish population is a very low incidence population. In order to obtain the number of interviews needed in a timely manner, SSRS used pre-screened sample from our Omnibus survey, which is a national, weekly dual-frame bilingual telephone survey designed to meet standards of quality associated with custom research studies. For this study, SSRS utilized sample where someone in the household had been identified as Jewish in a previous Omnibus survey. If there was no longer anyone Jewish in the household, the interview was terminated.

In an effort to garner more responses from younger Jewish Americans, additional sample was purchased from L2. Utilizing commercially available databases to append variables including consumer and voter registration data. In total, 4% of the database consist of phone numbers that are indicated to be likely Jewish[1]. In addition, SSRS utilizes the selected sample to create an internal predictive model of whether a household is likely to be Jewish or not is created. Each number is assigned a score designating whether it's likely a Jewish household or not.

FIELD PREPARATIONS, FIELDING AND DATA PROCESSING

The questionnaire was developed by the staff of the American Jewish Committee in consultation with the SSRS project team. Screening procedures include ensuring the respondent is age 18 or older, and if on a cell phone that they are in a safe place to continue with the survey. To identify Jewish respondents a number of questions were asked, as follows:

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[1] In total 36% of households reached were determined to be eligible for the survey. 2.5% of the completes came from the database sample (n=14 from landline sample/n=16 from cell sample).

S2.   What is your present religion, if any? Are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox such as Greek or Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, something else, or nothing in particular?

IF DON'T IDENTIFY AS JEWISH RELIGION

S3.   Do you consider yourself to be Jewish for any reason?

IF 2 OR MORE PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD AND RESPONDENT DOESN'T IDENTIFY AS JEWISH

S4.   Does anyone in your household consider themselves to be another religion? (IF YES: And which religion or religions would that be?)

Prior to the field period, SSRS programmed the study into CfMC Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software. Extensive checking of the program was conducted to assure that skip patterns followed the design of the questionnaire.

The field period for the study was September 11 through October 6, 2019. All interviews were done through the CATI system. The CATI system ensured that questions followed logical skip patterns and that complete dispositions of all call attempts were recorded.

CATI interviewers received both written materials on the survey and formal training. The written materials were provided prior to the beginning of the field period and included an annotated questionnaire that contained information about the goals of the study as well as detailed explanations of why questions were being asked, the meaning and pronunciation of key terms, potential obstacles to be overcome in getting good answers to questions, and respondent problems that could be anticipated ahead of time as well as strategies for addressing the potential problems.

Interviewer training was conducted immediately before the survey was officially launched. Call center supervisors and interviewers were walked through each question from the questionnaire. Interviewers were given instructions to help them maximize response rates and ensure accurate data collection.

Deliverables

SSRS delivered to AJC:

- Fully labeled dataset in SPSS
- Fully labeled Excel dataset
- Full topline for all weighted survey responses and combination tables
- Summary findings report
- PowerPoint presentation (forthcoming)
- Methods report

WEIGHTING PROCEDURES

Total Probability of Selection Weighting

The data from this project was weighted to reflect nationally representative estimates of the adult Jewish population. The weighting process takes into account the disproportionate probabilities of household and respondent selection due to the number of separate telephone landlines and cellphones answered by respondents and their households, as well as the probability associated with the random selection of an individual household member.

Probability of Selection (Pphone): A phone number's probability of selection depends on the number of phone-numbers selected out of the total sample frame. So for each respondent whose household has a landline phone number this is calculated as total landline numbers dialed divided by total numbers in the landline frame and conversely for respondents answering at least one cell phone number, this is calculated as total cell phone numbers divided by total numbers in the cell phone frame.

Probability of Respondent selection (Pselect): In households reached by landline, a single respondent is selected. Thus, the probability of selection within a household is inversely related to the number of adults in the household.

Total Probability of Selection: This is calculated as the phone number's probability of selection (by frame), and for landlines, divided by the number of adults in the household. Thus, for each respondent a probability can be calculated for being reached via landline (LLprob) and for being reached via cell phone (Cellprob). These calculations are:

$$LLprob=Pphone* /Pselect$$
$$Cellprob=Pphone$$

The sample weights derived at this stage are calculated as the inverse of the combined probability of selection, or:

$$1/(LLprob+Cellprob-LLprob*CellProb)$$

Post Stratification Weighting

The second stage of the weighting balances the demographic profile of the sample to target population parameters.

To handle missing data among some of the demographic variables we employ a technique called hot decking. Hot deck imputation replaces the missing values of a respondent randomly with another similar respondent without missing data. These are further determined by variables predictive of non-response that are present in the entire file. We use an SPSS macro detailed in 'Goodbye, Listwise Deletion: Presenting Hot Deck Imputation as an Easy and Effective Tool for Handing Missing Data' (Myers, 2011).

Weighting is accomplished using SPSSINC RAKE, an SPSS extension module that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using the GENLOG procedure. The sample is balanced to match estimates of the Jewish population determined from 2 years of data collected through our SSRS Omnibus. The population parameters used for post-stratification are: age (18-29; 30-49; 50-64; 65+), gender (male; female), Census region (Northeast, North-Central, South, West), Education (less than high school, high school graduate, some college, four-year college or more); race/ethnicity (White non-Hispanic or Other non-Hispanic; Black non-Hispanic; Hispanic); marital status (single; married; other), denomination (Orthodox; Conservative, Reform, or other, and phone-usage (cell phone only, landline only, both).

Weights were trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population. The following table provides the population parameters, and we will add the unweighted and weighted sample distributions after weighting.

Table 1. *Weighted and Unweighted Sample Distributions*

		Parameter (%)	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (%)
Gender	Male	54.0	57.4	53.6
	Female	46.0	42.6	46.4
Age	18-29	23.6	12.1	23.3
	30-49	29.6	20.6	29.4
	50-64	22.9	25.5	22.5
	65+	23.9	41.9	24.8
Education	Less than High School	5.5	.9	4.2
	High School Graduate	19.3	7.0	18.9
	Some college/Assoc Degree	19.3	16.1	20.4
	College Graduate	55.9	76.0	56.5
Denomination	Orthodox	10.4	11.6	9.8
	Conservative	12.3	21.2	13.0
	Reform	27.0	37.1	27.0
	Other	50.3	30.1	50.1
Region	Northeast	35.6	42.3	36.1
	North Central	13.3	12.7	13.5
	South	27.7	24.2	28.4
	West	23.4	20.8	22.1
Marital Status	Single/Other	46.9	44.0	46.9
	Married	53.1	56.0	53.1
Race	Whites and Other	87.0	96.2	89.7
	Blacks	4.7	.3	2.2
	Hispanic	8.3	3.5	8.1
Phone Status	Cell Phone Only	41.3	29.8	41.4
	Dual Frame	54.8	66.4	54.9
	Landline Only	3.9	3.8	3.7

Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference

Specialized sampling designs and post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. SSRS calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 2.39.

SSRS calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size *n*, with each case having a weight, *w* as:

$$deff = \frac{n \sum w^2}{(\sum w)^2}$$

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted standard error of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect ($\sqrt{deff}$). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

$$\hat{p} \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{deff \times \hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}}$$

where $\hat{p}$ is the sample estimate and *n* is the unweighted number cases in the group being considered.

The formula for computing the 95 percent confidence interval around the difference between two percentages, p_1 and p_2, of sizes n_1 and n_2, is:

$$(\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2) \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{deff_1 \times \hat{p}_1(1-\hat{p}_1)}{n_1} + \frac{deff_2 \times \hat{p}_2(1-\hat{p}_2)}{n_2}}$$

where $\hat{p}_1$ is the estimate of p_1, $\hat{p}_2$ is the estimate of p_2, and $deff_1$ and $deff_2$ are the design effects for each group.

The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample—one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the total sample is ±4.2 percentage points. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 4.2 percentage points away from their true values in the population. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as measurement error, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

The response rates for this study were calculated using AAPOR's RR3. The overall response rate was 27.8%. The landline and cell components had response rates of 29.8% and 26.7%, respectively.[2] Table 2 gives a detailed account of final sample dispositions for the principal study.

Table 2. Sample Dispositions

	Landline	Cell	Total
Eligible, Interview (Category 1)			
Complete	598	685	1283
Eligible, non-interview			
Refusal and breakoff	343	10	353
Break-off	150	6	156
Answering machine	431	11	442
Physically or mentally unable/incompetent	3	0	3
Language problem	0	0	0
Unknown eligibility, non-interview (Category 3)			
Always busy	59	324	383
No answer	1127	937	2064
Answering machine don't know if household	525	1151	1676
Call blocking	13	7	20
Technical phone problems	0	0	0
Housing unit, unknown if eligible respondent	44	1411	1455
No screener completed	13	47	60
Not eligible (Category 4)			
Fax/data line	60	2	62
Non-working number	2058	2704	4762
Business, government office, other organizations	41	80	121
No eligible respondent	112	282	394
Total phone numbers used	5586	7657	13243
Response Rate 3	29.8%	26.7%	27.8%

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[2] Note that the response rate for the SSRS omnibus averages about ~9% overall and thus the total response rate would be the product of the original response rate and the study response rate.