

# Example of case study on data collection mode and social desirability bias in sel...

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## **Article Analysis: “ Data Collection Mode and Social Desirability Bias in Self-Reported Religious Attendance”**

In this article, Stanley Presser (University of Maryland) and Linda Stinson (Bureau of Labor Statistics) research inaccurate data in regards to whether or not self-administered studies and time usage reports are beneficial to studies. In this report, the researchers investigate religious service attendance numbers and how truthful people are when it comes to self-administered studies.

One would imagine that people would tell the truth and fear no judgement during a typical “ interview” style of collecting data. However, when the participants in these studies on religious ceremony attendances were asked questions during a typical interview-administered style, their attendance numbers were not exactly the truth - pressure from their own religious communities made these reports exaggerated (Presser & Stinson, 142). The participants in the study said they went to church more than they actually did. When people were asked questions and participated in the study by means of self-administered methods and time usage reportings (meaning, that those participating in the study have to say the exact times/dates of their church attendance), the church attendance numbers dropped dramatically with a 5% decrease from 1975 to around 1994 (Presser & Stinson, 143). This is because there is less room to lie about a question and there is less pressure on the participant.

The typical interview style conducted over the years in regards to church attendance showed very little change in numbers while the other methods showed more realistic, and sadly declining changes over time. It's quite

interesting that people feel the need to lie about something so personal, like church attendance, in order to please and conform to their peers. This research article showed how important it is to have an accurate and low-pressure form of conducting a study in order to receive accurate results to show how society is functioning as a whole.

## **Works Cited**

Presser, Stanley & Stinson Linda, Data Collection Mode and Social Desirability Bias in Self-Reported Religious Attendance: American Sociological Review, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Feb., 1998), pp. 137-145. American Sociological Association. Print