

National Deliberative Poll® on Health Care and Education

SAMPLE SELECTION AND WEIGHTING METHODOLOGY

The initial sample was drawn from Polimetrix's PollingPoint panel of approximately one million persons. Panelists were matched to a national sampling frame to be representative of U.S. adults aged 18 or higher. 6,053 persons completed the baseline survey and were randomly assigned to treatment (participation in online discussions) and control groups with probabilities 0.81 and 0.19, respectively. 63% of those assigned to the treatment declined to participate, leaving 1,830 participants in the treatment group and 1,158 in the control group.

The sample was weighted to have the same distribution of racial, gender, age, and education groups as the U.S. Census. In addition, respondents were weighted so that the distribution of party identification would be the same as in the 2004 American National Election Study. Weights were computed by the method of "raking" which attempts to make the sample distributions of each variable match its known population distribution. However, to avoid very large or small weights on individual respondents, weights greater than 6.0 were reduced to 6.0 and weights less than 0.167 were increased to 0.167.

Each control group member who participated in at least three sessions was matched to the most similar control group member (in terms of age, gender, race, education, and party identification). The treatment group was then post-stratified using the weighting system described above and the same weights were applied to matching observations in the control group. This subset is closely balanced between treatment and control group characteristics and was used for comparing treatment-control differences.

The following categories were used for weighting:

Gender	Male	Female			
	49.4%	50.6%			
Education	HS or less	Some College	College	Post-	
	45.9%	28.4%	15.7%	9.9%	
	Race	Blacks	Hispanics	Asian	All other
		15.5%	6.7%	1.8%	75.9%
Party I	Republican	Democrat	Independent/Other		
	29.9%	30.4%	38.1%		
Age Group	18-30	31-44	45-64	65+	
	22.1%	26.1%	34.9%	16.9%	