



# Whiplash?

## Measuring the Impact of Including Numerous Unrelated Topics on Omnibus Surveys Conducted on a Probability-based Panel

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**CIPHER 2025**

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# What is an “Omnibus?”

- A service that lets multiple researchers share space on a single, larger survey.
- Cost-efficient vehicle for researchers who don’t have enough survey questions or funding for their own standalone survey.
- A variety of clients means it’s a unique survey that covers a wide variety of unrelated topics.



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# Research Goals

- Do panelists like or dislike bouncing between topics?
- Does this experience impact their survey data?
- Does it affect their likelihood to participate in future panel surveys?



## Panelist Satisfaction

- Survey ratings
- Panel ratings



## Data Quality

- QC failure
- Breakoff rate



## Panel Participation

- Response to next invite
- Future response rate



# Why should Panels care?

- Omnibus represents any sort of re-occurring, high volume survey work conducted on a panel.
- If panelists are having negative reactions to these surveys, it could have a negative impact on the overall panel (e.g., increased non-response or attrition).
- Potential trickle-down impact on other users of the Panel.

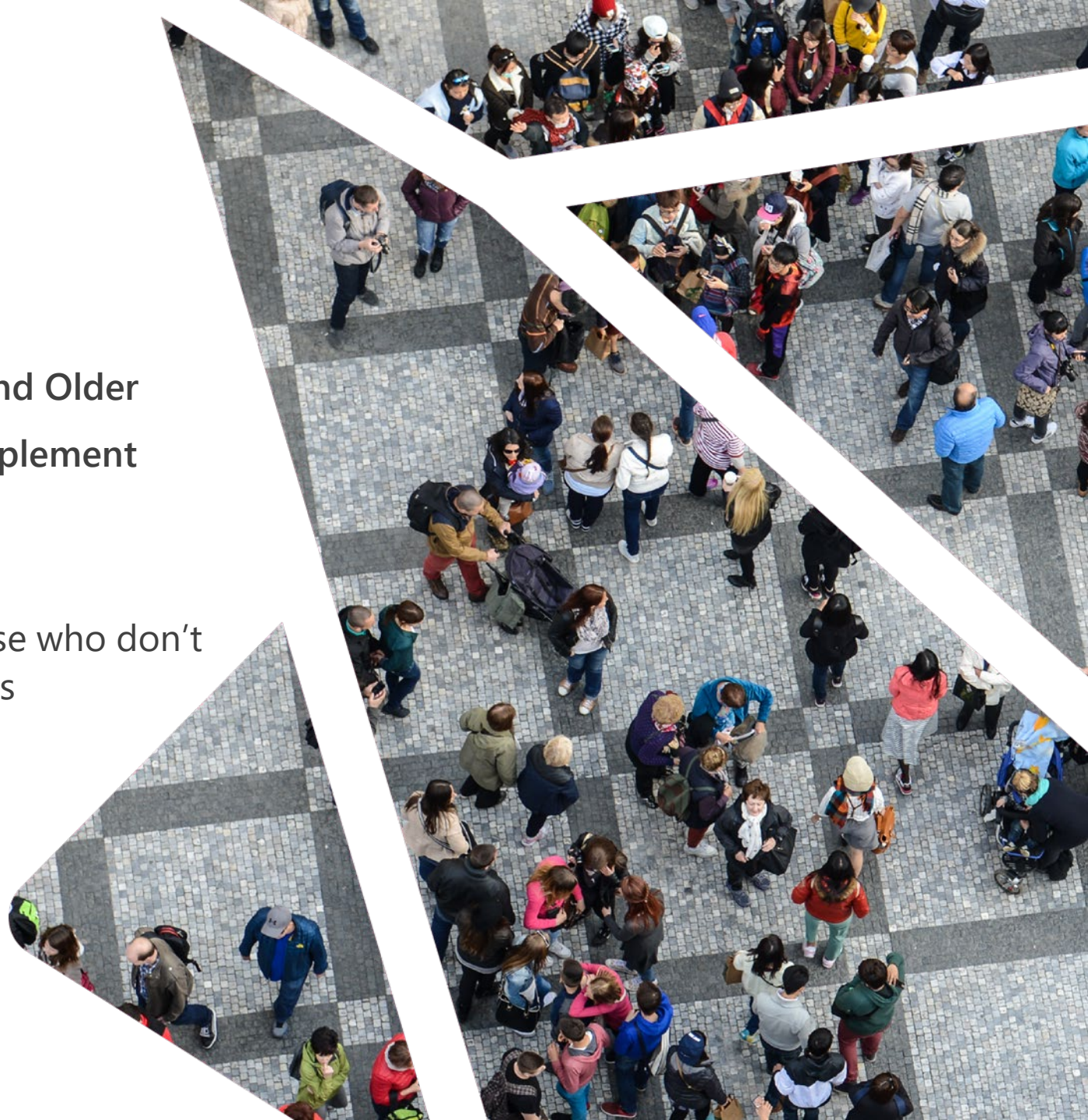




- Probability-based
- Nationally Representative of U.S. Adults 18 and Older
- Recruited via ABS with Prepaid Cell RDD Supplement
- Multi-mode Capability
  - Most respondents participate online
  - Live telephone interviewing available to those who don't use the internet or who prefer phone surveys
- English and Spanish

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[SSRS.COM/OPINION-PANEL](https://ssrs.com/opinion-panel)

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# ssrs opinion panel omnibus

- Samples from SSRS Opinion Panel
- Delivers a nationally representative sample of N=1,000 adults
- Fields twice per month (Friday – Monday)
- Mode: 97% Web, 3% CATI
- Language(s): English with Spanish option

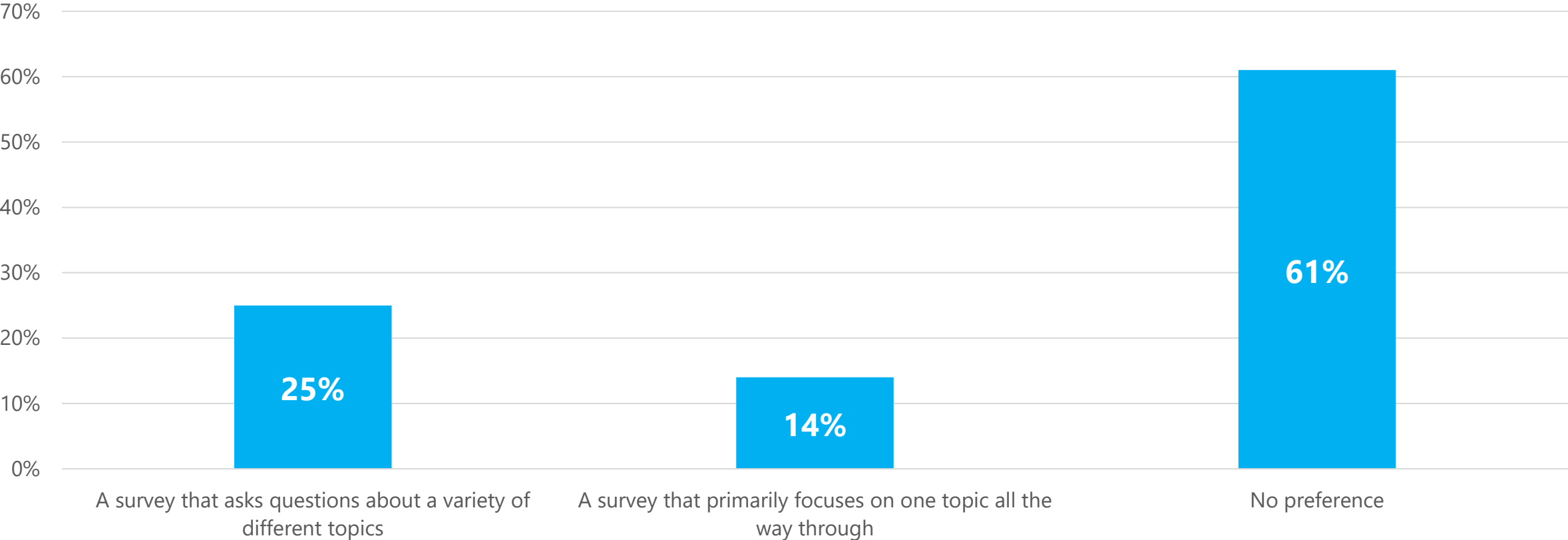
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# Self-reported Preference

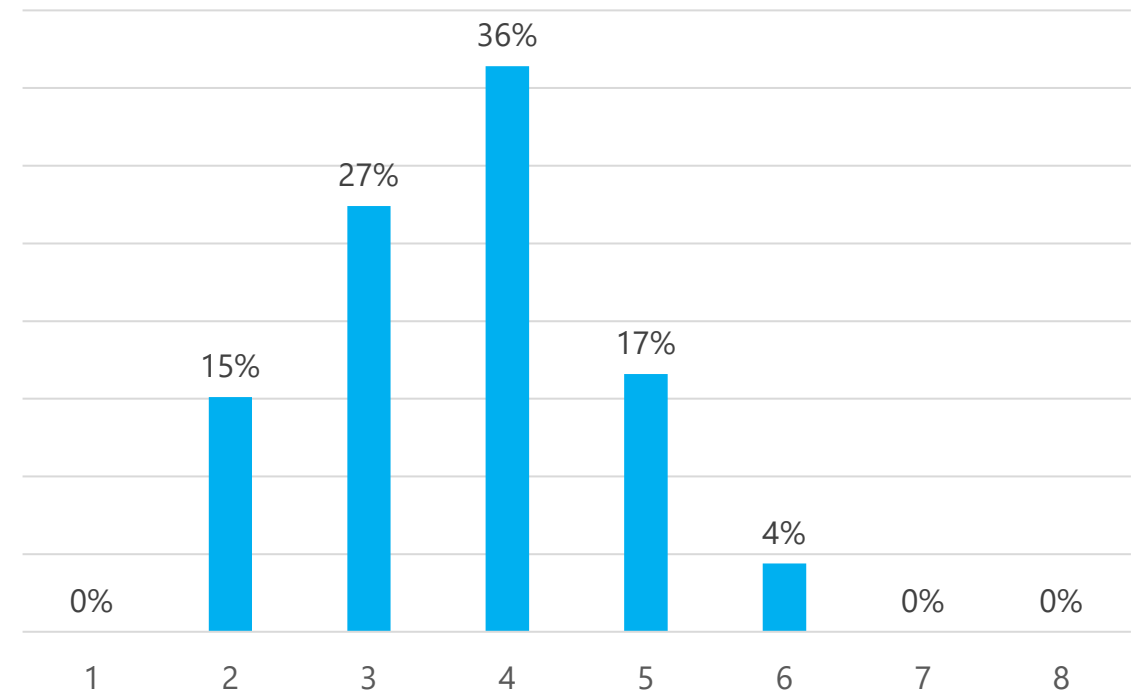
If you could choose, which type of SSRS Opinion Panel survey would you prefer to take? Please assume both surveys take the same amount of time to complete.



# Defining Topic Variety

- Analyzed 47 Omnibus surveys fielded between January 2023 and December 2024.
- Includes data from n=23,712 panelists who entered an Omnibus survey during that time framed
- Limited to Web and English cases only (n=53,607).
- Each block of client questions was manually coded into one of 8 "topics":
  - *Current Events*
  - *Politics*
  - *Education*
  - *Health Care*
  - *Lifestyle*
  - *Personal Finance*
  - *Workplace*
  - *Other*

Number of Topics Covered Per Omnibus





# Control Variables

## Panelist History

- Tenure on panel (in months)
- Total Invites in past 12 months
- Response rate past 12 months
- Non-response to preceding survey invite

## Survey Characteristics

- Topic variety**
- Survey length (in minutes)

## Profile Demographics

- Gender
- Race
- Nativity
- Education
- Age
- Region
- Civic Engagement
- Party ID (Unleaned)
- Adults in HH
- Religion
- Home ownership

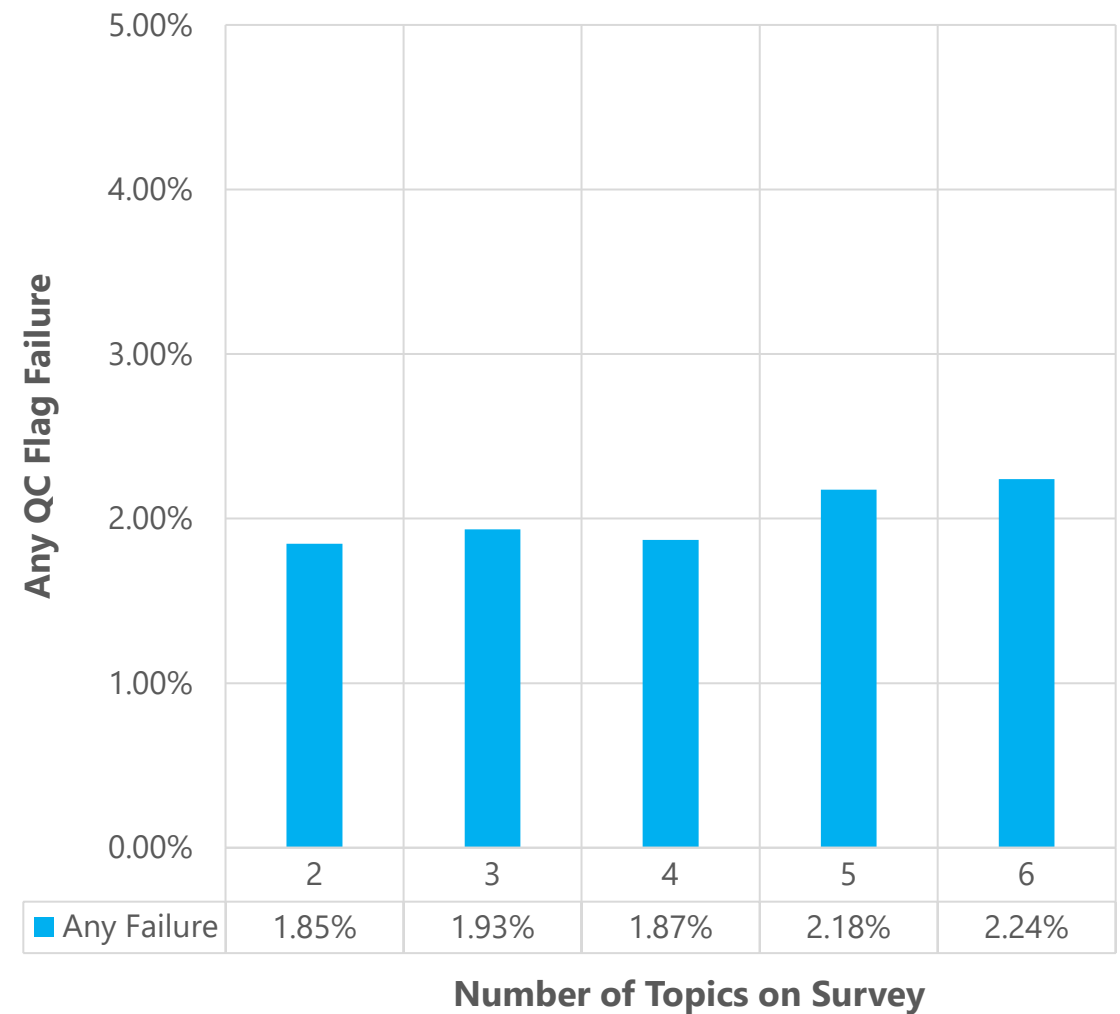
# Satisfaction

- At the end of every Omnibus panelists are asked to rate their satisfaction, on a scale of 1-5, with the **survey** and with their **overall panel experience**.
- Survey satisfaction steadily declines as the number of topics increases (even when controlling for survey length, panelist history, and demographics)
- Panel satisfaction less affected by total topics, only significantly declines at 6 total topics.



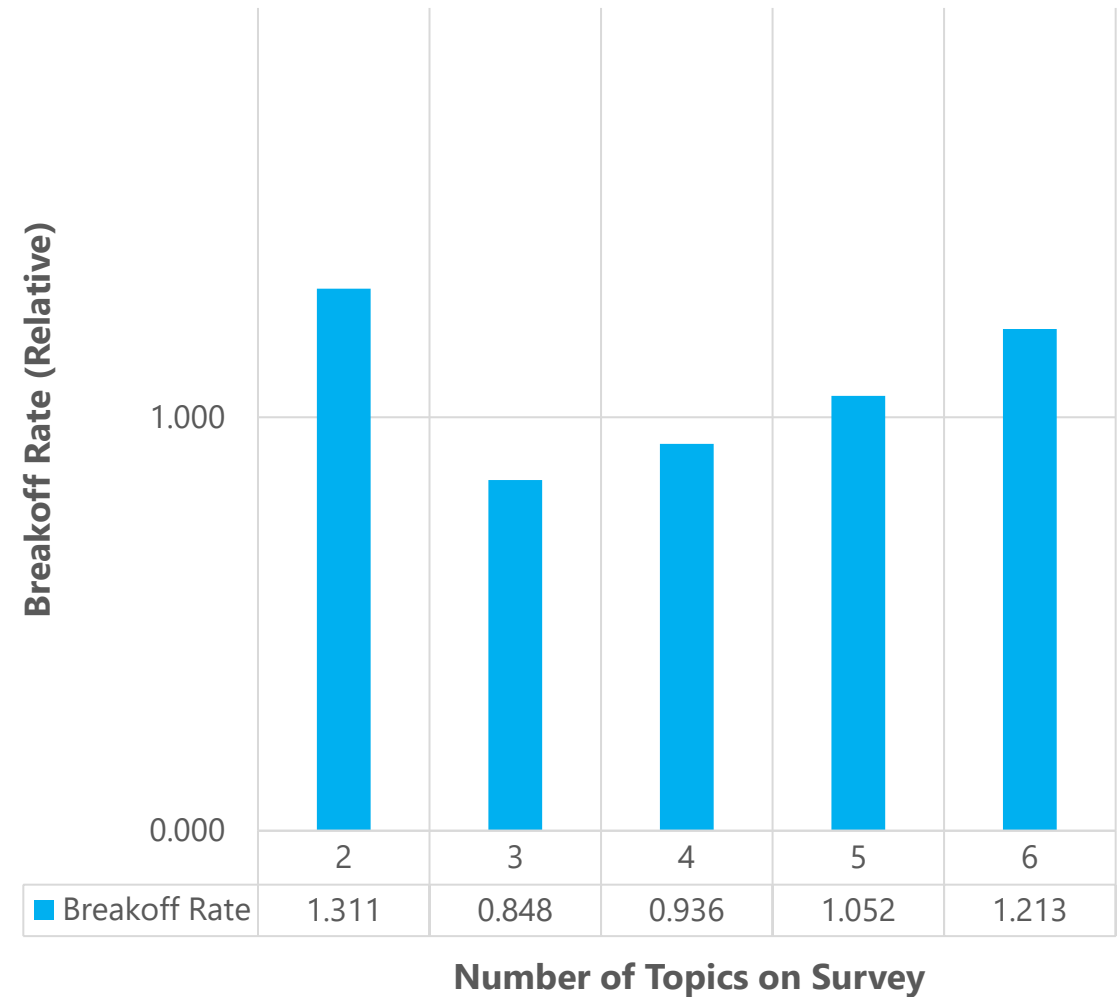
# QC Failure

- Flagged respondents who failed **any** of three quality control checks:
  - **Trap Question** (*Choose the correct option type questions*)
  - **Sincerity Check Question** (*Yes/No question of something that should have 0% or near 0% incidence*)
  - **Speeder Check** (*<20% median LOI*)
- Failure rate increases at higher end of topic variety.
- Multivariate models indicate increase in fail rate from 4-6 topics is significant when controlling for everything else.
- But overall impact is minimal.



# Breakoff Rate

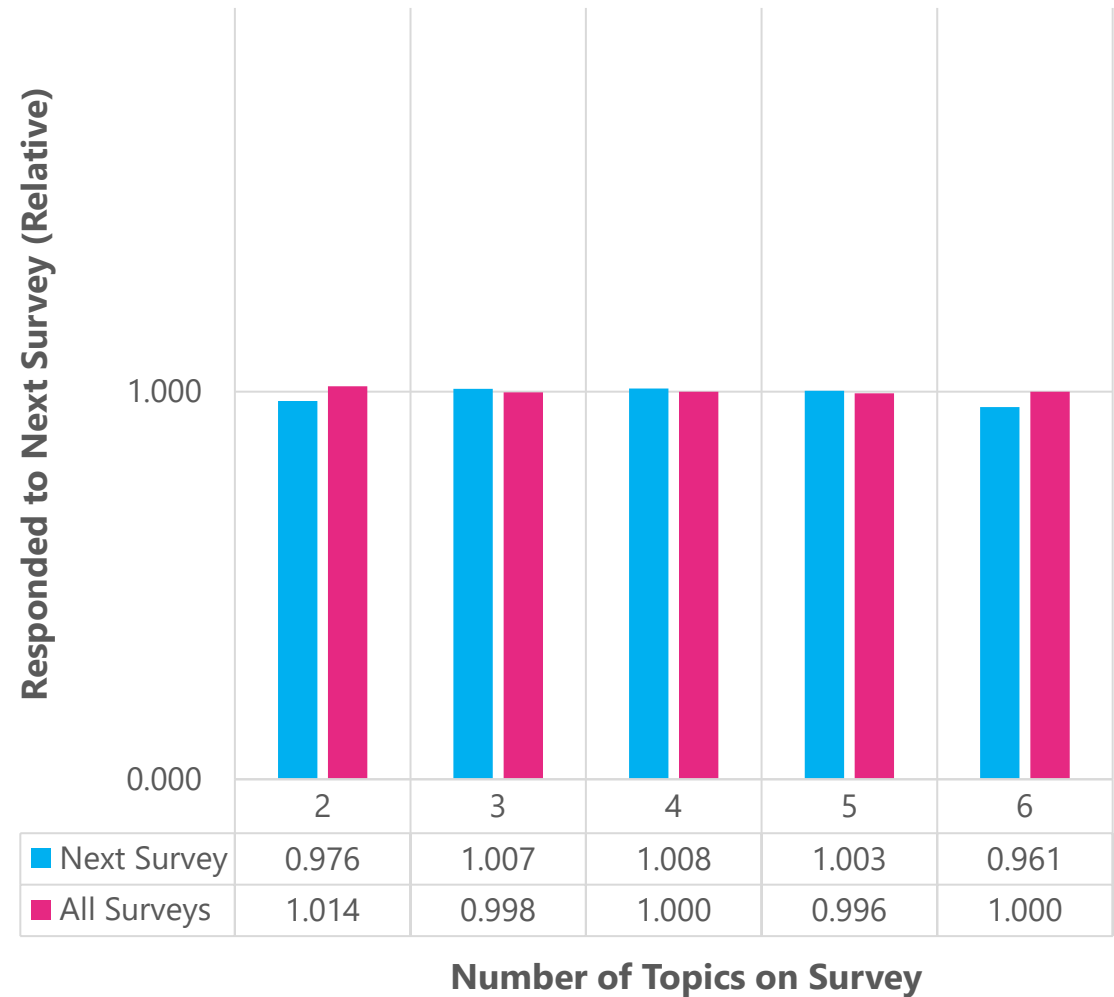
- Flagged all respondents who entered the survey but did not complete it.
- Breakoff decreases when there is more than two topics.
- Dichotomous relationship shows gradual increase in breakoff from 3-6 topics, **but** multivariate analysis reveals there is no significant difference between 3 and 6 topics when controlling for everything else.





# Post-Omni Participation

- To assess *immediate* impact, looked at just the response rate to the **next survey** they were invited to.
- To assess *longer term* impact, looked at the cumulative response rate to **all surveys** they were invite to post-Omni.
  - Limited to only the most recent time they completed an Omnibus.
- Topic variety did **not** have a significant impact on their tendency to respond either way.
- Pattern generally holds when controlling for survey length, panelist history, and panelist demographics.



# Summary

- **Survey level** impact of topic variety on Omnibus surveys...
  - Slight but statistically significant negative impact on survey satisfaction rating.
  - Increases failure of QC questions slightly at upper limits (4+ topics).
  - May decrease breakoff rate (when controlling for other factors like overall length), but more analysis needed.
- **Panel level** impact of topic variety on Omnibus surveys...
  - Negligible impact on overall panel satisfaction ratings.
  - Does not impact their likelihood to respond to their next survey invitation.
  - Does not impact their response rate on the panel going forward.
- **If your panel has any sort of reoccurring, high volume work, its important monitor any impact that survey could be having on the panel as a whole.**



## Next Steps

- Analyze relationship between topic variety and panelist attrition.
- Evaluate which survey topics, if any, have greater impact on these measures than others.



Thank You **CIPHER 2025**

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# APPENDIX: MULTIVARIATE MODELS

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# MODEL 3: Breakoff

				Incl. Topic Count ONLY (categorical), Invite Count (conntinuous) & RR (categorical)				Test			Chi-Square	DF	Pr > Chi Sq
Population = ALL								Likelihood Ratio			9898.36	9898.36	<.0001
Analytic N				53,588				Score			14429.5	14429.5	<.0001
								Wald			6741.26	6741.26	<.0001
Parameter	Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Limits	Pr Code	Parameter	Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Limits	Pr Code	Parameter	Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Limits	Pr Code		
<b>Gender</b>				<b>Volunteerism</b>				<b>Topic Variety</b>					
gender3c 1: Male				volunteer3c 1: Yes				TOPICS_TOTAL 2					
gender3c 2: Female	0.81	0.75	0.87 ***	volunteer3c 2: No	1.19	1.09	1.30 ***	TOPICS_TOTAL 3	0.49	0.43	0.56 ***		
gender3c 3: Other/Ref/DK	0.92	0.70	1.19	volunteer3c 3: Unknown	0.63	0.20	2.03	TOPICS_TOTAL 4	0.50	0.43	0.57 ***		
								TOPICS_TOTAL 5					
								TOPICS_TOTAL 6					
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				<b>Talk to Neighbors</b>				<b>Survey Length</b>					
RaceEth6c 1: White, Non-Hispanic				neighbor5c 1: Basically, every day				LOI_MEAN	1.08	1.068	1.10 ***		
RaceEth6c 2: Black, Non-Hispanic	1.27	1.12	1.45 ***	neighbor5c 2: A few times a week	1.02	0.89	1.17	<b>Chronic Nonresponse Prior</b>					
RaceEth6c 3: Hispanic	1.04	0.92	1.17	neighbor5c 3: A few times a mont	1.03	0.89	1.18	CNR4c 0: Zero					
RaceEth6c 4: Asian or NHPI	0.75	0.61	0.92 **	neighbor5c 4: Once a month or Less	1.10	0.95	1.27	CNR4c 1: One	3.18	2.80	3.60 ***		
RaceEth6c 5: Other/Mixed	0.96	0.77	1.19	neighbor5c 5: Not at all or missing	1.15	0.96	1.37	CNR4c 2: Two	4.90	4.22	5.69 ***		
RaceEth6c 6: DK/Refused/Missing	0.82	0.66	1.02	<b>PID (No-Lean)</b>				CNR4c 3: Three or more	8.72	7.72	9.86 ***		
				PID_nolean 1: Republican				<b>Invites in 12 Months Prior</b>					
<b>Country of Birth</b>				PID_nolean 2: Democrat				invitesin12monthspri					
CntryBorn3c 1: Born in the U.S. (50 States or DC)				PID_nolean 3: Independent	1.10	0.99	1.23	invitesin12m_quad	1.01	0.98	1.05		
CntryBorn3c 2: Born outside of the U.S.	1.09	0.94	1.26	PID_nolean 4: Something else	1.04	0.94	1.16	invitesin12m_cube	1.00	1.00	1.00		
CntryBorn3c 3: Other/DK/Missing	4.27	3.74	4.88 ***	PID_nolean 5: Missing	1.25	1.10	1.43 ***	<b>Response Rate in 12 Months Prior</b>					
								RR12moprior6c 0: Zero					
<b>Education</b>				<b>Religious Affiliation</b>				RR12moprior6c 1: >0%-25%					
educ6c 1: LTHS	1.44	1.21	1.72 ***	ReligAffil 1: Yes				RR12moprior6c 2: >25%-50%	2.01	1.38	2.92 ***		
educ6c 2: High School	1.14	1.02	1.27 *	ReligAffil 2: No	1.01	0.92	1.10	RR12moprior6c 3: >50%-75%	0.95	0.65	1.39		
educ6c 3: Some College				ReligAffil 3: Unknown	1.18	0.98	1.43	RR12moprior6c 4: >75%-99%	0.47	0.31	0.71 ***		
educ6c 4: BA	0.78	0.70	0.88 ***	<b>Adult Count</b>				RR12moprior6c 5: 100%					
educ6c 5: More than BA	0.74	0.66	0.84 ***	adltcnt 1: One				RR12moprior6c 6: NA, not invited prior to OMNI	11.82	7.81	17.89 ***		
educ6c 6: Unknown	0.94	0.68	1.30	adltcnt 2: Two	1.00	0.90	1.12	<b>Tenure On Panel</b>					
				adltcnt 3: Three	1.07	0.94	1.22	tenure_months	0.99	0.98	0.99 ***		
<b>Age</b>				adltcnt 4: Four or more	1.14	0.98	1.32	<b>Pre/Post Scrub Date</b>					
age5c 1: 18-24	0.85	0.70	1.03	adltcnt 5: Unknown	0.86	0.31	2.38	postscrub	1.49	1.370	1.62 ***		
age5c 2: 25-39	1.03	0.91	1.17	<b>Own/Rent</b>									
age5c 3: 40-64	0.97	0.87	1.08	OwnRent 1: Own									
age5c 4: 65+				OwnRent 2: Rent	1.24	1.13	1.35 ***						
age5c 5: Unknown	0.94	0.68	1.32	OwnRent 3: Unknown	0.43	0.19	1.01						
<b>Region</b>													
preion North Central	1.14	1.01	1.29 *										
preion North East	1.17	1.03	1.33 *										
preion South	1.15	1.03	1.27 *										
preion West													



# MODEL 4B: POST-OMNI RR (ALL SURVEYS)

Incl. Topic Count ONLY  
(categorical),  
Invite Count (continuous) &  
RR (categorical)

Population = Anyone invited to anything at least  
once after OMNI (Last OMNI Only)

Analytic N

23,082

R-Square

0.0243

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Pr Code	Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Pr Code	Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Pr Code
Intercept	0.4482	0.0165	***								
<b>Gender</b>				<b>Volunteerism</b>				<b>Topic Variety</b>			
gender3c 1: Male	0.0000			volunteer3c 1: Yes	0.0000			TOPICS_TOTAL 2	0.0000		
gender3c 2: Female	0.0029	0.0042		volunteer3c 2: No	0.0068	0.0043		TOPICS_TOTAL 3	-0.0062	0.0076	
gender3c 3: Other/Ref/DK	-0.0081	0.0155		volunteer3c 3: Unknown	0.0765	0.0652		TOPICS_TOTAL 4	-0.0043	0.0075	
								TOPICS_TOTAL 5	-0.0066	0.0084	
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				<b>Talk to Neighbors</b>				TOPICS_TOTAL 6	-0.0055	0.0106	
RaceEth6c 1: White, Non-Hispanic	0.0000			neighbor5c 1: Basically, every day	0.0000						
RaceEth6c 2: Black, Non-Hispanic	-0.0111	0.0072		neighbor5c 2: A few times a week	0.0007	0.0067		<b>Survey Length</b>			
RaceEth6c 3: Hispanic	0.0010	0.0064		neighbor5c 3: A few times a mont	0.0000	0.0069		LOI_min	0.0001	0.0003	
RaceEth6c 4: Asian or NHPI	-0.0164	0.0104		neighbor5c 4: Once a month or Less	-0.0061	0.0072					
RaceEth6c 5: Other/Mixed	-0.0058	0.0109		neighbor5c 5: Not at all or missing	0.0126	0.0098		<b>Chronic Nonresponse Prior</b>			
RaceEth6c 6: DK/Refused/Missing	0.0125	0.0123						CNR4c 0: Zero	0.0000		
				<b>PID (No-Lean)</b>				CNR4c 1: One	-0.0039	0.0072	
<b>Country of Birth</b>				PID_nolean 1: Republican	0.0000			CNR4c 2: Two	0.0056	0.0108	
CntryBorn3c 1: Born in the U.S. (50 States or DC)	0.0000			PID_nolean 2: Democrat	-0.0002	0.0055		CNR4c 3: Three or more	-0.0058	0.0086	
CntryBorn3c 2: Born outside of the U.S.	0.0043	0.0076		PID_nolean 3: Independent	-0.0026	0.0055					
CntryBorn3c 3: Other/DK/Missing	-0.0020	0.0107		PID_nolean 4: Something else	0.0033	0.0076		<b>Invites in 12 Months Prior</b>			
				PID_nolean 5: Missing	0.0017	0.0601		invitesin12monthspri	0.0007	0.0020	
<b>Education</b>								invitesin12m_quad	0.0000	0.0001	
educ6c 1: LTHS	-0.0067	0.0123		<b>Religious Affiliation</b>				invitesin12m_cube	0.0000	0.0000	
educ6c 2: High School	-0.0021	0.0061		ReligAffil 1: Yes	0.0000						
educ6c 3: Some College	0.0000			ReligAffil 2: No	-0.0044	0.0046		<b>Response Rate in 12 Months Prior</b>			
educ6c 4: BA	0.0058	0.0055		ReligAffil 3: Unknown	0.0062	0.0107		RR12moprior6c 0: Zero	0.0173	0.0120	
educ6c 5: More than BA	0.0093	0.0059						RR12moprior6c 1: >0%-25%	0.0065	0.0118	
educ6c 6: Unknown	0.0056	0.0208		<b>Adult Count</b>				RR12moprior6c 2: >25%-50%	0.0051	0.0105	
				adtcnt 1: One	0.0000			RR12moprior6c 3: >50%-75%	0.0116	0.0105	
<b>Age</b>				adtcnt 2: Two	-0.0062	0.0052		RR12moprior6c 4: >75%-99%	0.0101	0.0112	
age5c 1: 18-24	0.0091	0.0112		adtcnt 3: Three	0.0099	0.0069		RR12moprior6c 5: 100%	0.0000		
age5c 2: 25-39	0.0044	0.0063		adtcnt 4: Four or more	-0.0111	0.0083		RR12moprior6c 6: NA, not invited prior to OMNI	-0.0153	0.0160	
age5c 3: 40-64	-0.0049	0.0054		adtcnt 5: Unknown	0.0397	0.0586					
age5c 4: 65+	0.0000							<b>Tenure On Panel</b>			
age5c 5: Unknown	-0.0141	0.0200		<b>Own/Rent</b>				tenure_months	0.0024	0.0001	***
				OwnRent 1: Own	0.0000						
<b>Region</b>				OwnRent 2: Rent	-0.0030	0.0047		<b>OMNI Status</b>			
pregion North Central	0.0082	0.0061		OwnRent 3: Unknown	-0.0837	0.0501		RespStat4c 1: Completed	0.0000		
pregion North East	0.0001	0.0064						RespStat4c 2: Break off	-0.0098	0.0085	
pregion South	0.0096	0.0054		<b>Number of Omnibuses in timeframe</b>				RespStat4c 3: Quality Fail	-0.1323	0.0626	*
pregion West	0.0000			OMNI Count	-0.0010	0.0014		RespStat4c 4: Quota term	-0.0076	0.0085	
								<b>Pre/Post Scrub Date</b>			
								postscrub	-0.03	0.005	***