Transparency Initiative Update

The 2016 PAPOR Mini-Conference

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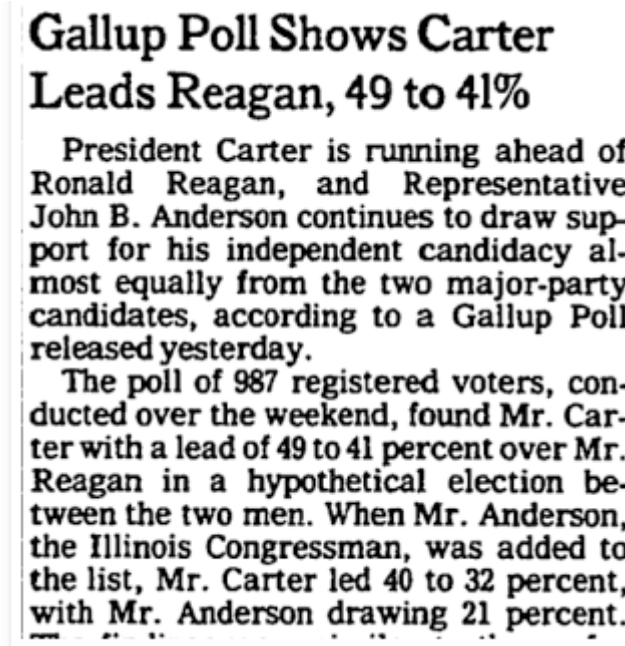
On behalf of the Transparency Initiative Coordinating Committee

Overview

- Quick History of Disclosure/Development of the Transparency Initiative

- What is AAPOR's Transparency Initiative?
  - Mission
  - Current Members

- What's next?
  - Recruit new member organizations
  - Spotlighting current member organizations
  - Assess the "effect" of the TI on the field

Disclosure through the years…

- Since 1947, pioneers of public opinion research have been advocating for higher levels of disclosure among survey research organizations.

Gallup Poll Shows Carter Leads Reagan, 49 to 41%

President Carter is running ahead of Ronald Reagan, and Representative John B. Anderson continues to draw support for his independent candidacy almost equally from the two major-party candidates, according to a Gallup Poll released yesterday.

The poll of 987 registered voters, conducted over the weekend, found Mr. Carter with a lead of 49 to 41 percent over Mr. Reagan in a hypothetical election between the two men. When Mr. Anderson, the Illinois Congressman, was added to the list, Mr. Carter led 40 to 32 percent, with Mr. Anderson drawing 21 percent.

- In the 1990s, the Gallup organization argued that polling results need to replicate the scientific and scholarly model such that "the manner in which most polling results are in fact reported to the American public doesn't conform to these requirements or objectives" (Newport, 1992).

The Transparency Initiative

- In 2010, AAPOR launched the Transparency Initiative in an effort to encourage broader and more effective disclosure of research methods by all organizations.

- The goal of the TI is to promote methodological disclosure through a proactive, educational approach that assists survey organizations in developing simple and efficient means for routinely disclosing the research methods associated with their publicly-released studies.

- The goal of the TI is <u>NOT</u> to decide which methods are better, more accurate, etc…

- In the words of Tim Johnson:

  "The Transparency Initiative will provide the public with more information regarding how surveys are done with the hope that they will be better able to judge their credibility."

The Transparency Initiative

- In 2014, the TI began accepting members with an online application process.

- The TI wrapped up its first official year of operation in early October 2015, having completed processing and admission of 77 survey organizations as Charter Members.

- A complete list is available on TI webpage: http://www.aapor.org/Transparency-Initiative/Charter-Members.aspx

- Since then, we have 60 other organizations who have begun the application process.

Praise for the Transparency Initiative

- Use of Transparency Initiative membership as a methodological standard as part of *FiveThirtyEight*'s 2016 pollster ratings:

- http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-state-of-the-polls-2016/

- As noted in their methodological section, the pollster ratings use <u>membership</u> in AAPOR's Transparency Initiative as one of the proxy variables for methodological quality due to the fact that *FiveThirtyEight*'s own analysis has consistently found that organizations who are members of the TI, release data to Roper Center Archives, and/or members of NCPP tend to have more accurate polls.

Next Steps

- Recruit more organizations (COME TALK TO ME IF YOUR ORGANIZATION <u>ISN'T A MEMBER</u>)

- Spotlight the work of current member organizations (COME TALK TO ME IF YOUR ORGANIZATION <u>IS A MEMBER</u>)

- Educational materials
  - We have AAPOR TI modules (now also ones on qualitative research and content analysis), available here: http://www.aapor.org/Transparency-Initiative/Educational-Materials.aspx

  - …and are developing new ones on explaining the various things we ask people to disclose

Assessing the effect

- AAPOR 2017 Conference will have a panel with various papers assessing the impact of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative on our polling environment

- Interested?

  COME TALK TO ME!