

Jerrold M Grochow

Subject: FW: Survey of Members' Tenure
Attachments: CSG Membership Yrs.xls

-----Original Message-----

From: owner-stonesoup@citi.umich.edu [<mailto:owner-stonesoup@citi.umich.edu>] On Behalf Of Jerry Grochow
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2004 10:32 PM
To: virtnet@stonesoup.org
Subject: Survey of Members' Tenure

This email reports the results of survey research conducted among 52 individual members of CSG participating in one of the events at the Fall 2002 meeting at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA (02139, "our fair city").

Research summary:

The average tenure at current institution of a significant sample of CSG membership is 15.2 years, with median 13.6 years, and standard deviation of 10.65 years.

Research method:

The research was conducted as a single question survey. The survey was administered in person by the author among all CSG members in attendance at the event, or at least at their table at the time. Since the survey was conducted over a 30 minute period, it is assumed that any members who may have been temporarily absent when the survey was conducted would have provided a response before the analysis was complete. Although this was not verified, nor was the location of any absent subjects determined, the possibility of significant remuneration for participation in a concurrent but totally unrelated activity may have had a positive impact on subject participation.

Subjects in the survey participated semi-anonymously as names or other identifying characteristics were not recorded when the survey was taken. Although this lack of attribution precluded certain types of data analysis (e.g. by job classification, gender, state of inebriation, etc.), it was deemed most effective (or at least, most expedient) in ensuring completion of the survey.

The complete data set is presented in the attached spreadsheet.

Research question:

The question asked was "How many years have you been at your current institution?" Although it is believed that most subjects attempted to answer this, or at least a similar, question (e.g. "How many years have you been employed at your current institution?" which question is probably the one that should have been asked had the survey been more carefully designed), the question actually answered is, of course, unknown due to a number of factors that may have polluted the data collection process, either on the part of the subjects or the researcher.

In addition to providing an answer to the survey question, all but one subject also provided analysis (the "guess") of the expected outcome for one survey statistic, the average. Again, it is presumed that most subjects in this survey provided a guess for the average rather than

some other statistic (e.g. median), particularly as the definition of this statistic was provided multiple times to different subject groups. Actual data and guesses from particular survey respondents could not be correlated as survey data was collected semi-anonymously although guesses were attributed by name (for use in the other concurrent activity, which, as previously noted, was totally unrelated to the collection of the research data).

Data analysis:

Summary results of the survey question are (in terms of "years"):

Total	789.40
Average	15.18
Min	0.10
Max	39.00
Median	13.60
Std.Dev.	10.65

In addition, it is noted that guesses of the average were significantly skewed on the low side as 42 of the 51 guesses were below the average (average guess was 11.8 vs. true average of 15.2). One conclusion would be that the research subjects think they are significantly younger than they actually are, although other conclusions are possible.

Acknowledgement:

The assistance of other members of CSG in this research is gratefully acknowledged (names have been withheld at their request). Further comments, analysis, or suggestions for further research will be accepted (but are certainly not solicited) and further research may be conducted at future CSG meetings if the membership deems it appropriate.

See you in January!
Jerry Grochow

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