

December 13, 2013

NOTE TO THE
REVIEWER OF:
FROM:

OMB CLEARANCE 1220-0141

Robin Kaplan
Research Statistician
Office of Survey Methods Research

SUBJECT:

Submission of Materials for the
Occupational Outlook Quarterly
Reinvention Project

Please accept the enclosed materials for approval under the OMB clearance package 1220-0141
In accordance with our agreement with OMB, we are submitting a brief description of the study.

The total estimated respondent burden hours for this study are 25.

If there are any questions regarding this project, please contact Robin Kaplan at
202-691-7383 or Bill Mockovak 202-691-7414.

1. Introduction and Purpose

The Occupational Outlook Quarterly (OOQ) is a publication produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) four times per year. The OOQ provides practical information on jobs and careers. Articles are written in straightforward, non-technical language and cover a wide variety of career and work-related topics such as unusual occupations, tips for jobseekers, salary trends, and results of new studies from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Its target audience includes students, teachers, school and career counselors, and anyone seeking occupational information.

The following features appear in most issues: *Grab Bag*, which presents a collection of brief items of interest to counselors and students, *My career*, an interview with a worker that describes his or her career path; *You're a what?*, which explores unusual occupations by taking a look at the career of someone in that occupation, and *OOChart*, a graphic presentation of data of interest to counselors and students.

The OOQ is published in magazine and PDF format, but now much of the content is available primarily online through the BLS website. In an effort to enhance the online content of the OOQ and make it more accessible to people, an OOQ reinvention team was assembled to completely redesign the content and information available on the website. This includes renaming the website itself and the features that appear in the OOQ. To gain insight into identifying the most user-friendly and descriptive names, we seek an audience of potential users of the website to solicit feedback on names for the OOQ website and its features.

2. Research Design

This research will aim to get feedback from two populations: 200 students ages 18-25 from the general public via Mechanical Turk, and feedback from 100 visitors of the OOQ website by posting a link to the survey on the OOQ website.

For the Mechanical Turk audience, two brief online surveys will be used (8 questions or fewer each) to solicit feedback regarding the OOQ online redesign (see attached). The surveys will be hosted on a survey data collection website called Mechanical Turk, hosted by Amazon.com, which will also be responsible for recruiting participants from their database.

For the audience of OOQ visitors, a link will be posted on the OOQ website where visitors can voluntarily participate in the survey. The instruments will be combined into a single survey for this audience.

Each survey will provide respondents with a brief description of the OOQ website and its regular features (i.e., *Grab Bag*, *My career*, *You're a what?*, and *OOChart*). After reading these descriptions, respondents will be asked to indicate which of two alternative names they prefer for that section of the website. They will also be asked to indicate an alternative name if they have a specific suggestion. See Appendix A for survey instrument 1 and Appendix B for survey instrument 2 (Mechanical Turk) and Appendix C for the survey to be linked on the OOQ website.

Justification of Research Design

OSMR proposes this methodology for the following reasons. The Occupational Outlook Quarterly is an online magazine that provides career information. Based on prior research, we know that it is not heavily used, with the primary audience being career counselors, guidance counselors, etc., as well as students of all ages, who are mostly referred to the site by counselors.

We also know from in-house and TryMyUI usability testing with students that the current name (OOQ) and section names on the website are not effective. They do **not** resonate with students. A previous website survey was conducted in the past of users of the OOQ to find out what they thought about the site and what could be improved, but got a tepid response. After four months, there were 88 responses, comprised of almost all counselors or teachers.

For the purposes of this research, we need to hear from students if we hope to make the website more appealing to them. We have successfully accessed students of varying ages using SurveyMonkey and Mechanical Turk. In addition, we've had a positive experience with both services in our recent evaluation of pages for a redesigned BLS brochure. We got excellent feedback. Moreover, obtaining the feedback was inexpensive and fast. This methodology will enable us to receive input from a targeted audience: young people.

In addition to the general audience of students from Mechanical Turk, we also plan to post an invitation on the OOQ website to obtain feedback from OOQ visitors who are already familiar with the website and its resources. This population is likely to be career and guidance counselors. We could then compare results between the two sources to see what difference, if any, there are between the two sources of feedback.

3. Participants

We will recruit 200 respondents from the Amazon Mechanical Turk database, half of whom will complete the first survey and half the second survey. Mechanical Turk provides

samples at a cost of about \$1 per respondent for a 100-person sample, with the general guideline that a survey should focus on only a few key points and be kept brief. The \$200 allocated for this survey will be paid directly to Amazon Mechanical Turk to administer the surveys and recruit respondents.

We will also aim to recruit approximately 100 respondents over 3 months by posting an invitation to participate in the survey on the OOQ website.

4. Burden Hours

Our goal is to obtain feedback from 200 respondents using Amazon Mechanical Turk and 100 respondents from the OOQ website. Each survey is expected to take approximately 5 minutes to complete, for a total of 25 burden hours (300 respondents X .083 hours). The survey will be administered completely online at the time and location of the respondent's choosing.

5. Data Confidentiality

Recruiting of participants will be handled by Amazon Mechanical Turk or by posting an invitation to participate on the OOQ website. Participants will be informed that the study will be used to improve the design of the Occupational Outlook Quarterly website. No pledge of confidentiality will be given to survey respondents.

Attachments

Appendix A – Survey Instrument 1

Appendix B – Survey Instrument 2

Appendix C – Survey Instrument 3