Retrospective Pretest Surveys

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Agenda

Pre-post surveys
Response shift bias
Retrospective pretest (RPT) surveys
RPT survey design variations
Advantages of RPTs
Limitations of RPTs (and other considerations)
Conclusion: Choosing Between Pre-Posts and RPTs
Pre-Post Survey

Limitations:

- Pre-test cannot always be administered
- Time and resources
- Response shift bias

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 17
Response Shift Bias

“You don’t know what you don’t know.”
Retrospective Pre-test Surveys

Pre-Post Design

Post-then-RPT Design

Intervention

Post-test

Retrospective pre-test
Retrospective Pre-test Surveys

(Very) Brief History of RPTs

- Introduced as an alternative or supplement to pre-posts
- Typically used in place of pre-posts
  - Popular in PD workshops

- Emerges in literature
- Research on RPTs
  - Proposed mostly as a supplement to pre-posts

- 1950s
- 1963
- 1970s-1980s
- Today
RPT Survey Design Variations

Post + RPT (same survey): 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Before the Webinar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree ○</td>
<td>Agree ○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral ○</td>
<td>Neutral ○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree ○</td>
<td>Disagree ○</td>
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1. “I’m confident in designing RPT surveys.”

Post + RPT (separate surveys): 

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1. “I’m confident in designing RPT surveys.”

Perceived change:

Rate your level of improvement attributable to this webinar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None ○</th>
<th>A little ○</th>
<th>Some ○</th>
<th>A lot ○</th>
</tr>
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</table>

1. Your confidence in designing RPT surveys.
Retrospective Pre-test Surveys

Advantages of using RPTs:

☑ Addresses response shift bias 1, 2, 3
☑ Baseline (e.g., if missing pre-data) 3, 7
☑ Research supports validity and reliability 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12
☑ Can be anonymous
☑ Convenient/feasible 3, 11
Retrospective Pre-test Surveys

Limitations of RPTs:
- Motivation biases (e.g., social desirability) 2,3,4,5
- Memory recall 2,3,13
- Program attrition (data from “dropouts”) 1,14
- Methodological preferences of audience 14
Other Considerations

Triangulate data with other methods and sources

Post-test first, followed by RPT (work backwards)

Type of info being collected

- Absolute change (frequency, occurrences) → traditional pre-post
- Change in perception (emotions, opinions, perceived knowledge) → RPT
## Conclusion: Choosing Between Pre-Posts and RPTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Post Design</th>
<th>Post-then-RPT Design</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response shift bias</td>
<td>More susceptible to response shift bias</td>
<td>Less susceptible to response shift bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation biases</td>
<td>Less susceptible to motivation biases</td>
<td>More susceptible to motivation biases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimation of initiative</td>
<td>Tends to underestimate effects</td>
<td>Tends to overestimate effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available resources</td>
<td>More resource intensive</td>
<td>Less resource intensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodological preference</td>
<td>May be seen as more familiar/credible</td>
<td>May be seen as less familiar/credible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive ability</td>
<td>Requires less cognitive ability</td>
<td>Requires greater cognitive ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory recall</td>
<td>Can better accommodate longer initiatives</td>
<td>Works well with brief initiatives (e.g., one-day events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attrition</td>
<td>Missing post-data</td>
<td>Missing “dropout” data</td>
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<td>Absolute change (e.g., frequency, range)</td>
<td>Change in perception (e.g., emotion, opinion, knowledge)</td>
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**Limitations of literature:**
- Some studies lack comparison data (e.g., standardized test scores, third-party observations)
- More research needed in some areas (e.g., comparing variations of RPTs)
References


Questions?

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