Duke UNIVERSITY

INITIATIVE ON SURVEY METHODOLOGY
AT THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

A Future for Video Interviewing?

D. Sunshine Hillygus
Professor of Political Science and Public Policy
Duke University

Evaluating “Innovation”

- Risks of innovating for innovations sake
- Motivations for innovations
  - Cost savings, improved data quality, measurement improvements
- How should we evaluate these innovations? What are metrics for success?

Innovating Surveys with Video Interviews

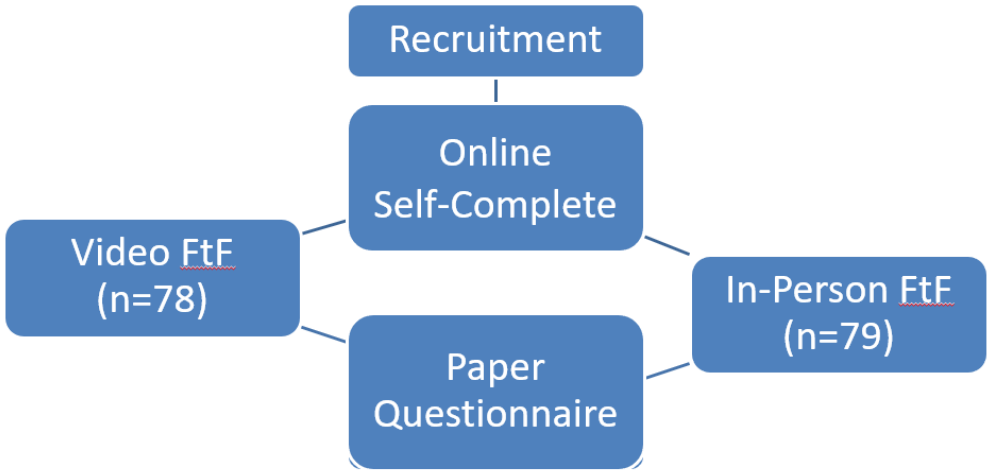
- In-person, Face-to-Face (FtF) interviews gold standard, but increasing costs
  - Well-tested probability-based sampling strategies
  - Self-administered surveys have more inattention and satisificing
- Increasing comfort/access to video technology
- Time series studies (e.g. ACS, ANES, GSS) moving online, but concerned about mode effects

Key Questions

- How does video mode compare to FtF and online mode in terms of data quality?
- What are the logistical/operational barriers to video interviewing?
- What are best practices for design and recruitment for video interviewing?

Evaluating Comparability

Endres, Hillygus, DeBell, and Iyengar. 2023. "A Randomized Experiment Evaluating Survey Mode Effects for Video Interviewing" *Political Science Research and Methods*.

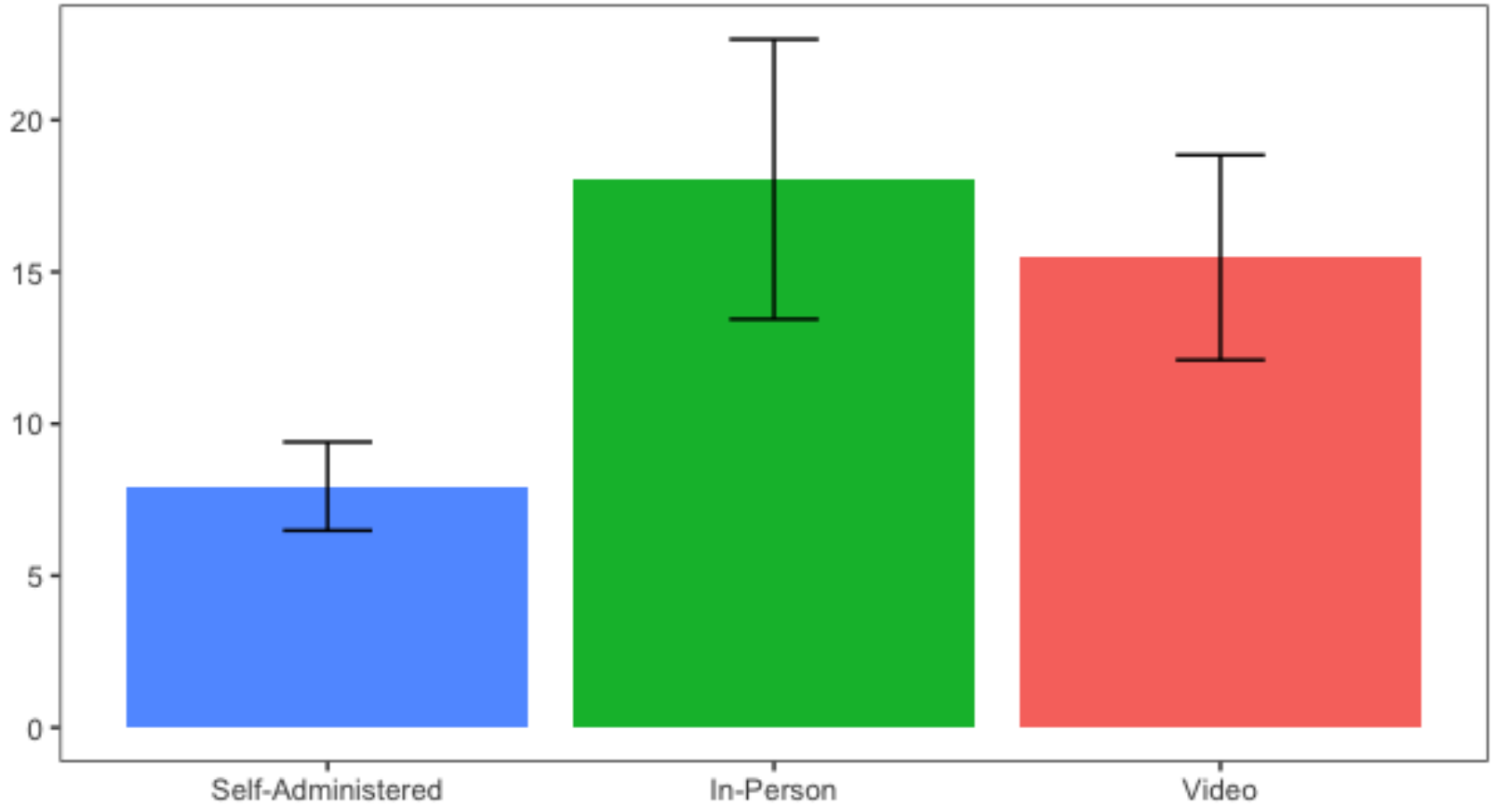


- Randomization of video vs. FtF after recruitment
- Identical questionnaires
- Lab experiment so no technology confounders
- Within-subject comparison to online

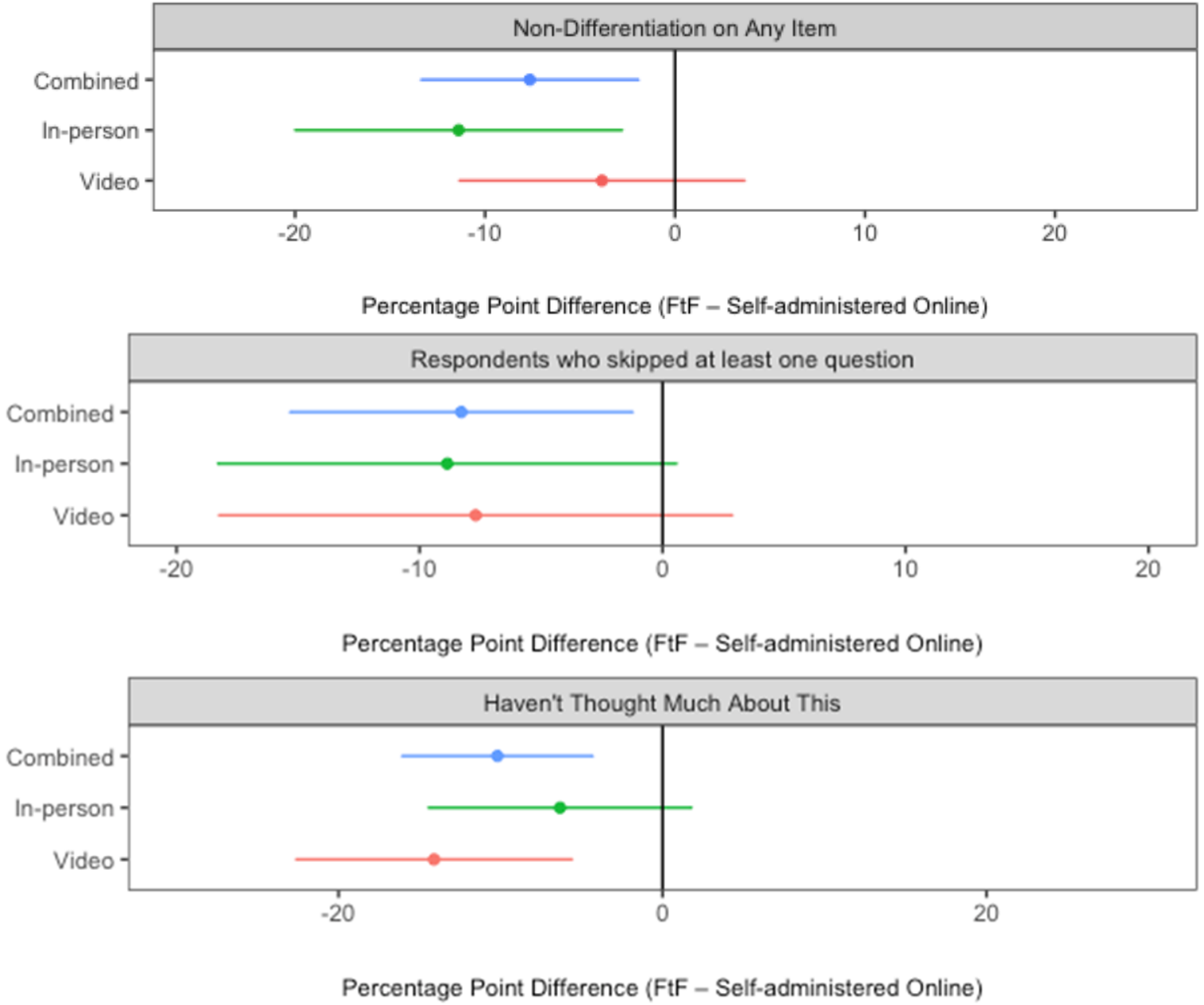
Findings Summary: Video and FtF share pros and cons

- Similar data quality advantages compared to online mode
- Increased social desirability bias compared to online mode

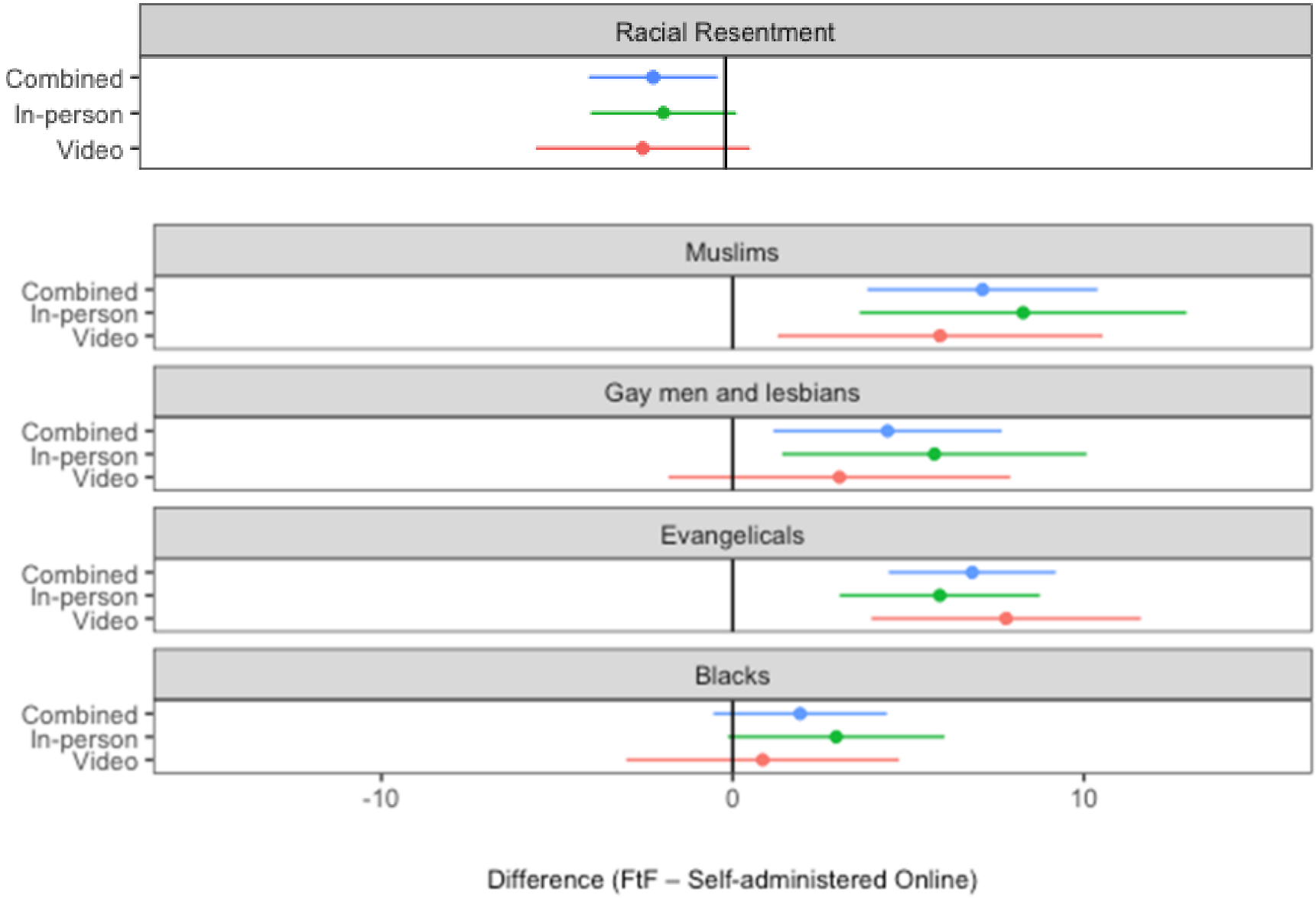
Data Quality: Length of Response



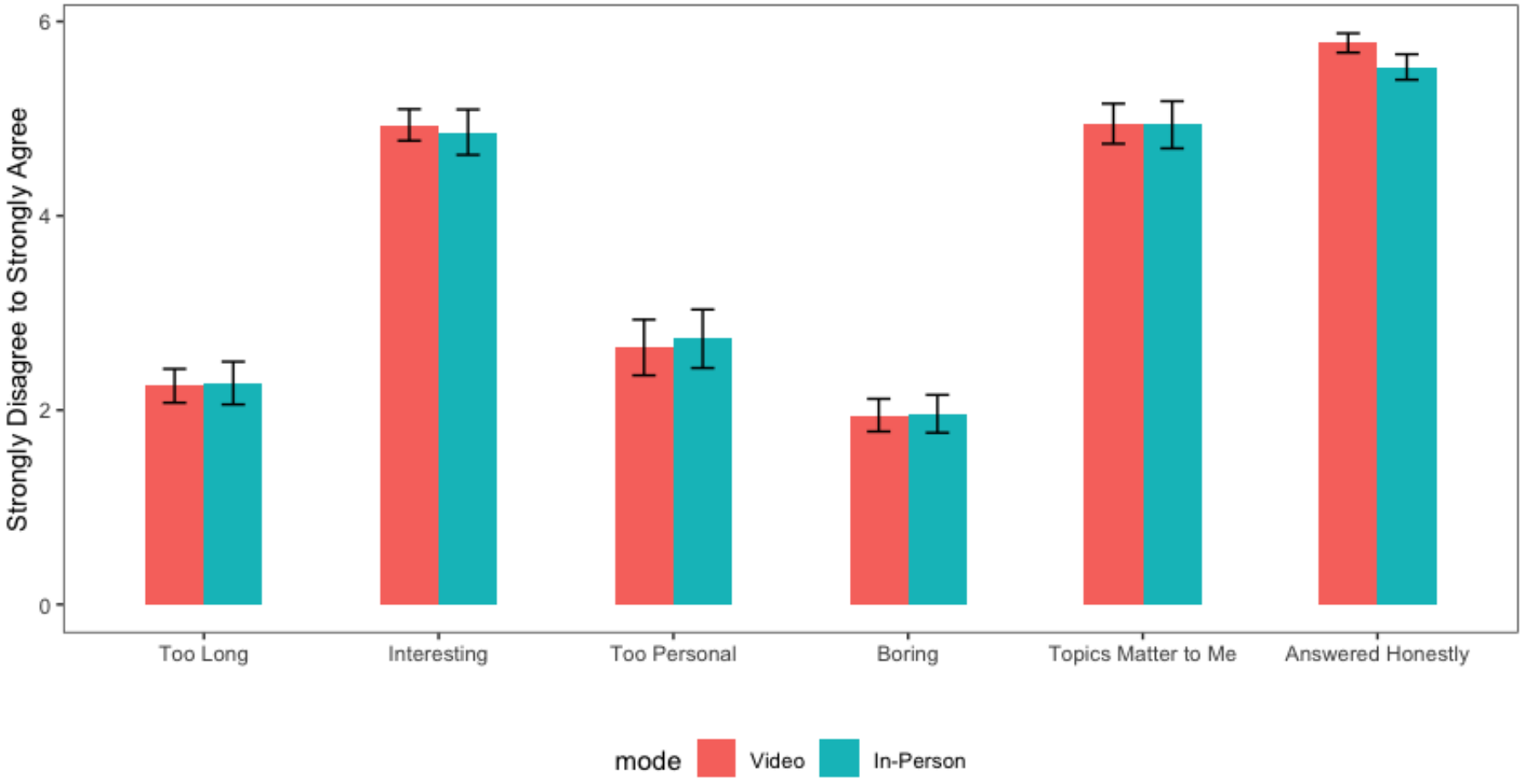
Data Quality: Straightlining, Item Nonresponse



Response Bias: Social Desirability



Similar Participant Satisfaction



Evaluating Video Interviews in the Field (2020 ANES and 2023 ANES pilot)

2020 ANES Experiment

- Pandemic prevented in-person interviews
- Experiment: mail invitation, web screener, randomized mode for pre-election survey
  - Rs don't know mode offered until after screener
  - Refusals offered alternative mode
- Recruitment
  - Identical materials through screener
  - Inbound video interviews—appointments, virtual waiting room, live help desk

Offering Video Lowered Response Rate

	Pre-Election		Post Re-Int.	
	N	RR1 (%)	N	(%)
Fresh Cross-Section	5,441	37	4,783	88
Web-only	2,283	38	2,012	88
Mixed Web	2,407	40	2,136	89
Mixed Video	751	28	635	85

Notes. Response rates are based on AAPOR Response Rate 1. Re-interview rates are the percentage of respondents from the pre-election that completed the post-election study.

Contribution of each mode to mixed video condition

	Pre-Election Contribution		Post-Election Re-Interview	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Web	328	43.7	307	93.6
Phone	64	8.5	54	84.4
Video	359	47.8	274	76.3
Total	751	100.0	635	100.0

2020 Video - Types of Issues

Summary of technical and non-technical problems (pre-election results)

	N	%
No problems	124	42.0%
Technical problems only	78	26.4%
Non-technical problems only	41	13.9%
Both technical and non-technical problems	52	17.6%

Notes. N=296. Interviewer observation forms were completed for 83.4% of the completed pre-election video interviews. Table shows results for completed observations only.

2020 Video Magnitude of Issues

Interviewer observations, specific issues (pre-election results)

	None	A little	A lot	Total
Technical Issues				
Audio use (e.g., feedback)	78.8%	18.1%	3.1%	100.0%
Video use (e.g., freezing)	82.3%	13.0%	4.8%	100.0%
Internet connectivity	87.1%	11.5%	1.4%	100.0%
Installing Zoom or getting Zoom working	86.8%	10.8%	2.4%	100.0%
Non-technical Issues				
Concerns about self-view	93.9%	4.4%	1.7%	100.0%
Confidentiality - interview or software	96.6%	3.4%	0.0%	100.0%

Notes. N=296. Interviewer observation forms were completed for 83.4% of the completed pre-election video interviews. Table shows results for completed observations only.

Further Video Challenges

16% of Mixed Video completed web screener but not pre-election survey

- <3% in other groups

Special team contacted all video Rs stuck on the screener:

- Could offer alternate videoconference technology
- Could increase incentive to $200

Result (N=49 completed calls):

- No interest or uptake on alternate video apps
- No on-the-spot conversions - even with $200 offers

2020 Differential Participation

Characteristic	ACS 2020 benchmarks Percent	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted) Percent	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280) Percent	ANES 2020 Video (n=359) Percent
Education				
Less than HS cred.	9.8	9.0	4.6	2.2
HS credential	27.8	22.0	16.4	13.8
Some college/AA degree	31.9	33.1	34.2	28.9
Bachelor's degree	19.3	22.6	25.2	29.2
Graduate degree	11.2	13.3	19.5	25.8

Notes. This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

2020 Party ID

Characteristic	ACS 2020 benchmarks	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280)	ANES 2020 Video (n=359)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Party ID 3-point				
Democrat	--	45.7	46.5	59.9
Independent	--	10.3	11.7	3.1
Republican	--	44.0	41.7	37.0

Notes. This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

2023 Video Methods Pilot – Design and Results

2023 Video Design - Interviewing

- 6,000 households, based on available interviewers
- Mailed invitation, FTF interview (~75 Qs); at the end, set video appointment, offer to test video connection
- Wait 4+ weeks
- Video appointment reminders by text, email, calls
- Video (~65 Qs); at end, mini-CASI rating experience

- Goal = 160 FTF. 80-128 Video completes

2023 Returns

N	What
1,365	FTF Contact Attempts
151	Completed FTF IWs
92	Agreed to Complete Video IW
47 (31%*)	Completed Video IWs
28	Missed video appointments

* Video contributed 13-14% response rate to 2020 Mixed Video group; this 2023 re-interview group is higher

2023 Non-Participation

Main reason from 61 Video Non-Respondents

Percent	What
44%	Technology phobic • Doesn't like/distrusts/not skilled at Internet/technology/videoconferencing • Five mentioned AI
8%	Doesn't like to be on camera
6%	Inadequate Internet/Device

Other reasons: too busy (21%), anti-survey (6%), privacy (6%)

State of Video Interviewing

- Video technology largely equivalent to FtF as mode
- However, motivation and ability to use video interviews varies significantly across population
  - Suggests best used in a mixed mode design, perhaps selectively offered
- Research opportunities
  - Need to model propensity to respond
  - Increasing cooperation among the able
  - UX research to optimize respondent experience

Future Directions

- General:
  - Fund research to establish standards and best practices for evaluating new sources of data
  - Fund methodological research on diagnosing and accounting for data quality issues
  - Continue to support high-quality benchmark data collections necessary to evaluate and correct new data sources
- Convene experts/stakeholders for developing and promoting standards and best practices for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data.

THANK YOU!

R-Initiated Contacts

Specific concern about video	Contacts
User Comfort	
Uncomfortable with Video/Zoom	24
Bait and switch/Late reveal of video	7
Doesn't want to install software	7
Uses video software other than Zoom	1
Technical Issues	
Technical issue (installation, etc.)	18
Inadequate device	12
No camera	7
Inadequate Internet	5
Device battery ran out of energy	1
Privacy Issues	
Security concerns about Zoom/video	3
Does not want to show face/image	2
Interrupted interview	7

Notes. Some contacts involved multiple issues. Counts are of contacts rather than Rs. Not all contacts resulted in completed interviews.