

1.5 The methodological evolution of the Swiss Multi-Media Survey (MMS)

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE SURVEY?

In Switzerland syndicated Readership surveys have been carried out nationally since 1965 by AG für Werbemittelforschung (WEMF) - Media Research Institute - which is based on a group of four associations interested in media research, viz:

- BSR Association of Advertising Agencies.
- SZV Association of Swiss publishing houses (news-papers and magazines).
- SIV Association of Swiss Advertisers.
- VSW Association of Swiss Space Brokers.

TECHNICAL REMARKS ON SAMPLING

The Swiss Multimedia Study (MMS) is subdivided into three Surveys, one for each of the three national languages: German, French and Italian speaking Switzerland.

Sample size and population

Area	Sample size	Population	$\frac{N}{n}$
Swiss Romande (French)	1968	1,012,000	514.2
Deutschschweiz (German)	5806	3,220,000	554.6
Ticino (Italian)	653	201,000	307.8
Total Switzerland	8427	4,433,000	526

Sample points

The sample points are selected proportional to size of communities; each sample point representing five household addresses. We therefore start with some 2240 sample points which are defined in the selected communities. They are chosen randomly from telephone directories and represent the start for a random route collection of five addresses which are to be visited by the fieldstaff later on. The address of the sample point may not be used for interviewing purposes.

Scouting in a random route

A few months ahead of the start of fieldwork specially trained interviewers ('scouts') visit the selected sample points and collect five target addresses in the following

way.

The scouting interviewer first looks for the letterbox representing the sample point. If looking from left to right or from top to bottom the following address is the first collected target address. In the same way, the scout has to count to five; the next fifth letterbox bears the second target address and so on up to five clustered household addresses.

Exceptions: if the target address is a collective household (hospital, commercial enterprise, asylum, etc) the letterboxes are jumped until the next private address.

Direction of route: the scout has to proceed in the direction of increasing house numbers but on the same side of the road.

Definition of interviewee in selected household

Only one person (whose anniversary happens to be first in the year) of the household contacted will be interviewed, as we feel, that a second interview cannot be undertaken independently of the first one. Therefore the household sample has to be transformed into a personal sample by weighting proportional to size of the respective household and inversely proportional to the mean size of the households of the area:

$$w_j = \frac{x_j \sum h_i}{\sum x_i h_i} = \frac{x_j}{x_j}$$

- x_j = size of household
- $\sum h_i$ = sum of all households in the j -th stratum
- $\sum x_i h_i$ = sum of all persons in the j -th stratum.

Definition of the population

The universe covered by our survey consists of people of 15-74 years able to communicate in the language of the area.

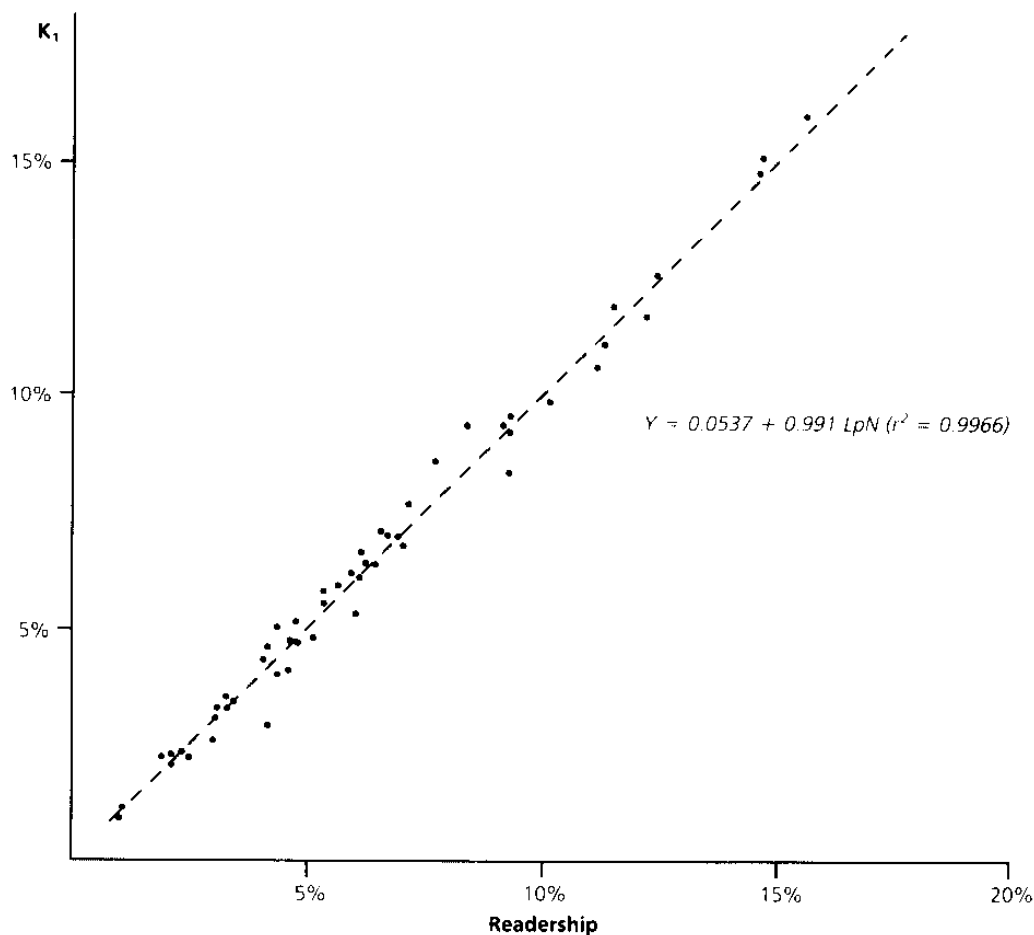
MEASURING CONTACT BETWEEN PRESS-MEDIA AND RECIPIENTS

Average issue readership

From 1968-1972 in Switzerland a reader was defined whenever he looked at any copy of the periodical in question during a period back from the day of the interview equal to the interval at which the title appears. Thus for each daily paper the survey attempted to establish whether or not the person interviewed looked at a copy

1.5 The methodological evolution of the Swiss Multi-Media Survey (MMS)

FIGURE 1
Correlation between readership and probability of contact (K_1)



of it 'yesterday', the day before the interview (no interviews are made on Sundays).

For each weekly magazine, the survey tried to find out whether or not the interviewee had looked at a copy of the title during the past four weeks, etc.

Reading frequency

This interviewing technique was used between 1968 and 1972. When the media world discovered the second dimension of media planning and started evaluating media plans by computer it became necessary to attribute to each respondent and for each title a probability of reading.

We therefore added to the previous questions a reading frequency question the answers to which are directly transformed into reading probabilities as per the

following table for dailies:

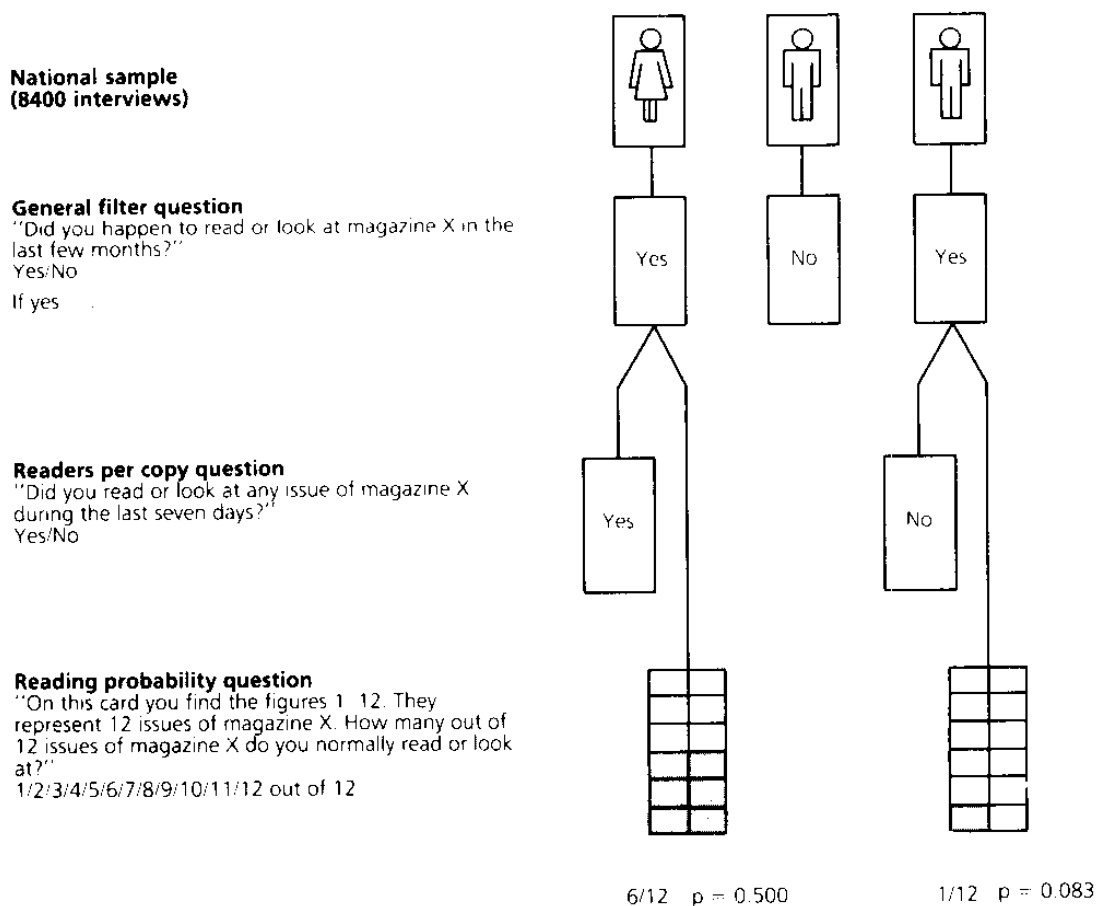
<i>reading frequency</i>	<i>reading probability</i>
less than one issue	0.04
one issue out of six	0.17
two issues out of six	0.33
three issues out of six	0.50
four issues out of six	0.67
five issues out of six	0.83
six issues out of six	0.99

For weeklies as well as monthlies we use in a similar way a 12 point scale.

The informant looks at a masthead card on which is also printed a reading frequency scale and is asked to say

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FIGURE 2 The calculation of reading probabilities for a weekly in Switzerland



how many out of six issues (or, as appropriate, 12) he normally reads or looks through at home or somewhere else.

Calculating individual reading probabilities

In contrast to the German model for example we do not calculate the proportion of readers within the last period out of the widest reading circle as the average contact probability but ascertain for each individual the probability from his statement of normal reading behaviour. The reason for doing it this way is based on the observation that the proportion of readers within the period highly correlates with the mean reading probability and this not only for the whole but also within subgroups by sex and age.

The correlation between readership per issue and the average reading probability (K_1) is clearly

demonstrated in **Figure 1**.

Quality of mastheads

The mastheads consisted originally of black and white cards. Since 1975 colour photographic reproductions of the masthead of each periodical covered by the survey have been used. We found out experimentally that certain colour magazines were better recognised by the respondents with coloured mastheads.

Sequence of presentation

After questions on TV viewing and cinema going we first start with dailies, followed by weeklies, fortnightlies and monthlies.

In order to neutralise any influence due to the sequence the whole set of cards is shuffled by the interviewer for each respondent.

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SUMMARY

As shown above the Swiss multi-media Survey started with the press media some 15 years ago. In the early seventies questions on TV and cinema have also been integrated into the same survey. They are an important

part of our research besides the press media, but their problems could not be shown in this paper.

Figure 2 gives a quick look over our survey and how it is built up, starting with the General Filter Question and ending with the Reading Probability Question (K_1) as the main data source being published.