



Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research

Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research (SPAR)

Process and Methodology Statements

Artist and Public Surveys

Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research

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Process and Methodology

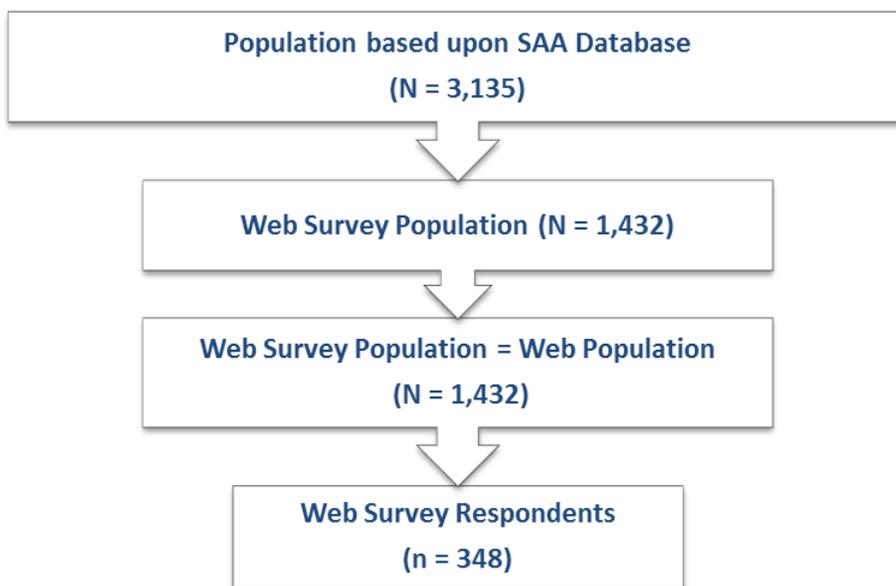
Artist Survey:

SPAR conducted the online survey of artists from April 23 through May 14, 2014 using the Class Climate software provided by the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina. The Saskatchewan Arts Alliance (SAA) provided a database of 3,135 individuals who were identified as artists (see the “Population based on SAA Database” in Chart 1, below). The database was aggregated by the SAA using its Artist Registry, online resources, as well as input from its member organizations. From this population based on the SAA database, 1,343 individuals had active email addresses. All members of this subset were contacted via their email addresses and they were provided with individual passwords and a URL that led to the survey location on the University of Regina website. Of these, 309 individuals responded to the survey questionnaire with a participation rate of 23% and missing values below the 10th percentile. A lottery incentive in the form of an iPod mini was offered to the participants.

A follow up survey was conducted from May 16 through May 25, 2014. This subset was comprised of 89 individuals who expressed their interest in responding to the survey directly to SPAR or by registering for the Artist Registry on the SAA website after the initial launch on April 23rd. Of these, 39 individuals responded to the survey questionnaire with a participation rate of nearly 44% and missing values below the 10th percentile.

The total web survey population was 1,432. The total number of respondents was 348 individuals¹ (the “Web Survey Respondents”). The overall response rate was just above 24%. Given a Response Distribution of 50% the Margin of Error would be +/-5% to the 95% Confidence Level.

Chart 1: Web Survey Respondents



Given the numbers above it is worth noting that the subpopulation of this web survey may not represent the general population of artists. We need to assume that coverage error and nonresponse error may be present and

¹ Random sampling is a probability statistical method that gives a certain population an equal and independent chance of being selected. For a better understanding of related social research methodologies, please see: Neuman, W.L. Neuman & K. Robson (2012), *Basics of Social research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 2nd Canadian ed. (Don Mills, Ontario: Pearson Education, p. 137.

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data bias is always a possibility. In fact, even simple random sampling with equal selection probability is not immune to sampling error since only a subgroup of the population is selected. A verifiable data registry that accounts for a complete listing of the population of artists in Saskatchewan does not exist, and is likely not possible. So far, the SAA data is the best and maybe the only reliable source for such data.

As a result, making general assumptions and drawing inference or projecting to the wider population of artists is not possible. Consequently, the results of the statistical analysis undertaken with our survey results should be treated as an effort to make comparative sense of the experiences and perspectives of individuals drawn from our web survey population with respect to their own position in and understanding of the arts ecology of Saskatchewan. This is a first quantitative step in a broader research project that is now moving into a qualitative phase of consultations that will extend beyond the web survey respondents to further test and extend our understanding of the role of the arts and creativity in the social, cultural and economic fabric of the province.

The challenges of identifying and accessing verifiable artist populations and others connected with arts and cultural ecologies have too often functioned as an obstacle and impediment to studies of artists (eg. how they work, what networks they form and how these networks foster and support the realization of their creative work), and this is especially true of subgroups such as Indigenous artists. However, SPAR's partners and research team regard such research as essential to strong evidence-based policy and programs and to a better understanding of how the arts ecology is working that will benefit artists and other members of the community as well as policy makers. By making a start with such a study and analyzing these results in the context of other data derived from current and future studies, over time we should be able to derive a much clearer understanding of the provincial arts ecology than we currently have.

Public Survey:

SPAR conducted an online survey open to any Saskatchewan residents over the age of 18 from April 23 through May 14, 2014. The Department of Kinesiology and the University of Regina provided the project with access to Class Climate software in order to administer the survey. It was launched with media support from the project partners' communications teams as well as print and broadcast media coverage. A total of 131 individuals responded to the survey questionnaire. The Margin of Error was +/-8.53% to the 95% Confidence Level.

A lottery incentive in the form of an iPod mini was offered to the participants.

Public Survey data should be used with an understanding that the demographics of respondents do not conform to those of the provincial population as a whole. As will be clear from the following overview, the subject matter, the orientation of the partner organizations promoting the survey as well as the need for respondents to take the initiative to access the survey yielded a respondent group the majority of whom identified themselves as closely connected with the provincial arts ecology. Accordingly, this sample is one of convenience². The data from this survey is therefore useful in providing insights into the demographics of those members of the public who may be most closely integrated into the provincial arts ecology--as well as the way they are connected to artists and their perspectives on the arts.

² Convenience sampling is a non-probability statistical method to draw representative data from an easy to access source such as volunteers. This method might not be representative of the population and the chance of bias representation can occur. For a better understanding of related social research methodologies, please see: Neuman and Robson (2012), p. 130.