

SECOND-HAND SMOKE
SURVEY

PRELIMINARY REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Marquette County Health Department, Dr. Steven Nelson and the students of PS 201 Research Methods in Public Administration developed and implemented a survey to determine the level of support for regulations restricting smoking in public places. Questions about the survey, or its results should be directed to Dr. Steven Nelson (227-2182).

METHODOLOGY

Dr. Nelson and the students of PS 201 met with a representative of the Marquette County Health Department, in September to discuss the research design. The parties agreed that a survey should be conducted and that the questions should be similar to those on the model survey presented. Using these questions would allow for comparisons across populations.

Based on concerns about response rates and time constraints, the researchers decided to employ a telephone survey design. The population was defined as the adult population of Marquette County. The sampling frame consisted of the most recent Marquette County Directory published by SBC-Ameritech. Statistical tables were consulted to arrive at an appropriate sample size. It was determined that a random sample of approximately 400 respondents would result in the measurement of opinions with a four (4) point margin of error. A systematic random sample of 600 potential respondents was drawn.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY

Students were trained in effective interviewing techniques. Training included rehearsals of telephone calls, instructions on telephone courtesy and the preparation and study of the survey script. Four hundred and four (404) interviews were completed during the two week period starting October 23rd. Each interview lasted between five and ten minutes. Responses were recorded on forms provided to the students (see attachment 1). Each potential respondent was called at least three times before their number was discarded and replaced with another number.

RESULTS

The following materials present some question responses and highlight some interesting correlations.

Regulation of Smoking

Respondents were asked to give their opinions on the government's duty to protect against exposure to second-hand smoke. In question nine, respondents were asked whether the government should protect public health, including the restriction of smoking.

Table 1

Government Should Protect

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	184	45.5	66.7	66.7
	Disagree	92	22.8	33.3	100.0
	Total	276	68.3	100.0	
Missing	System	128	31.7		
Total		404	100.0		

You will note that two-thirds of the respondents agreed with the statement that the government should protect health, including the restriction of smoking.¹

Respondents were also asked whether they believed that a regulation was needed to protect children, clients and visitors in public places and work sites.

Table 2

Reg to Protect

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	304	75.2	77.4	77.4
	Disagree	89	22.0	22.6	100.0
	Total	393	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	11	2.7		
Total		404	100.0		

You will note that the level of agreement with this statement increases to 77.4%. This increase is most likely the result of adding the work site to the question.

¹ You will also note that this question was answered by only 276 respondents. This is primarily due to a survey formatting error which resulted in this question being presented only to those individuals that indicated that they were employed outside of the home.

Finally, the respondents were asked whether a regulation was needed that prohibited smoking in public places.

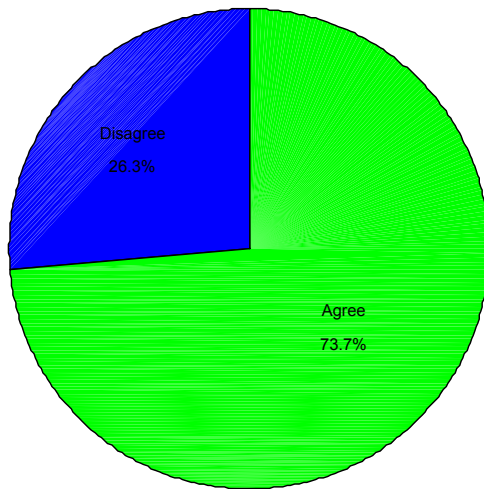
Table 3

Regulation for Public Places

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	286	70.8	73.7	73.7
	Disagree	102	25.2	26.3	100.0
	Total	388	96.0	100.0	
Missing	System	16	4.0		
Total		404	100.0		

As one can see, approximately three-fourths of the respondents believe a prohibition on smoking in public places is needed.

Graph 1 A county regulation that would prohibit smoking in public places is needed so that the public is not exposed to second hand smoke.



Some other interesting findings included:

- 78.6% of respondents indicated that they were concerned about the health effects of second-hand smoke on themselves or their family.
- Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents indicated that they had seen or heard advertisements about second-hand smoke and 74% of these people said that these advertisements had increased their awareness of the dangers of second-hand smoke
- 78% of respondents indicated that they were somewhat aware of the fact that the Marquette County Board of Commissioners was considering a regulation that would prohibit smoking in public places.

- 22.1 % of respondents indicated that they were currently smokers. These are the individuals that indicated that they smoked either “every day” or “most days.” This compares to the 45.5% of respondents that indicated that they had once been a regular smoker of cigarettes, cigars or a pipe.

Some Correlations

The survey results allow us to determine whether there are differences of opinions based on their gender, political party affiliation and whether they are a smoker or not. The first question that we addressed was whether registered voters had different opinions than non-registered respondents.

Table 4

Regulation for Public Places * Registered Voter Crosstabulation

			Registered Voter		Total
			Yes	No	
Regulation for Public Places	Agree	Count	222	64	286
		% within Registered Voter	74.2%	71.9%	73.7%
	Disagree	Count	77	25	102
		% within Registered Voter	25.8%	28.1%	26.3%
Total	Count	299	89	388	
	% within Registered Voter	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

All of the following correlations are between the independent variable, in this case whether or not the respondent was a registered voter and question 12: Do you agree or disagree with the need for a county regulation prohibiting smoking in public places. As one can see in table 5, there is not a significant difference between registered and non-registered respondents.

We also tested for differences of opinion based on political party affiliation:

Table 5

Regulation for Public Places * Party Identification Crosstabulation

			Party Identification					Total
			Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other	5	
Regulation for Public Places	Agree	Count	111	50	72	24	28	
		% within Party Identification	81.6%	64.9%	76.6%	58.5%	73.7%	73
	Disagree	Count	25	27	22	17	10	
		% within Party Identification	18.4%	35.1%	23.4%	41.5%	26.3%	26
Total	Count	136	77	94	41	38		
	% within Party Identification	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100	

We did find statistically significant differences of opinions across party identifications.² While Democrats had the highest level of support for a regulation, the Other category had the lowest level of support. This could indicate that these respondents had Libertarian tendencies. One should also note that all categories had a majority of respondents agreeing with the need for a prohibitive regulation.

We also thought it would be interesting to test for differences across males/females and smokers/non-smokers. In regards to males and females, no statistically significant differences of opinions were found. In regards to smokers and non-smokers the following results were obtained:

Table 6

Regulation for Public Places * Current Smoker Crosstabulation

			Current Smoker		Total
			Regular Smoker	Non-Smoker	
Regulation for Public Places	Agree	Count	33	251	284
		% within Current Smoker	37.1%	84.5%	73.6%
	Disagree	Count	56	46	102
		% within Current Smoker	62.9%	15.5%	26.4%
Total	Count	89	297	386	
	% within Current Smoker	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

One should note that a majority of the people that oppose the public smoking ban are in fact smokers. What may be even more surprising is that almost 40% of smokers support such a ban. Recognizing the fact that only 22% of the respondents indicated that they smoke, it is safe to say that the vast majority of Marquette citizens support a regulation that prohibits smoking in public places.

² Please note that we used an alpha of .05, which indicates that there is a less than 5% chance that these differences are the product of chance or randomness. The 5 category for this specific question indicates that the respondent refused to answer.