Miami-Dade Public Library Telephone Survey

Top-Line Summary of Findings
For Internal Review Only

December 18, 2013

SURVEY RESEARCH

- Study was developed to determine public library awareness, service utilization, Internet usage, public attitudes toward the library system and potential response to property tax increases among persons who use the public library system (or who have members of their household who use the library) and those who do not.

- Telephone survey conducted with 601 heads of household over 21, in English, Spanish and Creole (according to language preferences of respondent), balanced across all Commission districts to ensure full-county representation.

- Households were interviewed at random in three sample groups (householders under 55 with children, householders under 55 without children, households over 55), without reference to library use.

- Surveys were ethnicity balanced across the County: 64% Hispanic, 15% non-Hispanic white, 17% non-Hispanic Black / Haitian, 4% other/refused.

- Statistical margin of error for 600 cases is +4% at the 95% confidence level.

LIBRARY USERS AND NON-USERS

- 37% of sample are "adult visitor households", i.e. households in which one or more adults (but no children) visited a local library at least once within past year.
  - 20% white non-Hispanic, 22% Black, non-Hispanic, 53% Hispanic
  - 51% are familiar or extremely familiar with MDPLS

- 24% of sample are "children visitor households", i.e. households in which one or more children visited a local library at least once within past year.
  - 24% white non-Hispanic, 20% Black, non-Hispanic, 52% Hispanic
  - Only 39% chose to have survey administered in Spanish, 75% of the Hispanics in the group
  - Disproportionately younger: 79% under 50 (vs. 32% for adult visitor households)
  - 55% with BA or above education
  - 52% are familiar or extremely familiar with MDPLS

- 39% of sample are "non-visitor households", i.e. households in which nobody – adult or child – visited a local library within past year.
  - 14% white non-Hispanic, 17% Black, non-Hispanic, 68% Hispanic
  - 63% chose to have survey administered in Spanish, 93% of the Hispanics in the group
  - 53% have less than AA degree
  - Highest % under $35K income (38%), lowest % over $100 K (13%)

WHY DO ADULTS AND CHILDREN USE LIBRARIES?

- Most frequent uses: borrow books, DVDs, other hard-copy materials
  - 82% among adult-only, 94% among HH with children library users
- Second rank: quiet place to read, study or play
  - 62% adult-only, 67% among HH with children library users
- Third: use library's on-line databases to do research
  - 47% adult-only, 54% among HH with children library users.
- Use of library computers and Internet do not dominate
  - 40% use library computers and printers
  - 40% use Internet (42% among children user HH)
- Satisfaction levels are high
  - 70% "very satisfied" with services at local public library
  - 24% - 26% "satisfied" with services.

USE OF INTERNET

- 76% use the Internet
  - 90% among HH with children library users, 78% among adult-only user HH, 66% among non-user HH

- 92% - 97% access the Internet at home
  - 45% of HH with children users access Internet at work (may be correlated with age), vs. 35% among adult-only user HH, 38% among non-user HH
  - 17% of HH with children users access Internet at Barnes and Noble, Starbucks, vs. 9% among adults-only HH, 11% among non-user HH

- 38% - 45% of library-visiting HH using Internet have used library website
  - 45% among HH with children users, 38% among adult-only users
  - Note 7% of non-users report using library website
  - Predominant use: check on availability of books, place hold on books, renew books, check library hours.
  - Secondary uses: Do research, download e-books, download music or audio-books, search for event or program.

ATTITUDES TOWARD LIBRARY

- Public libraries are outmoded, obsolete, not necessary as public service
  - 90% - 94% of users disagree, vs. 69% of non-users

- MD Public Libraries provide important service to persons without computers or Internet access at home
  - Strong overall agreement (92% - 99%, regardless of user group)

- Public libraries add to my quality of life as a Miami-Dade citizen
  - 95% - 96% of users strongly agree or agree, as well as 72% among non-users

- Seen or heard anything about funding for public library operation or expansion?
  - 42% - 44% awareness among users, 22% awareness among non-users. Over half recall "something about closing some libraries." Users are likely to cite "cutting funding" and "cutbacks" in recalled issues; non-users are not.

- Support for property tax increase is inconsistent
  - Overall, 44% choose to raise property taxes. Support is strongest among non-Hispanic whites (63%), weakest among Hispanics; Support is strongest among HH with children as users (60%), weakest among non-users (30%)
  - 37% choose to reduce library hours, close branches and cut services. Support for cutting libraries is strongest among non-user households (50%) and Hispanics as a group (43%)
  - "Undecided" represent about 20% of respondents. Highest undecided are Black non-Hispanic (24%: note that only 75% are homeowners), lowest undecided are HH with children as library users (13%) and white non-Hispanics (13%), both groups with over 90% homeowners

COMPARISON WITH PEW STUDY

Responses to several questions in the Miami-Dade survey were similar to the 2013 Pew Research Center national study, "Library services in the Digital Age." Comparable (or semi-comparable) data for the Miami-Dade and Pew studies are provided in a separate handout: a few comparisons are referenced below.

- 60% of Miami-Dade households had at least one person who had been to a library in the past year (only slightly higher than 53% nationally)

- Miami-Dade library users visit their local public library more frequently than the national average, with 26% visiting once a week or more (vs. 15% nationally).

- Miami-Dade library users are more likely to use the library as a place to sit, read or study (64% of users, vs. 49% nationwide)

- About 24% of the Miami-Dade households had someone use their library's computers, printers and no-cost Internet, comparable to the 26% reported by the Pew study for persons 16+ years of age.

- Printed books are central to the library experience of library users in Miami-Dade, in a manner very similar to the data reported in the Pew study.

  - 87% of Miami-Dade library users went to the library to borrow books, DVDs and other hard-copy materials. Similarly, 73% of the Pew national sample library users went to borrow books, and 40% went to borrow a DVD or videotape.

  - Of the persons who used the Miami-Dade library website, 88% used it to look up a book to see if it was available at a local branch (cf. 82% for the Pew sample).