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## **INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT, EVALUATION AND TESTING METHODS IN ESTABLISHMENT SURVEYS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Data collected by surveys of businesses, institutions and establishments are used to monitor and measure the economy, supporting the estimation of critical economic indicators such as gross domestic product. Yet questionnaire development, evaluation and testing methods are not as well developed, nor as routinely applied, as they are in social surveys of households and individuals. In order to address the challenges for improved adoption of questionnaire development, testing and evaluation methodologies in establishment surveys, we need to begin by assessing their current level of utilization.

In this paper, we summarize data collected from early 60 survey organizations worldwide to support qualitative assessment of establishment survey pretesting practices by Willimack, et al. (2002). We update and expand upon a 1990 study of 21 international statistical agencies by Christianson and Tortora (1995), whose attention to establishment survey questionnaire design was limited to queries about cognitive experts' involvement in questionnaire development and respondent participation in pretesting. In addition, our data address the following topics:

- aspects of questionnaire design and response error subjected to formal or informal investigation;
- methods used for conducting these studies;
- specialized research, such as formal studies of business record-keeping practices, respondent burden reduction or harmonization;
- types of personnel involved in questionnaire development, testing and evaluation activities;
- the existence of policies, standards or guidelines on questionnaire design, development, testing and evaluation.

These data provide a sketch of the current status of the adoption of questionnaire development and testing methods for establishment surveys internationally. Putting our empirical results together with the qualitative findings from Willimack et al., we will suggest a program of methodological research and strategies for improving the adoption of questionnaire development and testing methods for establishment surveys.

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