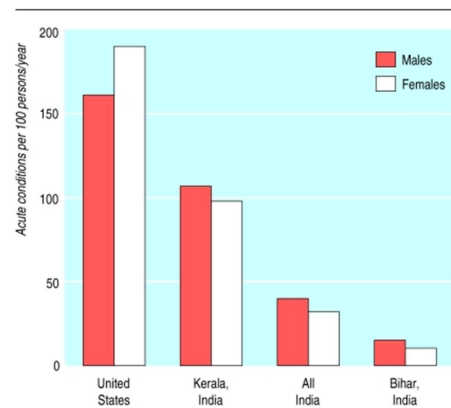# Anchoring Vignettes

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The <u>anchoring vignette method</u> was originally developed by Gary King and his colleagues at Harvard to "anchor" the meaning that survey respondents attribute to the different choices within survey response scales.
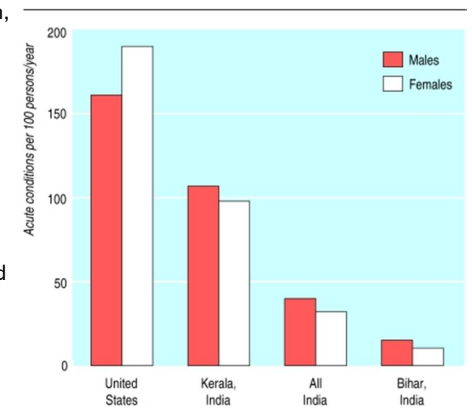

"The state of Kerala has the highest levels of literacy (nearly universal for the young) and longevity (a life expectancy of about 74 years) in India. But it also has, by a very wide margin, the highest rate of reported morbidity among all Indian states (this applies to age specific as well as total comparisons). At the other extreme, states with low longevity, with woeful medical and educational facilities, such as Bihar, have the lowest rates of reported morbidity in India. Indeed, the lowness of reported morbidity runs almost fully in the opposite direction to life expectancy, in interstate comparisons" (Sen, 2002).
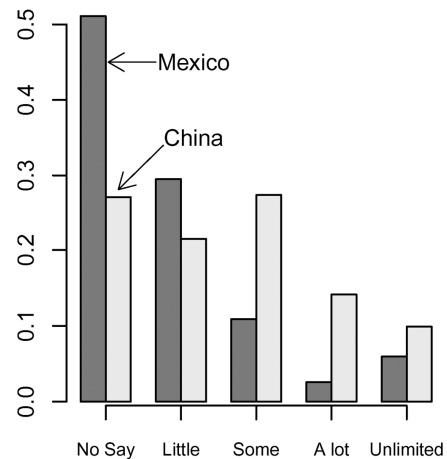
"Political Efficacy"

"Political Efficacy"

How much say do you have in getting the government to address issues that interest you?

No say at all
Little say
Some say
A lot of say
Unlimited say

How much say do you have in getting the government to address issues that interest you?

King, Murray, Salomon & Tandon (2004)

If the question, "How much say do you have in getting the government to address issues that interest you?", does not provide reliable results across countries, how can the results be improved upon?

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•Ask more concrete question(s)...
e.g. "In order to get the government to address issues that interest me, I support candidates who I know advocate for my sides of those same issues." (Strongly disagree to Strongly agree)

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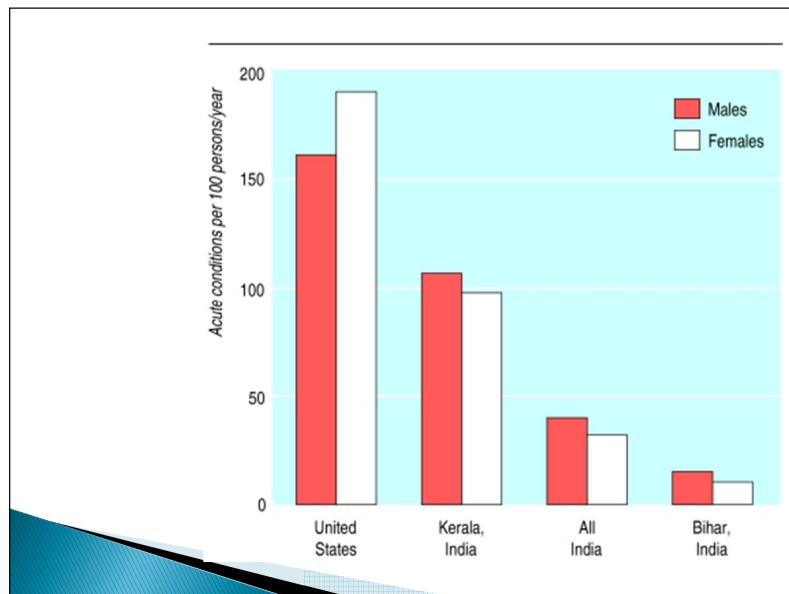
•Ask more concrete questions...
e.g. "In order to get the government to address issues that interest me, I support candidates who I know advocate for my sides of those same issues." (Strongly disagree to Strongly agree)

•Figure out whether your question results in biased responses for specific sub-populations

The Anchoring Vignette Method

▸ Step One
Ask the survey question.
▸ Step Two
Ask survey respondents to use the same response scale to rate hypothetical people meant to illustrate varying levels of political efficacy.
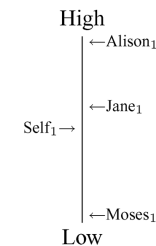
For each vignette, respondents are asked to rate *"How much say [insert name here] has in getting the government to address issues that interest him/her?" (No say at all, Little say, Some say, A lot of say, Unlimited say)*

- Alison lacks clean drinking water. She and her neighbors are supporting an opposition candidate in the forthcoming elections that has promised to address the issue. It appears that so many people in her area feel the same way that the opposition candidate will defeat the incumbent representative.
- Jane lacks clean drinking water because the government is pursuing an industrial development plan. In the campaign for an upcoming election, an opposition party has promised to address the issue, but she feels it would be futile to vote for the opposition since the government is certain to win.
- Moses lacks clean drinking water. He would like to change this, but he can't vote and feels that no one in government cares about this issue. So he suffers in silence, hoping something will be done in the future.
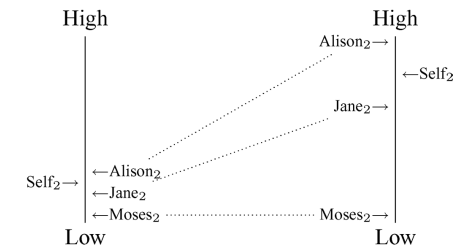
13

Analyzing the data...

14

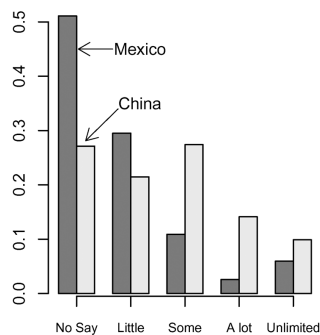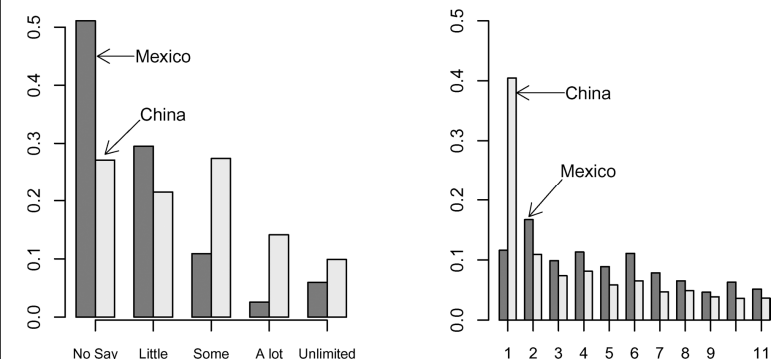### How much say do you have in getting the government to address issues that interest you?

15

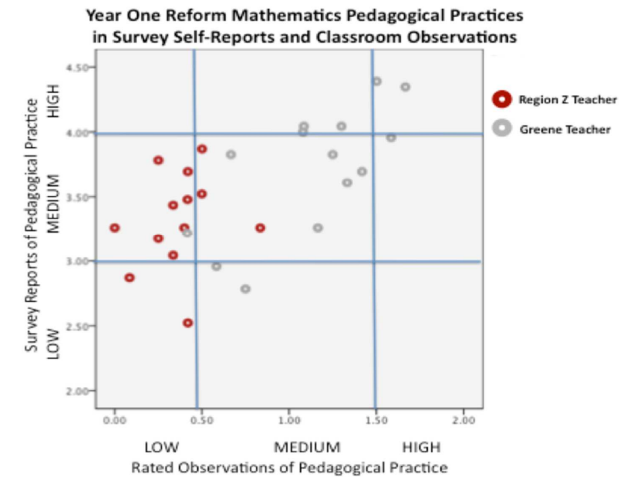### How much say do you have in getting the government to address issues that interest you?

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Other concepts and measures that could be gauged through anchoring vignettes?

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Year One Reform Mathematics Pedagogical Practices in Survey Self-Reports and Classroom Observations

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Other concepts and measures that could be gauged through anchoring vignettes?

Researchers have used anchoring vignettes to measure extent of:

▸ Health impairments like the extent to which respondents have trouble remembering things, sleeping and breathing (on a scale of none, mild, moderate, severe, extreme)

▸ Alcoholic drinking habits (mild, moderate, some cause for concern, excessive, extreme)

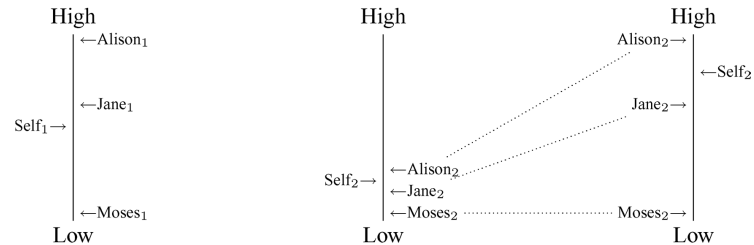▸ Job satisfaction (all in how, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current occupation?)

What needs to happen so that anchoring vignettes "work" to recalibrate respondents' use of response scales?

Analyzing the data…

Respondent 1   Respondent 2

Diagram showing High/Low scales with labels $\leftarrow Alison_1$, $\leftarrow Jane_1$, $Self_1 \rightarrow$, $\leftarrow Moses_1$ for Respondent 1; and $Alison_2 \rightarrow$, $\leftarrow Self_2$, $Jane_2 \rightarrow$, $Self_2 \rightarrow$, $\leftarrow Alison_2$, $\leftarrow Jane_2$, $\leftarrow Moses_2$, $Moses_2 \rightarrow$ for Respondent 2.

VIGNETTE EQUIVALENCE is the assumption that the level of the variable represented in any one vignette is perceived by all respondents in the same way and on the same unidimensional scale, apart from random measurement error.

For each vignette, respondents are asked to rate *"How much say [insert name here] has in getting the government to address issues that interest him/her?" (No say at all, Little say, Some say, A lot of say, Unlimited say)*

▸ Alison lacks clean drinking water. She and her neighbors are supporting an opposition candidate in the forthcoming elections that has promised to address the issue. It appears that so many people in her area feel the same way that the opposition candidate will defeat the incumbent representative.

▸ Imelda lacks clean drinking water. She and her neighbors are drawing attention to the issue by collecting signatures on a petition. They plan to present the petition to each of the political parties before the upcoming election.

▸ Jane lacks clean drinking water because the government is pursuing an industrial development plan. In the campaign for an upcoming election, an opposition party has promised to address the issue, but she feels it would be futile to vote for the opposition since the government is certain to win.

▸ Toshiro lacks clean drinking water. There is a group of local leaders who could do something about the problem, but they have said that industrial development is the most important policy right now instead of clean drinking water.

▸ Moses lacks clean drinking water. He would like to change this, but he can't vote and feels that no one in government cares about this issue. So he suffers in silence, hoping something will be done in the future.

How would you describe your own drinking patterns over the course of the last year? (mild, moderate, some cause for concern, excessive, extreme)

For each vignette, respondents are asked to rate *"How would you describe [name]'s drinking habit?" (mild, moderate, some cause for concern, excessive, extreme)*

▸ Jorge is out on a given night and has 1 or 2 drinks containing alcohol.
▸ Nisha is out on a given night and has 3 or 4 drinks containing alcohol.
▸ An is out on a given night and has 5 to 6 drinks containing alcohol.
▸ Mary is out on a given night and has 6 or 7 drinks containing alcohol.
▸ Alex is out on a given night and has 8 or 9 drinks containing alcohol.
▸ Marina is out on a given night and has 10 or more drinks containing alcohol.

Van Soest, Delaney, Harmon, Kapteyn & Smith (2007)

How would you describe your own drinking patterns over the course of the last year? (mild, moderate, some cause for concern, excessive, extreme)

Group A

Mild   Moderate Some Concern Excessive   Extreme

Group B

Mild   Moderate   Some Concern   Excessive   Extreme