

# *Crowdsourcing* : What Is It, and How Can It Be Used in Evaluation Practice

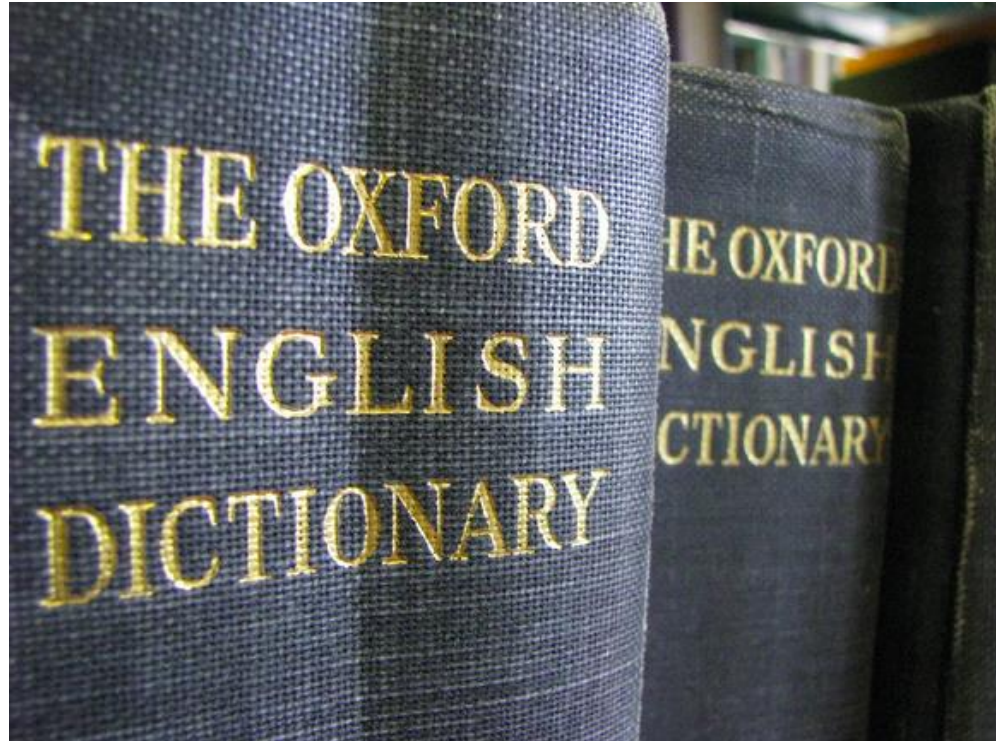
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# What is Crowdsourcing

“Paid recruitment of an independent global workforce for the objective of working on a specifically defined task or set of tasks”

- (Behrend, Sharek, Meade, & Wiebe, 2011, p. 800)



# Crowdsourcing

- Pay people for tasks such as:
  - Tagging pictures
  - Translating text,
  - Reviewing website content
  - Completing surveys



- Subscribed workers can elect to complete set tasks for specified payments



- The largest, most well-known, and most empirically studied
- Established in 2005 to connect workers and employers
- Since its creation it has grown to host approximately 500,000 workers who are 18 years of age or older



- To access the workforce, a requester posts a “Human Intelligence Task” (HIT)
- The requester can also set prescreening qualifications :
  - E.g. location, specific age group, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, level of education, etc.
- Studies found that the data gathered from MTurk workers generally matched the reliability of other methods
  - Many of the social science experiments were successfully replicated using the MTurk sample

## Mechanical Turk is a marketplace for work.

We give businesses and developers access to an on-demand, scalable workforce. Workers select from thousands of tasks and work whenever it's convenient.

**214,170 HITS** available. [View them now.](#)

## Make Money by working on HITS

HITS - *Human Intelligence Tasks* - are individual tasks that you work on. [Find HITS now.](#)

### As a Mechanical Turk Worker you:

- Can work from home
- Choose your own work hours
- Get paid for doing good work



## Get Results from Mechanical Turk Workers

Ask workers to complete HITS - *Human Intelligence Tasks* - and get results using Mechanical Turk. [Register Now](#)

### As a Mechanical Turk Requester you:

- Have access to a global, on-demand, 24 x 7 workforce
- Get thousands of HITS completed in minutes
- Pay only when you're satisfied with the results



# Edit Project

Specify the properties that are common for all of the HITs created using this project.

1 Enter Properties

2 Design Layout

3 Preview and Finish

Project Name:

This name is not displayed to Workers.

## Describe your HIT

Title

Describe the task to Workers. Be as specific as possible, e.g. "answer a survey about movies", instead of "short survey", so Workers know what to expect.

Description

Give more detail about this task. This gives Workers a bit more information before they decide to view your HIT.

Keywords

Provide keywords that will help Workers search for your HITs.

## Working on your HIT

Time allotted per assignment

Hours



Maximum time a Worker has to work on a single task. Be generous so that Workers are not rushed.

HIT expires in


Days



Maximum time your HIT will be available to Workers on Mechanical Turk.

## HITs containing 'survey'

1-10 of 309 Results

Sort by:  

[Show all details](#) | [Hide all details](#)

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) > [Next](#) >> [Last](#)

### Take This Demographic and Buying Habits Survey (CA)

[View a HIT in this group](#)

**Requester:** [CrowdSource](#)      **HIT Expiration Date:** Sep 24, 2013 (52 weeks)      **Reward:** \$0.25  
**Time Allotted:** 30 minutes      **HITs Available:** 4493

### Take This Demographic and Buying Habits Survey (GB)

[View a HIT in this group](#)

**Requester:** [CrowdSource](#)      **HIT Expiration Date:** Sep 24, 2013 (52 weeks)      **Reward:** \$0.25  
**Time Allotted:** 30 minutes      **HITs Available:** 4493

### Take This Demographic and Buying Habits Survey (US)

[View a HIT in this group](#)

**Requester:** [CrowdSource](#)      **HIT Expiration Date:** Sep 24, 2013 (52 weeks)      **Reward:** \$0.25  
**Time Allotted:** 30 minutes      **HITs Available:** 4490

### Find and list craft shows, fairs and festivals in the US

[View a HIT in this group](#)

**Requester:** [Craft Listings](#)      **HIT Expiration Date:** Sep 21, 2013 (51 weeks 5 days)      **Reward:** \$0.20  
**Time Allotted:** 60 minutes      **HITs Available:** 1109

### Survey about YouTube Channels - with Cat

[View a HIT in this group](#)

**Requester:** [CrowdFlower](#)      **HIT Expiration Date:** Sep 28, 2012 (4 days 5 hours)      **Reward:** \$0.05  
**Time Allotted:** 60 minutes      **HITs Available:** 483

### Please take this survey if you have gambled in Atlantic City in the Last 12 Months

[View a HIT in this group](#)

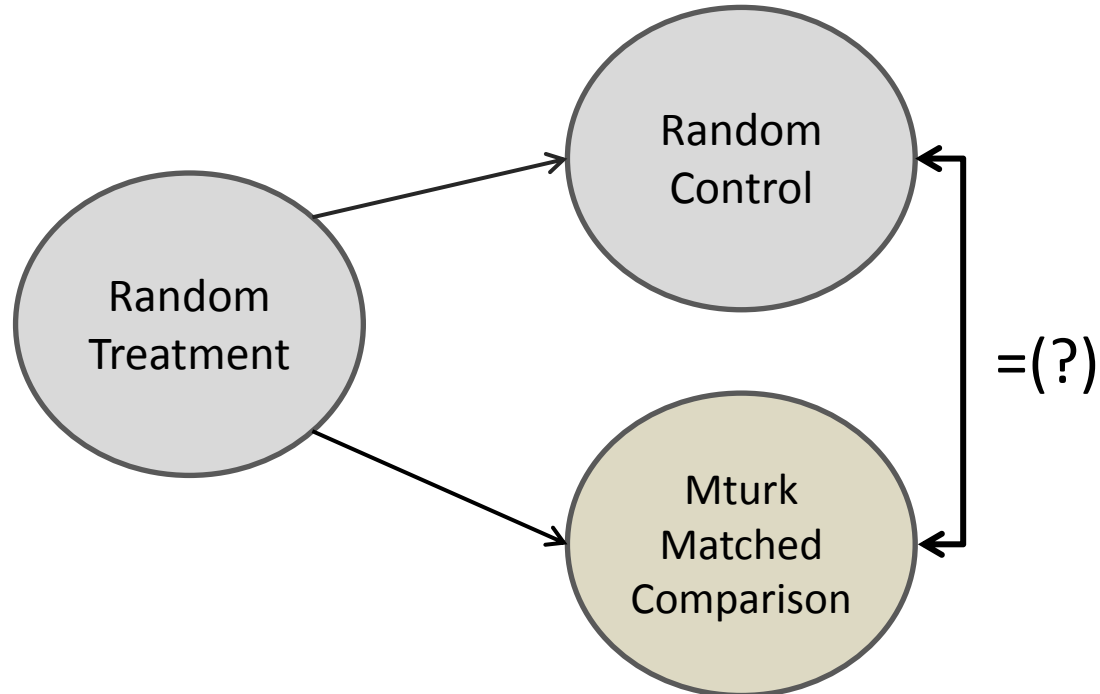
**Requester:** [CrowdFlower](#)      **HIT Expiration Date:** Oct 1, 2012 (6 days 20 hours)      **Reward:** \$0.45  
**Time Allotted:** 60 minutes      **HITs Available:** 165



# Study

## Research Question:

*Are findings from an MTurk-created matched comparison group similar to findings from a randomly assigned control group?*



# Study

- Procedure:
  - Survey data collected from treatment condition, control condition, and posted on MTurk at the same time.
- An analysis was conducted comparing the:
  - Random treatment to random control
  - Treatment to matched comparison group (after propensity score matching)

# Procedure

- 500 surveys were collected from MTurk in less than 36 hours
- Cost for collecting the data equaled \$375 (\$,75 per survey) plus a 10% MTurk commission (\$37.50) total cost= \$412.50.

# Limitations

- Online crowdsourcing can only be used for evaluations that require responses from individuals who are 18 years or older.
- Important to select appropriate survey topics.
- Selecting appropriate populations.

# Other Potential Uses

*(These ideas still need to be tested)*

Crowdsourcing can be used to:

- Create pre-post designs
- Implement longitudinal designs
- Develop and refine measurement instruments
- Translate instruments
- Do some qualitative analysis
  - Rating of qualitative data
  - Transcribing
  - Identify themes

Thank You

Questions?

# References

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