



## How Many Answer Categories Are Correct?

### What's wrong with this picture? i.e., the results?

Compared to other problems in the county, how concerned are you about

	NOT MUCH	SOME	A LOT	A GREAT DEAL	TOTAL
<i>the quality of drinking water?</i>	10%	12%	<b>31%</b>	<b>47%</b>	100%
<i>lack of housing for seniors?</i>	9%	13%	<b>37%</b>	<b>41%</b>	100%
<i>a place for teens to congregate?</i>	10%	9%	<b>30%</b>	<b>51%</b>	100%

In results from needs assessments and evaluations, you may have findings that are 'bunched' at one end of the scale. In the above needs assessment for example, **most** of the respondents in the sample have considerable concern, i.e., "a lot" or "a great deal." A similar problem may occur in evaluations.

The problem with such findings is that they don't help you and your program committee to discriminate among the concerns. These findings don't provide the information you need to choose which concern in the county to target in your extension program. To avoid this problem:

1. pretest your data collection instrument with a small sample.
2. if the sample of results produces this skewed effect, add more answer categories in that part of the scale **where most respondents answered** to give respondents more options from which to choose.

Solution to the problem above:

*Compared to other problems in the county, how concerned are you about the*

			NEW!		NEW!	
<i>the quality of drinking water?</i>	<b>NOT MUCH</b>	<b>SOME</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>A LOT</b>	<b>VERY</b>	<b>EXTREMELY</b>
<i>lack of housing for seniors?</i>	<b>NOT MUCH</b>	<b>SOME</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>A LOT</b>	<b>VERY</b>	<b>EXTREMELY</b>
<i>a place for teens to congregate?</i>	<b>NOT MUCH</b>	<b>SOME</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>A LOT</b>	<b>VERY</b>	<b>EXTREMELY</b>

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