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Editorial

Meeting Report: STAT-HAWKERS at the JSM-2013, Montreal, Canada – celebrating Golden Jubilee Year of Sarjinder Singh's 50th birthday!

In this foreword, we attempt to recall some memories annotated with appropriate photographs from the booth STAT-HAWKERS at the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM)-2013 held in Montreal, Canada during August 3–8, 2013.

There were three main advertising posters: one for the book, "Thinking Statistically: Elephants Go to School"; second for the monograph, "Advanced Sampling Theory with Applications: How Michael Selected Amy", and the third for the journal, "Model Assisted Statistics and Applications: An International Journal." The booth was decorated with LED-light strings, and laser-lights falling on the three main posters.

In Fig. 1, Sarjinder is fixing an elephant train on a track which was used to advertise the book, "Thinking Statistically: Elephants Go to School". A flashing yellow elephant running on a table was also used for advertising the same book. There was also a little singing toy-doll who did a wonderful job to attract the conference attendees to the booth (Fig. 2).

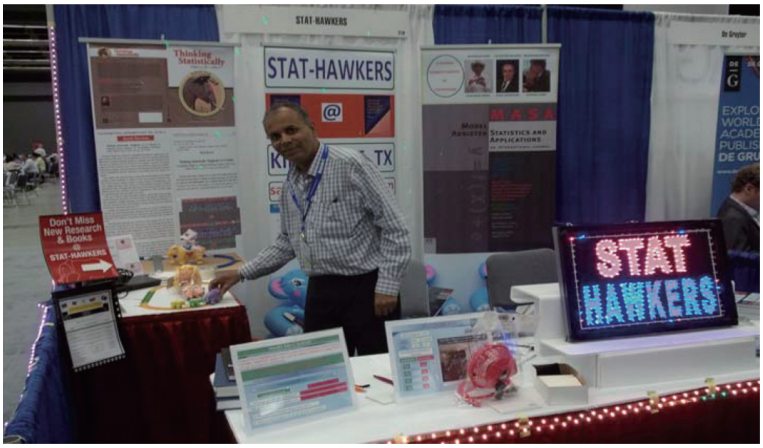

Fig. 1. Sarjinder fixing the elephant train.

For a door prize, one laptop was also given to a winner. There were 1000 (one thousand) year 2014 calendars advertising the journal, "Model Assisted Statistics and Applications", which were distributed among the conference attendees. The calendars were very handy and useful being convertible to small prismatic shapes and they take little space on a work table. Almost 50 hard printed copies of the journal "Model Assisted Statistics and Applications" were distributed at free of cost in addition to CDs and IOS Press booklets. Credit goes to Paul Gijsbers and Rasjel van der Holst from the IOS Press for their support and cooperation while thinking the promotion of the journal Model Assisted Statistics and Applications.

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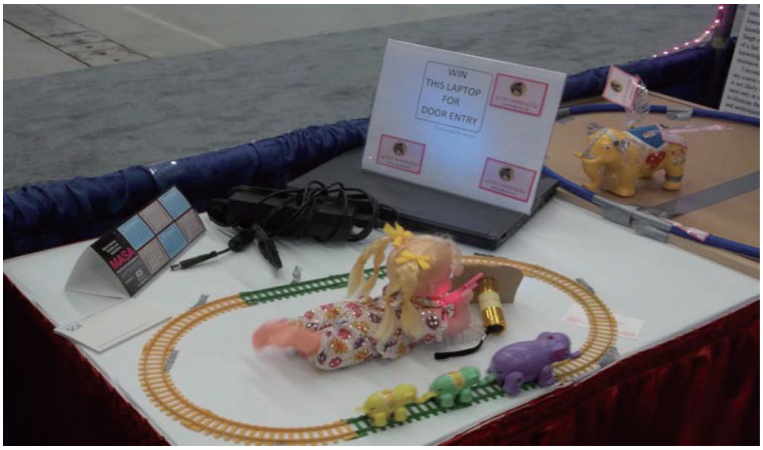

Fig. 2. Doll singing a song while elephants are moving on a track, probably going to school.

There was a very good traffic for three days to visit the booth, "STAT-HAWKERS". The first reason was that children visiting the booth with their parents were given elephants, and bouncing colored balls. In Fig. 3, the children are shown to be given balloon elephants in different colors. It was one source of attractions for other conference attendees to take an elephant for their own or friend's kids too.

Conference attendees were also given over 100 flash-lights, each consisting of nine LED-bulbs. Children liked these flash lights more than the conference attendees. A few children (females) were also given jump ropes. Over 15 USB-FANS and a few footballs were given to those who visited the booth. There were three big elephants which were given to the conference attendees on the very last hour of the booth. At the ending hour of the booth, two trains with elephants were given to two conference attendees as well. No doubt hard candies and chocolate candies were also left on the front desk for the visitors.

Fig. 3. Children with yellow and pink elephants on the booth STAT-HAWKERS.

The main purpose of giving toys to children at the booth was to put in their memory that toys would be available at a statistics conference. It will keep in their mind that statistics is a subject where people can play with toys like a bouncing ball, an elephant, a die, or a playing card, etc. There was only one blue colored elephant, which was running if you press from the top. We gave this elephant to two children (maybe twins), they started fighting with each other because both wanted the same elephant, oops! We are sure that these children will again ask their parents if they are going next year to Boston to get an elephant from STAT-HAWKERS!!

By the words of ASA Advertising Manager Claudine Donovan, "Your booth was the highlight of the Expo"!

Collection of data on sensitive characteristics from human populations is not an easy task. For example sensitive questions: (a) Are you an Alawite? (b) Are you gay? (c) Have you ever molested a child? (d) Have you under-reported your income on your tax return? (e) Do you smoke marijuana?, and (f) Have you ever cheated on an exam?, etc. These questions are not likely to be responded honestly by the respondents if they are asked using direct question survey methods. The randomized response technique was first introduced by Warner (1965) to deal with a problem of estimation of such sensitive characteristics in a finite population. This technique enables respondents to provide truthful information in anonymity on sensitive or highly personal questions without endangering their privacy. At the booth, we demonstrated the use of a randomization device to the attendees (Fig. 4). Demonstrations are required to promote such interesting, valuable and cleaver techniques which could help a statistician to deal with sensitive characteristics.

Fig. 4. Dr. Stephen A. Sedory and a respondent responding by using a randomization device.

We are also devoting the next issue of the Journal Model Assisted Statistics and Applications on a special topic, "Randomized Response Techniques", on this Golden Jubilee Year (50^{th}) birthday of the Editor in Chief, Sarjinder Singh.

At the Joint Statistical Meeting 2013, we had a meeting by the editorial board members, reviewers and supporters of the journal, "Model Assisted Statistics and Applications", as shown in Fig. 5.

Fig. 5. Editorial board members, reviewers and supporters of MASA.

Although our meeting was shorter this year than last year, we had a fruitful discussion on the future of the journal, "Model Assisted Statistics and Applications" regarding its Impact Factor and topics to be chosen for forthcoming Special Issues.

You can check SJR factor of MASA and any other journal on this web-page: http://www.scimagojr.com/journalsearch.php?q=7100153149&tip=sid.

Sarjinder Singh,
MASA Editor-in-Chief.