

SURVEY METHOD

Introduction to survey method

- Survey method gathers data by asking questions
- It is the commonly-used method of collecting information
- Population of interest is always preferred in survey method.
- Researchers take opinions of a large group of people about a topic.
- A survey consists of a formal list of questionnaire.
- Firstly, every survey asks about demographic interests
- Demographic questions are the most popular and common one e.g. what is your age? what is your gender? etc.
- Cross-sectional and longitudinal
 - Both the cross-sectional and the longitudinal studies are observational studies. Cross-sectional means that researchers record information about their subjects without manipulating the study environment. The defining feature of a cross-sectional study is that it can compare different population groups at a single point in time. A longitudinal study, like a cross-sectional one, is observational. So, once again, researchers do not interfere with their subjects. However, in a longitudinal study, researchers conduct several observations of the same subjects over a period of time, sometimes lasting many years.
- Surveys yield broader range of information
- Socio-economic characteristics and attributes are considered important in survey research.
- An example of a survey topic:
 - English teachers' perception of mother-tongue based education policy in Philippines

Purpose and uses of survey method

- Describing 'what is'?
- Assessing magnitude
- Guiding about the planning
- Evaluating control activities
- Community perception (human behavior)
- Suggesting and testing hypotheses

Characteristics of survey method

- Mostly large cases
- Mostly cross-sectional study
- No characteristics of individuals
- Involves clearly defined problem
- Requires experts imaginative planning
- Involves definite objectives
- Careful analysis and interpretation

- Logical and skillful reporting
- Surveys vary greatly in complexity
- Not developing scientific principles
- Useful to the solution of local problems
- Advancement of knowledge
- Penetrating insight
- Suggests the course of future developments
- Present trends and problems
- Fashioning many new tools

Steps in survey research

Before starting survey research one should;

- Know what exactly do you want?
- Determine the target population
- Choose the mode of data (Direct + mail + phone + personal interview)
- Select the sample
- Prepare instrument
- Write any memo or letter?
- Train the interviewers
- Recheck carefully before you start your research

Suggestions for a survey method project

- Be sure about the nature of the project and gather sufficient demographic information
- Determine whether your study is cross sectional or longitudinal
- It should be directly associated with the people's opinions
- Be sure of the survey nature
- Keep yourself aware of limitations - human biases
- Descriptive or normative study and tools?
- Follow up studies and tools