

## **The Basics of Survey Research**

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### **Five Basic Steps of Survey Research**

1. Development of the Survey Design
2. Instrument Development and Survey Design
3. Data Collection
4. Post-collection Processing
5. Analysis and Dissemination

#### **1. Development of Survey Design**

**Goal:** identify a need for survey data and obtain funding for data collection

*Key tasks:*

1. Define questions to be answered by the survey -Review existing data and literature
2. Make sure that research questions can't be answered with other data sources
3. Outline survey instrument
4. Outline desired tables, figures and charts of interest
5. Set rough timetable for survey operations and analysis -Write grant proposal or budget request

#### **2. Instrument Development and Design**

**Goal:** Develop survey tools to meet the objectives, given time and cost parameters

*Key tasks:*

1. Develop sampling procedures  
Develop weighting scheme
2. Create and edit test survey instrument  
Develop interviewer training materials
3. Conduct field test of survey
4. Evaluate and revise test instrument based on the field test -Develop final instrument
5. Work out a plan for analyzing the survey data

#### **3. Data Collection**

**Goal:** Gather raw data in a timely and cost-effective manner

*Key Tasks:*

1. Conduct training
2. Field the survey
3. Data capture
4. Monitoring interviewers

*Deliverables:*

1. Tracking report of problems encountered in the field -Progress/Status reports
2. Raw data set

#### **4. Post-collection Processing**

**Goal:** Generate accurate and organized final data set

*Key Tasks:*

1. Clean the data
2. Edit the data
3. Missing data imputation
4. Weighting

5. Generate data dictionary and code book that contains data set description, variable names, and basic tabulations
6. Write a data users guide

*Deliverables:*

1. Data dictionary and code book -Processing specifications
2. A Clean, edited, weighted and imputed data set -Data users guide

## **5. Analysis and Dissemination**

**Goal:** Translate data into useful information that answers research questions and distribute it

*Key Tasks:*

1. Create data tabulations
2. Write publications/reports
3. Make data available in "public use" form (optional)
4. Make sure confidentiality of respondents remains intact
5. Compile produce final data set documentation
6. Evaluate the entire process

*Deliverables:*

1. Create tables for reports
2. Create technical documentation/report appendix -Press releases
3. Public use file (optional)
4. Final data set documentation
5. Final evaluation of the survey process