

Survey Research Procedures, Sample And Questionnaire Development

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Why conduct survey research?

1. *To gather primary data that:*
2. *Assists in planning or policy development*
3. *Evaluates the effectiveness of a particular program*
4. *Gains knowledge about behaviors and attitude*

Survey Procedures

1. *Determine objectives*
2. *Establish accuracy level desired*
3. *Decided in conjunction with client*
4. *Balance of accuracy and cost*
5. *Select the most appropriate survey method*
6. *List resources*
7. *Make budget estimate*
8. *Develop timeline*
9. *Develop delivery methods*

Sampling

Why sampling works:

1. Flip 10 coins, and count the number of heads
2. Do this 100 times, and plot distribution
3. If you do this 1,000 more times, or 1 million more times, will distribution be different?
4. Its the size of the sample, not the size of the population, that matters

What sampling frames are available?

For each sampling frame:

1. *What is the availability, cost, and accuracy?*
2. *Sampling pitfalls*
3. *Out-of-date lists*
4. *Lack of coverage among various groups*
5. *Do you want individuals or households?*

Two types of samples:

1. Nonrandom
 - *statistical validity not a concern*
 - *convenience surveys (e.g., in supermarkets, at tourist sites)*
 - *surveyors tend to pick someone like themselves*
2. Random
 - *Unbiased, since everyone has equal chance of being selected*
 - *Sample can only be as good as the list from which it was drawn*

Types of Sample Schemes:

1. Simple random - select random number to start, every nth thereafter
2. Stratified sampling - divide population into subpopulations, then every nth
3. Sluster sampling - survey all units in a stratified area

Potential error:

1. Sampling error - difference in distribution of characteristics between sample and population as a whole (this is an estimate, since we can't really measure whole)

- population) Sampling error indicates how close our sample is to the population. But how confident are we that the true value really does lie within that range?
2. Level of confidence - sampling error is only half of our concern for accuracy
Accepted confidence level is 95% - nothing sacred about this number, just most commonly used

Survey Questionnaire Development

Develop an initial questionnaire

Types of questions

1. *Open-ended - short (what is your age?) and long (what do you think about ...) try to keep these to a minimum*
2. *Closed-ended*
 - Y/N
 - Multiple choice - will you allow multiple responses?
 - Ranking - people tend to have trouble
 - Rating - can be difficult to word, can be subjective, how many categories?
 - Likert scales: 3, 5, 7, or more responses possible
 - Unipolar (E, VG, G, F, P) or bi-polar (SA, SA, NO, SD, SD)
 - What about "don't know?" - should you have one?

Composing Questions

Basic Attributes of Questions

- *Focus*
- *Brevity*
- *Clarity*
- *Expressing the Questions*
- *Vocabulary*
- *Grammar*

Question organization and format

- *Begin with simple easy to answer questions*
- *Begin with questions that pertain to the purpose of the survey*
- *Questions should follow some logical order for respondents*
- *Vary the type of questions*
- *Put demographic and sensitive questions at the end*
- *Use simple words*
- *Have clear skip patterns*
- *Adequate spacing for open-ended questions*
- *Make survey visually appealing*
- *Be careful with maps (see examples)*
- *Lots of white space*

Pretests

Can resolve issues such as:

- *How many response categories should you have?*
- *Do the response categories represent reasonably spaced increments?*
- *Do you want a "don't know" category?*
- *Is a question too intrusive?*
- *Can people answer all the questions?*
- *Are you using the proper local vernacular?*