

# Designing Survey Research

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# Introduction: Survey Work

What is survey work – research process of asking questions to respondents.

Questions are predetermined to the entire groups.

Process used to gain information about the population.



# What Survey Work Should Be



- It should be used to explain trends of large groups in a population.
- One should have a goal in mind.
- The schedule that can be used to perform the survey study.
- It should have a study design

# Strengths of Surveys

Survey research can be termed to be:

- Potential to generalizability.
- The method is also deemed to be reliable.
- The process is cost-effective.
- The research process is versatile and applicable to different professions.

Survey  
Research

Definition, Examples  
and Methods

 QuestionPro



# Weaknesses of Surveys



- Surveys lack in depth of the topic under research.
- It is also an inflexible method of research.
- Respondents might feel discouraged to give honest responses.

# Reasons Surveys Can be the Best

- The research helps to get individual views at all times.
- Aids in important decision-making.
- Gets personal views without exposing the respondent.



# Types of Surveys

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# Survey types can be defined by variations on time and administration

## Surveys defined by the time administered....

### Cross-sectional

Administered at just one point in time

### Longitudinal

Administered to make observations over some extended period of time

### Retrospective

Administered once but participants report events from the past

## Surveys defined by how they are administered...

### Self administered questionnaires

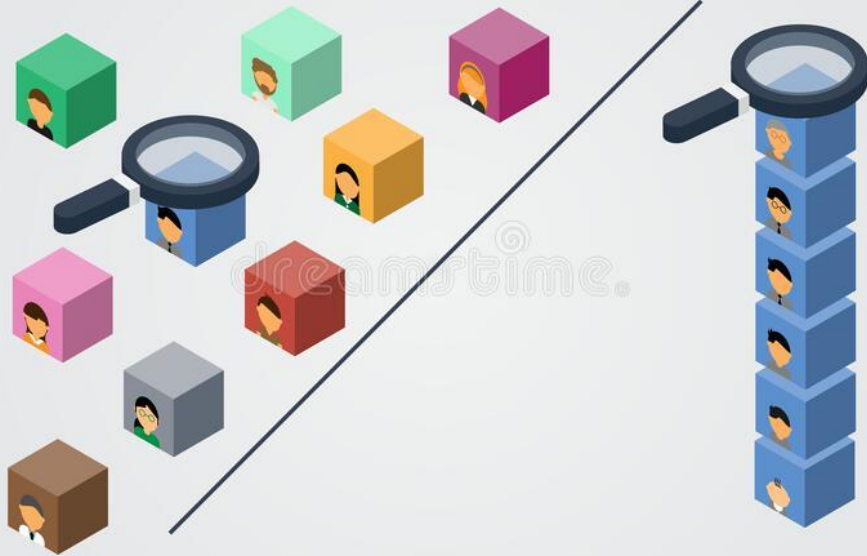
Administered online or paper copy, participants fill out and return

### Interview schedule

Administered over phone or in person, questions are posed verbally



Cross-sectional Study



Longitudinal Study

Time focused surveys

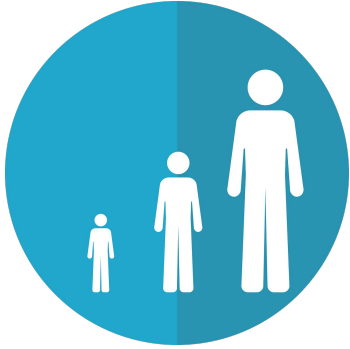
# Cross - sectional

“Snapshot in time”

\*Pro: affordable and easy

\*Con: as time goes on, what is  
being assessed changes

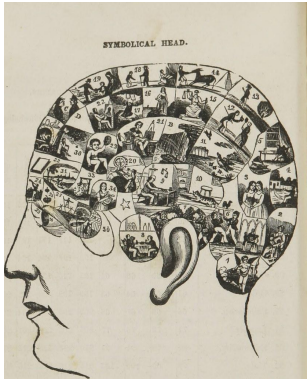
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# Longitudinal

There are 3 types of surveys that extend over a period of time

- Trend
    - Surveys how special groups change over time
    - Different participants each time
  - Panel
    - Same people each time
    - Difficult and costly but powerful
  - Cohort
    - Participants have defining characteristics at periods of time
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# Retrospective

Somewhere in the middle

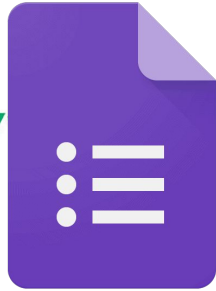
- Administered once
  - Participants report events from the past
  - Pro: gather longitudinal like data for much less time and money.
  - Con: relying on memory can provide inaccurate results
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# Administration focused surveys



# Self-administered questionnaire



Google Forms

- Participants are given a set of questions to respond to online or on paper
- Digital equity/ consider your target audience
- Incentives for returned survey

# Interview schedule

aka quantitative interviews



- Phone or in person
- Questions posed verbally
- Interview effect
- Context effect
- Benefit of clarification



She

isn't

flying

to

Hawaii

tomorrow

Take the stress test



# Match the survey

- A. Survey monkey
- B. A snapshot of current views of public education in a district
- C. A self reported study of how ppl spent Valentines day for the past 5 years in one single survey
- D. The Youth Development study - same people since 1988
- E. Longitudinal study of difference in women employment through the generations
- F. Political phone survey
- G. Annual survey on substance use of high school kids in the US

- A. Self-administered questionnaire
- B. Cross-sectional
- C. Retrospective
- D. Panel
- E. Cohort
- F. Interview survey
- G. Trend

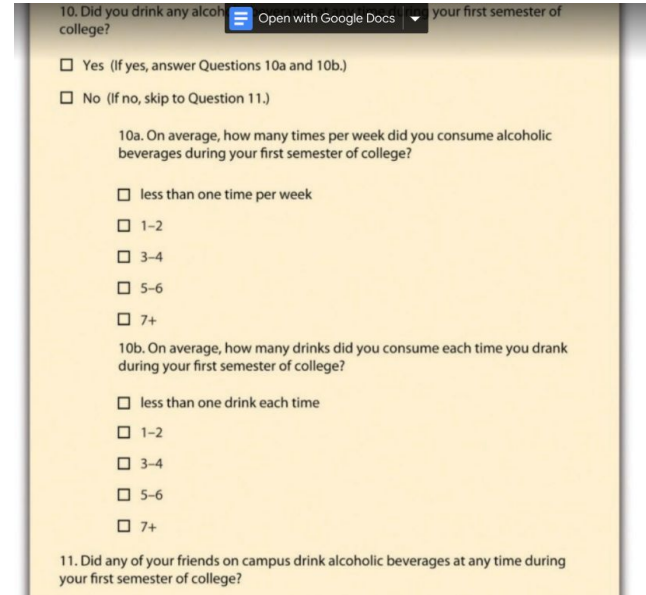
# Survey Design

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## Filter questions

# Designing Effective Questions

- What do you want to know?
- What order do you want to ask the questions?
- Is every question relevant to every participant?
  - Filter questions
- Is the language clear and universal?
  - Double barreled questions
- What will the response options be?
  - Closed-ended vs open-ended



10. Did you drink any alcoholic beverages during your first semester of college?

Yes (if yes, answer Questions 10a and 10b.)

No (if no, skip to Question 11.)

10a. On average, how many times per week did you consume alcoholic beverages during your first semester of college?

less than one time per week

1-2

3-4

5-6

7+

10b. On average, how many drinks did you consume each time you drank during your first semester of college?

less than one drink each time

1-2

3-4

5-6

7+

11. Did any of your friends on campus drink alcoholic beverages at any time during your first semester of college?

## Double barreled questions

Did you find the classes you took during your first semester of college to be more demanding and interesting than your high school classes?

- Yes
- No

Figure 11.2 Double-barreled question

# Designing Effective Questionnaires



- Grouping
- Order
- Length and timing
  - Pretesting
- Design and aesthetics
- Feedback and editing
  - Alternate questions

# Refining your Questionnaire

Who is part of the editing process?

How long should it take to design a survey?

How will you distribute it?

Reverse coding:

- “I found the class informative” versus “I did not find the class informative”

Leading questions:

- “The class was incredible” versus “The class was helpful/engaging/interesting”

Subjective interpretations:

- Example: words like “respect” “comfortable” “welcoming” “inclusive”

# Discussion - Examples

“This felt like a punishment.”

“I felt singled out or uncomfortable because of my race or ethnicity.”

“The facilitators/supervisors made the classes/sessions feel inclusive.”

“I would have liked what I did/learned at [Program/Site] even if I was not required to be here.”

“It felt like the session(s) I participated in were suitable for people in my situation.”

“All the classes and services I was required to complete was a fair way to handle my case.”

**What sensitive issues are brought up in the phrasing of these questions? How does that affect data? How can we refine them?**

Answer options:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree