

Discuss the various forms or methods of obtaining public opinion data. to what ex...



Part Opinion poll surveys are important mechanisms for identifying trends and gauge public opinion and sentiments about major public issues. The surveys are taken from population at large and are designed in a way so as to represent their opinion on specific topic or issue. The questions are framed with single answer which respondents can easily answer. The major methods of opinion poll survey as follow:

#### Telecommunication

These have increasingly become popular where people are contacted on telephone for their opinion on specific issue. If the questions are short and few, they are answered else more often they become nuisance value and not responded correctly.

#### Mail survey

The questionnaires are sent to respondent by mail and received by mail. This method is no more in popular practice.

#### Online survey

This has become one of the most popular methods of conducting opinion poll of burning issues and public policies. Online surveys are sent either through email or come up on surfing sites which are often answered if they are issues which are important or interesting. The huge data collected on online surveys helps generate more accurate results.

#### Mall intercept survey

In this method, people are requested to fill in questionnaire or asked questionnaires verbally while they are shopping in malls or streets. This is also quite successful as short questionnaires are answered and one gets quite large sample.

<https://assignbuster.com/discuss-the-various-forms-or-methods-of-obtaining-public-opinion-data-to-what-extent-if-any-should-politicians-be-responsive-to-public-opinion-data-should-polls-dictate-war-policy/>

## In-home

House calls are made for opinion survey and questionnaires are answered at relatively relaxed environment of home. Due to increasing cost, it is no more very popular. But in important public policy issues, this method becomes more reliable.

## Part 2

Politicians should be very responsive to the public opinion as they are representative of people and primarily represent their interest in the government. But it is also very controversial because the public opinion can also be very emotive and may be manipulated by vested interests (Foyle, 1999). But at the same time, it is also true that public opinion, when represented by large sample, is distinct in its trend and therefore must be treated seriously, especially as a reciprocal relationship that highlights democratic values.

In democratic state, people's power is centric to all decision making processes, within and outside the government, for all welfare programs and policies for the wider development issues like socio-economic issues, energy, infrastructure, healthcare etc. Very often, opinion polls become important tools that influence politicians' stand on vital issues to win the trust of people, whom they represent or want to gain confidence of.

The polls should dictate war policies because in the recent times, large public money has been diverted to the war where major interests of the nation were not involved. Iraq War, Vietnam War etc were long drawn where huge amount of money was used. Hence, all the actions of government where public money is involved must be influenced by the opinion polls. The

<https://assignbuster.com/discuss-the-various-forms-or-methods-of-obtaining-public-opinion-data-to-what-extent-if-any-should-politicians-be-responsive-to-public-opinion-data-should-polls-dictate-war-policy/>

war policies of government are critical issues which have direct impact on the wider welfare of people. As such, war policies must be dictated by the larger interests of the population.

(words: 509)

#### Reference

Foyle, C. D. Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion, and Foreign policy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.