

# Surveys



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In a dynamic world that runs on numbers, it has become increasingly important for researchers to express populations in terms of statistical parameters. The most convenient way of extracting data from such a population is through a survey—that is, the systematic approach to studying individuals. Surveys are conducted primarily in one of two spectrums: cross-sectional, a linear survey for one point in time, or longitudinal, two separate surveys that are compared to estimate the influence of time (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan, & Moorman, 2008). In both situations, surveys are conventionally conducted with the use of communicative media, such as the telephone or internet. The point is to access as many individuals in the most convenient and efficient manner. As such, surveys consist of extracting characteristics from individuals, not always in the format of a questionnaire. Depending on the population of interest, a sample is chosen with a sampling method, such as simple random sampling, wherein individuals are expected to be representative because of uniformity in selection. Once this is established, the individuals in the sample are confronted with the method of data extraction, one that records data from behavior, response, preference, or the like (“ How to Design a Survey”, 2006). Surveys have a wide spectrum of practicality, as they are convenient in representing a population whilst minimizing error and effort. For instance, if a researcher was interested in studying the change in popularity of a presidential candidate in the state of Massachusetts, he might go about conducting a survey. His method would require a simple random sample of the population, wherein a longitudinal surveying method is utilized to compare the magnitude of popularity between two points in time (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). The researcher would most likely contact the individuals of the sample by some form of

communication (one that would avoid non-response bias), and in doing so, would present the extraction tool—usually in the form of a question: “ What are your feelings on this presidential candidate?” His data would then be compared against time, resulting in statistical conclusions on the presidential candidate’s projected popularity in Massachusetts. References How to Design a Survey. (2006). The Write Market. Retrieved May 17, 2011, from <http://www.thewritemarket.com/marketing/index.php?marketing=survey-design> Rindfleisch, A., Malter, A., Ganesan, S., & Moorman, C. (2008, June). Cross-Sectional Versus Longitudinal Survey Research. Marketing Power. Retrieved May 17, 2011, from <http://www.marketingpower.com/AboutAMA/Pages/AMA%20Publications/AMA%20Journals/Journal%20of%20Marketing%20Research/TOCs/summary%20june%2008/CrossSectionalJmrjum08.aspx>