



CHOOSING A SURVEY METHOD

Wail Al-Sabbali



Chapter 4

In this chapter, we discuss the choice between mail, face-to-face, and telephone survey methods

Contents

I	Types of Surveys What to Consider
II	Mail Surveys - Strengths & Weaknesses
III	Telephone Surveys - Strengths & Weaknesses
IV	Face-to-face Surveys - Strengths & Weaknesses
V	Drop-Off Surveys
VI	Response Rate Budget
VII	Future



Different Types of Surveys

- Mail Surveys
- Telephone Interviews
- Face-to-face Interviews
- Drop-off Surveys



What to consider

- Resources (People and money)
- Time
- Error (coverage, sampling, measurement, non-response)

Mail Surveys

■ Strengths

- ◆ Less recourses and less cost
- ◆ Less sensitive to biases introduced by the interviewer

■ Weaknesses

- ◆ Sensitive to non-coverage error
- ◆ People are less likely to respond to questionnaire
- ◆ Surveyor has less control on the questionnaire

Mail Surveys

Mail surveys are best suited for

- Surveying people for whom a reliable address list is available and who are likely to respond accurately and completely in writing
- Surveys in which an immediate turnaround is not required
- Projects in which money, qualified staff, and professional help are all relatively scarce



Telephone Surveys

■ Strengths

- ◆ Quick
- ◆ More control

■ Weaknesses

- ◆ Telephone directories are incomplete
- ◆ Sensitive to measurement errors



Telephone Surveys

Telephone surveys are most appropriate when

- Members of the population are very likely to have telephones
- Questions are relatively straightforward
- Experienced help is available
- Quick turnaround is important



Face-to-face Surveys

- Strengths
 - ◆ Good control
 - ◆ People are likely to respond
- Weaknesses
 - ◆ High cost
 - ◆ Time consuming



Face-to-face

Face-to-face surveys are best suited

- Surveying populations for whom there is no list
- Collecting information from people who are likely to respond willingly or accurately by mail or telephone
- Complex questionnaires
- Well-funded projects for which experienced interviewers and professional help are available



Drop-off Surveys

Drop-off survey combines the low labor cost of mail surveys and the personal contact of face-to-face survey.

Drop-off surveys are best suited for

- Small community or neighborhood surveys in which respondents are not spread over a large area
- Relatively short and simple questionnaires
- Projects with a small staff but relatively large sample size



Response Rate

The proportion of people in a particular sample who participate in the survey



Budget

- Regardless of the error sources & the response rate, money is the biggest concern for most of people
- Estimating the cost of the survey differs from a method to another



Future

- Mixed Mode Survey
 - ◆ Using more than one method for a single survey to overcome the problem of the response rate & the high cost