

Use of Survey Method in Research

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Abstract

Surveys are conducted in different ways in different areas and the purpose of all these surveys is to know the current situation about a subject, so that through the situation the needs of the people can be identified and their demands can be made by the government or government. Can be delivered to the concerned institution or department.

“Survey method is most useful for studying many subjects having social importance. Survey study on various topics like economic condition of people of various sections of a state, results of development schemes in the state during a period of time, prevalence and consequences of drug use, prevalence of dialects of a language, literary interests of people of various sections, etc. Is useful. This method is widely used in education, economics, sociology, psychology etc. and such surveys are essential for the implementation of various social welfare schemes.”

Keyword: Research, Survey, Method, Use

Introduction:

There are various stages that the researcher has to undergo while planning and conducting a research study. The research first selects the area of research; he identifies and defines his problem; he reviews the literature to acquaint himself with the recent developments in knowledge related to his problem; he states hypothesis and defines specifically the objectives of his study; he finalizes his research plan; and then starts working actively on the problem itself according to the plan. In the planning process, the researcher has to decide about research method that he could use in solving his research problem.

Research methods are of utmost importance in a research process. They describe the various steps of the plan of attack to be adopted in solving a research problem, such as the manner in which the problems are formulated, the definition of terms, the choice of subjects for investigation, the validation of data-gathering tools, the collection, analysis and interpretation of data, and the processes of inferences and generalizations.

Methods of research, according to Good, Barr and Scates (1941 p. 207), may be classified from many points of view; the field to which applied: education, history, philosophy, psychology, biology etc.; purpose: description, prediction, determination of causes, determination of status, etc; place where it is conducted; in the field or in the laboratory; application: pure research or applied research; data gathering devices employed: tests, rating scales, questionnaires, etc.; nature of data collected; objective, subjective, quantitative, qualitative, etc.; symbols employed in recording, describing, or treating results: mathematical symbols or language symbols; forms of thinking: deductive, inductive etc.; control of factors; controlled and uncontrolled experimentation; methods employed in establishing causal relationships: agreement, difference, residues and concomitant variation.

According to Jeorg J. Mule Research Method is divided into following three fundamental parts-

1. Survey Method
2. Historical Method
3. Experimental Method

For the present research work survey method is used.

- **Survey Method:**

Survey studies are conducted to collect detailed descriptions of existing phenomena with the intent of employing data to justify current conditions and practices or to make more intelligent plans for improving them. Their objective is not only to analyze, interpret, and report the status of an institution, group, or area in order to guide practice in the immediate future, but also to determine the adequacy of status by comparing it with established standards. Some surveys are confined to gather all three types of information: (1) data concerning existing status, (2) comparison of existing status with the established status and standards, and (3) means of improving the existing status; while others are limited to one or two of these types.

Survey studies may take different forms depending upon the scope, nature and purpose of the problem under investigation. They may be broad or narrow in scope. Some surveys encompass several countries, states or regions; or may be limited to one country, region, state, district, tehsil, city, school system, or some other unit. Survey data may be collected from every unit of a population or from a representative sample. The information gathered may be concerning a large number of related factors or may be confined to a few selected items.

Survey studies describe and specify the properties of educational phenomena. They include: (1) School surveys (2) Job analysis (3) Attitude (Public opinion) surveys, and (4) Social surveys.

In order to make some important and crucial decisions, industrial, political, educational and other leaders seek knowledge of the publics' opinions, attitude and preferences. Educationists conduct public opinion (attitude) surveys to find out how people feel about that matter or issues.

In public opinion surveys, the researchers usually make use of questionnaires, schedules or interviews to gathers data from the selected group or groups following appropriate sampling procedures.

Under the survey method, the information is sought by way of researcher's own direct observation without asking from the respondent and in this method one of the best methods of data collection is questionnaire method.

This method of data collection is quite popular, particularly in case of big enquiries. It is being adopted by private individuals, research workers, private and public organizations and even by governments. In this method a questionnaire is sent to the persons concerned with a request to answer the questions and return the questionnaire. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is mailed to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The respondents have to answer the questions on their own.

The method of collecting data by mailing the questionnaires to respondents is most extensively employed in various educational, economic and business surveys. It is a very important and useful method of data collection and the merits claimed on behalf of this method are as follows:

1. There is low cost even when the universe is large and is widely spread geographically.
2. It is free from the bias of the interviewer; answers are in respondent's own words.
3. Respondents have adequate time to give well thought out answers.

4. Respondents, who are not easily approachable, can also be research conveniently.
5. Large samples can be made use of and thus the results can be made more dependable and reliable.

Therefore, the following steps have been prescribed for a successful survey-

1. Selection of Problem or Selection of Topic: Before planning any survey, it is very important to search for the topic of the survey. First of all it is necessary to select the problem. "Selection of the topic is the initial stage of any survey, in which the surveyor himself is motivated to investigate, on the basis of his sensitivity, seriousness of the social problems of the society, non-availability of facts and information at any level, but feeling the need for it, etc. But selects such a topic which is appropriate for the survey."²

Therefore, while choosing the topic, it should be kept in mind that the researcher should have deep interest in the subject, so that he works on that subject with more dedication and hard work. The subject should be such that the surveyor has some knowledge about it. According to Mr. Bogards- "The head of unrelated subjects.

Apart from this, the usefulness of the subject and the expansion of its study area should also be kept in mind, so that its practical utility can also be protected and this survey does not become meaningless. While selecting the topic, it is also kept in mind that what will be the factors whose interrelationships will be examined during the survey. People's income, their standard of living, education, occupation, position etc. can be counted among these changing factors.

2. Determining the Objective: After determining the subject of the survey, the objective of the survey should also be decided whether the survey should be conducted for general purpose or for any specific purpose. A survey conducted for a general purpose highlights aspects related to general public life, whereas a survey conducted for a specific purpose highlights aspects related to general public life.

Determining the objectives of the survey helps in structuring the survey and its study methods can also be decided.

3. Determining the Study Area: After selecting the topic and area of the survey, the study area should also be decided, so that there is no deviation from the main topic and the survey can be conducted successfully within the stipulated time.

4. Preliminary Preparations: After determining the area of the survey, it is very important to start some preliminary preparations. Among these preparations, first of all comes the assessment of books by the surveyor and selection of the most appropriate method among various methods. Apart from this, it is also determined how the hypothesis can be formulated effectively and which aspects of the subject will be beneficial to emphasize. According to Mrs. Young – "Without preliminary preparations the success of the survey always remains doubtful."

Apart from this, as per requirement, talking to the experts of the related subject and estimating the difficulties that may arise during the survey and thinking of ways to deal with them is also a part of the preliminary preparations.

5. Selection of Sample: A survey can be successful only when the right sample is selected for it. If the survey is to be conducted on a large community, it is important to select a sample that is representative of the entire community to get accurate results. This not only saves time and money, but also gives good results.

While selecting the sample or sample, proper representation of the total number, adequacy of the number, availability of sample units and matching of the sample units with the objectives of the survey should be kept in mind. In fact, sampling or sampling method is a process in which units are selected from the total units. There are mainly two types of this process – non-probability sample and probability sample. In non-

probability sampling, the surveyor contacts some units as per his wish, on the basis of some objective, and declares them as the sample. Thus, this sampling is arbitrary, random quota sampling. On the contrary, in probability sampling, the selection process is not affected by the wishes of the selectors and the units involved in the selection. In this, every unit of the whole gets equal opportunity to be included in the unit of the sample, hence it is also called 'Dev Nidarshan'. This Dev Darshan is obtained through lottery method, regular scoring method, grid usage method or random number usage method.

6. Formulation of Budget: In any survey, expenditure is inevitable. That is why the budget should be decided in advance, so that all the work can be done easily. According to Professor Warner – "The preparation of budget in a survey is as important as the determination of study methods, because a balanced survey-budget is considered the basis of the success of the survey and expenditure is done on various items according to their importance and need." remains with us as our guide in what to do."

During the survey, expenses are incurred at three levels - (a) planning and schedule of the survey, printing forms like questionnaires, (b) investigating the study area and collecting data and (c) classification, tabulation, analysis and In report-publication. The surveyor decides the expenditure on all these using his discretion.

7. Determining the time limit: Determining the time limit of the survey is also very important for the success of the survey. The objective of the survey can be achieved only when the survey is completed on time. The time taken for the entire survey can be estimated by doing a preliminary survey. "Determining the time taken in the survey depends on the nature of the data and information, the number and efficiency of the workers, the geographical details of the informants, the available arrangements for sending the information, tabulation, analysis and printing of the report."

8. Selection of study methods and techniques: Multiple study methods can be used in any survey as per requirement. The nature of study methods is decided according to the type and need of the survey. The study method and technique should be chosen in such a way that more information can be obtained with less effort and money. If the informant is far away, but educated, then questionnaire can also be used. But if the person is illiterate, then accordingly schedule observation, measurement, projective method, single study method etc. can be used for survey.

9. Selection and training of workers: To conduct survey in a wide area, it is very important that the surveyors work with full interest, hard work and dedication. That is why such workers should be selected who can do the given work efficiently. For example, if someone is skilled in statistics, he should be given work related to classification and tabulation of data.

It is also necessary to give proper training to the workers regarding their work. The more qualified and trained they are, the more accurate the survey will be.

10. Organization of Survey: A proper organization is required to conduct the survey smoothly. In large surveys, a central office is established, in which a committee related to the survey is formed. It consists of a survey director, chief surveyor and some departmental representatives. They form various committees to run the survey work smoothly.

11. Pre-Test and Pre-Survey: Conducting any survey and declaring its results is a very responsible task. That is why before the original survey, as a rehearsal, the suitability of the techniques and equipment chosen for the study and the qualifications and capabilities of the workers are studied through 'pre-test' and 'pre-survey'. Through this, the workers not only get practical knowledge but can also become aware of the errors and obstacles encountered during the survey.

“The purpose of pre-testing is to check the suitability of equipment, instruments, models, etc., whereas the purpose of pre-testing is to obtain preliminary knowledge regarding the study subject and the study site.”

12. Distribution of study materials: After correcting the errors during pre-testing and preliminary survey, the workers are sent to the actual study area. “For this, in addition to the required copies of questionnaire, schedule, interview guide etc., they should be given five or ten copies for incidental use. Appropriate stationery, regional maps, cameras etc. should be provided as per the requirement of the study, so that appropriate facts can be easily made available.”

13. Preparing the community: The success of any survey depends on the cooperation of the informants. Therefore, considering the nature of the survey method, it is necessary to mentally prepare the survey takers for the survey. If the survey is to be conducted through questionnaire method, then the community can be prepared through radio and other mass media or through the speech of a famous person or leader. The individuals selected through sampling can be explained in a specific way how their situation can be improved by this survey. While conducting the survey using schedule method, people's time facilities and psychological facilities should be kept in mind.

14. Compilation and editing of facts: While compiling the facts, care should be taken that the respondents should be talked to in a friendly manner, so that they do not hide anything. The reliability of the information collected should also be checked. Apart from collecting primary facts from informants, secondary facts should also be collected from related government, non-government, personal, published or unpublished books, records, letters, diaries etc.

Since survey is a responsible social-scientific work, in which the collected social facts are interpreted objectively, some things should be kept in mind while collecting the facts. Like- reliability, confidentiality, integrity and honesty, neutrality, gratitude towards informers, fearlessness in analysis, protection from unethical and illegal social activities and maintenance of relevance. While collecting survey data, along with these ethical responsibilities, efforts should also be made to present the findings in a timely manner. After collecting the facts, they are edited, which has the following steps - (a) Arranging the Information Systematically and Orderly, (b) Checking the answers, (c) removing unnecessary facts and (d) code numbering.

15. Classification and tabulation of facts: After editing, facts of one type are grouped together. This is called ‘classification of facts’. After this, they are tabulated to make them more understandable. On the basis of these, graphical display of facts is also done.

16. Analysis and conclusion of facts: In this stage, various facts are compared and the facts are analyzed on the basis of correlations found in them and on the basis of the same analysis, some general conclusions are drawn. New knowledge is obtained from these findings.

17. Preparation and publication of the report: This is the final stage of the survey. In every survey, the information obtained and the conclusions based on their analysis are published in the form of a report, so that the concerned people can get information regarding it. It is very important to have clarity, simplicity and purity of language and thoughts in the report, so that no misconception or wrong feeling can develop in anyone's mind. The surveyor should give such suggestions in the report, which can be used in practical field. The report should be sequential and attractive. Headings, tables, index, diagrams etc. should be arranged, sequentially and displayed in their proper place.

18. Usefulness of Survey: Survey is an important phase of research. It is the best means of gathering opinions on a topic from a wider community. Through this, new facts and figures can be collected. This is the best method of regional study. Through this, a quick solution to a problem is found and its immediate

need is met. During the survey, apart from the selected topic or problem, many new problems also come to light, which can become the subject of the survey in future. Through the survey, concerned institutions can be alerted to solve the problems. Through survey, new survey can be conducted further to the old discovered facts. For example, a few years ago, on the completion of 50 years of Doordarshan service, a survey was conducted that despite the advent of so many private channels, what percentage of people prefer to watch Doordarshan channels? Similarly, many companies, before launching their new products in the market, survey the market to find out what type of product is demanded by the consumers in the market. They manufacture their products accordingly.

Conclusion

Surveys are conducted in different ways in different areas and the purpose of all these surveys is to know the current situation about a subject, so that through the situation the needs of the people can be identified and their demands can be made by the government or government. Can be delivered to the concerned institution or department.

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