

ELEVENTH EDITION

EXPLORING  
**Marketing** Research



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# Chapter 7

# Survey Research



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

*After studying this chapter, you should*

1. Define surveys and describe the type of information that may be gathered in a survey
2. Identify sources of error in survey research
3. Summarize the ways researchers gather information through personal interviews
4. Know the advantages and disadvantages of conducting surveys using personal interviews, telephone calls, smartphone, tablet or PC
5. Appreciate the importance of pretesting questionnaires
6. Describe ethical issues that arise in survey research

# Introduction

- Respondents are the people who answer questions during a survey
- A survey represents a way of describing public opinion by collecting primary data through communicating directly with individual sampling units
- A sample survey is a more formal term for a survey emphasizing that respondents' opinions presumably represent a sample of the larger target population's opinion

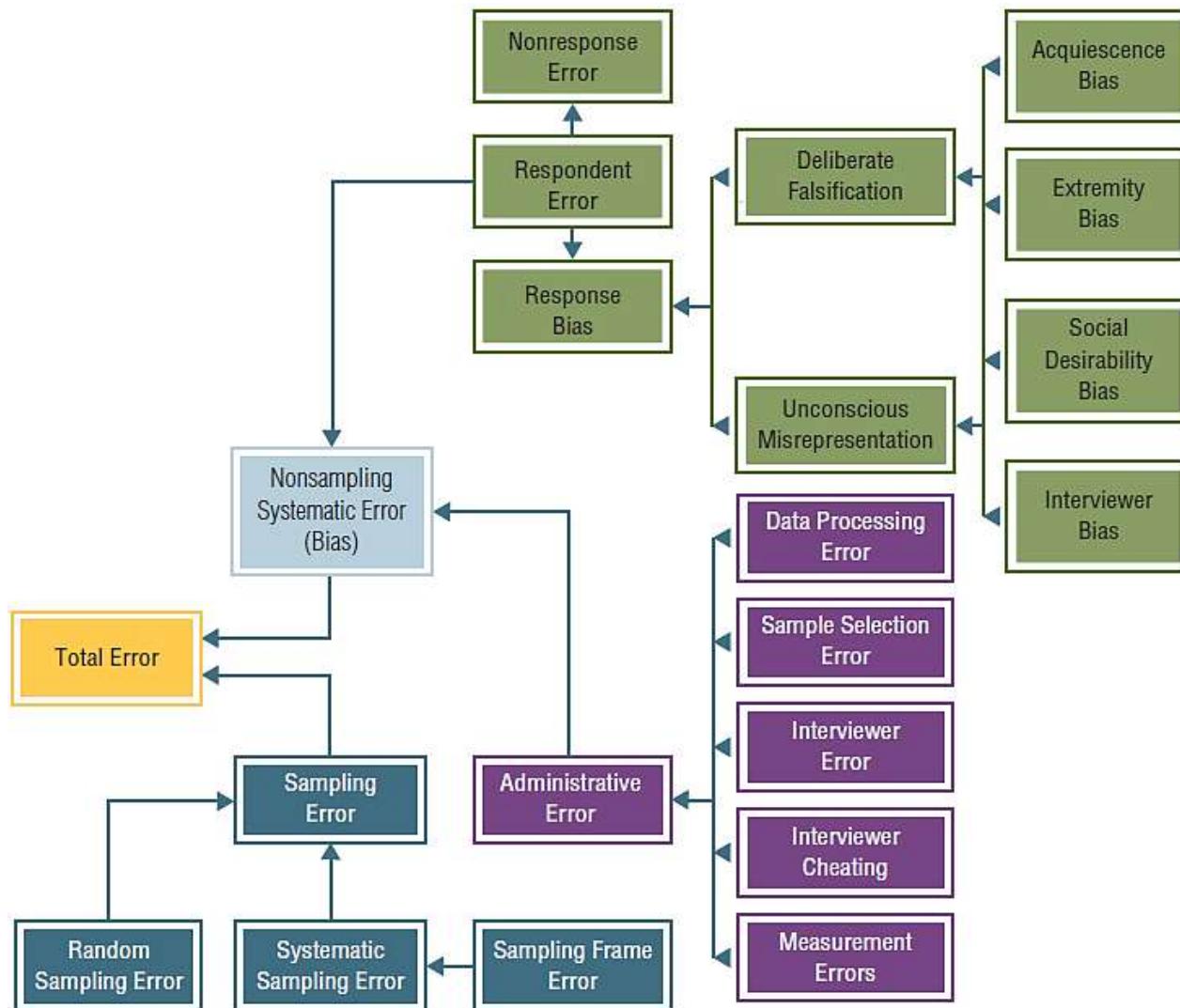
# The Types of Information Gathered Using Surveys

- Questions about product use, desirable features, and Web habits help with product development and advertising messages
- Surveys gather information to assess consumer knowledge and awareness of products, brands, or issues and to measure consumer attitudes, feelings and behaviors
- Certain aspects of surveys may be qualitative

# Advantages and Disadvantages of Survey Research

- Advantages
  - Quick
  - Inexpensive
  - Efficient
  - Accurate
  - Flexible
- Disadvantages
  - Can have errors, which cause misleading results

## EXHIBIT 7.1 Source of Survey Error That Distract from Representativeness



# Sources of Error in Surveys

- Random versus systematic sampling error
  - Sampling error—error arising because of inadequacies of the actual respondents to represent the population of interest
  - Systematic error—error resulting from some imperfect aspect of the research design
  - Population parameter—refers to some true value of a phenomenon within a population
  - Sample bias—a persistent tendency for the results of a sample to deviate in one direction from the true value of the population parameter

# Respondent Error

- A category of sample bias resulting from some respondent action such as lying or inaction
- Two major categories
  - Nonresponse error bias
  - Response bias

# Nonresponse Error

- The statistical difference between a survey that includes those who responded and those who failed to respond
  - Nonrespondents—sample members who are mistakenly not contacted or who refuse to provide input in the research
  - No contacts—potential respondents who do not receive the request to participate in the research
  - Refusals—people who are unwilling to participate
  - Self-selection bias—people who feel strongly about a subject are more likely to respond

# Response Bias

- A bias that occurs when respondents either consciously or unconsciously answer questions with a certain slant that misrepresents the truth
- Can include two broad categories:
  - Deliberate falsification
  - Unconscious misrepresentation

# Types of Response Bias

- Acquiescence bias—tendency for a respondent to try to agree with the viewpoint of a survey
- Extremity bias—some individuals tend to use extremes when responding to questions
- Interviewer bias—the presence of the interviewer influences respondents' answers
- Social desirability bias—bias in responses caused by respondents' desire, either conscious or unconscious, to gain prestige or appear in a different social role

# Administrative Error

- An error caused by the improper administration or execution of the research task
- Types:
  - Data processing error—incorrect data entry, incorrect computer programming, or other procedural errors during data analysis
  - Sample selection error—improper sample design or sampling procedure execution
  - Interviewer error—mistakes made by interviewers
  - Interviewer cheating—filling in fake answers or falsifying questionnaires during an interview

# What Can Be Done to Reduce Survey Error?

- Upon recognizing the problems, steps can be applied to reduce survey errors
- Future chapters discuss some ways to reduce error through effective questionnaire and sampling design

# Ways Marketing Researchers Conduct Survey Interviews

- Interactive survey approaches
  - Communication that allows spontaneous two-way interaction between the interviewer and the respondent
- Noninteractive media
  - Two-way communication by which respondents give answers to static questions that do not allow a dynamic dialog

# Conducting Personal Interviews

- Interactive face-to-face communication in which an interviewer asks a respondent to answer questions
- Advantages of personal interviews
  - Opportunity for feedback
  - Probing complex answers
  - Length of interview
  - Completeness of questionnaire
  - Props and visual aids
  - High participation rate

# Conducting Personal Interviews (cont'd.)

- Disadvantages of personal interviews

- Interviewer bias
  - ❖ Respondents act differently with different interviewers
  - ❖ Interviewer's tone of voice and appearance are influential
- Lack of anonymity of respondent
- Cost: personal interviews are expensive

# Other Interview Types

- **Mall intercepts**
  - Personal interviews conducted in a shopping center
- **Door-to-door interviews**
  - Personal interviews conducted at respondents' doorsteps in an effort to increase the participation rate in the survey
- **Callbacks**
  - Attempts to try and contact those sample members missed in the initial attempt
  - CATI—acronym for computer-assisted telephone interviews

# Personal Interviews: Global Considerations

- The manner of conducting and the receptiveness to personal interview varies dramatically around the world
- Cultural norms play a role in selecting a survey approach
- Researchers face both cultural and social norms when doing research that requires business people to participate

# Telephone Interviews: Landline Phones

- No call legislation
  - Marketers cannot call phone numbers listed on the do-not-call registry
  - Robocalls— a phone call conducted by an autodialer and using recorded voice message system
- Ownership
  - Coverage bias—misrepresentation of a population by survey results that disproportionately represent one group over another

# Telephone Interviews: Mobile Phones

- In the United States, telemarketing toward mobile phone numbers is prohibited unless the user opts in
- The area codes for mobile phones are not necessarily geographic
- The phones have varying abilities for automated responses and differing keypads

# Phone Interview Characteristics

- Random digit dialing
- Landline versus mobile phone results
- Speed
- Cost
- Absence of face-to-face contact
- Cooperation
- Incentives to respond
- Lack of visual medium

## EXHIBIT 7.2 Comparing and Contrasting Landline and Mobile Phones

	Landline Phone	Mobile Phone
Sampling units	Better for sampling household populations	Better for sampling populations of individual consumers/employees
Reaching respondents	Low probability of contact during working hours	Higher probability of getting an answer except on weekends
Cooperation	Once someone answers, slightly more willing to cooperate	Once someone answers, they often are preoccupied and less willing to talk particularly at any length
Restrictions	Do not call legislation restrictions may apply	Mobile phone numbers cannot be autodialed or conducted with computer voice-assistance unless respondent gives written consent
Cost to respondent	Generally none	Charges may apply and respondent should receive compensation
Geography	Area codes and exchanges indicate location of household	Phone numbers are not good indicators of individuals' locations

## EXHIBIT 7.2 Comparing and Contrasting Landline and Mobile Phones (cont'd.)

	<b>Landline Phone</b>	<b>Mobile Phone</b>
Population	Tends to be older than median, married, own fewer electronic durable goods per person	Tend to be younger (not eligible to participate), single, college-educated, likely to own more electronic durable goods per person
Technology	Relatively static	Changing rapidly with greater likelihood for visual presentation and text input
Ownership	About 65 percent in the United States and decreasing here and abroad	Over 90 percent in the United States with nearly 60 percent being smartphones
Expense	Relatively economical	Relatively expensive due to added requirements of use

# Other Aspects of Telephone Interviews

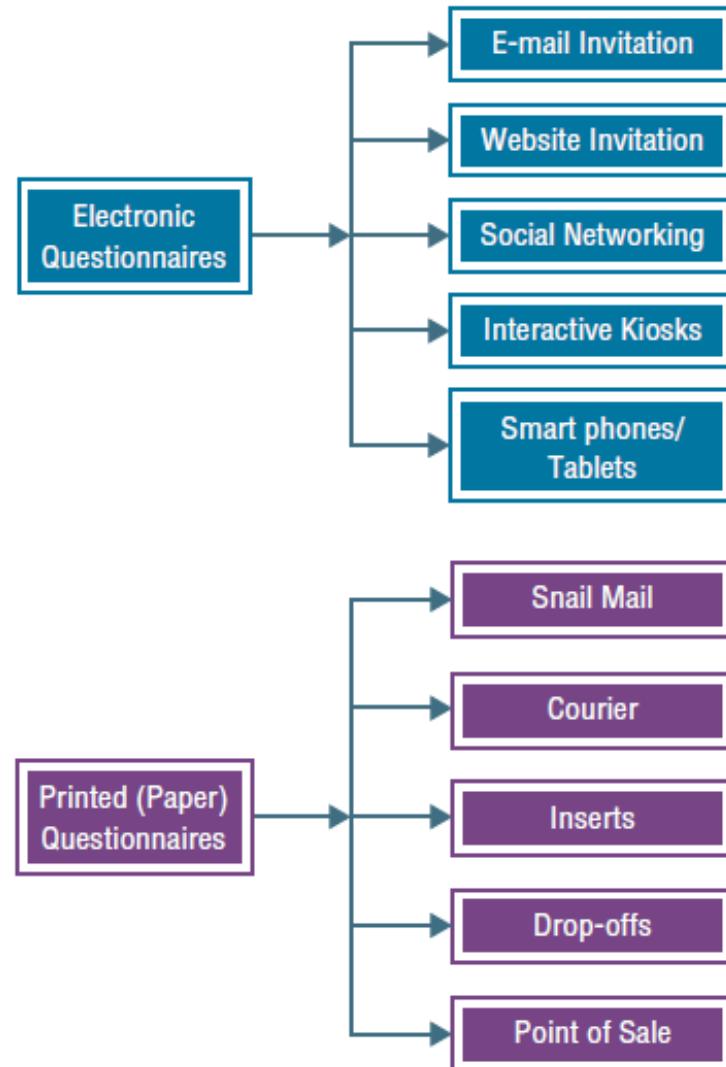
- Central location interviewing
  - Telephone interviews conducted from a central location, allowing firms to hire a staff of professional interviewers and to supervise and control the quality of interviewing more effectively
- Global considerations
  - Different cultures often have different norms about proper telephone behavior

# Surveys Using Self-Administered Questionnaires

- Self-administered questionnaires—surveys in which the respondent takes the responsibility for reading and answering the questions without having them stated orally by an interviewer

## EXHIBIT 7.3

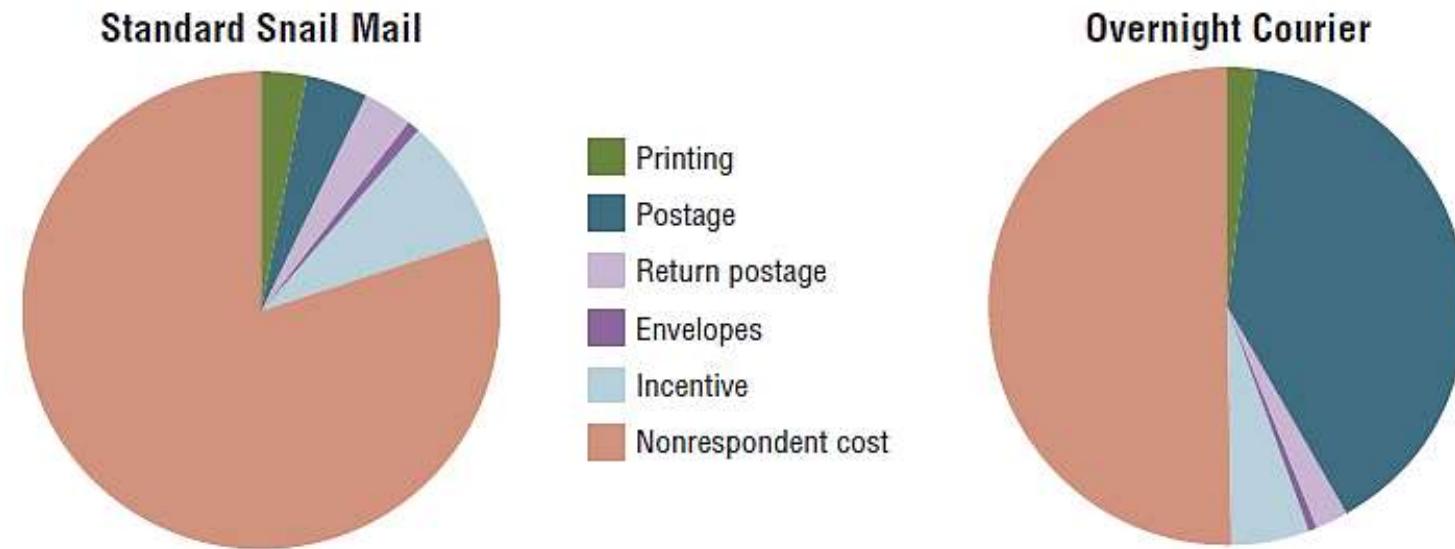
## Options for Self-Administered Questionnaires



# Mail Questionnaires

- Geographic flexibility
- Cost
- Respondent convenience
- Respondent anonymity
- Absence of interviewer
- Standardized questions
- Time is money
- Length of mail questionnaire—10 minutes or less

## EXHIBIT 7.4 Costs of Snail Mail Versus Courier Surveys



Standard Snail versus Overnight

Item	Standard Snail Mail		Overnight Courier	
	Per Response	Total	Per Response	Total
Printing	0.75	\$1,500	0.75	\$600
Postage	1.00	\$2,000	15.00	\$12,000
Return postage	0.80	\$1,600	0.80	\$640
Envelopes	0.20	\$400	0.20	\$160
Incentive	2.00	\$4,000	2.00	\$1,600
Nonrespondent cost	19.00	\$7,600	18.80	\$7,500
<b>Respondent Cost</b>	<b>\$23.75</b>	<b>\$9,500</b>	<b>\$37.50</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

# Response Rates

- The number of questionnaires returned and completed divided by the number of sample members
- Increasing response rates for mail surveys
  - Include a cover letter
  - Provide incentives
  - Give advance notification
  - Keep survey sponsorship anonymous
  - Keying mail questionnaires with codes - the researcher knows who has responded and remove them from the sample list

# Self-Administered Questionnaires Using Other Forms of Distribution

- Drop-off method
  - A survey method that requires the interviewer to travel to the respondent's location to drop off questionnaires that will be picked up later

# E-Mail Surveys

- Survey requests distributed through e-mail
- Can include:
  - Survey in the body of an e-mail
  - Survey as an attachment
  - A hyperlink to a Web-based survey
- Sampling and e-mail
  - Most people can be sampled via e-mail

# Advantages and Disadvantages of E-Mail

- Advantages
  - Speed
  - Lower cost
  - Faster turn around time
  - More flexibility
  - Less manual processing
  - Candid responses
- Disadvantages
  - Possible lack of anonymity
  - Spam filters
  - Problems with successful delivery

# Internet Surveys

- Advantages
  - Speed and cost-effectiveness
  - Visual appeal and interactivity
  - Respondent participation and cooperation
    - ❖ Crowdsourcing—inviting many, many people; even a small percentage generates a usable sample
  - Accurate real-time data capture
  - Callbacks
    - ❖ Should not be used for anonymous surveys
  - Personalized and flexible questioning
  - Respondent anonymity

# Improving Response Rates

- Click-through rate
  - The portion of potential respondents exposed to a hyperlink to a survey who actually click through to view the questionnaire
- Incentives:
  - Increase response rates
  - Prepaid incentives do better than promised incentives
  - Response rates increase with the size of incentive
  - Can influence what type of person responds
- Maximizing response rate does not guarantee sample representativeness

# Response Quality

- Internet surveys are still in their infancy in many ways
- Web-based survey approaches produce data that is as good as traditional landline phone surveys

# Text-Message Surveys

- Text-message surveys have all the advantages of mobile-phone surveys, including increased reach
- Can only be used for respondents who have opted in with expressed consent
- MMS messages can include graphic displays or even short videos

# Choosing an Appropriate Survey Approach

- Questions to determine the approach
  - Is the assistance of the interviewer necessary?
  - Are respondents interested in the issues being investigated?
  - Will cooperation be easily attained?
  - How quickly is the information needed?
  - Will the study require a long and complex questionnaire?
  - How large is the budget?
- Mixed-mode survey—more than one survey medium

## EXHIBIT 7.6 Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Survey Approaches

Characteristic:	Door-to-Door Personal Interview	Mall Intercept Personal Interview	Telephone Interview	Snail Mail Survey	E-mail / Internet Survey
Speed of data collection	Moderate	Fast	Very fast	Slow	Fastest
Geographic flexibility	Limited to moderate	Confined mostly to urban and suburban areas	High	High	High (worldwide)
Respondent cooperation	Moderate in getting an answer. Excellent once respondent agrees to participate	Good in agreement to respond. Moderate cooperation thereafter	Difficult to get an answer. Good cooperation thereafter. Varies landline versus cell	Moderate all the way around	Low from general population but high when hot button issue presented or sample is a computer panel
Versatility of questioning	Quite versatile	Extremely versatile	Limited versatility, particularly for cell calls	Not versatile; requires highly standardized format	Good versatility for logical branching and respondent assignment
Questionnaire length	Long	Moderate	Moderate for landline and short for cell	Moderate but varies depending on incentive	Moderate but varies depending on incentive
Item nonresponse rate	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Software can assure none
Possibility for respondent misunderstanding	Low	Low	Average	High	High
Degree of researcher or interviewer influence on responses	High	High	Moderate	Lowest	Low with exceptions depending on data source

## EXHIBIT 7.6 Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Survey Approaches (cont'd.)

Characteristic	Door-to-Door Personal Interview	Mall Intercept Personal Interview	Telephone Interview	Snail Mail Survey	E-mail / Internet Survey
Supervision of interviewers	Moderate	Moderate to high	High, especially with central location interviewing	Not applicable	Not applicable
Anonymity of respondent	Lowest	Moderate	Low	Highest	Moderate
Ease of callback or follow-up	Difficult	Most difficult	Easy	Easy, but takes time	Difficult if respondents are unknown. Easy if sample drawn from e-mail list
Cost	Highest	Moderate to high	Low to moderate	Low	Low to moderate depending on potential cost of access to sample
Special features	Visual materials may be shown or demonstrated; extended probing possible	Taste tests, product trials, viewing of marketing materials possible. Ideal for representing population of mall/shopping center shoppers	Fieldwork and supervision of data collection are simplified. Distinction must be made between landline and mobile/cell phone calls	Respondent may answer questions at own convenience; has time to reflect on answers	Streaming media software allows use of graphics and animation as well as random assignment to experimental conditions

# Pretesting Survey Instruments

- Pretesting—screening procedure that involves a trial run with a group of respondents to iron out fundamental problems in the survey design
- Researchers benefit by spotting problems in the pretest
- Three ways of pretesting:
  - Ask colleagues to screen the survey for problems
  - Ask the manager who asked for the survey to screen it for problems
  - A true pretest, or trial run, of the survey

# Ethical Issues in Survey Research

- Participants' right to privacy
- The use of deception
- Respondents' rights to be informed about the purpose of the research
- The need for confidentiality
- The need for honesty in collecting data
- The need for objectivity in collecting data