

The background of the slide is a spiral-bound notebook with a light beige, textured cover and a silver metal spiral binding on the left side. The text is centered on the page.

Descriptive or Survey Data

Collecting data to test hypotheses or answer questions about a topic or issue guided by scientific and disciplined inquiry

Classifications of Descriptive Research

- Observation
- Self-report
 - Questionnaires
 - Telephone surveys
 - Interviews
 - Cross-sectional
 - Longitudinal

Self-report requires the collection of standardized, quantifiable information from all members of a population or sample

Descriptive Research Constraints

- Questionnaires are hard to write
 - Cannot interpret for participants
 - Questions must be clear and unambiguous
- Response of participants
 - Who responds makes a difference
 - % or responses makes a difference



Steps to Descriptive Research

- Select a topic/define a problem
- State hypothesis or research question
- Review related literature
- Select participants
- Determine data collection procedures

Selection of Participants

- Carefully consider what target population most likely has the information needed
- Identify accessible population
- Determine sample size
- Select appropriate sampling technique
- Select sample



Data Collection—the Instrument

- Existing instruments—PRO
 - Validity and reliability established
 - Accessible
 - Faster
 - Thousands to choose
- Existing instruments—CON
 - May ask for unnecessary information
 - Not appropriate for study
 - May be expensive
- Original instruments
 - Need to be tested
 - Need validity and reliability
 - Assure researcher control



Plan Data Collection Procedures

- When instrument will be administered?
- Who will administer?
- To whom will instrument be given?
- How will instrument be administered?



Weaknesses to Surveys

- Poor planning
- Poor execution
- Poor instruments

Types of Surveys

- Attitude
- Opinion
- Development
- Follow-up
 - Internal/external evaluation of instruction program
 - Attitude
 - Opinion



Cross-sectional Survey

- Collection of data in single time from selected sample
- Single, stand-alone study



Longitudinal Surveys

Collection of data at two or more times to measure growth or development

Types of Longitudinal Surveys

- Trend—different groups and different samples over time—female valedictorians
- Cohort—same group-different samples over time
- Panel—same group-same sample over time
 - Participant loss
- Follow-up—same group-same sample survey done after original study completed



Self-report vs Observational

- Participants respond to questions about themselves
- Researcher obtains data through observation
- Researcher not involved with participants
- Observation of predetermined activities

Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Statement of problem (topic)
 - Must be of interest to participants
 - Must be defined in terms of specific objectives

– FOCUS THE SURVEY



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Selection of Participants must
 - Be able to provide desired information
 - Willing to provide it to the researcher



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Constructing the Questionnaire
 - Brief
 - Attractive
 - Easy to fill out
 - Error free
- **Carefully Plan**



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Constructing the Questionnaire
 - Avoid
 - Items not directly related to the topic
 - Fill in or essay questions
 - DO
 - Use structured, selection-type items
 - Create sections (sub areas) when possible



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Method of data collection
 - Mail
 - Telephone
 - Personal administration
 - interview



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Mail
 - Greatest standardization
 - Least training

 - Low response rate
 - Do not permit follow-up questions



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Telephone
 - High response rate
 - Fast

 - Require phone numbers of participants
 - Administrator training

Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Personal administrator
 - Rich data
 - Long time
 - Least standardization

Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Personal administrator
 - Rich data
 - Long time
 - Least standardization



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Types of items
 - Scaled (Likert-type) and semantic differential
 - Ranked items
 - Checklists
 - Free response
 - Time an issue
 - Scoring an issue

Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Table 8.2 page 286
- Guidelines for items
 - Only those that relate
 - Collect demographic info only if using it as comparison
 - Each question has a single concept
 - Don't jam items together to save space



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Leave “white spaces” for interest and clarity
- Write directions for completion clearly
- Do not use the back of the page
- Use bonded paper if possible
- Include cover letter, stamped envelop for return
- Contact information

–Consent



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- The cover letter
 - Use names not addresses
 - Include organization or endorsement if possible
 - Include topic, purpose, intent of study
 - Give reason for participant to respond—benefits to the participants, not you
 - Commit to share results
 - Address, phone number, e-mail
 - Call ahead if possible to alert participants



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Anonymity
 - No one can identify the participants—not even the researcher
- Confidentiality
 - Researcher promises not to give participant identity to anyone



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Pretest
 - Try a pilot study
 - Revise accordingly

Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- What to do when they don't respond
 - Send follow up letter and questionnaire
 - Call participants
- Expect
 - 30-50% first round
 - 20% more on second round
 - 10% after that



Conducting a Questionnaire Study

- Non responses
 - Try to determine if they could be different from responders
 - Try interviewing some non-responders
- Items can be non-responses also
 - Carefully analyze item for clarity, threats, or confusions