

Surveys

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial will briefly introduce you to surveys, demonstrating the following concepts:

1. [Introduction to Surveys](#)
2. [Survey Design](#)

1. Introduction to Surveys

A **survey** is a data gathering technique. It's an information collection tool, and a lot of organizations use these. Surveys allow organizations a way to gather data so that they can target the specific information that they want.

The following are examples of how surveys can be used:

- A store might use a survey to figure out something about its customers.
- Politicians might use a survey to gather information about their constituents.
- Someone hiring for a position in a company might use a survey to learn more about their labor market, who they can hire, and who is not available in that area, etc.

In all of these examples, the survey is a tool being used to increase the amount of specific information someone has. For each survey, the researcher has selected the **variables of interest**, or the variables that he or she is interested in gathering data on.



TERMS TO KNOW

Survey/Sample Survey

A data collection tool that individuals in a study can fill out and return to the researcher.

Variables of Interest

The variables the survey wishes to measure about those taking the survey.

2. Survey Design

A survey must be carefully designed to elicit the intended information. The **survey design** is an important element of surveys. If you are designing a survey, you want to get a representative sample of your population. So as with every sampling technique, designing a survey is all about the process and being able to get accurate data from a representative sample.



BIG IDEA

Just like with any sample, it's important to define what you're interested in before you begin surveying.



BRAINSTORM

You might ask yourself: What are the variables that you want to measure? What information do you want people to provide in your survey? Answering these questions is going to be important because those answers will help you understand the purpose of the information you generate with your survey. So, for example, if it's a survey about employment, you're going to want to ask about employment, former employment, current employment, and things like that.

IN CONTEXT

Suppose a teacher uses the following survey at the end of the year for her students:

Course Survey					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1. The course objectives have been clearly outlined for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The methods for evaluating student work have been applied fairly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. This course has challenged me intellectually.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I have worked hard to meet the requirements of this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. This course was harder than I thought it was going to be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I looked forward to attending classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I have learned a great deal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. This course covered more material than I thought it was going to.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I know more now than before taking this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This teacher wants to know whether or not she did a good job outlining course objectives. This survey asks about evaluating student work and academic challenge. You'll notice that she's provided answer choices from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The teacher thought about all of the different things she wanted to learn from her students including her teaching and listed them all in her survey. The information she gathers from this survey will help her answer the question of how clearly she outlined her course objectives for her students.



TERM TO KNOW

Survey Design

The way the survey is set up. This deals with the wording of questions and answer choices.



SUMMARY

To recap, surveys are used to obtain data or information from the population. It's important that you determine what you want to understand and why and for whom this is being collected, which may impact survey design. We talked about surveys, which are also called sample surveys. We also talked about variables of interest, which are the things that you wanted to measure because you're interested in knowing them.

Thank you and good luck!

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TERMS TO KNOW

Survey Design

The way the survey is set up. This deals with the wording of questions and answer choices.

Survey/Sample Survey

A data collection tool that individuals in a study can fill out and return to the researcher.

Variables of Interest

The variables the survey wishes to measure about those taking the survey.