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Psychology Study Material: Steps Involve in Conducting the Research

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Steps Involve in Conducting the Research

There are mainly five steps, which are essential while conducting surveys i.e.. ,

- **Conceiving the problem:** The purpose of the study must be carefully thought out and precisely defined. How is the information to be used? From whom it is obtained? What kind of information to be gathered etc.
- **Designing the instrument:** There are numerous ways by which information can be gathered from the general public such as mailed questionnaires, telephonic interviews, through internet etc. It must be carefully thought that which procedure is most effective in obtaining the needed information.
- **Sampling the population:** The problem of obtaining a representative sample of the population is one of the most difficult as well as significant in the field of measuring popular reactions. The sample to be studied must be drawn in such a manner each individual has an equal chance of being selected, and that the drawing of one does not influence the chances of any other being drawn. With this procedure, each age, sex, income, religious and ethnic group in the population will be proportionately represented in the sample. Of course there are a number of ways of properly drawing a sample.
- **Conducting interviews:** Even when the questions are carefully worded and carefully designed, a poor interviewer can bias the results. Experiments have shown that females are the best interviewers: at least 21 years of age, who like people, who are unbiased, who are good listeners, who have some college education, and who are fairly familiar with the section they are working in.
- **Interpreting the results:** Even when all the findings are carried out properly, there is always a chance of misinterpreting the results. Errors in questionnaires, statistical methods, and investigator's own subjectivity can easily bias the results.

Unobtrusive Measures of Behaviour

- Indirect ways of data collection
- The person/s who are the focus of interest may not be present at the time of investigation
- May be used for supplementing information collected through observation

- May be used as a replacement of observation
- In situations where direct observation is not possible

Unobtrusive measures of behaviour include:

- Archival data
- Physical Traces
- Archival data

Already existing records, documents, different forms of literature, newspaper items, photographs, movies, documentaries, biographies, autobiographies etc are used as evidence/information e. g. using newspaper records to study the rate of crime during the past 20 years. May be used to supplement data gathered through other sources

Physical Traces

Remains, remnants, fragments, objects and products of past behaviour are used as evidence; usually employed to supplement data from other sources.



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Physical traces can be of two types

- Use traces
- Products

Use Traces

Cues to the use or nonuse of objects and items provide significant evidence e. g. wall chalking, graffiti on walls of public places, milk cartons or tissue boxes in the garbage bags.

Products

Study of products, tools, weapons, sculpture etc used less frequently than physical traces.

