

Chapter : 5

Field Surveys

1. Choose the right answer from the four alternatives given below:

(i). Which one of the following helps most in planning for a field survey?

- (a) Personal interviews
- (b) Secondary information
- (c) Measurements
- (d) Experimentation

Answer: (a) Personal interviews

(ii). Which one of the following is taken up at the conclusion of a field survey?

- (a) Data entry and tabulation
- (b) Report writing
- (c) Computation of indices
- (d) None of the above.

Answer: (c) Computation of indices

(iii). What is most important at the initial stages of field survey?

- (a) Outlining the objectives
- (b) Collection of secondary information
- (c) Defining the spatial and thematic coverages
- (d) Sample design

Answer: (c) Defining the spatial and thematic coverages

(iv). What level of information is acquired during a field survey?

- (a) Macro level information
- (b) Maso level information
- (c) Micro level information
- (d) All of the above levels of information

Answer: (a) Macro level information

2. Answer the following questions in about 30 words:

(i). Why is a field survey required?

Answer: Like many other sciences, geography is also a field science. Thus, a geographical enquiry always needs to be supplemented through well planned field surveys. It serves the following objectives:

- (a) These surveys enhance our understanding about patterns of spatial distributions, their associations and relationships at the local level.
- (b) The field surveys facilitate the collection of local level information that is not available through secondary sources.
- (c) The field surveys are carried out to gather required information so as the problem under investigation is studied in depth as per the predefined objectives.

(ii). List the tools and techniques used during a field survey.

Answer: Field survey is basically conducted to collect information about the chosen problem for which varied types of tools are required. These include secondary information including maps and other data, field observation, data generated by interviewing people through questionnaires.

- Recorded and Published Data
- Field Observation
- Measurement
- Interviewing

(iii). What type of coverages need to be defined before undertaking a field survey?

Answer: During field studies, investigator has to decide whether the survey will be conducted in the form of census for the entire population or will be based on selected sample. If the study area is not very large but composed of diverse elements then entire population should be surveyed. In case of a large size area, one can limit the study to selected samples representing all segments of the population.

(iv). Describe survey design in brief.

Answer: From functional point of view, field surveys are designed in the following steps:

1. Defining the Problem: The problem to be studied should be defined precisely. It can be achieved by way of statements indicating the nature of the problem. It should also be clear through the title and sub-title of the topic of the survey.

2. Objectives: A further specification of the survey is done by listing the objectives. Objectives provide outline of the survey and in accordance to these, suitable tools of acquisition of data and methods of analysis will be chosen.

3. Scope: Scope of survey needs to be delimited in terms of geographical area to be covered, time framework of enquiry and if required themes of studies to be covered. This multi-dimensional delimitation of the study is essential in relation to fulfilment of the predefined objectives and limitations of analysis, inferences and their applicability.

4. Tools and Techniques: Field survey is basically conducted to collect information about the chosen problem for which varied types of tools are required. These include secondary information including maps and other data, field observation, data generated by interviewing people through questionnaires.

5. Compilation and Computation: Surveyor needs to organise the information of varied types collected during the fieldwork for their meaningful interpretation and analysis to achieve the set objectives. Notes, field sketches, photographs, case studies, etc. are first organised according to sub-themes of the study. Similarly, questionnaire and schedule based information should be tabulated either on a master sheet or on the spreadsheet.

6. Cartographic Applications: Different methods of mapping and drawing of diagrams and graphs and also use of computer in drawing them neatly and accurately. For getting visual impressions of variations in the phenomena, diagrams and graphs are very effective tools. Therefore, the description and analysis should be duly supported by these presentations.

7. Conclusion: At the end a report is prepared. On the basis of the report, we can provide the summary of the investigation.

(v). Why is the well-structured questionnaire important for a field survey?

Answer: Questionnaire plays an important role in a field survey. If it is properly designed, certainly we shall get accurate results from our investigations. On the other hand, if it is not properly designed then it will lead to many problems. Rather the entire purpose of field survey will be defeated. Questionnaire is the most

commonly used method in survey. Questionnaire is a list of questions either open-ended or close-ended for which the respondent gives answers. Questionnaire can be conducted via telephone, mail, live in a public area, or in an institute, through electronic mail or through fax and other methods. There are some points which must be borne in mind while constructing a questionnaire.

To draft a questionnaire or schedule is an art. The success of statistical investigation depends on proper drafting of the questionnaire. It is a highly specialised job and following points should be borne in mind:

- The number of questions in a schedule should be brief and limited as possible. Only relevant questions to the problem under investigation should be added. Ideally it should be between 20-30.
- The questions should be simple, clear and precise. Its language should be very simple so that informants may easily understand.
- All unambiguous questions should be avoided at all, complicated and long- worded questions irritate the respondents which results in careless; replies.
- No personal questions should be asked from respondents. Such questions should be avoided.

For example

- Do you take alcohol?
 - Do you tell a lie?
 - Does your boss scold you?
- Questions should be framed with right words. This ensures the validity. Starting a question with negative is undesirable. For example, Don't you think India is a corrupt country?
- Questions should not be based on calculations. Only those questions should be asked which the respondents may reply immediately. Moreover, questions should avoid memories.
- The objective type questions should be given preference. Either MCQ or yes-no options should be given but in case of need and requirement of investigation, open ended questions can also be used.

- The arrangement of the questions should be such it involves a logical flow of questions. For example, it is not making sense to ask a person:
 - What is your income?
 - Are you employed?
 - Or
 - How many kids do you have?
 - Are you married?

3. Design a field survey on any one of the following problems:

- (a) Environmental Pollution
- (b) Soil Degradation
- (c) Floods
- (d) Energy Issues
- (e) Land Use Change Detection

Answer: Students will choose the topic themselves and conduct a survey.