

Marketing Research

Chapter 8

Survey Research: An Overview

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this chapter, you should be able to

1. Define surveys, and explain their advantages
2. Describe the type of information that may be gathered in a survey
3. Identify sources of error in survey research
4. Distinguish among the various categories of surveys
5. Discuss the importance of survey research to total quality management programs

The Nature of Surveys

- Respondents
 - People who verbally answer an interviewer's questions or provide answers to written questions.
- Survey
 - A method of collecting primary data in which information is gathered by communicating with a representative sample of people.
- Sample Survey
 - A survey that emphasizes contacting respondents who are a representative sample of the target population.

The Nature of Surveys (cont'd)

- Survey Objectives: Type of Information Gathered
 - Surveys attempt to describe what is happening or to learn the reasons for a particular marketing activity.
 - Survey research is descriptive research:
 - Identifying characteristics of target markets
 - Measuring consumer attitudes
 - Describing consumer purchasing patterns
 - Surveys can be both quantitative and qualitative
 - Surveys can be designed to provide insights about causal explanations or to explore ideas.

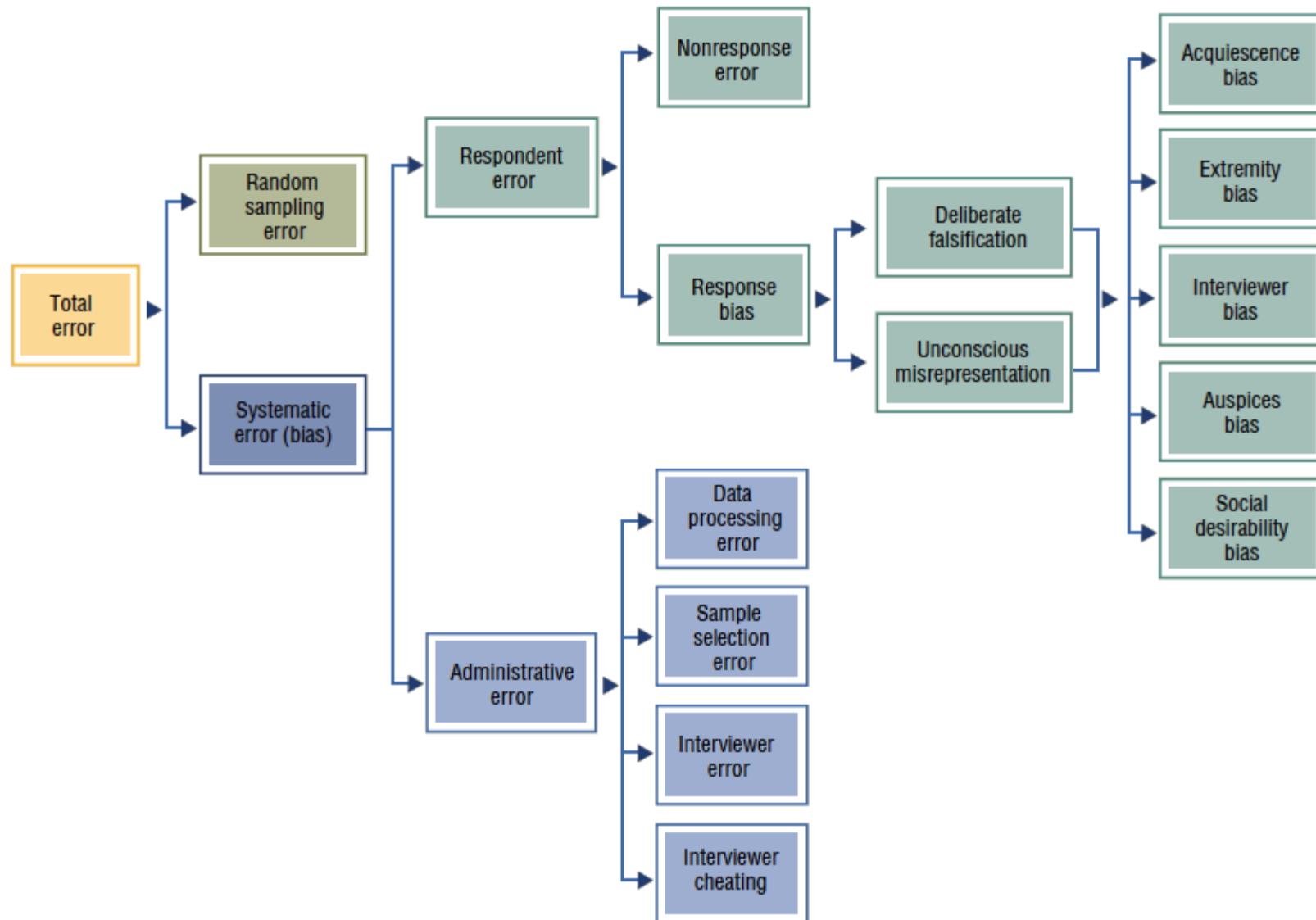
The Nature of Surveys (cont'd)

- Advantages of Surveys
 - Gathering information via surveys is:
 - Quick
 - Inexpensive
 - Efficient
 - Accurate
 - Flexible
- Disadvantages
 - Potential Problems
 - Poor design
 - Improper execution

Errors in Survey Research

- Random Sampling Error
 - A statistical fluctuation that occurs because of chance variation in the elements selected for a sample.
- Systematic Error
 - Error resulting from some imperfect aspect of the research design that causes respondent error or from a mistake in the execution of the research.
- Sample Bias
 - A persistent tendency for the results of a sample to deviate in one direction from the true value of the population parameter.

EXHIBIT 8.1 Categories of Survey Errors



Source: Exploring Marketing Research 9th Edition pp 162

Respondent Error

- Respondent Error
 - A category of sample bias resulting from some respondent action or inaction such as nonresponse or response bias.
- Nonresponse Error
 - The statistical differences between a survey that includes only those who responded and a perfect survey that would also include those who failed to respond.

Respondent Error

- Nonrespondents
 - People who are not contacted or who refuse to cooperate in the research.
 - **No contacts:** people who are not at home or who are otherwise inaccessible on the first and second contact.
 - **Refusals:** People who are unwilling to participate in a research project.
- Self-Selection Bias
 - A bias that occurs because people who feel strongly about a subject are more likely to respond to survey questions than people who feel indifferent about it.

Response Bias

- Deliberate Falsification
 - Occasionally people deliberately give false answers.
 - Misrepresent answers to appear intelligent
 - Conceal personal information
 - Avoid embarrassment
 - Average-person hypothesis:
 - Individuals may prefer to be viewed as average, so they alter their responses to conform more closely to their perception of the average person.

Response Bias

- Unconscious Misrepresentation
 - When a respondent is consciously trying to be truthful and cooperative, response bias can arise from the question format, the question content, or some other stimulus that affects their response to a question.
 - Sources of misrepresentation:
 - Misunderstanding the question
 - Unable to recall details
 - Unprepared response to an unexpected question
 - Inability to translate feelings into words
 - After-event underreporting

Types of Response Bias

- Acquiescence Bias
 - A tendency to agree with all or most questions.
- Extremity Bias
 - The tendency of some Individuals to use extremes when responding to questions.

Types of Response Bias

- 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.
 - **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.

Administrative Error

- An error caused by the improper administration or execution of the research task.
 - **Interviewer error:** mistakes made by interviewers failing to record survey responses correctly.
 - **Interviewer cheating:** filling in fake answers or falsifying questionnaires by an interviewer.

Classifying Survey Research Methods

- Structured and Disguised Questions
 - **Structured question:** imposes a limit on the number of allowable responses.
 - **Unstructured question:** does not restrict the respondents' answers.

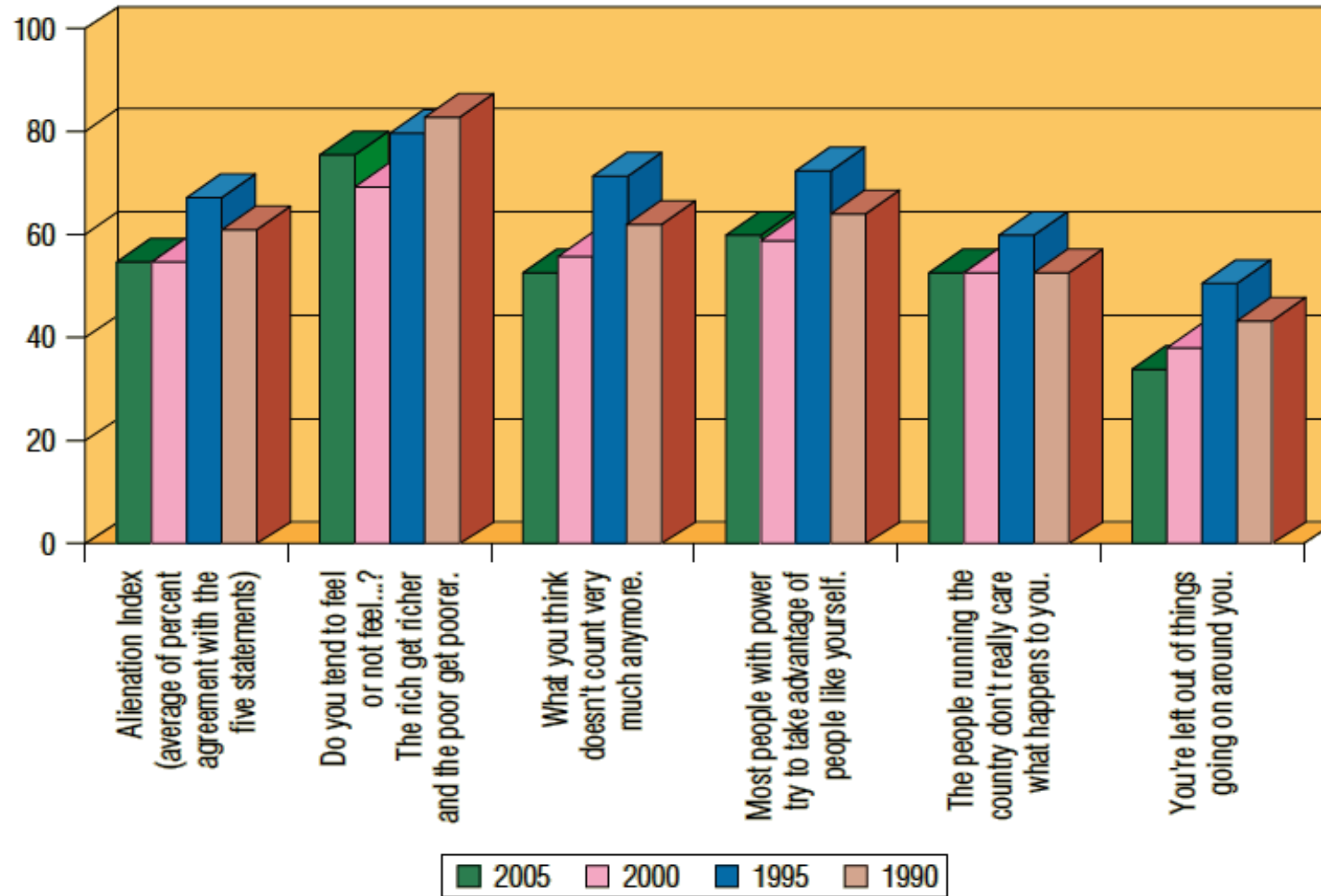
Classifying Survey Research Methods

- Structured and Disguised Questions
 - **Undisguised (direct) questions:** assume the respondent is willing to answer.
 - **Disguised (indirect) questions:** assume the purpose of the study must be hidden from the respondent.

Classifying Survey Research Methods (cont'd)

- Temporal Classification
 - **Cross-sectional study:** various segments of a population are sampled and data are collected at a single moment in time.

EXHIBIT 8.2 Longitudinal Research from a Harris Poll



Source: "Americans Feel More Isolated, Less Empowered, Poll Shows," The Wall Street Journal, December 8, 2005, <http://online.wsj.com>.

Classifying Survey Research Methods (cont'd)

- Temporal Classification (cont'd)
 - **Longitudinal study:** A survey of respondents at different times, thus allowing analysis of response continuity and changes over time.
 - **Tracking study:** uses successive samples to compare trends and identify changes in variables such as consumer satisfaction, brand image, or advertising awareness.
 - **Consumer panel:** a survey of the same sample of individuals or households to record (in a diary) their attitudes, behavior, or purchasing habits over time.

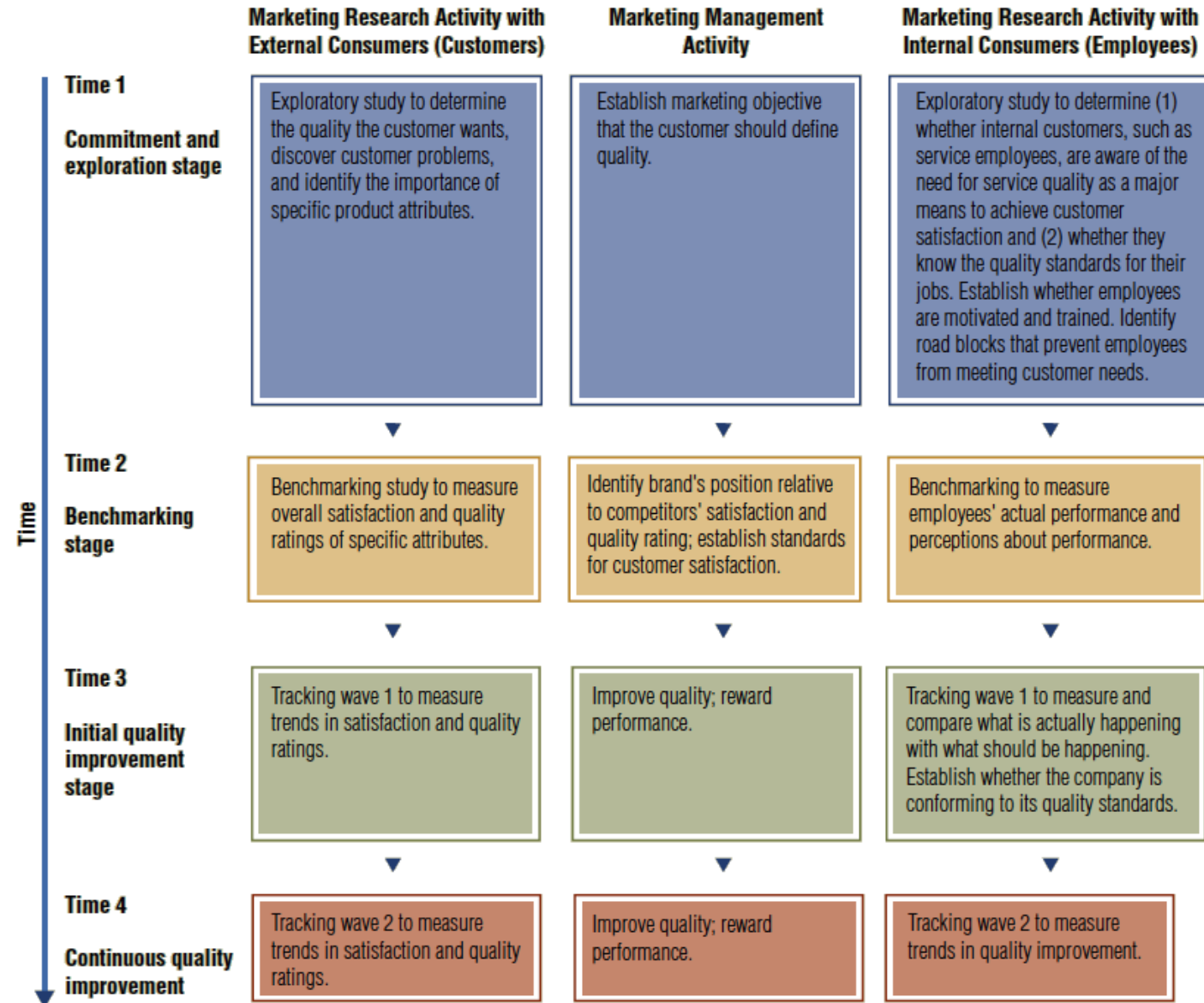
Total Quality Management and Customer Satisfaction Surveys

- Total Quality Management (TQM)
 - A business philosophy that emphasizes market-driven quality as a top organizational priority.
- What is Quality?
 - Quality is determined by the customer/buyer.
 - The degree to which a good or service corresponds to buyers' expectations.

Stages in Tracking Quality Improvement



EXHIBIT 8.3 Longitudinal Research for Total Quality Management



Tracking Quality Improvement

- Stage 1: Commitment and Exploration Stage
 - Management makes a commitment to total quality assurance.
 - Marketing researchers explore external customers' needs and problems.
 - Marketing researchers explore internal customers' needs, beliefs, and motivations.
- Stage 2: Benchmarking
 - Research establishes quantitative measures as benchmarks or points of comparison.
 - Overall satisfaction and quality ratings of specific attributes
 - Employees' actual performance and perceptions

Tracking Quality Improvement (cont'd)

- Stage 3: Initial Quality Improvement
 - Tracking Wave 1 measures trends and establishes a quality improvement process within the organization.
 - Translate quality issues into the internal vocabulary of the organization.
 - Establish performance standards and expectations for improvement.
- Stage 4: Continuous Quality Improvement
 - Consists of many consecutive waves with the same purpose—to improve over the previous period.
 - Quality improvement management continues.

EXHIBIT 8.4

Quality Dimensions for Goods and Services

Quality Dimension	Characteristic	Example
Goods		
Performance	The product performs its core function.	A razor gives a close shave.
Features	The product has auxiliary dimensions that provide secondary benefits.	A motor oil comes in a convenient package.
Conformance with specifications	There is a low incidence of defects.	A vineyard never sells spoiled wine.
Reliability	The product performs consistently.	A lawn mower works properly each time it is used.
Durability	The economic life of the product is within an acceptable range.	A motorcycle runs fine for many years.
Serviceability	The system for servicing the product is efficient, competent, and convenient.	A computer software manufacturer maintains a toll-free phone number staffed by technical people who can answer questions quickly and accurately.
Aesthetic design	The product's design makes it look and feel like a quality product.	A snowmobile is aerodynamic.

Source: Adapted from David A. Aaker, *Managing Brand Equity* (New York: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 90–95.

EXHIBIT 8.4 Quality Dimensions for Goods and Services (cont'd)

Quality Dimension	Characteristic	Example
Services		
Access	Contact with service personnel is easy.	A visit to the dentist does not involve a long wait.
Communication	The customer is informed and understands the service and how much it will cost.	A computer technician explains needed repairs without using overly technical terms.
Competence	The service providers have the required skills.	A tax accountant has a CPA certification.
Courtesy	Personnel are polite and friendly.	Bank tellers smile and wish the customer a “good day” at the close of each transaction.
Reliability	The service is performed consistently and personnel are dependable.	Employees of the office cleaning service arrive on schedule every Friday evening after working hours.
Credibility	Service providers have integrity.	The doctor who is performing a heart transplant is trustworthy and believable.

Source: Adapted from David A. Aaker, *Managing Brand Equity* (New York: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 90–95.

Key Terms and Concepts

- respondent
- sample survey
- survey
- random sampling error
- systematic error
- sample bias
- respondent error
- nonresponse error
- nonrespondent
- no contact
- refusal
- self-selection bias
- response bias
- acquiescence bias
- extremity bias
- interviewer bias
- social desirability bias
- administrative error
- data processing error
- sample selection error
- interviewer error
- interviewer cheating
- structured question
- unstructured question

Key Terms and Concepts (cont'd)

- undisguised question
- disguised question
- cross-sectional study
- longitudinal study
- tracking study
- consumer panel
- total quality management

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Thank you