

Social surveys Definition:

Key Terms

- **Pre-coded, or closed questions**

- **Likert Scale**

- **The imposition problem,**

- **Open-ended questions**

- **Structured Interviews:**

Types of Survey

- **There are different ways of administering surveys: note down four different ways below:**

Examples of Social Surveys over the two years of studying...

Task Two – True/False (also quite basic!)

Statement	True/ False
The data from Structured Social Surveys is easy to put into graphs and charts	
Given the same amount of money being available to conduct the research, It would be easier to obtain a large sample with a structured interview compared to a postal questionnaire.	
Using social surveys, you gain an in depth understanding of the respondents views of life	
One of the biggest strengths of survey based research is that it avoids the imposition problem	
If one wishes to achieve greater reliability one should do a structured interview rather than a self-completion questionnaire.	
It is easy to make comparisons using social surveys	
Self-completion questionnaires tend to have good reliability	
Survey data is good for making comparisons compared to more qualitative data	
Social surveys are a good way of collecting in-depth data about people's thoughts and feelings.	
Social surveys are one of the cheapest methods for collecting data from a wide, geographically dispersed sample of the target population	
Social surveys are good to use when researching complex and intricate topics	
It is generally easy to achieve large samples using structured questionnaires	
The data from social surveys sent through the post may lack validity because researchers cannot be sure who filled in the questionnaire	
Interviewer bias is more likely to be a problem in structured than in unstructured interviews.	
Social surveys are best used for simple, straightforward topics.	
Social Surveys are good for gaining an 'overview' of social trends	
There are few ethical issues with this method compared to more qualitative methods.	
Interpretivists prefer social surveys	

Task 3a: The Advantages of Social Surveys (contrast questionnaires/ interviews)

	Strengths	Evaluations
Theoretical Factors Positivism trends generaliseability correlations, 'causality' Interpretivism insight meaning empathy depth		<i>Say what might undermine these strengths</i>
Theoretical Factors Validity Reliability Representativeness		
Practical Factors Cost effectiveness Funding Ease of access Skills required		
Ethical Factors Informed consent Confidentiality/ anonymity Legality Harm to respondents Good for society?		
Nature of Topic -	Useful for...	Avoid when....

Task 3b: The Disadvantages of Social Surveys

Using the hand-out on social surveys, complete the table below....

	Disadvantages	Evaluations
Theoretical Factors Positivism trends generaliseability correlations, 'causality' Interpretivism insight meaning empathy depth		Say what you might do to overcome these disadvantages
Theoretical Factors Validity Reliability Representativeness		
Practical Factors Cost effectiveness Funding Ease of access Skills required		
Ethical Factors Informed consent Confidentiality/ anonymity Legality Harm to respondents Good for society?		
Nature of Topic -	Useful for...	Avoid when....

Task 4: Sampling Methods

Sampling is the process of selection a section of the population to take part in social research. Key terms associated with sampling include:

The Target Population –

The sampling Frame -

The research sample –

A sample is said to be **representative** if...

	Definition/ explanation	At least one strength	At least one limitation
Random Sampling			
Systematic sampling			
Stratified sampling			
Quota Sampling			
Multistage sampling			
Snowball sampling			

Task 5: Social Surveys Applied to Education

Select TWO of the topics below and jot down some of the theoretical, ethical and practical strengths and limitations of using (different types) of survey to research the following...

1. Researching how the values, attitudes, and aspirations of parents contribute to the achievement of certain groups of children
2. Why boys are more likely to be excluded than girls
3. Why white working class boys underachieve
4. Exploring whether teachers have 'ideal pupils' – whether they label certain groups of pupils favourably!
5. Looking at whether the curriculum is ethnocentric (racist/ homophobic)
6. Exploring the extent to which sexist 'bullying' disadvantageous children
7. Assessing the relative importance of cultural deprivation versus material deprivation in explaining underachievement
8. Assessing the success of policies aimed to improve achievement such as 'employing more black teachers'

Topic 1

<i>Strength or limitation of surveys applied to the topic</i>	<i>Analysis/ development</i>	<i>Analysis/ development</i>

Topic 2...

<i>Strength or limitation applied to the topic</i>	<i>Analysis/ development</i>	<i>Analysis/ development</i>

Task 6: Exam Style Question on social surveys

A question like this could come up on paper 1 or paper 3.

Outline two theoretical advantages of using social surveys in social research (10)

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