Chapter 14

Field Work: Data Collection
### Figure 14.1  Relationship of Field Work to the Previous Chapters and the Marketing Research Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of this Chapter</th>
<th>Relationship to Previous Chapters</th>
<th>Relationship to Marketing Research Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Field Work/Data Collection</td>
<td>• Marketing Research Process (Chapter 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Problem Definition
- Approach to Problem
- Research Design
- Field Work
- Data Preparation and Analysis
- Report Preparation and Presentation
Figure 14.2  Field Work:  An Overview
The Nature of Field Work

Field Work/Data Collection Process (Fig 14.3)

Selection of Field Workers

Training of Field Workers (Fig 14.4)

Supervision of Field Workers (Fig 14.5)

Validation of Field Workers

Evaluation of Field Workers (Fig 14.6)

Application to Contemporary Issues (Fig 14.7)

International  Social Media  Ethics

Opening Vignette

What Would You Do?

Be a DM! Be an MR! Experiential Learning
Figure 14.3 The Field Work/Data Collection Process

- Selection of Field Workers
- Training of Field Workers
- Supervision of Field Workers
- Validation of Field Workers
- Evaluation of Field Workers
Figure 14.4 Training Field Workers

1. Making the Initial Contact
2. Asking Questions
3. Probing
4. Recording Answers
5. Terminating the Interview
Selection of Field Workers

The researcher should:

- Develop job specifications for the project, taking into account the mode of data collection.
- Decide what characteristics the field workers should have.
- Recruit appropriate individuals.
General Qualifications of Field Workers

- **Healthy.** Field workers must have the stamina required to do the job.
- **Outgoing.** The interviewers should be able to establish rapport with the respondents.
- **Communicative.** Effective speaking and listening skills are a great asset.
- **Pleasant appearance.** If the field worker's physical appearance is unpleasant or unusual, the data collected may be biased.
- **Educated.** Interviewers must have good reading and writing skills.
- **Experienced.** Experienced interviewers are likely to do a better job.
Training of Field Workers

- **Making the Initial Contact** – Interviewers should be trained to make opening remarks that will convince potential respondents that their participation is important.

- **Asking the Questions**
  1. Be thoroughly familiar with the questionnaire.
  2. Ask the questions in the order in which they appear in the questionnaire.
  3. Use the exact wording given in the questionnaire.
  4. Read each question slowly.
  5. Repeat questions that are not understood.
  6. Ask every applicable question.
  7. Follow instructions, skip patterns, probe carefully.
Training of Field Workers (Cont.)

- **Probing** – Some commonly used probing techniques:
  1. Repeating the question.
  2. Repeating the respondent's reply.
  3. Using a pause or silent probe.
  4. Boosting or reassuring the respondent.
  5. Eliciting clarification.
  6. Using objective/neutral questions or comments.
## Commonly Used Probes and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Interviewer’s Probe</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any other reason?</td>
<td>(AO?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any others?</td>
<td>(Other?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anything else?</td>
<td>(AE or Else?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you tell me more about your thinking on that?</td>
<td>(Tell more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you mean?</td>
<td>(How mean?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat question</td>
<td>(RQ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you mean?</td>
<td>(What mean?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which would be closer to the way you feel?</td>
<td>(Which closer?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do you feel that way?</td>
<td>(Why?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you tell me what you have in mind?</td>
<td>(What in mind?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Training of Field Workers (Cont.)

- **Recording the Answers** – Guidelines for recording answers to unstructured questions:
  1. Record responses during the interview.
  2. Use the respondent's own words.
  3. Do not summarize or paraphrase the respondent's answers.
  4. Include everything that pertains to the question objectives.
  5. Include all probes and comments.
  6. Repeat the response as it is written down.

- **Terminating the Interview** – The respondent should be left with a positive feeling about the interview.
Figure 14.5  Supervising Field Workers

- Supervision of Field Workers
  - Quality Control and Editing
  - Sampling Control
  - Control of Cheating
  - Central Office Control
Supervision of Field Workers

Supervision of field workers means making sure that they are following the procedures and techniques in which they were trained. Supervision involves quality control and editing, sampling control, control of cheating, and central office control.

- **Quality Control and Editing** – This requires checking to see if the field procedures are being properly implemented.

- **Sampling Control** – The supervisor attempts to ensure that the interviewers are strictly following the sampling plan.

- **Control of Cheating** – Cheating can be minimized through proper training, supervision, and validation.

- **Central Office Control** – Supervisors provide quality and cost-control information to the central office.
Validation of Fieldwork

- The supervisors call 10 - 25% of the respondents to inquire whether the field workers actually conducted the interviews.

- The supervisors ask about the length and quality of the interview, reaction to the interviewer, and basic demographic data.

- The demographic information is cross-checked against the information reported by the interviewers on the questionnaires.
Evaluation of Field Workers

- **Cost and Time.** The interviewers can be compared in terms of the total cost (salary and expenses) per completed interview.

- **Response Rates.** It is important to monitor response rates on a timely basis so that corrective action can be taken if these rates are too low.

- **Quality of Interviewing.** To evaluate interviewers on the quality of interviewing, the supervisor must directly observe the interviewing process.

- **Quality of Data.** The completed questionnaires of each interviewer should be evaluated for the quality of data.
Figure 14.6 Evaluating Field Workers

Evaluation Criteria

Quantity
- Cost and Time
- Response Rates

Quality
- Quality of Interviewing
- Quality of Data
Figure 14.7 A Concept Map for Field Work/Data Collection Process

Field Work/Data Collection Process involves

Selection of Field Workers is followed by Recruitment Plan

Job Specification

Characteristics of Field Workers

Training of Field Workers

making leads to Answers

Initial Contact

Probing

Questions

Supervision of Field Workers

Sampling Control

Quality Control and Editing

Validation of Field Work is followed by Evaluation of Field Workers

10 to 25% of respondents for verification

Quality of Data

Quality of Interviewing

Quality

Cost and Time

Response Rate

Quantity

indicators are

measure

measure

upon interview completion

Control of Cheating

Central Office Control

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International Marketing Research

- Using local field workers is preferable because they are familiar with the local language and culture and can create an appropriate climate for the interview, being sensitive to the concerns of the respondents.

- Local field work agencies are unavailable in many countries; therefore, it might be necessary to recruit and train local field workers or import trained foreign workers.
International Marketing Research (Cont.)

- In many countries, interviewers tend to help respondents with the answers and select households or sampling units based on personal considerations rather than the sampling plan.
- Interviewer cheating can be more of a problem in many foreign countries because of the lax ethical culture in these countries.
- For these reasons, validation of field work is critical.
Marketing Research & Social Media

- A challenge a researcher faces is working closely with the client in making additional field work decisions.

- When collecting qualitative data, several decisions have to be made and these should be arrived at jointly by the researcher and the client. These decisions involve determining the type and specification of the social media channels to be monitored, developing a standardization of terms, conversation types, and content types, establishing a standardized coding scheme, and setting benchmarks.

- A crucial part of the organization of field work is forming a core nucleus team of people drawn from both the client and research organizations.
Ethics in Marketing Research

- Researchers and field workers should make the respondents feel comfortable by addressing their apprehensions and concerns.
- Researchers and field workers should respect respondents’ time, feelings, privacy, and right to self-determination.
- Researchers and field work agencies also are responsible to the clients for following the accepted procedures for the selection, training, supervision, validation, and evaluation of field workers.
- Field work procedures should be carefully documented and made available to clients.
Acronym: Vests

In the fieldwork/data collection process, the organization VESTS in the field-workers:

V alidation of fieldwork
E valuation of field-workers
S election of field-workers
T raining of field-workers
S upervision of field-workers
Acronym: Train

The areas in which field-workers should be trained may be summarized by the acronym TRAIN:

T erminating the interview
R ecording the answers
A sking the questions
I nitial contact development
N osy behavior: probing