

# **Principles and Practises of Survey Research: Designing and Conducting Surveys**

## **Instructors**

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## **Course Description**

Survey data is considered to be one of the “work horses” of empirical social science research. It is used, for example, to reveal descriptive information and to test theoretical propositions. However, designing and conducting surveys is not an easy task. Researchers have to make many decisions which might affect study results considerably: What is the appropriate sample method and sample size? Which question format should be used to obtain the information needed? Which survey mode should be used to collect respondents’ answers? The aim of this course is to give an overview and to discuss potential sources of errors in survey research. Focusing on the design and implementation of surveys, the course comprises problems concerning designing questionnaires, sampling, and collecting data. Based on a theoretical foundation of different types of biases in survey research, concrete examples will be analysed. Moreover, students have the possibility to present and discuss their own empirical project and the problems involved with regard to survey methodology (e.g. sampling strategy or questionnaire design).

## **Course Outline**

(Thematic blocks for both lectures and seminar sessions)

### **I Introduction**

- Overview on the field of survey methodology
- Basic principles of survey design and conducting surveys
- Survey research ethics

### **II Data Collection Methods**

- Different types of data collection methods (face-to-face, telephone, online, etc.)
- Errors related to data collection methods (systematic errors, random errors)

### **III Questionnaire Design**

- Question format, wording and order
- Questionnaire design and its dependence on the mode of data collection

### **IV Methods of Survey Sampling**

- Different types of sample designs (probability, non-probability)
- Requirements for representativeness
- Errors related to sample designs

## **Teaching methods**

Lectures (50%), seminars (50%)

**Grading**

Course presentation (100%)

**Credit points and type**

3 Empirical methods

**Requirements**

No special requirements

**References**

Literature will be provided at the beginning of the course

**Software**

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**Language**

English or German (depending on participants)

**Organization and time**

The course is split up into lectures (2.5 days) and seminars (2.5 days). They are held at University of Kassel, Witzenhausen.

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