The challenge of conducting a quantitative business research: Analysis of issues with survey design, sampling, validity, and reliability

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Abstract:

The aim of this literature research article was to provide insight into the challenges that quantitative researchers face and to analyze the specific issues with surveys. Several studies have been synthesized and analyzed. Building upon the current knowledge of the field, this article highlighted some specific areas of concern, including sampling, validity, and reliability. While survey research is a method of choice among quantitative scholars and practitioners, the rigor with which it is conducted within the business community remains a topic of interest. This article indicates a direction to future research.

Keywords: Business Research, Quantitative Methodology, Survey Design, Sampling, Validity, Reliability

1. Introduction

Businesses across the world collect information to gain deep insight about market trends, competitors, consumer behaviors, potential opportunity for growth, and any kind of threats that could inhibit their performance. Therefore, survey research has become a growing field with 20,000 job openings in the United States alone and an estimated growth rate of 24% over the next decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (2012).

As the demand for business research continues to grow, surveys have been extremely popular among quantitative researchers and the design of choice to investigate several issues, particularly in marketing and customer behavior. Besides, a survey design involves collecting data from a representative sample with the intent to generalize the findings to a larger population (Barlett, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001). In addition, several researchers argued that survey design is both economical and capable of yielding a quick turnaround in the data collection process (Couper & Miller 2008; Frippiat & Marquis, 2010). However, this process is not always conducted with the same rigor in business as compared with the academia.

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