

B.A.PART-II (SOCIOLOGY)

PAPER-III (Methods of Social research)

Topic- Types of social survey
College- MMC,P.U(Department of
Sociology)

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Types of Social survey

➤ **Learning objective:**

- To know about the types of Social survey.

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

A Survey is conducted by sending a set of pre-decided questions to a sample of individuals from a target market. This will lead to a collection of information and feedback from individuals that belong to various background, ethnicities, age groups etc. Surveys can be conducted via online and offline mediums. Due to the improvement in technological mediums and their reach, online mediums have flourished and there is an increase in the number of people depending on online survey and polls.

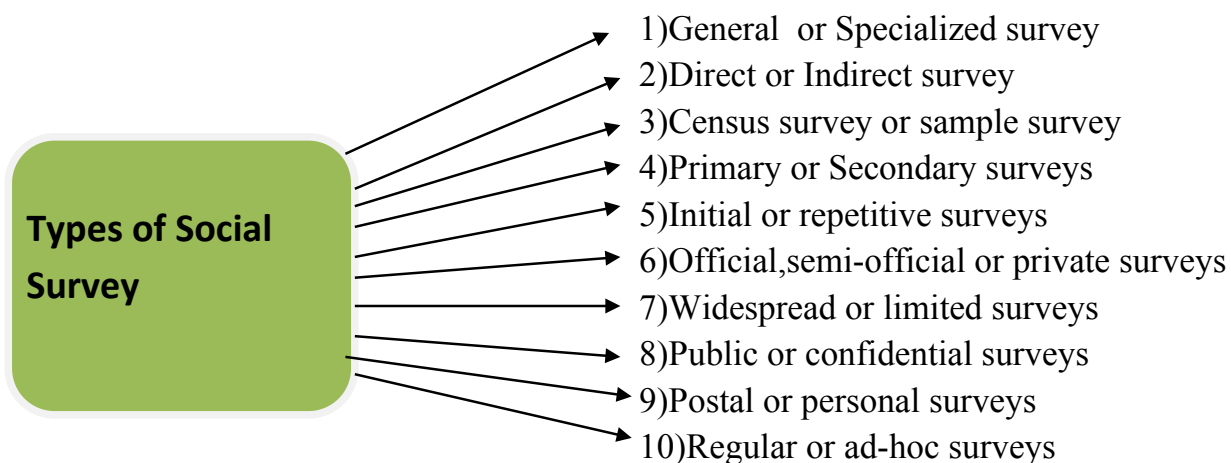
A social survey in its broadest sense, has a reference to a first-hand investigation, analysis and co-ordination of economic, sociological and other related aspects of a selected community or group.

A survey may be undertaken with the primary purpose of formulating a programme for amelioration of the conditions of life and work of a community or a group, implying some frame in the mind of the surveyor as to what the conditions ideally ought to be.

The purpose of a social survey may also be to provide scientifically gathered facts or materials affording some empirical basis for the social theorists to set up their conclusions.

As the history of the development of survey movement unfolds itself, we come across such trail-blazers as John Howard, a philanthropist and reformer, Fredrick Leplay, a reformer and economist, Charles Booth, a Reformer and statistician.

➤ Types of Social survey



1. **General or specialized surveys:** Originally, social survey was taken to be two kinds –general and specialized. In the general survey the community is made the subject of study like a country, state, town or village. In the specialized or topical survey the study is confined to some special aspect only e.g. unemployment, health, cleanliness, labor welfare, child welfare etc.
2. **Direct or indirect surveys:** Direct survey is one in which the facts can be quantitatively interpreted while, on the other hand, no such quantitative interpretation is possible in the case of an indirect survey, e.g. the survey of population is direct, while on the other hand, the surveys of the state of health or the level of nutrition are indirect. Different problems of social sciences are studied by both kind of survey.
3. **Census survey or sample survey:** in the census survey the different parts of the entire area are individually studied and the figures are then compiled into one. On the other hand, in the sample survey, instead of the whole is being studied, a part which represents the entire area is taken. Now this representative part is studied. Compared to the census survey, the sample survey is far less expensive and it is, therefore, very popular in the study of rural sociology which makes much use of it.
4. **Primary or secondary surveys:** in the primary survey, the survey work is started right from the beginning. In this, the surveyor himself collects facts concurring with his objectives and hence the primary surveys are more reliable and pure. But, if some data have already been collected in the study of any subject a new start has

not to be made. The survey conducted under these circumstances is called a secondary survey. It is obvious that when the situation is favorable to a secondary survey there is much saving of time and money.

5. **Initial or repetitive surveys:** if the survey conducted in the area is the first of its kind, it is called an initial survey while if some survey has been done in the past then the present survey is termed a repetitive survey. An initial survey involves comparatively greater effort and exertion and comparable data are not available. In repetitive survey the information obtained is more reliable and can be compared.
6. **Official, semi-official or private surveys:** As the names indicate, official survey is the survey sponsored by the government, semi-official survey is the survey conducted by universities, district boards, municipalities and other similar semi-official institutions and private survey is a survey attempted by an individual. Among these, official survey has the greatest probability of success because it is not hampered by a dearth of finances or trained personnel. Semiofficial survey is not only less economic but also more difficult. In the private survey, the problem of expenditure, time and trained personnel is even more acute. But, in spite of the fundamental difficulties, some semi-official and private surveys have yielded better results than some government surveys.
7. **Widespread or limited surveys:** surveys are given these names according to their extension or coverage. A survey covering a greater area is called widespread survey while a more delimited or less extensive survey is known as a limited survey. A limited survey is comparatively more reliable and less liable to mistakes but it carries with it the probability of some of the facts being omitted. On the other hand, a widespread survey includes many aspects of the subject under study and presents a more complete picture. But, due to its extension, it becomes less reliable because the probability of irregularities is increased.
8. **Public or confidential surveys:** it is evident from the very name that public surveys are those in which the processes and results of study are not concealed while the confidential surveys are those in which the processes and results are not revealed to people. Whether the survey is going to be public or confidential depends upon its nature and aim.
9. **Postal or personal surveys:** postal survey, as the term itself implies, is a method in which the surveyor obtains the answers by sending the questionnaire by post. If the survey is to be a personal one then the surveyor has to move about the area to be surveyed

and collect information. Postal survey certainly does economies upon effort and money but the information which it can obtain is very limited and lacks reliability. Although personal survey demands more time, energy and money the information obtained is correspondingly more comprehensive and more reliable.

10. **Regular or ad-hoc surveys:** regular surveys are conducted after the lapse of a fixed period of time. The organization made for an ad-hoc survey is temporary and is dissolved after the survey has been completed. An ad-hoc survey, in comparison with a regular survey, supplies less extensive and less comparative information but it, all the same time, involves the expenditure of less time, money and energy.

➤ **Conclusion**

So, Social survey is the most commonly used research technique in Sociology. It is a methodical gathering of social data from a sample of the target population through standardized interviews or questionnaires. The data thus collected is collated and systematically analysed quantitatively. It provides descriptive information about the variables studied, Correlations between two or more variables and causal analysis.