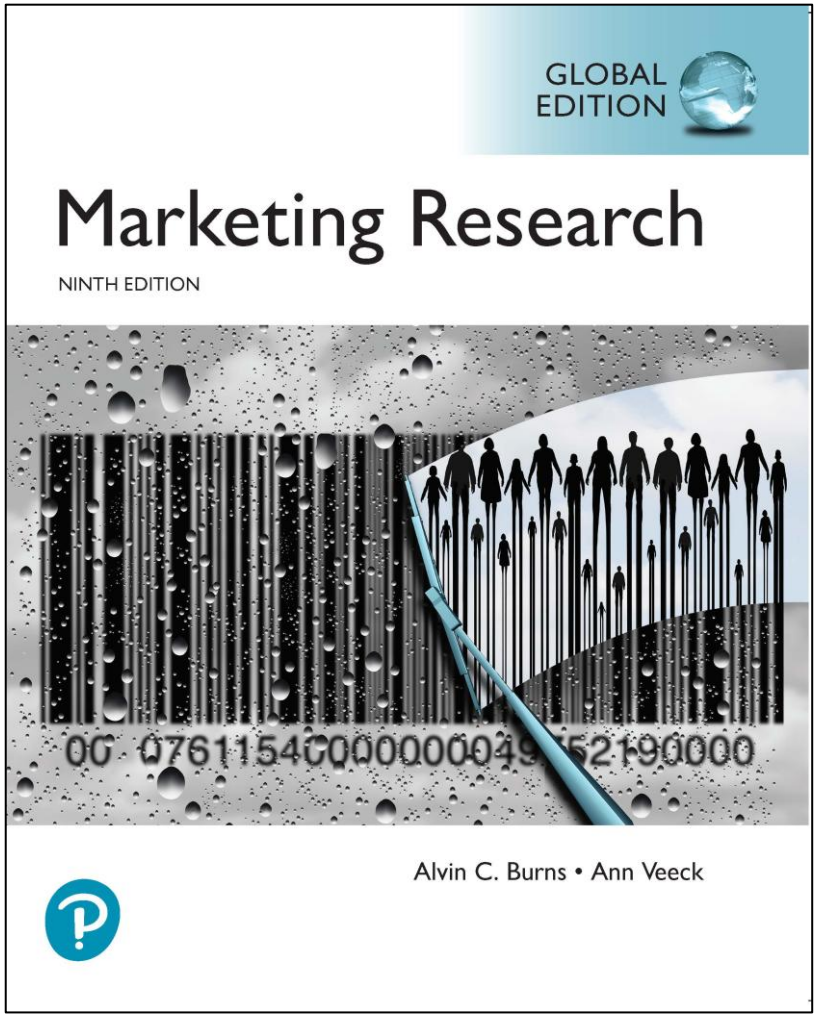
Marketing Research

Ninth Edition, Global Edition



Chapter 3

Research Design

Learning Objectives

In this chapter you will learn

3.1 What research design is and why it is important

3.2 The three major types of research design: exploratory, descriptive, and causal

3.3 How exploratory research design helps the researcher gain understanding of a problem

3.4 The fundamental questions addressed by descriptive research and the different types of descriptive research

3.5 What is meant by causal research and the different types of experimental research design

3.6 The different types of test marketing and how to select test-market regions

Research Design

- **Research design** is a master plan specifying the methods and for collecting and analyzing the needed information.

Why Is Research Design Important?

- Good research design is the “first rule of good research”.
- Knowledge of the needed research design allows advance planning so that the project may be conducted in less time and typically at a cost savings due to efficiencies gained in preplanning.

Objectives of Research Design

- To gain background information and to develop hypotheses
- To measure the state of a variable of interest
- To test hypotheses that specify the relationships between two or more variables

Three Types of Research Designs

- Exploratory
- Descriptive
- Causal

Exploratory Research

- **Exploratory research** is unstructured, informal research usually conducted at the outset of research projects.
- It is usually conducted when the researcher does not know much about the problem.

Uses of Exploratory Research

- Gain background information
- Define terms
- Clarify problems and hypothesis
- Establish research priorities

Exploratory Research Methods (1 of 2)

- **Secondary Data Analysis**: the process of searching for interpreting existing information relevant to the research topic
- **Experience Surveys**: refers to gathering information from those knowledgeable on the issues relevant to the research problem
  - **Key-informant** technique: gathering information from those thought to be knowledgeable on the issues relevant to the problem
  - **Lead-user survey**: used to acquire information from lead users of a new technology

Exploratory Research Methods (2 of 2)

- **Case Analysis**: a review of available information about a former situation(s) that has some similarities to the current research problem
- **Focus Groups**: small groups brought together and guided by a moderator through an unstructured, spontaneous discussion for the purpose of gaining information relevant to the research problem

Descriptive Research

- **Descriptive research** is undertaken to describe answers to questions of who, what, where, when, and how.
- It is undertaken to collect data to examine characteristics of consumer and/or markets.
- It is desirable when we wish to project a study's findings to a larger population, if the study's sample is representative.

Descriptive Research Classifications

- **Cross-sectional** studies
- **Longitudinal** studies

Descriptive Research Studies (1 of 3)

- **Cross-sectional studies** measure units from a sample of the population at only one point in time (or “snapshot”).
  - Sample surveys are cross-sectional studies whose samples are drawn in such a way as to be representative of a specific population.
  - These studies are usually presented with a margin of error.

Descriptive Research Studies (2 of 3)

- **Longitudinal studies** repeatedly measure the same sample units of a population over time.
- Since they involve multiple measurements over time, they are often described as “movies” of the population.

Causal Research

- **Causality** may be thought of as understanding a phenomenon in terms of conditional statements of the form “If *x*, then *y*.”
- Causal relationships are often determined by the use of experiments.

Experiments

- An **experiment** is a type of study in which one or more independent variables are manipulated to see how they affect a dependent variable, while also controlling the effects of additional extraneous variables.

Independent Variable

- **Independent variables** are those variables which the researcher has control over and wishes to manipulate.
- For example: level of ad expenditure; type of ad appeal; display location; method of compensating salespersons; price; type of product.

Dependent Variables

- **Dependent variables** are those variables that are measured in response to changes in independent variable.