Basic Model

Interaction of Rights and Obligations

Subject

Subject's Rights

Researcher's Obligation

Researcher

Researcher's Rights

Subject's Obligation

Client

Client's Rights

Researcher's Obligation

Researcher's Rights

Client's Obligations

Subject's Rights

Client's Obligations
Researchers’ Obligations to Respondents

Researchers should:

• Avoid deceiving respondents needlessly
• Avoid invading respondents’ privacy
• Be adequately concerned for respondents
• Guarantee properly informed consent
  – Secure parental consent if necessary
Deceptive Practices

• Unrealized promise of anonymity
  – Use of UV ink or ID numbers
• Falsifying sponsor identification
  – Misrepresent true sponsor
  – Pretending to be student working on research for professor
• Selling under the guise of research (suggling)
• Fundraising under the guise of research (fruggling)
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**ShortSurveys.com**

**Do you currently have more than $5000 in total credit card debt?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**What is your highest interest rate?**

- [ ] 0-2.99%

**If you could, would you like to reduce your monthly credit payments by 60%?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**What is your zip code?**

- [ ] Zipcode

Submit

If you are unable to submit this survey, please click here.

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It is our hope that you will find our recurring mailings of interest. Our goal is to send local ads, great product deals, and interest targeted national offers a few times a week. We do not wish to send you mail you do not want to receive.

Printed for "Michael R. Hyman" <mhyman@nmsu.edu> 4/24/2003
Preference Surveys, 07:13 PM 7/15/02 -0600, Two Question Survey

Date: Mon, 15 Jul 2002 19:13:41 -0600 (MDT)
X-CID: 18
X-UserID: mhyman@nmsu.edu
X-Email: mhyman@nmsu.edu
X-From: bob@bob.mydelivere.com
Reply-To: bob@bob.mydelivere.com
To: mhyman@nmsu.edu
From: "Preference Surveys" <bob@bob.mydelivere.com>
Subject: Two Question Survey

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1: Do you own your home?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

2: Would you like to save over $100 per month in mortgage costs by refinancing at a lower interest rate?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

Submit

If you are unable to "Submit" for any reason, please CLICK HERE.

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It is our hope that you will find our recurring mailings of interest. Our goal is to send local ads, great product deals interest targeted national offers a few times a week. We do not wish to send you mail you do not want to receive.

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If you would like to contact us, please feel free to write, call, or fax.
Deceptive Practices (cont.)

• Misrepresenting research procedures
  – Questionnaire/interview length
  – Possible follow-up contacts
  – Purpose of study
  – Uses made of results
  – Undelivered compensation for participation
Respondent Privacy Issues

• Observation without informed consent
  – Hidden cameras and microphones
  – Voice pitch analysis
  – Garbology studies
• Use of qualitative research techniques
• Overly personal questions
• Merging data from several sources
Inadequate Concern for Respondents

- Inconvenient contact time
- Incompetent or insensitive interviewer
- Failure to debrief after deception/disguise
- Needlessly depress respondents
- Too frequent use of research/polling
- Nondisclosure of research procedures (length, follow-ups, purpose)
Researchers’ Obligations to Clients

• Avoid abuses of research design or methods or results
• Avoid abusing clients
Abuses of Research Design or Methods or Results

- Conducting unnecessary research
- Research wrong or irrelevant problems
- Continuing research after spotting early error
Abuses of Research Design or Methods or Results (cont.)

• Use of unwarranted shortcuts to secure contract or save expenses
  – Altering sample design to obtain enough respondents
  – Accuracy requirements not met by reduced sample size
  – Improper subject verification procedures
  – Inadequate questionnaire pre-testing
Abuses of Research Design or Methods or Results (cont.)

- Misrepresenting research limitations
  - Hiding non-response and sampling errors
  - Artificiality of experimental designs
- Overstating validity or reliability of conclusions
- Use of inappropriate analytical techniques
- Insufficient expertise to conduct research
- Overly technical language in reports
Abuses of Clients

- Over-billing for project
- Low-ball pricing
- Failure to maintain client confidentiality
- Failure to avoid conflict of interest
- Reusing data collected for another client
- Conducting multiple interviews simultaneously
Clients’ Obligations to Researchers

- Appropriate use of research proposals
- No pseudo pilot studies
- No disclosure or use of researchers’ specialized techniques or models
- No cancellation of project (or refusal to pay) without cause
- No research solely to support a priori conclusions
- Encourage objectivity, even for advocacy research
Advocacy Research

Conducted to support a specific legal claim
Clients’ Obligations to Respondents

- Not to use responses to identify prospect list
- Acting on dangerous/damaging results
Respondents’ Obligations to Researchers

• To be truthful
  – Mischievous respondents major threat
Field Service Ethics

Services should avoid:

- Over-reporting hours worked
- Falsifying data
- Use of professional respondents
General Ethical Checklist
(from Ethical Codes are Not Enough)

1. Does my decision treat me, or my company, as an exception to a convention that I must trust others to follow?
   Yes  No

2. Would I repel customers by telling them?
   Yes  No

3. Would I repel qualified job applicants by telling them?
   Yes  No

4. Have I been cliquish? 
   (If answer is "Yes," answer Questions 4a to 4c. If answer is "No," skip to Question 5.)
   Yes  No
   4a. Is my decision partial?
   Yes  No
   4b. Does it divide the goals of the company?
   Yes  No
   4c. Will I have to pull rank (use coercion) to enact it?
   Yes  No

5. Would I prefer avoiding the consequences of this decision?
   Yes  No

6. Did I avoid any of the questions by telling myself that I could get away with it?
   Yes  No
Some Ethical Dilemmas

First consider why the nine situations described on the next two slides are ethically problematic. Then read each of the eight vignettes and consider your answers to the related questions.
A project director went to the Marketing Research Director's office and requested permission to use ultraviolet ink to pre-code a questionnaire for a small survey. The project director pointed out that although the cover letter promised confidentiality, respondent identification was needed to permit adequate cross tabulation of the data. The Marketing Research Director gave approval.

In a study intended to probe deeply into the buying motives of a group of wholesale customers, the Marketing Research Director authorized the use of the department's special attache cases equipped with hidden tape recorders to record the interviews.

One of the products of X Company is brassieres. Recently, the company has been having difficulty making decisions on a new product line. Information was critically needed regarding how women put on their brassieres. The Marketing Research Director therefore designed a study in which two local stores agreed to put two-way mirrors in the foundations of their dressing rooms. Observers behind these mirrors successfully gathered the necessary information.

In another study concerning consumers' magazine reading habits, the Marketing Research Director decided to contact a sample of consumers using the fictitious company name, Media Research Institute. This successfully camouflaged the identity of X Company as the sponsor of the study.

X Company belongs to a trade association with an active marketing research sub-group. At the sub-group's meetings, the Marketing Research Director regularly exchanges confidential price information. The Marketing Research Director then turns the information over to the company's sales department but is careful not to let the marketing vice-president know about it. Profits are substantially enhanced, and top management is protected from charges of collusion.
In the trial run of a major presentation to the Board of Directors, the marketing vice president deliberately distorted some recent research findings. After some thought, the Marketing Research Director decided to ignore the matter since the vice president obviously knew what he was doing.

A market testing firm to which X Company gives most of its business recently went public. The Marketing Research Director of X Company had been looking for a good investment and proceeded to buy some $20,000 of their stock. The firm continues as X Company’s leading supplier for testing.

A recent study showed that several customers of X Company were misusing Product B. Although this posed no danger, customers were wasting their money by using too much of the product at a time. But, yesterday, the Marketing Research Director saw final story board on Product B’s new ad campaign which not only ignored the problem of misuse but actually seemed to encourage it. The Marketing Research Director quietly referred the ad manager to the research results, well known to all of the people involved with Product B’s advertising, but did nothing beyond that.

You are a study director for a research company undertaking a project for a regular client of your company. A study you are working on is about to go into the field when the questionnaire you sent to the client for final approval comes back drastically modified. The client has rewritten it, introducing leading questions and biased scales. An accompanying letter indicates that the questionnaire must be sent out as revised. You do not believe that valid information can be gathered using the revised instrument.
A leading manufacturer of breakfast cereals was interested in learning more about the kinds of processes consumers go through when deciding to buy a particular brand of cereal. To gather this information, an observational study was conducted in the major food chains of several large cities. The observers were instructed to assume a position well out of the shopper's way, as it was felt that the individuals would change their behavior if they were aware of being observed.

Questions:

Is it ethical to systematically observe another person's behavior without their knowledge? What if the behavior had been more private in nature? What if the behavior had been recorded on video tape?

Does use of this method of data collection invade an individual's privacy?

Even if there is no harm done to the individual, is there harm done to society?

Does the use of such a method add to the concern over Big Brotherism?

Can you suggest alternative methods for gathering the same information?
A project director requested permission to use ultraviolet ink in pre-coding questionnaires on a mail survey. He pointed out that the cover letter referred to an anonymous survey, but he said he needed respondent identification to permit selected follow-up among those not responding. The marketing research director gave his approval.

**Questions:**

If you had been the marketing research director, would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?

Is it ethical to give the impression of anonymity when, in fact, it does not exist?

What results might be obtained if the respondent was asked to sign the questionnaire while being promised that his opinions would be kept confidential? Is this procedure preferable to the one described above?
Pharmaceutical Supply Company derives its major source of revenue from physician-prescribed drugs. Until recently, Pharmaceutical Supply had maintained a dominant position in the market. A new competitor had entered the market, however, and was quickly gaining market share.

In response to competitive pressure, Pharmaceutical Supply's management decided it need to conduct an extensive study concerning physician decision-making with regard to selection of drugs. Janice Rowland, Marketing Research Director, decided the best way to gather this information was through the use of personal and telephone interviews. Ms. Rowland directed the interviewer to represent herself as an employee of a fictitious market research agency as she felt that a biased response would result if the physicians were aware that Pharmaceutical Supply was conducting the study. In addition, the interviewers were instructed to tell the physicians that the research was being conducted for their own purpose and not for a particular client.

Questions

Was Ms. Rowland's decision to withhold the sponsor's true name and purpose a good one?

Do the physicians have a right to know who is conducting the research?

It has been argued that use of such deception prevents a respondent from making a rational choice as to whether or not she wishes to participate in a study. Comment on this.

What kind of results might have been obtained if the physicians knew the true sponsor of the study?

What are the consequences for the research profession of using this form of deception?
The Samuelson Research Firm was contacted by Larkin Electronics, a manufacturer of small electronic radio parts, to conduct a survey of Larkin's employees. The purpose of the research was to determine the state of worker morale and the importance of certain employee grievances so that Larkin's management could gauge the strength of its position in collective bargaining with the employee union. Samuelson Research agreed to conduct the study.

Questions:

What are the consequences for the employees of participating in such a survey?

Is this research detrimental to the employee's immediate self-interest?

Do researchers have the right to ask questions concerning this issue?

Does this research undercut the position of labor's representatives in as much as they have no corresponding way of gauging the intensity of management's opinions?

If you were director of the research, what kind of questions might you ask of Larkin management?

Would you have agreed to conduct such a survey?

In general, should a researcher be concerned with the uses of the research which he conducts and/or its effects on the research participants?
Marketing Research Facts was asked to carry out the data collection and analysis procedures for a study designed by a consumer goods company. After studying the research purpose and design, a consultant for Marketing Research Facts concluded that the design was poorly conceived. First, he felt that the design was more complex than was necessary in as much as some of the data could be obtained through secondary sources, precluding the necessity of much primary data collection. Secondly, the proposed choice of primary data collection would not produce the kinds of information sought by the company.

Although the consultant advised the company of his opinions, the company insisted on proceeding with the proposed design. Marketing Research Facts was reluctant to undertake the study as they felt that the firm's reputation would be harmed if its name were associated with poor research.

Questions:

What decision would you make if you were a consultant for Marketing Research Facts?

In general, should a researcher advance his opinion of a proposed design, or should he remain silent and simply do the work?

Is it ethical to remain silent in such situations?
A well-known car agency needed to make a decision concerning whether or not to import a relatively unknown line of foreign cars to complement its domestic line. To aid in its decision making, the agency contracted a research firm to conduct a study to determine potential consumer interest and demand for this foreign line. The results indicated that substantial awareness and interest existed, and consequently the decision was made to take on the new line. To publicize the new line a special preview was arranged for interested community groups such as local newspaper and radio people, executives in related automotive industries, filling station and repair shop owners, and leaders of men's and women's clubs. The agency's owners also wanted to invite the survey participants who had expressed an interest in the make and consequently asked the research firm to make known to them the respondents' names. The research firm refused to comply with this request, arguing that to do so would be a violation of the respondent's promised anonymity.

Questions:

Should the research firm comply with the agency's request?

Does the car agency have the right to receive the participants' names since it has paid for the research?

Would it have made a difference if the study had not been one to determine sales potential?

What are some of the consequences of making the respondents' names known to the car agency?

If the question had been anticipated before the survey was begun, could the interview structure have avoided the dilemma in which the company and the agency now find themselves?
A beer producer conducted a study to determine whether consumers perceive an actual or psychological difference in the taste of beer. As part of the experiment, each subject was asked to taste three unmarked cans of beer, and to describe the taste of each. Although lead to believe that the three cans of beer were different beers, the participants discovered when the beers were unmasked that the three cans were, in fact, the same beer. A fair proportion of participants had stated that the three beers tasted quite differently.

Questions:

It is argued that such an experiment may induce stress in some participants in as much as it may lead them to doubt their competence as shoppers. Comment on this argument.

Should the investigator offer some sort of psychic support (i.e. debriefing) upon completion of the experiment in order to counteract any possible negative effects?

Under what conditions might debriefing be problematic?
A field experiment was conducted to determine the most effective advertising appeal for an immunization program. The control communities received no appeal at all, whereas the experimental communities received varying appeals in different strengths.

Questions:

Is it ethical to withhold benefits (i.e. knowledge of the immunization program) from participants in the control group?

What participant rights are being violated?

How can this research be justified? Do the long term benefits of the research outweigh the costs?