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1. **QUALITATIVE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND RELEVANT EXAMPLES**

Different methods are used in qualitative research. The most common ones are interviews, focus group discussions, observational methods and document analysis.

**INTERVIEWS**

Interviews are useful to explore experiences, views, opinions, or belief on specific matters. There are different grades of structuring the interview: structured, semi- structured or open/ in-depth, dependent on the characteristics of structuring the interview by the researcher. Often the researcher develops a topic list before the start of the interview, which can be used in a flexible manner. As the interview is a product of interaction between the researcher and the interviewee, the setting and skills of the researcher are of importance.

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

These are useful to examine how social knowledge is produced. The researcher stimulates discussion in order to examine how knowledge and ideas develop and operate in a given group. Most of the times, a facilitator guides a discussion about a particular topic in a group of usually 6-12 people. Some sensitive issues might be more easily discussed within a group, although personal information’s might be withheld, for instance when persons are acquainted with each other or because of hierarchical relations within the group. The role of a facilitator is to create can open atmosphere, involve participants in the discussion and manage this discussion. The organization of a focus group requires a careful attention.

**OBSERVATIONAL METHODS**

 These are used to understand phenomenon by studying people’s accounts and actions in an everyday context. There are different types of observations, with various degrees of research participation, like non participating observation (e.g. by using video recordings), and participants observation.

1. **METHODS USED FOR QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION**

A data that can be counted or expressed in numerical constitute the quantitative data. It is commonly used to study the events or levels of concurrence and is collected through a structured questionnaire asking questions starting with “how much” or “how many”. As the quantitative data is numerical, it represents both definite and objective data. Furthermore, quantitative information is much sorted for statistical and mathematical analysis, making it possible to illustrate it in forms of charts and graphs. Any traditional or online data collection method that helps in gathering numerical data is a proven method of collecting quantitative data.

**PROBABLITY SAMPLING**

A definite method of sampling carried out by utilizing some form of random selection and enabling researchers to make a probability statement based on data collected at random from the targeted demographic. Data is collected randomly from the selected sample rules out the possibility of sampling bias.

There are three significant types of probability sampling

1. Simple random sampling: more often, the targeted demographic is chosen for inclusion in the sample.
2. Systemic random sampling: any of the targeted demographic would be included in the sample, but only the sample is selected randomly, rest are selected in the ordered fashion as if one out of every ten people on the list.
3. Stratified random sampling: it allows selecting each unit from a particular group of the targeted audience while creating a sample. It is useful when the researchers are selective about including a specific set of people in the sample, i.e., only males or females, managers or executives, people working within a particular industry.

**INTERVIEWS**

Interviewing people is a standard method used for collection of data. However, the interviews conducted to collect quantitative data are more structured, wherein the researchers ask only a standard set of questionnaires and nothing more than that. There are three major types of interviews conducted for data collection

1. Telephone interviews: for years, telephone interviews ruled the charts of data collection methods. However, nowadays, there is a significant rise in conducting video interviews using the internet, Skype, or similar online video calling platforms.
2. Face- to- face interviews: it is a proven technique to collect data directly from the participants. It helps in acquiring quality data as it provides a scope to ask detailed questions and probing further to collect rich and informative data. Literacy requirements of the participants are irrelevant as face-to- face interviews offer ample opportunities to collect non verbal data through observation or to explore complex and unknown issues. Although it can be an expensive and time consuming method, the response rates of this interview are often higher.
3. Computer assisted personal interviewing: it is nothing but a similar setup of the face to face interview where the interviewer carries a desktop or laptop along with him at the time of interview to upload the data obtained from the interview directly into the database. This saves a lot of time in updating and processing the data and also makes the entire process paperless as the interviewer does not carry a bunch of papers and questionnaires.

**SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRES**

The surveys are designed in a manner to legitimize the behavior and trust of the respondents. More often, checklists and rating scale type of questions make the bulk of quantitative surveys as it helps in simplifying and qualifying the attitude or behavior of the respondents. There are two significant types of survey questionnaires used to collect online data for quantitative market research.

1. Web based questionnaire: this is one of the ruling and most trusted methods for internet based research or online research. In a web based questionnaire, they receive an email containing the survey link, clicking on which takes the respondents to a secure online survey tool from where he /she can take the survey or fill in the survey questionnaire. The primary benefit of a web based questionnaire is flexibility; respondents are free to take the survey in their free time using a desktop, laptop, tablet, or mobile.
2. Mail questionnaire: in a mail questionnaire, the survey is mailed out to a host of the sample population, enabling the researcher to connect with a wide range of audiences. The mail questionnaire typically consist of a packet containing a cover set that introduces the audience about the type of research and reason why it is being conducted along with a prepaid return to collect data online.

**OBSERVATION**

In this method researchers collect quantitative data through systematic observations by using techniques like counting the number of people present at the specific event at a particular time and a particular venue or number of people attending the event in a designated place. Naturalistic observation is used to collect both quantitative and qualitative. However, structured observation is more used to collect quantitative rather than qualitative data.

1. Structured observation: in this type of observation method, the researcher has to make careful observations of one or more specific behaviors in a more comprehensive or structured settings compared to naturalistic or participant observation. In a structured observation, the researchers rather than observing everything, focus only on very specific behaviors’ of interest. It allows them to quantify the behaviors they are observing. When the observations require a judgment on the part of the observers- it is often described as coding, which requires a clearly defining a set of target behaviors.

**DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Document review is a process used to collect data after reviewing the existing documents. It is an efficient and effective way of gathering data as documents are manageable and are the practical resources to get qualified data from the past. Apart from strengthening and supporting the research by providing supplementary research data document review has emerged as one of the beneficial methods, to gather quantitative research data.

Three primary document types are being analyzed for collecting supporting quantitative research data

1. Public records: under this document review, official, ongoing records of an organization are analyzed for further research. For example, annual reports policy manuals, student’s activities, game activities in the university etc.
2. Personal document: in contrast to public documents, this type of document review deals with individual personal accounts of individuals’ actions, behavior, health, physique, etc. for example, the height and weight of the students, distance students are traveling to attend the school, etc.
3. Physical evidence: physical evidence or physical documents deal with previous achievements of an individual or of an organization in terms of monetary and scalable growth.