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Assignment: Read about Data collection methods and summarize the following in a maximum of 6 typed pages

1. Qualitative data collection methods with relevant examples.

2. Quantitative data collection method with relevant examples.

Data collection can be defined as a process in which information about a particular area of study or information about are particular topic are collected and reviewed.

Data collection can be from either the Primary or secondary source

**Primary source:** In this, the researcher collects first hand data e.g. Interview, survey and experiments.

Secondary source: the researcher collects information from a pre existing source e.g. published or unpublished reports, journals and articles.

**Qualitative data collection methods**

Qualitative data are mostly non-numerical and usually descriptive or nominal in nature. This means the data collected are in the form of words and sentences. Often (not always), such data captures feelings, emotions, or subjective perceptions of something. Qualitative approaches aim to address the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of a program and tend to use unstructured methods of data collection to fully explore the topic. Qualitative questions are open-ended. Qualitative methods include focus groups, group discussions and interviews. Qualitative approaches are good for further exploring the effects and unintended consequences of a program. They are, however, expensive and time consuming to implement. Additionally the findings cannot be generalized to participants outside of the program and are only indicative of the group involved. Qualitative data collection methods play an important role in impact evaluation by providing information useful to understand the processes behind observed results and assess changes in people’s perceptions of their well-being. Furthermore qualitative methods can be used to improve the quality of survey-based quantitative evaluations by helping generate evaluation hypothesis; strengthening the design of survey questionnaires and expanding or clarifying quantitative evaluation findings. These methods are characterized by the following attributes - they tend to be open-ended and have less structured protocols (i.e., researchers may change the

• Data collection strategy by adding, refining, or dropping techniques or informants); they rely more heavily on interactive interviews; respondents may be interviewed several times

• To follow up on a particular issue, clarify concepts or check the reliability of data; they use triangulation to increase the credibility of their findings (i.e., researchers rely on

• Multiple data collection methods to check the authenticity of their results);

Regardless of the kinds of data involved, data collection in a qualitative study takes a great deal of time. The researcher needs to record any potentially useful data thoroughly, accurately, and systematically, using field notes, sketches, audiotapes, photographs and other suitable means. The data collection methods must observe the ethical principles of research. The qualitative methods most commonly used in evaluation can be classified in three broad categories –

* In-depth interview

• Observation methods

• Document review

***Examples;***

* Interviews

Interviews are useful to explore experiences, views, opinions, or beliefs on specific matters. Accounts can be explored and compared to others, to develop an understanding of the underlying structures of beliefs (See chapter 4 in Green & Thorogood, 2010). 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 (e.g. the ability to build a sense of trust (developing rapport), the way of phrasing questions, give the interviewee room to tell a story, body language). Furthermore, it is important to think about the type of transcription of audio tapes**.**

**Quantitative data collection methods**

Quantitative data is numerical in nature and can be mathematically computed. Quantitative data measure uses different scales, which can be classified as nominal scale, ordinal scale, interval scale and ratio scale. Often (not always), such data includes measurements of something. Quantitative approaches address the ‘what’ of the program. They use a systematic standardized approach and employ methods such as surveys and ask questions. Quantitative approaches have the advantage that they are cheaper to implement, are standardized so comparisons can be easily made and the size of the effect can usually be measured. Quantitative approaches however are limited in their capacity for the investigation and explanation of similarities and unexpected differences. It is important to note that for peer-based programs quantitative data collection approaches often prove to be difficult to implement for agencies as lack of necessary resources to ensure rigorous implementation of surveys and frequently experienced low participation and loss to follow up rates are commonly experienced factors. The Quantitative data collection methods rely on random sampling and structured data collection instruments that fit diverse experiences into predetermined response categories. They produce results that are easy to summarize, compare, and generalize. If the intent is to generalize from the research participants to a larger population, the researcher will employ probability sampling to select participants. Typical quantitative data gathering strategies include

***Examples;***

* Experiments/clinical trials.

. • Observing and recording well-defined events (e.g., counting the number of patients waiting in

• Emergency at specified times of the day). Obtaining relevant data from management information systems.

• Administering surveys with closed-ended questions (e.g., face-to face and telephone interviews,