

University of Mumbai



M.Sc in Information Technology
Revised Syllabus 2019-2020

PSIT101 & PSIT1P1 - Research in Computing

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UNIT II - BEGINNING STAGES OF RESEARCH PROCESS

BASED ON WILLIAM G. ZIKMUND

Chapter 7:

Qualitative Research Tools

- What Is Qualitative Research?

Research that addresses business objectives through techniques that allow the researcher to provide elaborate interpretations of phenomena without depending on numerical measurement; its focus is on discovering true inner meanings and new insights

researcher-dependent : Research in which the researcher must extract meaning from unstructured responses such as text from a recorded interview or a collage representing the meaning of some experience

Uses of Qualitative Research

1. When it is difficult to develop specific and actionable problem statements or research objectives.
2. When the research objective is to develop an understanding of some phenomena in great detail and in much depth.
3. When the research objective is to learn how a phenomena occurs in its natural setting or to learn how to express some concept in colloquial terms.
4. When some behavior the researcher is studying is particularly context dependent—meaning the reasons something is liked or some behavior is performed depend very much on the particular situation surrounding the event
5. When a fresh approach to studying some problem is needed.

Qualitative “versus” Quantitative Research

Business research that addresses research objectives through empirical assessments that involve numerical measurement and analysis

| Qualitative Research | Research Aspect | Quantitative Research |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Discover Ideas, Used in Exploratory Research with General Research Objects | Common Purpose | Test Hypotheses or Specific Research Questions |
| Observe and Interpret | Approach | Measure and Test |
| Unstructured, Free-Form | Data Collection Approach | Structured Response Categories Provided |
| Researcher Is Intimately Involved. Results Are Subjective. | Researcher Independence | Researcher Uninvolved Observer. Results Are Objective. |
| Small Samples—Often in Natural Settings | Samples | Large Samples to Produce Generalizable Results (Results That Apply to Other Situations) |
| Exploratory Research Designs | Most Often Used | Descriptive and Causal Research Designs |

Contrasting Exploratory and Confirmatory Research

Research can be considered as either exploratory or confirmatory.

Most exploratory research designs produce qualitative data. Exploratory designs do not usually produce quantitative data, which represent phenomena by assigning numbers in an ordered and meaningful way.

Orientations to Qualitative Research

The major categories of qualitative research include

1. Phenomenology—originating in philosophy and psychology
2. Ethnography—originating in anthropology
3. Grounded theory—originating in sociology
4. Case studies—originating in psychology and in business research

1. Phenomenology

WHAT IS A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO RESEARCH?

1. A philosophical approach to studying human experiences based on the idea that human experience itself is inherently subjective and determined by the context in which people live.

WHAT IS HERMENEUTICS?

An approach to understanding phenomenology that relies on analysis of texts through which a person tells a story about him or herself.

Hermeneutic unit : Refers to a text passage from a respondent's story that is linked with a key theme from within this story or provided by the researcher

2. Ethnography

WHAT IS ETHNOGRAPHY?

Represents ways of studying cultures through methods that involve becoming highly active within that culture.

participant-observation : Ethnographic research approach where the researcher becomes immersed within the culture that he or she is studying and draws data from his or her observations

OBSERVATION IN ETHNOGRAPHY

Observation plays a key role in ethnography.

Ethnographic study can be particularly useful when a certain culture is comprised of individuals who cannot or will not verbalize their thoughts and feelings. For instance, ethnography has advantages for discovering insights among children since it does not rely largely on their answers to questions. Instead, the researcher can simply become part of the environment, allow the children to do what they do naturally, and record their behavior

3. Grounded Theory

WHAT IS GROUNDED THEORY?

Represents an inductive investigation in which the researcher poses questions about information provided by respondents or taken from historical records; the researcher asks the questions to him or herself and repeatedly questions the responses to derive deeper explanations

HOW IS GROUNDED THEORY USED?

4. Case Studies

WHAT ARE CASE STUDIES?

HOW ARE CASE STUDIES USED?

Common Techniques Used in Qualitative Research

What Is a Focus Group Interview? : An unstructured, free-flowing interview with a small group of around six to ten people. Focus groups are led by a trained moderator who follows a flexible format encouraging dialogue among respondents.

ADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

1. Relatively fast
2. Easy to execute
3. Allow respondents to piggyback off each other's ideas
4. Provide multiple perspectives
5. Flexibility to allow more detailed descriptions
6. High degree of scrutiny

Common Techniques Used in Qualitative Research

FOCUS GROUP ILLUSTRATION

GROUP COMPOSITION

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

THE FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR

PLANNING THE FOCUS GROUP OUTLINE

FOCUS GROUPS AS DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS

VIDEOCONFERENCING AND FOCUS GROUPS

INTERACTIVE MEDIA AND ONLINE FOCUS GROUPS

ONLINE VERSUS FACE TO FACE FOCUS GROUP TECHNIQUES

DISADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUPS

Common Techniques Used in Qualitative Research

Depth Interviews : A one-on-one interview between a professional researcher and a research respondent conducted about some relevant business or social topic.

Laddering : A particular approach to probing, asking respondents to compare differences between brands at different levels that produces distinctions at the attribute level, the benefit level, and the value or motivation level

Conversations : An informal qualitative datagathering approach in which the researcher engages a respondent in a discussion of the relevant subject matter

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

SOCIAL NETWORKING

PROJECTIVE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES : An indirect means of questioning enabling Respondents to project beliefs and feelings onto a third party, an inanimate object, or a task situation.

THEMATIC APPERCEPTION TEST: A test that presents subjects with an ambiguous picture(s) in which Consumers and products are the center of attention; the investigator asks the subject to tell what is happening in the picture(s) now and what might happen next

Exploratory Research in Science and in Practice

Misuses of Exploratory and Qualitative Research

SCIENTIFIC DECISION PROCESSES

TIME

MONEY

EMOTION