QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

OBSERVATION

- Not same as seeing. Noticing or watching using all 5 senses.
- Unstructured: Researcher is not in direct contact with participants. Non-reactive.
- How do you record observations?

WHAT IS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH?

- Example
- How is it different from quantitative research?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Research</th>
<th>Quantitative Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User/Words</td>
<td>User numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned with meanings</td>
<td>Concerned with behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth hypothesis</td>
<td>Begins with hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>Generalisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Hannan'sley, 1992


ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

- Advantage: Directness
- Data from observation can complement data from any other source.
- Access to people in real-life situations
- Rich data source: Getting involved in the social group gives insight to the emotions and motives of the participant behaviour.
- Disadvantage: Extent to which an observer affects the situation. How do we know what the behaviour would have been like if it hadn't been observed.
- Time Consuming
- Observation Box: Ethical Problems.
Sociometric Scales: Relationship between individuals in a group.

Self reporting measuring instruments to assess abilities, views, opinions and attitudes.

Tests provide a scale on which we can assess usually quantitatively the individual’s performance standing on the attribute in question.

“Should loan waivers be given to farmers”

Caution: Arbitrary Scales

Commonly Used Scale: Likert Scale

Other Scales: Guttman Scale, Thurstone Scale, Semantic Differential Scale.

Q Sort: Relative Position or ranking of an individual on a range of concepts.

Sociometric Scales: Relationship between individuals in a group.

Tests and Scales

• Can be of varying length.

How many alcoholic drinks do you consume in a typical day?

• a lot more than average

• somewhat more than average

• average

• somewhat fewer than average

• a lot fewer than average

Problems with Survey

• Not related to the content of the item but the content in which it appears: Context effects

• Item Order Effect: When the order in which items are presented affects the individual’s response

• Response items can have unintended effects on people’s responses.

Advantages

• Probability—http://www.poll Daddy.com

• QuestionPro—http://www.questionpro.com

• SurveyGizmo—http://www.surveygizmo.com

• SurveyMonkey—http://www.surveymonkey.com

• Zoomerang—http://www.zoomerang.com

• sip survey

Problems with Survey

• Dissatisfied with the sample of elements (adult women) drawn from a well defined population (Adult women population living in Karnataka).

• Variables of interest are measured using self reports

• Strong preference for large random samples; Rationeally uses random sampling

• Can be of varying length.

• Can be conducted in person, email, phone, post

• Non experimental survey using single variable

• Experimental Surveys
**QUESTIONNAIRES**

- Most common survey research instrument
- Open ended questions
  - Advantages
  - Disadvantages
- Closed ended questions
  - Advantages
  - Disadvantages

Questions in user studies.

**INTERVIEWS**

- Commonly one to one and face to face
- Lead themselves well to be commonly used with other methods. Example: Case study can employ interview with participant observation
- Types: Structured, Semi-Structured, Unstructured
- Respondent Interviews (Directed) or Informant Interviews (Non Directed)
- Training is essential as interviewer can control the quality of the result

**INTERVIEW ADVANTAGES**

- Flexible and adaptable way of finding out
- Option of probing “down to focus up interesting developments and to let the interviewee elaborate on various issues” (Dörnyei, 2007: 136).
- Supplementary information
- Enables interviewees to “speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings” (Berg, 2007: 96).
- Rich data source: Provides highly illuminating material

**PROBLEMS WITH QUESTIONNAIRES**

- Writing
- Suggestable questions
- No possibility of probing “Open Ended Questions”
- Language
- Requires the researcher to have a good prior knowledge of the subject in order to generate realistic likely responses options before printing the questionnaire
- Long process of designing
INTERVIEW DISADVANTAGES

- Although suitable for complex behaviour understanding can be time consuming and effortful process for both the parties
- Permissions
- Careful preparation
- Personal attributes of the interviewer
- Language dependent
- Interviewer bias/ Prompts

VALIDITY

- How well a test measures what it is supposed to measure
- Face Validity: Should referred to the least. Example: Scary Movie and Stress
- Content Validity: Most popularly used. Extent to which a test measures a concept what it is meant to.
  - Convergent & Discriminative Validity
- Concurrent Validity
- Predictive Validity

NORMS

- Typical level of performance of a particular group
- Indicate individual’s relative standing in a normative sample
- Raw scores are meaningless in behavioural sciences. Interpreted with reference to norms
- Types of Norms:
  - Development Norms: Normal Development Path of the Individual
  - Mental Age Norms; Grade Equivalent Norms; Ordinal Scale Norms
  - Within Group Norms

Issues in Qualitative Research: Reliability

- Quality of measurement: Consistency or repeatability of measures
- Internal Consistency Reliability
- Split Half Reliability
- Examples

Quality of measurement: Consistency or repeatability of measures

Inter Rater Reliability

Test – Reetest Reliability

Parallel Forms Reliability
SUMMARY

Qualitative data collection methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Brief explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>The researcher goes to a place or places to watch or listen to informants. This may be done in natural settings, such as classrooms or clinics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>A structured or unstructured conversation between the researcher and the informant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>A group discussion where multiple informants are interviewed simultaneously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other methods</td>
<td>Data collection methods other than observation and interview.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GROUNDED THEORY

- Am - Generate or Discover a Theory
- The discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)
- Symbolic Interactionism


STAGES IN QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

- Transcription
- Organizing your data
- Familiarization
- Coding
- Themes

DATA ANALYSIS

- Content/Thematic Analysis
- Identifying Patterns across datasets
- Theoretically Flexible. Can be used with variety of theories to understand different research questions
- Patterns are identified through: Data Familiarization, Coding, Searching for themes, Reviewing themes, Defining and naming themes and writing up
- Manual and Electronic
CASE STUDY I


KEY REFERENCES