

RESEARCH DESIGN AND EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

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Research Methodology

Exploratory Research

- How well is your problem defined?
- If not well defined:
 - Exploratory
 - Used to clarify/define a problem
 - Manager tells you “sales just aren’t what we expected for this kite”
 - Not meant to provide conclusive evidence

Descriptive Research

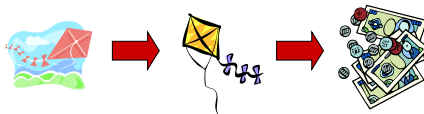
- Describes characteristics of a group in a given situation
- Some understanding of the nature of the problem
- If problem is partially defined
- Descriptive
 - What do children think of the size of the kite?
 - What do children think of the color?
 - Who uses the product, when, where, why, how

Descriptive Research Example

- Weight Watchers average customer
- Woman about 40 years old
- Household income of about \$50,000
- At least some college education
- Trying to juggle children and a job
- Men’s fragrance market
- 1/3 size of women’s fragrance market
- Women buy 80 % of men’s fragrances

Causal Research (Hypothesis Testing)

- Conducted to identify cause and effect relationships
- Change in color increase sales

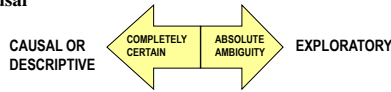


Causal versus Correlational

- Does smoking cause cancer (Causal)
- Are smoking and cancer related? (Correlational)

Types of Research

- Exploratory
- Descriptive
- Causal



| Degree of Problem Definition | Exploratory Research (Ambiguous Problem) | Descriptive Research (Partially Defined Problem) | Causal Research (Problem Clearly Defined) |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Possible situation | "Our sales are declining and we don't know why." "Would people be interested in our new product idea?" | "What kind of people are buying our product? Who is buying our competitor's product?" "What features do buyers prefer in our product?" | "Will buyers purchase more of our product in a new package?" "Which of two advertising campaigns is more effective?" |

Unit of Analysis

- Based on following examples:
- The problem statement focuses on how to raise the motivational levels of employees
 - Unit of analysis → individuals
- Studying two person interactions (suc as husband-wife interactions in families)
 - Unit of analysis → dyads
- Comparing the different departments of a organization
 - Unit of analysis → groups
- **OUR RESEARCH QUESTION DETERMINES THE UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

Time horizon: Cross-sectional versus Longitudinal Studies

- One-shot or cross-sectional studies
 - A study can be undertaken in which data are gathered just once, perhaps over a period of days, weeks or months, in order to answer the research questions
- Longitudinal Studies
 - A correlational research study that involves repeated observations of the same variables over long periods of time
 - More time, effort and cost

EXERCISE

- **You want to investigate the specific effects of negative emotions on buying intention after a failed service encounters across industries**
- Exploratory, descriptive or hypothesis-testing study? Why?
- A causal or a corralational study? Why?
- Unit of analysis?
- A cross-sectional or a longitudinal study? Why?

Exploratory Research

- Initial research conducted to clarify and define the nature of a problem
- Does not provide conclusive evidence
- Subsequent research expected

What is Exploratory Research?



Why Conduct Exploratory Research?

Diagnose a situation

Screening of alternatives

Discover new ideas



Categories of Exploratory Research

- Experience surveys
- Secondary data analysis
- Case studies
- Pilot studies

Experience Surveys

- Ask knowledgeable individuals about a particular research problem - most are quite willing
- Reveal nothing conclusive, they may help define the problem more formally



Secondary Data

Data gathered and recorded by someone else prior to and for a purpose other than the current project

Is often:

- Historical
- Already assembled
- Needs no access to subjects

Advantages of Secondary Data

- Inexpensive
- Obtained Rapidly
- Information is not Otherwise Accessible

Disadvantages of Secondary Data

- Uncertain Accuracy
- Data Not Consistent with Needs
- Inappropriate Units of Measurement
- Time Period Inappropriate (Dated)

Case Study Method

- Intensely investigates one or a few situations similar to the problem
 - Investigate in depth
 - Careful study
 - May require cooperation



Pilot Studies

- Any small scale exploratory study that uses sampling
- But does not apply rigorous standards
- **TYPES OF PILOT STUDIES**
 - Focus Group Interviews
 - Projective Techniques
 - In-Depth Interviews

Projective Techniques

- An indirect means of questioning that enables a respondent to project beliefs and feelings onto a third party, onto an object, or into a task situation
- **TYPES OF PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES**
- Word association tests
- Sentence completion method
- Third-person technique
- Role playing
- T.A.T.
- Picture frustration version of T.A.T.

Word Association

- An individual is given a clue or hint and asked to respond to the first thing that comes to mind.
- Or it is presented with a list of words to subject and it is asked to him/her the first word that comes to mind

Holy Feasts Celebrations



- Family
- Unity
- Peace
- Children
- Deserts

Sentence Completion

- Realized based on free-association

People who drink beer are _____

A man who drinks light beer is _____

Imported beer is most liked by _____

A woman will drink beer when _____

Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.)

- It is presented a series of pictures to research subjects and asks them to provide a description of or a story about the pictures
- Researchers analyze the content of stories



Focus Group Interviews



- Unstructured
- Free flowing
- Group interview
- Start with broad topic and focus in on specific issues

Group Composition

- 6 to 10 people
- Relatively homogeneous
- Similar lifestyles, experiences or demographics



Outline for a Focus Group

- Establish a rapport
- Begin with broad topic
- Focus in on specific topic
- Generate discussion and interaction

The Moderator

- Develops rapport - helps people relax
- Interacts
- Listens to what people say
- Everyone gets a chance to speak
- Maintains the control and focuses discussion
- Stimulates spontaneous responses

Advantages and Disadvantages of Focus Groups

- **Advantages**
 - Fast
 - Inexpensive
 - Interaction between group members
 - Capability To Utilise Non-Verbal Behavior As A Research Input
- **Disadvantages**
 - Bring together many participants from wide-spread geographical areas can be difficult
 - Focus Groups Tend To Become Influenced By One or Two Dominant People In The Session Thus Making the Output Very Biased
 - Interpretation difficulties

In-Depth Interviews



- An indepth interview is a dialogue between a skilled interviewer and an interviewee.
- Its goal is to elicit rich, detailed material that can be used in analysis
- Such interviews are best conducted face to face, although in some situations telephone interviewing can be successful
- **When do we have to prefer in-depth interviews?**
 - detailed information sought;
 - busy, high-status respondents; and
 - highly sensitive subject matter