

Unit 4 Some Consideration on Methods and Data

Topic

- ❑ Methods mapping
- ❑ The four pillars of research
- ❑ Primary and secondary data
- ❑ Quantitative and qualitative data and methods

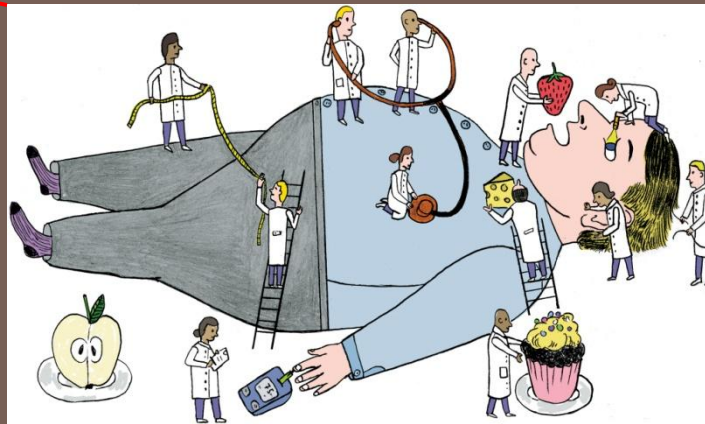
Objectives

Students should be able to:

- ❑ Identify a range of methods and data types in research.
- ❑ Make appropriate linkages from research aim (s)/ and objectives to the chosen methods.
- ❑ Design appropriate research methodology and be able to explain how the chosen methods can answer the objectives of their semester research project.

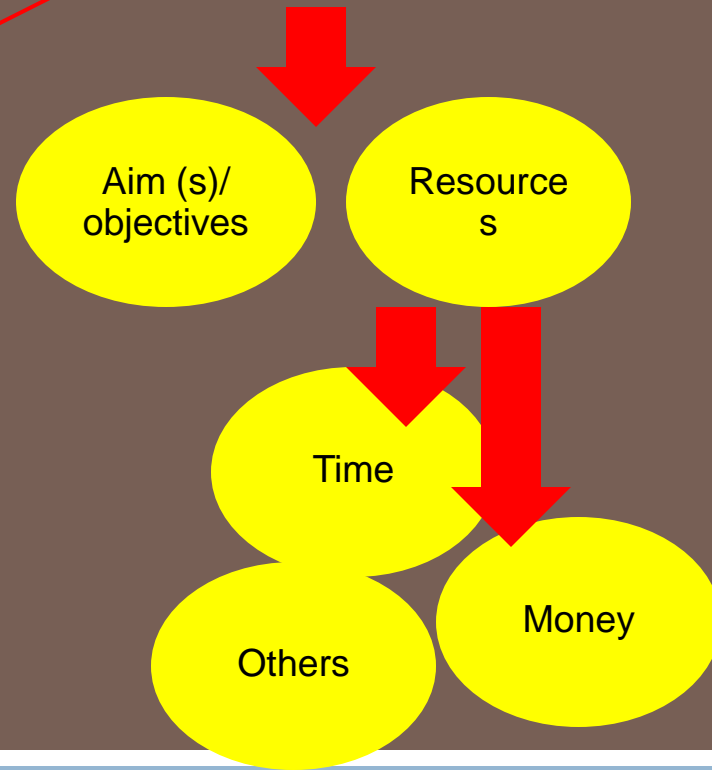
Method Mapping

There is no one perfect method on any given context, and each method has advantages and disadvantages.



The selection of your method (s) depends on the degree to which they are useful and appropriate for your work

A mixed or multiple methods approach may be appropriate



The Four Pillars of Research

- *Normative research*: research which represents the collection and assessment of social norms, such as patterns of behavior.
- *Exploratory studies*: research which focuses on asking ‘why’ questions relating to particular social phenomena, and allow researchers to develop predictions and hypothesize about why things happen.
- *Descriptive studies*: research which attempts to measure a situation or issue in as much detail as possible, therefore supplying the reader with a more rounded picture.
- *Predictive research*: research which obviously focuses on utilizing data and research findings to understand future potential and possibilities.

Primary and Secondary Data

Primary Data

Primary data refers to collecting some original data for the specific purposes of your research.

Generally- used methods include for example: questionnaires, in-depth interviews, focus groups and researching archives.

Secondary Data

Secondary data describes data that has been put together by another person or organization for a particular purpose, and that is put in your research for another use.

It provides a strong context to your specific study such as key finding which you may wish to examine, test or confirm in a different setting or set of circumstances.

Good reasons for using secondary data

- It fills important gaps in your primary data, particularly if your own survey was restricted in size or scope due to time constraints.
- It can be used in comparing and contrasting your findings from your primary survey with other data.
- There may be no other means of collecting relevant data in cases where primary data collection is limited by access problems.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data and Methods

Quantitative methods

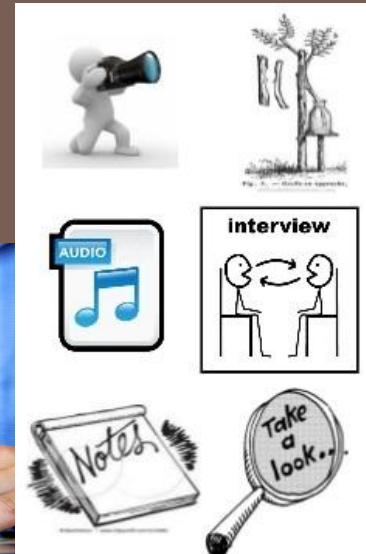
- ✓ Generally, a questionnaire
- ✓ Its flexibility
- ✓ Used to collect basic factual information about people, such as demographic characteristics and behavior, people's opinions, attitudes and perceptions
- ✓ You can add open-ended questions

Face-to-face
Postal
Internet-based



Qualitative methods

- ✓ Increasingly popular
- ✓ Some methods include in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation and even diary-based methods
- ✓ Other more innovative methods employ visual data in the form of photographs, video diaries and drawing



Some common characteristics of qualitative methods

- ✓ Interactive between the researcher and respondent, and humanistic.
- ✓ During collecting data with qualitative method, you may learn more about what questions to ask.
- ✓ Useful for researching complex ideas, especially opinions and perceptions
- ✓ Take place in the natural setting such as holiday accommodation, a bar in a holiday resort, or even a bus
- ✓ Ethical issues
- ✓ The methods are interpretive--- you as the researcher are the one who interpret and make sense of the data. --- How you present and analyze the data based on you
- ✓ Need taking note and acknowledging possible biases such as your age, gender, ethnicity, education, background
- ✓ Require greater re-flexibility or reflection of/on interpretation. This forces researchers to consider moving between different theories, concepts or positions to arrive at a critical interpretation of the data.

Types of interview methods

➤ *Unstructured interviews*

- Follow a general set of ideas/ topics to be discussed with the respondent
- Questions may be asked in no particular order, and some may not be covered at all.
- Your role as interviewer is not to be too intrusive: just start the interview and let the interviewee develop their ideas.

➤ *Semi- structured interview*

- You produce a clear list of topics/ questions but are flexible as to when and how these are discussed within the interview.

➤ *Structured interviews*

- More guided by you as the interviewer
- The interviewee is asked a set number of questions usually in an organized sequence.
- Allow the interviewee to give their views expressed in their own words.
- Work best in a face-to-face situation, but in many cases, this is not possible and the interview may have to be conducted by phone, e-mail or Skype.

When to use focus groups

- ✓ Focus groups or 'discussion groups'
- ✓ Bring together a number of people in order to study their group norms, meanings and process.
- ✓ Help researcher discover 'why people think as they do', and particularly it is effective in revealing 'how views are created and modified through group interaction'.
- ✓ A focus group consists of a small number of people, usually between about 6 and 8, and a moderator.
- ✓ Researcher is a moderator who will introduce various topics of discussion to the group and guide the discussion based on a topic guide.

- ✓ Focus groups offer the means to establish consensus and dissonant positions over key issues, and how these form.
- ✓ Need the dynamic of the group
- ✓ Unexpected outcomes or new directions for the research can be produced from focus groups
- ✓ Successful focus groups depend on the interaction of the group and the skills of the moderator in facilitating a productive discussion on topics of interest.

When to use for its usefulness?

- When you are interested in collecting underlying motives and reasons that help explain specific views.
- In exploring particular topics when you want to obtain a broad feel for how different people consider them.
- For considering the degree to which people agree and share views in terms of your research topics. This is sometimes used to help in the early stages of questionnaire design.
- For presenting tangible objects and artifacts (e.g. brochures, postcards, plans, mockups) on which you want the group's opinions.

The use of observation methods

You can watch and record people's behavior and listen to their discussions.

*** Observe with a direct record of exactly what people do, not what they say or think they do, but rather their actual behavior.

2 types of observation methods

Participant observation

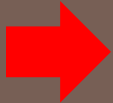
when you as a researcher get into a particular situation

For example, taking a package tour to observe the behavior of other tourists

Systematic observation

covers the situation where it is difficult for the researcher to participate.

Systematic observation refers to gathering information as an observer but without any participation



Diary- based methods

- ✓ Involves information being collected by respondents asked to keep a diary and record within specific information relevant to your research
- ✓ *For example*, you ask your respondents to spend time recording on particular activities at their specific time at specific attractions, about their experiences, emotions or the details about how they made travel decisions.
- ✓ Diary- based methods can be done as an extension of the interview method or part of the interview process.
- ✓ Need a great deal of preparation, demanding of time and cooperation and commitment as well as ability to cope with the respondents' conditions.
- ✓ Payment may be needed as to motivate the respondents to do their diary.

Students' task in the class

Review your proposal for the methodology.

Think carefully about what data you are going to collect.

Consider how your aim (s)/ objectives as well as the type of research the students wish to conduct drive your choice of method (s) and data type (s).

Write to reflect on how your choice of method (s) and source (s) of data can answer your research objectives (this is to submit at the end of this class)

Next task for the semester individual research project

Find 10 papers, read them and start a literature review (chapter 2)

Design your methodology (chapter 3)