

How did the authors use both Qualitative and Quantitative assessment approaches? What benefits did each approach yield?

Spears and Barki (2010) focus on the vital role users could play in the development of organisational security design through sharing needed business knowledge and safeguarding sensitive information. Qualitative approach provides an opening to assess behaviour and practices in richer detail, thus providing illumination and understanding of the context useful for answering humanistic 'why?' and 'how?' question that would have otherwise not be accessible by adopting a quantitative approach (Marshall, 1996).

An example of the benefit of understanding perceptions and competences in the business-aligned IS security risk management routine is highlighted through one of Spears and Barki's interviews with a chief information security officer, as he explained, 'I don't understand the business like they (end users) do, so I don't understand the information. I don't understand the relative importance of the information. I don't understand the context of the information in the way people do their daily business, so I don't know what forms people need the information in, how readily accessible it needs to be, how it flows through the business processes, and therefore where the critical junctures are that need to be controlled' (Spears and Barki, 2010: 510). Integrating different perceptions, such as "value-focused thinking as an approach" (Dhillon and Torkzadeh, 2006), help assessing behaviours, activities and assignments that defined user participation in the context of Security Risk Management (Spears and Barki, 2010).

It is impossible say that a qualitative approach comes without limitations. It is difficult to generalise a result of a qualitative approach, but quantitative approach would describe the general characteristic, but not cover the particulars (Hyde, 2000). For example, conclusions and hypotheses derived from qualitative study and literature formed a survey instrument to the quantitative study, which in turn helps to reveal theoretical relationships that may have been missed in a qualitative study.

In this study, the adaptation of both quantitative and qualitative methods strengthens the research outcome through cross-validation of both sources of data as it addresses the difficulty to comprehend quantitative risk management metrics without a subjective human judgement.

Reference List:

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