

Methods of Data Collection



Learning Objectives

1. To know about various methods of collecting information
2. To learn about personal observation, telephonic interview and mail questionnaires.
3. To decide which method is suitable depending on the purpose and the situation
4. Develop a Mail Questionnaire

Gathering Information

Methods

1. Personal observation
2. Telephone Interview
3. Personal Interview
4. Mail Questionnaire



Personal observation

- Seeing with a purpose.
- Chief source of 1st hand information
- Recognizing & Recording information
- Forming Mental Impression -Controlled (create an environment) Uncontrolled (view things as they are).
- Expensive, slow, can't be used for all.

Telephone Interview

- Information is of routine nature
- Good for brief answer only
- Small number of people to be contacted
- Saves time on traveling

Challenges

- Feedback is not effective
- Information may not be representative
- Less time for orientation

Personal Interview

- Conversation with a purpose
- To obtain qualitative data
- To supplement the information collected through other methods
- More freedom/flexibility to change the general strategy of asking questions as the session progress
- To have a feel of the answers so as to draw better inferences

Personal Interview

Disadvantages:

- Large number of people can't be contacted
- Time consuming
- Difficult to collect information in a structured way as you open different areas of discussion
- Requires skills to keep the discussion on the track
- Interviewee's prejudices, his mood and his image of you (professional rapport) may influence his responses.

Personal Interview Preparation

- Get an appointment
- Be clear with purpose
- Pen, tape etc.
- Visualize opening
- Dress appropriately
- Reach on time
- Get prior permission for recording
- Be ready with a strategy
- Prepare a list of questions (open ended)
- Last question

Conducting the Interview

- Briefly explain the purpose
- Motivate the interviewee
- Ask questions in a friendly way
- Ask easy to answer questions at the beginning
- Be accurate in recording information
- Don't enter into an argument
- Assume a subordinate position
- Avoid too many interruptions
- Avoid embarrassing questions

Conducting the Interview

- Indicate the closing of the interview by summarizing the outcome
- Assure the interviewee of confidentiality of the information
- Thank him/her for his/her response
- Keep the lines of communication open
- Give an indication that you will send the copy of the report

Questionnaires

- To survey large number of people
- Mail a questionnaire to all members
- Save times
- Covers a wide geographical area

Advantages

- Convenient for the respondent
- Chance to deliberate and look up information
- Bias of interviewer is eliminated
- Reach a specific segment of population
- Respondent need not be identified
- Questions can be standardized

Disadvantages of Questionnaire

- Difficulty in securing replies in certain cases.
- In case response is small, data collected, does not give a true picture.
- Representative sample may not be obtained.
- Cannot ask the respondent why he gave a particular response.
- Person's inability to understand 'skip-and-jump' questions generates a flawed response
- Incomplete/half filled questionnaires difficult to evaluate

While preparing Questionnaire

- Be focused and relevant
- Short and objective
- Arrange the questions logically
- Give the respondent less writing task
- Leave space for answers
- Do not repeat the questions

While preparing

Provide clear instructions: the respondent should know what exactly he wants to answer.

For example the question:
Do you watch movies regularly?

can be rephrased as:
How often in a month do you watch movies?

Cont...

Avoid questions which lead the respondent to favorable response only.

- Do you fly with Jet Airways?
- Which Airways you fly often with?

Cont...

- Keep the questionnaire short and easy to answer
- People are running short of time. They should be able to complete the questionnaire in about 10-15 minutes.
- Provide enough space to express the opinion.
- Ask only one question at a time.
- Avoid embarrassing questions which may hurt pride or ego of the respondent

Question type

Open-ended

How would you describe the customer service of Airtel?

Closed-ended

Do you think Airtel provides one of the best cell-phone services in India?

Yes ----

No ----

Dichotomous

- ▣ Is death sentence ever justified?

Yes/No

- ▣ Given an opportunity, will you undergo the training?

Yes/No

Cont...

Multiple choice (Closed-ended)

Which description best fits to describe the quality of mobile services? (choose only one)

- A. Uninterrupted incoming and outgoing anytime from anywhere
- B. Cheaper call rates
- c. Less rental more talk value
- D. Poor filtering

Cont...

Rating Scale (Closed Ended)

Respondent is required to rate something on a given scale. Rating parameter is also required in such questions.

Rate the Hospitality services of Hotel Hyatt Regency on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1= Good, 2= Very Good, 3= Average, 4= Above Average and 5= Excellent.

Cont...

Ranking (Closed-Ended)

Rank the following cell phone services in terms of their service and cost effectiveness (1-4 most preferred to less preferred).

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Tata Docomo | ----- |
| Airtel | ----- |
| Reliance | ----- |
| MTNL | ----- |

Cont...

Checklist

Which cell phone services you think maintain more or less equal standard?

1. Vodafone -----
2. Airtel -----
3. Reliance -----
4. BSNL -----



Cont...

Short-answer (Open-Ended)

Write about your experience of attending the Student orientation programme of BITS Pilani?

Fill in the blank (Open-Ended)

Which brand of toothpaste do you use?

Summing Up



Personal Observation



Personal Interview



Telephonic Interview





Thank You!