**Unit 9: Analysing Qualitative Data**

Welcome to week 9 where you will be looking at the different methods available to you for analysing qualitative data.

By its very nature, qualitative data is open to different interpretations. So, it is harder for the researcher to remain unbiased. If this is the type of data you will obtain from your research, you will need to keep this in mind when presenting your results.

Qualitative data analysis works a little differently from quantitative data, primarily as qualitative data is made up of observations, images, and words. It is almost impossible to derive absolute meaning from such data. Hence, the reason it is used mostly for exploratory research. Another key difference between quantitative and qualitative data is in the analysis: analysis for qualitative research often begins as soon as the data is available whereas there is a clear distinction between data preparation and data analysis stages in quantitative research.

In order to analyse qualitative data, such as responses from an unstructured qualitative interview, there is a need to code the responses. Coding here refers to the categorisation of data. BRM (2021) goes through types of qualitative data coding. Software is often used to ensure efficient coding and analysis, and sometimes involves cleaning the data.

**In this unit we shall:**

* Introduce the various ways to analyse, interpret and present results from qualitative data.
* Discuss the advantages and drawbacks of each of these methods.

**On completion of this unit you will be able to:**

* Understand the different types of analysis and how they may be useful for the data you have collected.
* Understand the different charts available to present the different types of data you have obtained.

Data, whether qualitative or quantitative, will be a key part of any investigation you undertake. An important consideration is then how to present your findings in a way that communicates your message to the reader. Charts and graphs are a good way to present data, both qualitative and quantitative and are usually used to set the scene.

**References**

Business Research Methodology (BRM) (2021) Qualitative Data Analysis.