

Chapter 7

Q 1) What Is Qualitative Research?

Qualitative business research is research that addresses business objectives through techniques that allow the researcher to provide elaborate interpretations of market phenomena without depending on numerical measurement. Its focus is on discovering true inner meanings and new insights. Qualitative research is very widely applied in practice. There are many research firms that specialize in qualitative research.

Q 2)What is Quantitative Research?

Quantitative business research can be defined as business research that addresses research objectives through empirical assessments that involve numerical measurement and analysis approaches. Qualitative research is more apt to stand on its own in the sense that it requires less interpretation.

Q 3) What are the Orientations to Qualitative Research?

Qualitative research can be performed in many ways using many techniques. Orientations to qualitative research are very much influenced by the different fields of study involved in research. These orientations are each associated with a category of qualitative research. The major categories of qualitative research include

1. Phenomenology—originating in philosophy and psychology
2. Ethnography—originating in anthropology
3. Grounded theory—originating in sociology
4. Case studies—originating in psychology and in business research

Q 4) WHAT IS A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO RESEARCH?

Phenomenology represents a philosophical approach to studying human experiences based on the idea that human experience itself is inherently subjective and determined by the context in which people live.

The phenomenological researcher focuses on how a person's behavior is shaped by the relationship he or she has with the physical environment, objects, people, and situations.

Phenomenological inquiry seeks to describe, reflect upon, and interpret experiences. Researchers with a phenomenological orientation rely largely on conversational interview tools. When conversational interviews are face to face, they are recorded either with video or audiotape and then interpreted by the researcher. The phenomenological interviewer is careful to avoid asking direct questions when at all possible. Instead, the research respondent is asked to tell a story about some experience.

Q 5) WHAT IS HERMENEUTICS?

The term hermeneutics is important in phenomenology.

Hermeneutics is an approach to understanding phenomenology that relies on analysis of texts in which a person tells a story about him or herself.

Meaning is then drawn by connecting text passages to one another or to themes expressed outside the story. These connections are usually facilitated by coding the key meanings expressed in the story.

Q 6) WHAT IS ETHNOGRAPHY?

Ethnography represents ways of studying cultures through methods that involve becoming highly active within that culture. Participant-observation typifies an ethnographic research approach. Participant observation means the researcher becomes immersed within the culture that he or she is studying and draws data from his or her observations. A culture can be either a broad culture, like American culture, or a narrow culture, like urban gangs, Harley-Davidson owners, or skateboarding enthusiasts.

Q 7) WHAT IS GROUNDED THEORY?

Grounded theory is probably applied less often in business research than is either phenomenology or ethnography.

Grounded theory represents an inductive investigation in which the researcher poses questions about information provided by respondents or taken from historical records. The researcher asks the questions to him or herself and repeatedly questions the responses to derive deeper explanations. Grounded theory is particularly applicable in highly dynamic situations involving rapid and significant change. Two key questions asked by the grounded theory researcher are “What is happening here?” and “How is it different?”

The distinguishing characteristic of grounded theory is that it does not begin with a theory but instead extracts one from whatever emerges from an area of inquiry.

Q 8) WHAT ARE CASE STUDIES?

Case studies simply refer to the documented history of a particular person, group, organization, or event. Typically, a case study may describe the events of a specific company as it faces an important decision or situation, such as introducing a new product or dealing with some management crisis.

Q 9) WHAT ARE THEME?

The case studies can then be analyzed for important themes. Themes are identified by the frequency with which the same term (or a synonym) arises in the narrative description. The themes may be useful in discovering variables that are relevant to potential explanations.

How is used?

- **Case studies of brands that sell “luxury” products helped provide insight into what makes up a prestigious brand**
- **A primary advantage of the case study is that an entire organization or entity can be investigated in depth with meticulous attention to detail.**
- **Enables the researcher to carefully study the order of events as they occur**
- **Helps in concentrating on identifying the relationships among functions, individuals, or entities.**

Q 10) What are the Common Techniques Used in Qualitative Research?

A **focus group interview** is an unstructured, free-flowing interview with a small group of people, usually between six and ten. Focus groups are led by a trained moderator who follows a flexible format encouraging dialogue among respondents. Common focus group topics include employee programs, employee satisfaction, brand meanings, problems with products, advertising themes, or new-product concepts.

Focus groups offer several advantages:

1. Relatively fast
2. Easy to execute
3. Allow respondents to piggyback off each other's ideas
4. Provide multiple perspectives
5. Flexibility to allow more detailed descriptions
6. **High degree of scrutiny**

Disadvantages:-

- **Results dependent on moderator**
- **Results do not generalize to larger population**
- **Difficult to use for sensitive topics**
- **Expensive**

Q 11) Define

PIGGYBACK

A procedure in which one respondent stimulates thought among the others; as this process continues, increasingly creative insights are possible.

12) Discuss the Orientations to Qualitative Research?

- 1. Phenomenology—originating in philosophy and psychology**
- 2. Ethnography—originating in anthropology**
- 3. Grounded theory—originating in sociology**
- 4. Case studies—originating in psychology and in business research**

1) phenomenology:-

- A philosophical approach to studying human experiences based on the idea that human experience itself is inherently subjective and determined by the context in which people live.
- Focuses on how a person's behavior is shaped by the relationship he or she has with the physical environment, objects, people, and situations.
- Phenomenological inquiry seeks to describe, reflect upon, and interpret experiences.
- Rely largely on conversational interview tools.
- The face to face interviews are recorded either with video or audiotape and then interpreted by the researcher.
- The interviewer is careful to avoid asking direct questions.
- Instead, the research respondent is asked to tell a story about some experience.
- Researcher must do everything possible to make sure a respondent is comfortable telling his or her story.
- One way to accomplish this is to become a member of the group.

2 Ethnography:-

Represents ways of studying cultures through methods that involve becoming highly active within that culture.

participant-observation

Ethnographic research approach where the researcher becomes immersed within the culture that he or she is studying and draws data from his or her observations.

- **Observation plays a key role in ethnography.**
- **Researchers today sometimes ask households for permission to place video cameras in their home.**
- **In doing so, the ethnographer can study the consumer in a “natural habitat” and use the observations to test new products, develop new product ideas, and develop strategies in general.**
- **Useful when a certain culture is comprised of individuals who cannot or will not verbalize their thoughts and feelings.**
- **For instance, ethnography has advantages for discovering insights among children since it does not rely largely on their answers to questions.**

3). Grounded Theory

- **Grounded theory represents an inductive investigation in which the researcher poses questions about information provided by respondents or taken from historical records.**
- **The researcher asks the questions to him or herself and repeatedly questions the responses to derive deeper explanations.**
- **Two key questions asked by the grounded theory researcher are “What is happening here?” and “How is it different?”**

HOW IS GROUNDED THEORY USED?

- **Consider a company that approaches a researcher to study whether or not its sales force is as effective as it has been over the past five years.**

- The researcher uses grounded theory.
- A theory is inductively developed based on text analysis of dozens of sales meetings recorded over the previous five years.
- By questioning the events discussed in the sales interviews and analyzing differences in the situations that may have led to the discussion, the researcher is able to develop a theory.
- The theory suggests that with an increasing reliance on e-mail and other technological devices for communication, the salespeople do not communicate with each other informally as much as they did five years previously.
- As a result, the salespeople had failed to bond into a close-knit “community.”

4) Case Studies.

The documented history of a particular person, group, organization, or event.