

HCI Assignment 3

Roll No: 41163

Title:

Conduct the contextual inquiry for the selected product / system.

Objective:

- To conduct the contextual inquiry for the Interactive system.
- To understand your users' needs.
- To list down need of the user for selected product/system.
- To observe how users interact with systems.

Theory :

Contextual Inquiry :

Contextual inquiry is reminiscent of anthropological research, and relies heavily on participant observation. For this reason, it's a highly qualitative methodology that does not require a big sample. Its premise is to discover flaws that stem from bad design.

Contextual inquiry is a type of customer interview where participants perform tasks to show how they use a product or service. This provides important insights into how a company's product is perceived and valued in a customer's day-to-day life.

Through direct observation, it allows researchers to look beyond theory and focus on what is actually done in practice. That way one can identify which designs or workflow strategies are problematic, and what heuristic solutions more experienced users have implemented to work around them. These observations can provide valuable insight toward addressing many issues. The goal is to better understand how everything interacts and influences the tasks and workflow.

There are four main principles of contextual inquiries:

1. **Context** : Naturally, the first principle is context. It's essential that a contextual inquiry occurs in the context of use. This means the interview must travel to the participant's work, home, school or other location in which they habitually use the product or service. If reaching the location is an issue, contextual inquiries can also occur over video chat in order to still observe the participant in their environment. The interviewer must also pay attention to all tasks done and artifacts used in addition to the product or service at hand. In order to fully understand the situation, interviewers must take into consideration everything a participant does during the process of using the product or service.
2. **Focus** : Before going into a contextual inquiry, the interviewer should decide on a focus for the interview. What conclusions are your company trying to come to? Having a focus is similar to having a research question in an experiment. It will keep all the participant's activities honed in on only what you need to observe. A good focus says exactly what you want to accomplish with the interview and how you plan on accomplishing it. This is also to save you time; once you've learned all you need to learn about the focus, you can feel free to end the interview. However, it's okay to let the interview be loose in structure and in the hands of the customer. Be open to the interview taking you down an unexpected, yet rewarding, path.
3. **Interpretation** : As mentioned above, an important part of contextual inquiries is mutual interpretation. That is why these differ from natural observations; in those situations, the researchers are left to come to their own conclusions without ever consulting the observed participants. But, in contextual inquiries, interviewers have the opportunity to speak with their subjects and gain greater meaning. Rather than just making implications, an interviewer must review their learnings with the participant. This gives the participant a

chance to confirm whether your observations are accurate or not. Their clarifications can either validate, expand on, or disprove your findings, making for a more accurate interview.

4. **Partnership** : The entirety of a contextual inquiry is based on collaboration between the interviewer and participant. There are two models that can be used to make for a more meaningful partnership:
 - **Active Observation** : This is the most commonly used model in contextual inquiries. This occurs when the participant talks through all the tasks they are performing as if educating the interviewer on their process. The interviewer has the opportunity to interrupt the participant in the middle of tasks to ask questions.
 - **Passive Observation** : In this model, the participant performs their tasks as if the interviewer is not present. The interviewer silently observes the participant and does not interrupt their tasks. Rather, they ask all their questions at the completion of the observation.

Here are some simple steps to conducting contextual inquiry yourself:

- **Identify your key research questions** : Make sure they relate to the overall task or workflow, but keep them broad, keeping in mind their underlying objectives and anticipated outcomes.
- **Find a participant** : The ideal participant is someone especially familiar or proficient with the tool or platform being tested so you can observe any heuristic shortcuts they may have developed.
- **Play your role** : You and the participant will adopt roles traditionally known as “master and apprentice” (think super user and newbie), with the researcher as the apprentice and the participant as the master. As the newbie, you’ll be asking the super user questions relating to what they do, how they do it, and why.
- **Identify shortcuts or heuristics participants use** : Note any instances where the participant does something interesting, unexpected, or confusing, be it for you or them.
- **Review your notes and reflect on your observations** : Try to understand the function of each of the tasks and see if any can be simplified, or even eliminated altogether.

Contextual Inquiry can be used for:

- Testing a Product
- Optimizing e-commerce
- Designing a user interface
- Enhancing customer experience
- Improving employee workflow
- Anticipating customer behaviour
- Identifying unanticipated use cases
- Recognizing product flaws

CASE STUDY : TELEGRAM

- Does your team use Telegram?
 - Yes/No
- What did you enjoy about this Telegram?
 - Naturally, you want to know what people already like about your brand. These are the aspects that should remain steady amid any improvements or changes.

- What issues did you face?
 - On the flip side, you want to know where they were confused, frustrated, or simply stuck. These are the things that should raise red flags and be improved to create greater efficiency and ease for customers.
- When might you use this Telegram?
 - Although you'll be watching the participants use the service in their typical context of use, you want to be sure of example when else they might use it in their day-to-day life. For instance, you might be watching a customer test out Telegram at their workplace, but there's a high chance that they might also use it while on their daily commute, resting at home, or exercising.
- Will you use Telegram for personal or professional reasons?
 - Similarly, you'll want to know the specific use cases for this new product or service. This can also help you decide if you should be more of a B2B or B2C company. You can better target audiences if you know if your products or services are being used to fulfill workplace duties or personal pleasures.
- Will you use Telegram alone or as part of a team?
 - This question is key because it can reveal how many people are actually interacting with your products or services. Newspaper and magazine companies recognize that circulation figures are often much smaller than readership, and the same principle can be applied to other brands and improve targeting efforts.
- What would make you choose Telegram over that of a competitor?
 - At the end of the day, you want to know what already differentiates your products or services from those of competitors and what more you can do to improve on that. When participants are hands-on with the product or service, they'll have a much easier time relaying exactly what they enjoy about your differentiation.

Conclusion :

Therefore, we have studied the contextual inquiry and different steps to conduct contextual inquiry for the selected product.