

Primary and secondary research



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This chapter will be exploring the various types of research strategies that can be used for both primary and secondary research, taking into account the strategy and approach that best suites the acquisition of information and analysis of data relevant to the subject matter.

This report is aimed at exploring the importance of stakeholder management as an effective tool in the rich oil and gas Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, drawing from past and present research on its relevance to the disputing region.

Research is the systematic collection, interpretation and clear definition of data (Suanders et al, 2007). Research methodology can be divided into quantitative and qualitative research strategies (Bryman, 2008). In the context of this report research strategy represents the means through which research can be carried out.

Quantitative strategy: This represents a deductive approach strategy used to test theories from an objective point of view, quantifying collected data, measurements and analysis.

Qualitative strategy: This represents an inductive approach strategy that primarily employs a subjective orientation in the formulation of theories and arguments.

Table 1. 0 gives a detailed distinction between quantitative and qualitative research strategies at all phases of a research life cycle.

Survey

This represents a social research technique that examines single or collective social phenomena. Survey is a method of data collection whereby information and data are collected through asking relevant questions in the form of structured interviews and the use of well structured questionnaires (questions and answers written documentation) (Sarantakos 1993). This method is aimed at studying relationships amongst variables. The questioning in this approach can take the form of face to face interviews, mail questionnaires, self-administered questionnaires, electronic questionnaires (using the internet as a media), telephone interviews etc. In conducting surveys a lot of questions orally or in writing are concentrated on the individual or groups that constitute the object of the research. For example, in a survey research on the conditions of international students studying in the Robert Gordon University, it is the students that are going to be asked the questions since they are the people that will have in-depth knowledge on the subject matter.

As a result of the structured nature of questionnaires and interviews in quantitative research, it has the deficiency of having a lack of penetration and depth into the individuals or groups being asked the questions. For example,

The response to the UK increase on income taxation

(Please circle the appropriate number)

Very satisfactory 5 4 3 2 1 Very unsatisfactory

From the above example the structured questionnaire already has a set of structured answers that will inevitably limit the answers of the individual or groups attempting the questionnaires, there by eliminating further information into why the selected answer was chosen.

Official statistics

The adjective ‘ statistics’ dates back to 1589 introduced by the Italian scholar Gerolamo Ghilini (Corbetta, 2003). Official statistics unlike surveys that are concerned with a unit of analysis represents a quantitative description of large amounts of data produced by geographic locations such as, cities, societies, countries etc undertaken by officials, governments or academia of regions to improve the overall knowledge of the area that they govern. Examples of official statistics include the following; population census, residence statistics, birth statistics, marriage, divorce statistics etc. It is a technique that deals with the quantitative description of the main features of a nation.

The gatherings of this data are primarily done by public agencies due to their direct link with the general public. For example on approval of a visa to the United Kingdom all non-immigrants will be registered with the UK border agency, this information when effectively collected can serve as valuable data ‘ official statistics’ in measuring the amount of non-immigrant students within the UK. The advantage of this technique is that it eliminates the cost of data collection since data can be sourced from administrative records. The disadvantage is that official data are collected for specific purposes as such, may be inadequate in revealing other social phenomenon under consideration.

Scaling

The scaling technique was first applied in the 1930's (Corbetta, 2003), scaling in a social research represents the ' measurement' of information, human beings, group and (or) a society. In social sciences the scaling of concepts are relatively difficult due to the high level of subjectivity within a social system, such as; measuring depression, optimism, religious devotion, social conflict etc. In order words ' scaling' is a systematic structure that utilises a set of coherent indicators to measure general concepts. For example scaling can be used in the measurement of attitude, in using the scaling technique it can be said that attitude is the general concept and the opinions of individuals in the test sample are its indicators.

Sampling

' Sample' represents a part of a whole. ' Sampling' is a research technique that involves the analysis of a ' part' to gain information about the ' whole' or ' complete body' of a system, some of the terms used in sampling include;

Sample frame: This consists of a detailed list of all the components of the complete body or system the sample will be taken from.

Representative Sample: In the selection of a part of the complete body the researcher must ensure that the selected sample must be a true reflection of the main body. In order, words representative sample is a sample that will effectively reflect the overall body that is being considered, for example in taking the opinion of 5000 students on a particular subject, it is likely that due to funds and certain constraints it won't be financially viable meeting all 5000 students, as such a representative sample in this case will be taking

into consideration an amount from the 5000 that will be considered a reflection of the possible opinions of the complete 5000.

Sample bias: This is a misrepresentation in the representative sample that can occur when components of a sample frame are not included in the sample.

Sample error: These are errors that can occur when the findings of the representative sample is not a true reflection of the main body.

In the selection of a sample a probabilistic or non-probabilistic approach can be taken (Bryman, 2008).

Probabilistic approach: This is the random selection of all the components of a sample from the main body. This is a commonly used system in social research in order to ensure that the findings of the selected components are a true reflection (representative sample) of the main body. An example of this would be testing for salt in a cooking pot of soup.

Non-probabilistic approach: This is a sample not collected randomly, in this approach there is a high tendency that more components of the sample will be collected from some areas when compared to other areas.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

This represents the various techniques that are commonly used in performing a qualitative research;

Ethnography and Participant observation

Qualitative interview

<https://assignbuster.com/primary-and-secondary-research/>

Ethnography and Participant observation

This is a technique that has been in existence for centuries used primarily to understand cultures, groups and countries. Ethnography is the study of cultures, while participative observation is a qualitative research that employs a similar approach in the collection and analysis of data. It entails intense contact between the subject who studies and subject being studied. In both techniques the researcher is directly involved by being immersed in the group under scrutiny for a specified period of time (usually a long duration). The researcher participates by asking questions, observing behaviours and listening to what is said in the conversations (Corbetta 2003, Bryman 2008).

It involves a wide range of data collection to support findings and a detailed understanding of the observed group in order to describe their actions and motivations. In other words the researcher sees the world from the eyes of the subjects. A major challenge of this technique is accessing a social setting and group that is of relevance to the research topic.

Some limitations of this technique include;

high level of subjectivity: From the definition it is no question that findings of the research is solely subject to the emotions, environment and opinions of the researcher since there aren't any objective means to measure interaction between the researcher and the observed group. For example, a researcher from a culture where women are not supposed to wear trousers is to perform a participative observation based research in another culture where women wear trousers, in his opinion based on his cultural background he

could come up with the findings that the women in that region are irresponsible while in the true sense they may be more responsible than those in his region.

Non-generalisation: Ethnography and participative research are focused on particular groups, cultures and regions, hence the findings unlike quantitative techniques cannot be generalised to other regions

Non-Standardisation: Due to the specific nature of this research to a particular subject matter, the processes and means of carrying out the research is subject to the researcher involved, in other words there isn't any standardised framework that depicts how ethnography and participative observation are to be carried out.

Ethnography and Participative observation like projects' are unique activities with clearly defined start and end dates associated with particular case studies or events. These techniques over decades has facilitated the conversion of the world into a global village (Bryman 2008) by giving knowledge on cultural beliefs of regions and countries, making it easier to factor the knowledge into projects, business strategy etc. The advantage of these techniques is that in actively participating in the primary research, it gives the researcher an in-depth knowledge on all the factors that can, will and are affecting the subjects under consideration, giving something that is invaluable to the social research community, " experience".

Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews are a non-structured approach to interviewing individuals and groups on particular subjects. Interviews when compared to

<https://assignbuster.com/primary-and-secondary-research/>

ethnography and participative observation that entails long periods of observation are more flexible, requiring a lesser duration of contact with the subjects. Unlike the structured approach used in quantitative analysis where answers could be defined like “ true or false” for the interviewee to pick from, in this approach the interviewer gives an open field for the interviewee to express their opinions on the asked questions. Qualitative interviews can be sub-divided into unstructured and semi-structured interviews.

Unstructured interviews: This is more of recorded or documented conversations between the interviewer and interviewee, with the interviewer asking questions and allowing the interviewee freedom to answer freely.

Semi-structured interviews: These are interviews where the interviewer has a list of topics or sections to be covered by the questions that are going to be asked, still allowing the interviewee freedom to express their point of view.

Interviews of focus groups typically fall under this category

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

From the break down of quantitative and qualitative research although there are differences between them, they have a lot of similarities to each other (Bryman 2008, pp. 394) they include;

They are both fundamentally concerned with providing answers or solutions to questions and problems related to social reality.

The findings of both research techniques emphasise links with already established literature on the research topic i. e. before a researcher proceeds

to the reports findings or arguments, the researchers using quantitative and qualitative techniques will review past literature and theories that have been written on the subject matter.

Both techniques collect large amounts of data to ascertain the validity of the findings and to effectively present this information in a concise or easily understood document, will converge all collected data into results and deductions.

They are both concerned with exploring variations within a system i. e. both techniques are keen on uncovering variations and exploring the causes of identified variations.

Quantitative and qualitative research emphasis transparency in the approach used to collect data , analysis it and how the findings were arrived at

The research topic was inspired by the void discovered working in the oil and gas industry in the Niger-delta. With brain storming technique used to sharpen ideas into a topic with specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound objectives.

This report is primarily utilises a qualitative approach in the collection, formulation and analysis of data