

Focus group discussion



According to studies made by Patton (2002) in the social sciences, FGD allow interviewers to analyze and evaluate people in a more normal environment than a personal one on one interview. In partnership with observations of the participants of the FGD, they can be utilized in order to gain comprehensive entrance to a variety of cultural and social groups, identifying pre-determined sites for study, identification of such areas, and raising unforeseen yet relevant concepts for further exploration and identification (Fischer 2005).

In addition a FGD have a very high apparent validity – due to the fact that they are relatively easy to comprehend, hence the results are easily understandable. In addition to this, they are very cheap to do, easy to set up and if needed, a research group can easily increase the number of samples or the focus groups if needed for the study (Krueger 1994). Zikmund (1997) summarised the benefits of the FGD as covered by the 10 Ss:

- Synergy or the potential of the group to integrate thoughts and ideas coming from each other's opinion pertaining to the topic that would yield a wider range of information.
- Snowballing of ideas and concepts is an effect wherein initial inputs from participants provide a venue wherein additional inputs from other people are brought about.
- Serendipity or the notion of an idea can drop out unexpectedly that can create for a snowballing effect.
- Stimulation is the concept that participant's views about the topic are retrieved because of the focus group processes and method of questioning.
- Security is brought about because respondents are more likely to be candid as there will probably be other similar people there.
- Spontaneity is

also another benefit of an FGD due to the fact that people are not required to answer a question in any given order; as such this encourages a spontaneous response when people have a definite point of view. •

Specialisation is another component of a focus group discussion wherein a trained moderator can extract vital information from a focus group discussion that can potentially address the aims of the objectives.

- Structure is also another benefit of an FGD because of the instituted frameworks and system that an FGD wherein moderators can easily inject topics and ideas effectively as compared to other qualitative research tools.
- Speed is also one of the benefits of a focus group discussion because quicker than individual interviews.
- Scrutiny is another benefit of an FGD as effective analysis can be observed by members of the research group and even by the participants themselves (Zikmund 1997).

As mentioned above, the benefits listed above would yield into a more comfortable environment for participants to provide the necessary information desired by researchers. In addition, the information provided by the researchers would have a very good chance of being highly informative and varied in such a way that a variety of perspectives can be tapped into in which case most if not all of the perspectives are considered in evaluating the research hypothesis and the objectives of the study. Subjects and

Sampling

It was explained by Krueger (1994) that FGDs essentially are comprised of four to 12 participants within a single group for the study. On one hand, although groups with a relatively higher number of participants can provide

a wide range of ideas and can generate a lot more vital information, the number of participants may create a venue for too much competition for a concept known as air time, more so if the focus group has accepted more than one members that are highly vocal or are dominant relative to the other groups.

In addition to this, a relatively large group of people may prove to be a daunting task for novice facilitators to operate and thus a relatively inadequate and inefficient FGD might occur. Initially, the original plan for the program intended for six participants per focus group. However, based on schedule of the identified members of the focus group and based on the above mentioned literature, it was deemed that it would be sufficient to have a group of a minimum of four participants per focus group.

As Krueger (1994) points out, smaller groups of four or five can simplify logistics but at the same time ensure that relevant data would be acquired from the FGD. It is also suggested that a focus group comprised of five to seven individuals would provide an optimal balance of air time and operational considerations for focus groups. More will be presented about the composition of the participants in the research design section of the study.

All interviewees were chose purposively with the following inclusion criteria:

- 1) should have been a member of the company for at least one year and has a considerable amount of understanding with regards to the company's vision, mission and objectives - whether in rank or file or in a management position;
- 2) has experienced any degree motivational initiative implemented

within the company; and 3) has explicitly expressed willingness to participate in the study.

These criteria apply for all Focus group discussion categories of employees. Research Design Quantity of the Participants For this section, the research design for the overall research will be presented in the study. In this section, the number of focus groups will be identified with the number of Focus groups per category and the manner upon which the FGD will be conducted. In addition, the number of hours per session will be presented and the method of analysis will also be presented.

In addition, the source of secondary analysis will also be presented. The first section would focus on developing the groups for the focus groups.

According to Morgan (1997), grouping participants based on their shared interests, skills and talents can prove to be the most efficient and effective way of segmenting groups. The concept of segmenting focus groups into sub-groups can also provide the moderator and eventually the research to capture and identify opinions from a variety of avenues and cases (Tynan 1988).

With this in mind, the study will utilize two focus groups per segment. This is to ensure that the researcher can compare the findings that were acquired from each research group and can validate or reject an identified conclusion per research group and ensures that there is a sense of validation and checks and balance within the research design (Krueger 1994).