

Sampling techniques



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Whenever I conduct a research, most of them combination of both quantitative & qualitative, I'll make sure that the objective is clearly written out and discussed with the client. As much as we agree that sampling is very crucial to any form of research, the purpose should always be a priority, or else the sampling methods may go through a lot of movements with no direction at all. " Decisions about design, measurement, analysis and reporting all flow from the purpose of the research. " (Patton, 1990).

For the first topic: Perceptions of job stress among correction officers, the probable purpose of the research is to contribute knowledge that will help people understand the nature of a problem so that there is some kind of control on their environment. Job stress can be viewed as a human problem. In applied research, the source of questions is in the problems and concerns experienced by people. The purpose of applied research there is to generate potential solutions to the said human problem.

Perhaps, from the qualitative inquiry, a need for stress management program among correction officers may become evident. No matter what the findings are, the researcher must first gather data on the gravity of the job-related stresses being experienced by the correction officers, if they are manageable or not. If the objective of the research is to gain a general understanding of what those perceptions are, therefore, a random sample of sufficient size would be appropriate to be truly representative of and permit generalization to the total population of correction officers.

How this sampling will be identified? The researcher will first and foremost identify the number of correction officers from various geographical sites and

from there draw a desirable sample size to achieve enough credibility. Get a sample size that represents each penitentiary or house of correction and the level of management they belong (junior officer, senior officer). The cluster is needed to concretize the findings and put some direction to where the research is going.

The first topic will generally use quantitative sampling through questionnaire, measuring the common pattern and qualitative inquiry like Focus group discussions using open ended questions to get an in-depth understanding of the issue or problem. For the second topic: Juvenile gang activities, again, there is the question on the purpose of the study. Is the research conducted only to gather a baseline data for further research?

There are so many gangs existing in various countries, cities, even on small towns. The geographical site is one consideration. Identify the meaning of a juvenile gang so as to create a unified understanding of the sample. The research is quite heterogeneous in nature, so we need to break the sample size. At this point, going underground to get the much needed data is too costly in terms of time and risk unless we break down the research into one single criterion.

Also, all gangs are different from each other in principle, in all dealings, therefore getting a sample size from one type of juvenile gang is not representative of all, although generally their activities are similar from what we've heard and read in the news. But a concrete data to elevate the observation to a credible finding is the objective of the research. How is this done? Get a sample size, representative of each group. Since the

difficulty there is the fieldwork, it is recommended that former gang members can serve as the sample.

This is also a good venue to write a case study based from the interviews where information rich data are more likely to come out in the process. Stratified purposeful sampling, illustrates characteristics of particular subgroups of interest; facilitates comparisons. This means, the researcher is also open to opportunistic sampling, following new leads during the research process, taking advantage of the unexpected. Be flexible, since interesting details involving the youth, crimes and society, usually follow not just one particular sampling method.

For the third topic: Sentencing patterns in an urban vs. rural court, the researcher can use Basic research, then the summative evaluation. This involves intensive data gathering and may not cover all urban and rural courts, thus there's a need to identify the sample size based on the total number of courts in a certain area. A Maximum variation sampling is appropriate to purposely pick up a wide range of variation on dimensions of interest and identify important common patterns that cut across variations.