

Describing research methodology and philosophy



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Saunders et al (2007) described research methodology as a carefully organised and scientific procedure used during a research project which generates results which are in turn assessed. Also the methodology used in any research is developed by the researcher. Saunders et al (2007) revealed five sections in which research projects are usually shaped.

Figure 3. 1: The Research “ Onion”

Saunders et al (2009) described research philosophy as an essential basis on how we view the world. This basis supports research strategy and the procedure a researcher chooses in evaluating the strategy.

Also according to Sullivan (2001 pp. 47) research philosophy is a type of philosophy based on scientifically proven facts where the world is thought to exist without consideration of people’s ideas of it and that science uses decisions based on facts to discover what exist in the world.

Authors like Malhotra and Birks (2007) support the fact that the ‘ scientifically based facts’ belief can have an effect on research.

Furthermore, Sullivan (2001 pp. 48) showed that belief on the philosophy based on feelings, thoughts is where reality of the world generates out of its creation and there is a replacement of social meaning during social interaction.

However for the process of this research, philosophy based on feelings and thoughts is chosen over that based on scientific proven ideas because Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swartz (1998 p. 32) showed that philosophy based on scientifically proven ideas work with noticeable social reality and

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the results of such research can be law like generalisation which is almost the same to those produced by the physical and natural scientist.

RESEARCH PURPOSE

Saunders et al (2009) defined research purpose as a clear exact statement that point out what the researcher wants to achieve from undertaking the research. However, this purpose can be achieved using any of the following (Saunders et al 2009)

Exploratory research

Descriptive research and

Explanatory research

Exploratory research: this type of research is used to find out ' what is occurring'; to seek new and clear understanding; to ask question and evaluate an occurrence in a new light (Robson 2002, p. 59). Furthermore, this research is mainly used to simplify a problem and also reveal if the problem is worth pursuing (Saunders et al 2009). Also, an exploratory research can be changed easily to suit a new situation, this change does not necessarily mean absence of direction, rather it means concentrating on a wide viewpoint and narrowing the research to a more specific manner. (Adams and Schvaneveldt 1991)

Descriptive Research; According to Robson (2002 p. 59): descriptive research is a research that seeks to describe an accurate profile of persons, events or situations in a particular way to suit one's opinion. This research

involves producing a correct representation of persons or events. (Saunders et al 2009 p. 590)

Explanatory research: this type of research seeks to present a direct relationship between variables. In other words, this type of research shows how a variable depends on another and how they affect each other. This research studies a problem or situation in order to generate the relationship between the variables (Saunders et al 2009. pp 591).

Several authors like Malhotra and Birks (2007) revealed that this type of research purpose can be used collectively in a research. However for the purpose of this research, the three purpose method was used.

Research Approach

According to Saunders et al (2009); there are two types of research approach available to researchers namely;

Deductive Approach and'

Inductive Approach

The deductive approach involves five stages in which research will be carried out (Robson 2002)

Deducing the hypothesis from the theory- this involves analysing the relationship between two or more variables.

Expressing the hypothesis in operational terms- this involves the identification of how the variable will be measured.

Testing the operational hypothesis

Examining the outcomes of the inquiry- this involves making sure the theory is right or suggesting modification to the theory

improving the theory using the research findings

Furthermore, this type of approach is carefully organised, collects quantitative data, and need to collect data from a sufficient sample size in order to generalise conclusion (Saunders et al 2009)

Inductive approach; this approach involves the generation of a theory as a result of the evaluation of the empirical data. (Saunders et al 2009 pp 593) Also, it involves understanding the kind of problem and how it concerns the context in which it occurs. Also this type of research tends to use small sample of subject as against the large sample used in deductive approach.

However for the purpose of this research both inductive approach was used because of the large sample that can be used to define a theory as well as the fact that inductive approach can be changed to fit any situation and the researcher can be more involved in the research process.

Choices

Saunders et al (2009) revealed that there are multiple method choices available to a researcher to collect data namely: qualitative and quantitative techniques.

According to Denzin, Norman, Lincoln and Yvonna (2005); qualitative research technique is a method of getting required information used in many

academic discipline and market research. Also, Chris Vaughan-Jones (2010) showed that qualitative research uses observation from participant and non participants, semi structured interview, unstructured interview and analysis of documents and materials.

While quantitative research technique is systematic investigation of countable properties and observable happenings and their relationship (Kuhn 1961). Furthermore, quantitative data are usually gathered using questionnaires in which the data collected will be coded using numerical codes and later analysed.

However, for the purpose of this research, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data. (Quantitative method was in form of questionnaires while qualitative method was in form of a focus group)

Time horizon

Ester by- Smith, Thorpe, Jackson and Lowe (2008) revealed that a research design can take the shape of a cross-sectional studies or longitudinal studies. A cross-sectional study usually uses the survey strategy as it seeks to describe incidence of a phenomenon (ester by- Smith et al 2008). On the other hand longitudinal study uses observation of people or an event over a period of time in which the researcher is able to control the time changing properties involved, provided that they are not affected by the research process (Saunders et al 2009)

However, cross-sectional study was used for this research because all the data collected was obtained from a sample of internet banking customers at different time of the day and different days of the week using questionnaires.

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Research strategy

Research strategy can be described as a general plan in which research questions are answered. Also, research strategy involves the use of research questions as well as research objectives, amount of time, extent of existing knowledge and resources available (Saunders et al 2009). Furthermore, the major research strategies available to researchers are experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography, and archival research (Saunders et al 2009)

Experiment- according to Saunders et al (2009 p 142), experiment is a form of research that involves a scientific test which features strongly in much social science research especially psychology. Furthermore, Hakim (2000) showed that experiments seek to reveal whether a change in one independent variable will cause a change in another dependent variable.

Survey- this is to collect a large amount of data from a particular population based on their views about a particular subject, it employs the use of explorative and descriptive research approach (Saunders et al 2009 pp. 144). Furthermore, survey strategy allows a researcher to collect quantitative data which can be analysed using descriptive and inferential data (Saunders et al 2009).

Case study; Robson (2002 pp 178) described case study as a plan for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular happening with its real life counterparts using different sources of evidence. Also, case study creates a detailed understanding of a research context and the processes involved (Morris and Woods 1991). Furthermore, Yin (2003)

revealed that case study uses triangulate multiple sources of data because it uses different methods of data collection with a study to ensure that data collected are accurate and useful.

Action research; Saunders et al (2009 pp. 587) described action research as a research strategy that is involved with management of change, also involving a close connectivity between practitioner and researcher. Coghlan and Brannick (2005) revealed that research should pay more attention on resolving organisational issues like effecting change together with the person that experiences the change directly.

Grounded theory; this can be described as the theory that was developed from data gotten from series of observations or interviews involving an inductive approach (Saunders et al 2009 pp 592). Furthermore, Goulding (2002) revealed that grounded theory strategy helps in predicting and explaining behaviour in a research which brings about building and developing a theory.

Ethnography: this strategy is used to describe and explain the social world through first hand field study (Saunders et al 2009 pp 591). This strategy involves participative observation and it consumes a lot of time because it is done over a period of time making the researcher involving in the social world being observed (Saunders et al 2009).

Archival research: this type of research strategy uses managerial works and records as its major data source (Saunders et al 2009 pp 150). However the data collected through this strategy are analysed because it is a product of daily activities (Hakim 2000). However Saunders et al (2009) revealed that <https://assignbuster.com/describing-research-methology-and-philosophy/>

the above strategies can be combined in a research, the survey strategy was used as a result of its ability to collect quantitative data as well as its ability to answer questions like who, what, where, how much, and how many; also because it uses exploratory and descriptive research techniques.