

## **MARKET RESEARCH (PART-2)**

### **Qualitative Marketing Research**

Qualitative research is a set of research techniques, used in marketing and the social sciences, in which data are obtained from a relatively small group of respondents and not analyzed with statistical techniques. This differentiates it from quantitative research in which a large group of respondents provide data that are statistically analyzed.

### **The role of Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research methods are used primarily as a prelude to quantitative research. They are used to define a problem, generate hypotheses, identify determinants, and develop quantitative research designs. They are inexpensive and fast. Because of the low number of respondents involved, these exploratory research methods cannot be used to generalize to the whole population. They are however, very valuable for exploring an issue and are used by almost all researchers. They can be better than quantitative research at probing below the surface for affective drives and subconscious motivations.

### **Approaches**

Most qualitative methods use a direct approach. They clearly disclose the purpose of the study and the organization that commissioned it. Questions are direct and to the point.

Many other qualitative techniques use an indirect approach. The true intent of the research is disguised, either by claiming a false purpose or by omitting any reference to the study's purpose. Some researchers have ethical misgivings about the deceit involved in this approach. Those researchers that use this approach feel that it provides the more honest and accurate responses. If disguised methods are used, all respondents should, on completion, attend a debriefing session in which the true purpose of the research is given and the reason for the deception explained.

The main types of qualitative research are:

### **Depth Interviews**

- Interview is conducted one-on-one, and lasts between 30 and 60 Minutes.
- Best method for in-depth probing of personal opinions, beliefs, and Values.
- Very rich depth of information
- Very flexible
- probing is very useful at uncovering hidden issues
- They are unstructured (or loosely structured)- this differentiates them from survey interviews in which the same questions are asked to all respondents.
- Can be time consuming and responses can be difficult to interpret
- Requires skilled interviewers - expensive - interviewer bias can easily be introduced

- There is no social pressure on respondents to conform and no group dynamics
- Start with general questions and rapport establishing questions, and then proceed to more purposive questions

**Laddering** is a technique used by depth interviewers in which you start with questions about external objects and external social phenomena, then proceed to internal attitudes and feelings.

**Hidden issue questioning** is a technique used by depth interviewers in which they concentrate on deeply felt personal concerns and pet peeves.

**Symbolic analysis** is a technique used by depth interviewers in which deeper symbolic meanings are probed by asking questions about their opposites.

### Focus Groups

- An interactive group discussion leads by a moderator.
- Unstructured (or loosely structured) discussion where the moderator encourages the free flow of ideas.
- Usually 8 to 12 members in the group who fit the profile of the target group or consumer.
- Usually last for 1 to 2 hours.
- Usually recorded on video.
- The room usually has a large window with one-way glass - participants cannot see out, but the researchers can see in.
- Inexpensive and fast.
- Can use computer and internet technology for on-line focus groups.
- Respondents feel a group pressure to conform.
- Group dynamics is useful in developing new streams of thought and covering an issue thoroughly.

### Projective Techniques

- These are unstructured prompts or stimuli that encourage the respondent to project their underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes, or feelings onto an ambiguous situation.
- They are all indirect techniques that attempt to disguise the purpose of the research
- Examples of projective techniques include:

1. **Word association** - say the first word that comes to mind after hearing a word - only some of the words in the list are test words that the researcher is interested in, the rest are fillers - is useful in testing brand names - variants include chain word association and controlled word association

2. **Sentence completion** - respondents are given incomplete sentences and asked to complete them

3. **Story completion** - respondents are given part of a story and are asked to complete it
4. **Cartoon tests** - pictures of cartoon characters are shown in a specific situation and with dialogue balloons - one of the dialogue balloons is empty and the respondent is asked to fill it in
5. **Thematic apperception tests** - respondents are shown a picture (or series of pictures) and asked to make up a story about the picture(s)
6. **Role playing** - respondents are asked to play the role of someone else - researchers assume that subjects will project their own feelings or behaviors into the role
7. **Third-person technique** - a verbal or visual representation of an individual and his/her situation is presented to the respondent - the respondent is asked to relate the attitudes or feelings of that person - researchers assume that talking in the third person will minimize the social pressure to give standard or politically correct responses.

### **Quantitative Marketing Research**

Quantitative marketing research is the application of quantitative research techniques to the field of marketing. It has roots in both the positivist view of the world, and the modern marketing viewpoint that marketing is an interactive process in which both the buyer and seller reach a satisfying agreement on the "four P's" of marketing: Product, Price, Place (location) and Promotion.

As a social research method, it typically involves the construction of questionnaires and scales. People who respond (respondents) are asked to complete the survey. Marketers use the information so obtained to understand the needs of individuals in the marketplace, and to create strategies and marketing plans.

### **Scope and Requirements**

Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques can be used to analyze data and draw conclusions. It involves a quantity of respondents sometimes ranging in number from ten to ten million, and may include hypotheses, random sampling techniques to enable inference from the sample to the population. Marketing research may include both experimental and quasi-experimental research designs.

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