

Module 1 – Research Design

Defining A Problem:

- The process of trying to identify specific areas where additional information is need about a marketing environment.
- Includes negative and positive ramifications.
 - Both require information when considering the impacts on markets.
- Must ensure research is designed correctly to address the right problems.

Formulating Research Problems:

- A restatement of the decision problem in research terms,
- The research problem states the issue being explored and its implications for: business, industry, society, culture etc.

1. Meet with The Client:

- Get a clear understanding of the client's perspective.
- Gather as much information as possible.
- Meet early. Trust must be build.

2. Clarify the Problem / Opportunity:

- Must listen to their background to the problem and do a diagnosis.
- Widen the scope of the analysis.
- Expansionary research may be useful.
- Do not stop asking questions and listening to feedback until the real problem is formulated.

3. State the Decision Problem:

- Need to be able to state the client's decision problem.
- Conclusively. Clearly. Concisely.
- In terms both the client and research team understand.

4. Develop Research Questions:

- New ideas for questions may come from preliminary, expansionary or basic research, or discussions with the clients.
- Should be a restatement of the decision problem in research terms.
- Describe information to be uncovered to help solve the decision problem.

5. Specific Key Questions:

- Important to refine and specify only key research questions.
- Needs to focus attention to those most impactful.
 - Better to attempt a few than to address many and not conclusively answer any.
- Decisions on what questions to obtain should be decided based on the benefits of the information attained, importance of decisions made, and resources required.

6. Prepare the Research Request (Proposal):

- Purpose is to ensure you and your client are in agreement.
- Calls for submissions may be made like a tender process.
- Include background, problem, research questions and methodology.

Discovery Orientated vs. Strategy Orientated Research Decisions:

- In relation to step 3 of formulating research problems
- Discovery Orientated – commonly responses to unplanned changes in the environment. About what is going on and why.
 - Researchers need to provide facts which happens through descriptive or exploratory research.
 - To discover information and illuminate the problem.
- Strategy Orientated – examining how planned changed should be implemented.
 - Often results from unplanned change.
 - There's been a subject of previous discovery-oriented research.

Research Designs:

- The framework or plan of a study.
- Determining the research design is dependent on the type of research problems identified.
- The amount of the different designs to undertake is dependent on the research problems and how much research information already exists.

Exploratory Research:

- May be helpful in the development of hypothesis.
- Research design in which the major emphasis is on gaining ideas and insights. Gaining a better understanding.
- Provides rich, meaningful information about the research problem that informs future research.
 - Identifies which research problem should be explored and what questions should be answered.
- Exploratory research techniques include: focus groups, interview, ethnography and case studies.

Descriptive Research:

- Research design in which the major emphasis is on determining the frequency with which something occurs or the extent to which two variables differs.
- May describe behaviours (consumption, attitudes, recognition etc.) and often communicates numbers. Increasingly digital – netnography, analytics.
- About who, what, when, where and how.

Causal Research:

- Research design in which the major emphasis is on determining cause-and-effect relationships.
- Often utilises experiments: lab vs. field.
- Used when evidence is needed that a particular action is going to have a certain result.

Cross Sectional vs. Longitudinal Research Design:

- Cross Sectional Designs –
 - Act as a snapshot and only happens once.
 - Can relate to all different types of research designs, but can only address one sample at one particular time.
- Longitudinal Designs –
 - May have measures taken over a long period of time.
 - May require observing changes or lack of changes.
 - May be repeated measures where the same respondents are asked multiple times, or independent samples.

Marketing Research:

- A systematic and objective process of generating information for aid in making marketing decisions.
- Organisations need information to make decisions and accomplish goals.
- It includes:
 - Specifying information required to address market issues.
 - Designing the method and implementing data collection.
 - Analysing the results.
 - Communicating the findings and their implications,
 - Research attempts to gather data and transform it into useful information.

Ethics in Research:

- Ethics are moral principles and values that govern the way an individual or group acts.
- Principles, values and standards of conduct are followed by researchers.
- Access to and quality of data depends on goodwill of the public.

Australian Market and Social Research Society:

- The code of conduct for professional behaviour includes:
 - Research must be legal.
 - Research must be honest, truthful and objective.
 - Must not conduct in a way that discredits the market, the profession or the public.
 - Researchers must not abuse the trust of, or exploit participants.

Research Questions:

- To address this problem, a series of research questions must be developed.
- These questions relate to broader objectives or hypothesis of study.
- They influence subsequent research design elements including sampling, methodology, data collection and data analysis.

Conceptualisation:

- The action or process of forming a concept or idea of something.
- Developing theoretical models and explains a phenomenon.
- Made up of independent and dependent variables, mediators and moderators.
 - An independent variable causes a change in the dependent variable.
 - Mediators and moderators change relationships.
- Aim is to explain as much of the phenomena as possible.
- If the arrow intercepts the line, it is the mediator. If it just points to the line, it is the moderator.

Example:

- Exercise (IV) leads to Weight Loss (DV).
- Moderators: Diet effects weight loss.
 - High protein diet vs. low protein diet.

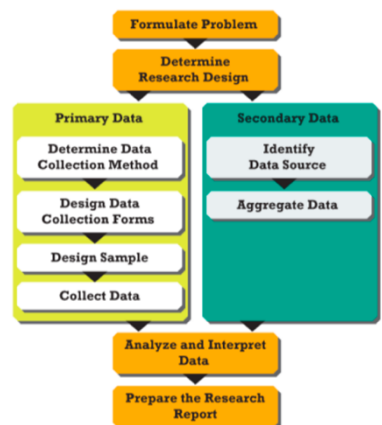


Stages in the Research Design Process:

- Each stage context will have a unique setting of contributing factors.
- These factors impact each stage.

1. Formulate Problem:

- Extensive amounts of research taken prior.
- The research problem must first be defined.



- Series of research questions and objectives.
- Unique contributors dependent upon specific context.

2. Research Design:

- Determined by how much is known about the problem.
- Type of research design are –
 - Exploratory: broad, it defines an initial problem.
 - Descriptive: describes a population / phenomenon.
 - Causal: the extent to which variables are related to one another.

3. Primary / Secondary Data:

- Secondary Research – used if the information required already exists, or has already been collected. If specific data needed for a research problem, primary data is collected.
- Sample and sampling technique must be decided upon.
 - Must consider the target population to be sampled from, sampling techniques and method, size of the sample to be collected.

4. Analyse and Interpreting Data:

- Reasoning to understand data (quality and quantity).
- Editing and coding of data required. Data is analysed and interpreting in light of the research problem.

5. Research Report:

- Putting together a research report to communicate findings.
- Interpreted information communicated to decisions makers.
- Research problem addressed (hopefully with solutions).
- Findings communicated in written and graphical form.

Module 2 – Secondary Data

Secondary Data:

- Data gathered and recorded by someone else for purposes other than your current project.
- Historical data that has already been assembled.
- Interesting insights may exist in the form of secondary data.
- Help fill in the gaps in the researcher's knowledge.
- Integral for exploratory research.

Forms of Secondary Data:

- Qualitative: Data that cannot be expressed as a number.
 - Data that represents nominal scales such as gender, socio economic status, religious preference etc.
 - Becoming increasingly important.
- Quantitative: Anything that can be expressed as a number, or quantified.

Things to Consider:

- When considering using secondary data, you need to ask the following questions:
 - Is the subject matter consistent with our problem definition?
 - Does the data apply to the population of interest?
 - Does the data apply to the time period of interest?
 - Does the data cover out subject matter?

Advantages of Secondary Data:

- Time and money – save a lot of time and money not having to research.
- Useful in the exploratory and descriptive stages for providing insights to a particular research problem.
- Provides comparative data and can be helpful in analyzing trends.

Disadvantages of Secondary Data:

- Because it is data collected from someone else, it is unlikely that secondary data is perfectly suitable for addressing your research problem.
- Secondary data findings may not be particularly accurate.
- Relevance of time – may not have a long shelf life because of rapidly moving and changing industries.

Internal Secondary Data:

- Data from internal sources – inside the organisation.
- Relies on existing databases.
- Can be the most cost-effective as data is autonomously being collected.

Internal Secondary Sources:

- Internal secondary data can come from a wide range of sources, including:
- Sales data.
- Warranty and product registration information.
- Website sign ups and newsletters.
- Loyalty cards.

External Secondary Data:

- Utilises a wide variety of media available in external forms.
- The information comes from areas outside of the organisation.
- Sources published by others – collect primary data and then make available for others.
- Being critical of secondary data and knowing its limitations is essential.

External Secondary Sources:

- Census data.
- Industry studies or reports.
- Academic databases.
- Can include an informal search of the web.