

Lecture 3-interviews and focus groups (chapter 4 and 5)

Marketing research data classification

- Primary data → originated by a researcher for the specific purpose of addressing the problem at hand → can be qualitative or quantitative
- Secondary data → already been collected for the purposes other than the problem at hand
- Meaningful insights can be gained from primary data that cannot be obtained from secondary data

Chapter 4-interviews

Quantitative research

- =research that places heavy emphasis on using formalised, standard questions and pre-determines response options on questionnaires administered to large numbers of respondents
- Useful for applicable and casual designs
- Researchers are trained in questionnaire design, construct development, scale measurement, sampling and statistical data analysis

Goals of quantitative research

- Make accurate predictions about relationships between market factors and behaviours
- Gain meaningful insights into those relationships
- Test various types of hypotheses

Qualitative research

- Gain preliminary insights to decision problems and opportunities
- Methods include probing, interviews, open-ended or unstructured questions, observation, feedback
- Preliminary insights are sometimes followed up with quantitative research to verify the qualitative findings

When objectives focus on gaining background info, defining terms and established research priorities → applicable for exploratory research designs

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|--|
| Economical and timely data collection | Lack of generalisability |
| Richness of data | Inability to distinguish small differences |
| Accuracy of recording marketplace behaviours | Lack of reliability |
| Preliminary insights into building models and scale measurements | Difficult finding well-trained investigators, interviewers and observers |

Comparing qualitative and quantitative research

| | Qualitative research | Quantitative research |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Research goals/objectives | Discovery of new ideas, thoughts, feelings, preliminary insights of ideas and objects | Validation of facts, estimates, relationships and predictions |
| Type of research | Exploratory | Descriptive or casual |
| Type of questions | Open-ended, un/semi structured | Mostly structured |

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|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Time of execution | Short time frame | Longer time frame |
| Representativeness | Small samples | Larger samples |
| Type of analysis | Debriefing, subjective | Statistical, predictions and relationships |
| Researcher skills | Interpersonal communications, observations, interpretive skills | Scientific, statistical procedure skills |
| Generalisability of results | Very limited, only preliminary insights and understanding | Usually very good, inferences about facts, estimates and relationships |

Interviews in qualitative research

- Formalised process where a well-trained interviewer asks a subject a set of semi-structured questions in a face-to-face setting
 - o At home, office, product location
 - o Referred to as 'in-depth' or 'one-on-one'
- Hybrid interview
 - o Combo of internet and phone interviewing
 - o Internal enables consumers to be exposed to visual and audio stimuli

In-depth interviewing

Objectives

- Discover preliminary insights of what the subject thinks or believes about the topic of concern or why the subject exhibits certain behaviour
- To obtain unrestricted and detailed comments that include feelings, beliefs or opinions that can help better understand the different elements of the subject's thoughts and the reasons why they exist
- Have the respondent communicate as much detail as possible about his or her knowledge and behaviour towards a given topic of object

Techniques

- Collection of attitudinal and behavioural dialogue through probing questions
 - o Interviewer uses subject's initial response to a question as the framework for the next question to gain a more detailed response
- Interpretations of the dialogue to create theme categories and insights

Advantages and disadvantages

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility to collect data on activities, behaviour patterns, attitudes, motivations and feelings - Large amount of detailed data possible - Possibility to probe the respondent further | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of generalisability - Inability to distinguish small differences - Lack of reliability and validity - Potential for biases to emerge - Potential interviewer errors - Costs and time |

Steps

1. Understand the decision problem and research objective
2. Create a set of appropriate questions
3. Decide on the best interview environment
4. Screen and select suitable prospective subjects
5. Contact subjects, provide guidelines, create comfort zone, begin interview
6. Conduct in-depth interview
7. Analyse the subject's responses
8. Write a summary report

Types of interviews

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| Experience interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none">- =informal gatherings of individuals thought to be knowledgeable on the issues- Quickly gather info that can be used to develop further research questions- E.g. asking computer experts about a research problem dealing with future demands for a website | Protocol interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none">- =subject is placed in a decision-making situation and is asked to express the process and activities undertaken to make a decision- Provides insights and understanding of motivational or procedural activities or both within the over decision process- E.g. asking a Dell customer through steps they went through when purchasing a computer |
| Articulate interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none">- =focus on listening for and identifying key conflicts in a person's orientation values toward goods and services- Structured to elicit narratives as opposed to gaining factual truths- E.g. researchers identifying different meaning of words and products from various groups of respondents | Projective interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none">- =indirect method of questioning that enables a subject to project beliefs and feelings onto a third party, into the task situation or an inanimate object- Learn more about the respondents in situations where they might not reveal their true thoughts in a direct questioning process- Can include word association test, sentence completion test, picture test, thematic appreciation test (tat) |

Focus groups- chapter 5

Focus groups in qualitative research

- =formalised process of bringing a small group of people together for an interactive, spontaneous discussion on one particular topic or concept
- Main purpose= gain insights into the topic of interest, gain unexpected findings from a free-flowing conversation

Research objectives

- Provide data for defining and redefining marketing problem
- Identify specific hidden info requirements
- Provide data for better understanding the results from other quantitate survey studies
- Reveal customers hidden needs, wants, attitudes, feelings, behaviours, perceptions and motives regarding services, products or practices
- Generate new ideas about products, services or delivery methods
- Discover new constructs and measurement methods
- Help explain changing consumer preferences

Phase 1: Planning the study

- Most critical phase
- Researchers must have an understanding of:
 - o Purpose of the study
 - o Precise definition of the problem
 - o Specific data requirements
- Key decisions on selecting the appropriate participants, selection and the recruitment of members, focus group size and session details

Focus group participants

- Central factors in the selection process
 - o Strong consideration of the study's purpose and think about who can best provide the necessary info
 - o Potential group dynamics
 - o Willingness of members to engage in dialogue
 - o Individuals Knowledge of the topic
 - o Group should be homogenous enough to encourage comfort and discourage socially acceptable responses, while allowing enough variation to allow for contrasting opinions

Phase 2: conducting discussions

- Success of focus groups depends on the moderator and his or her communication, interpersonal, probing, observation and interpretive skills
- Need to be able to ask the right questions, stimulate and control the direction of the participants discussions over a variety of predetermined topic → need to know when to move to the next topic

Moderator traits

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| Interpersonal, communications and interpretive skills | Display professionalism | Create positive group dynamics | Good understanding of topics |
| Communicate clearly | Capable of probing new ideas | Exhibit friendly personality | Know when the close the conversation |

Moderator guide

- Detailed outline of the topics, questions and sub questions that will serve as the basis for generating the spontaneous interactive dialogue among the group participants
- Uses a structural outline format that established on order for asking a series of opening, introductory, transition and ending questions

Phase 3: Analysing and reporting results

- Debriefing analysis
 - o Summary analysis of the comments and ideas
 - o Researcher and moderator discuss the subject response and feedback
 - o Need to check interpretive bias
- Content analysis
 - o Systematic producer of taking individual responses and grouping them into larger theme categories/patters
- Create a report to communicate the findings
- A formal report to communicate findings
- Includes:

Advantages and disadvantages

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stimulate new ideas, thoughts and feelings about a topic- Can uncover underlying reasons- Understanding of why people act or behave- Client participation- Wide ranging customer responses- Brings together hard to reach groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inability to generalise results- Questionable reliability of results- Subjectivity of interpretation- High cost per participation |

Technology

- High-tech versions of focus group interviewing, promoted as online focus groups is gaining popularity
- Subjects are gathered in a centralised location and the session is carried in real time across the internet to clients and researches at various locations
- Advancements in interactive marketing technologies (IMTs) is opening new avenues for conducting telephone, video and internet focus group interviews