

Interviewing

Introduction

- It is different from selection or appraisal interviews.
- Research interviews require a very systematic approach to data collection, analysis and description that allows us to maximize the chances of achieving meaningful valid and reliable conclusions.
- This method can be used any stage of research:
 - Initial phase to identify areas for more detail exploration.
 - Piloting/ validation of instruments main vehicle of data collection.
 - Check the results on target sample.

Introduction

- It includes- other methods (ex. Questionnaires or observations)
- It is a building block of far more specific and elaborate methods.
- Its' uniqueness is – direct interaction or exchange between researcher and participants.

The Interview Structure

- Having specified research questions.
- Interviewers will require an introduction to the interview. The participants should be given information appropriate for them to be able to give their informed consent to their participation.
- Do not explain hypothesis or proposition you hope to examine in the research otherwise, they will provide these answers only which support it.
- It is aimed only to encourage participation and confidence in the interview, but not to reveal the research agenda.

Interview Schedule

- (OR the form of questions and responses)
- Two types:
 - A: Structured Interview
 - B: Partially Structured Interview

A: Structured Interview

- Fixed number of questions in fixed order (Sometime respondents asked to choose one option from given options by the researcher).
 - Easily questioned
 - Ensure comparability
 - Consistency of questions
 - Ensure of important topics are included.
 - Useful in large number of participants.

BUT: No room for unanticipated discoveries.

B: Partially Structured Interview

- Questions are allowed to be developed as a result of exchange with the respondents.
- Comparability across respondents is sacrificed for the sake of individual relevance.
- Effectiveness of data is only based on whether research questions are properly addressed or not.

B: Partially Structured Interview

- Questions should not be used as:
 - Double-barreled: ex: question on cutting whale and seal; if answer is NO, is it for whale or seal or for both?
 - Introduce an assumption before going on to pose the question.
 - Include complex words
 - Be leading
 - Include double negative

B: Partially Structured Interview

- Sequence of Questions:
 - Should not jump without explanation from one topic to other.
 - The respondent has been given some notion of why the questions are being asked and must feel that the sequence of questions make sense. If fail in it, respondent can become confused and suspicious. (Ex: caste in attitude measurement is irrelevant question)
 - Use link explanations: it is part of study to show the caste of our participants, so if you never mind, may I ask your caste?

Conducting Interview

- Clear guidelines on how to conduct interview:
 - Respondents ask about result of study.
 - Tell them that it will take long time to analyze data.
 - Sensitive issues (ex. Bullying, crime): interviewer must be very sensible and respondent and thought about the reaction of respondents. (Counsel if required)

Piloting Interview

- Just like questionnaire.
 - (5 Stages)
1. Stsge-1: test whether your explanation for the interview is understood by a small sample. Ask for any doubts and queries.
 2. Stage-2: test comprehension of particular question which are difficult (ambiguous, lacking relevance, too advance vocabulary)

Piloting Interview

3. Stage-3: Amend introduction (stage-1) and questions (stage-2).
4. Stage-4: Test revised explanations and all questions on new sample for comprehension. This should be a complete run through of the entire interview schedule. It is still possible to make changes at this point.
5. Stage-5: new sample- use interview schedule to establish whether the answers you are getting are the ones which interest you. (sample structure must be like target sample).

Conducting the Interview

- There are some rules:
 - Thoroughly familiar with the interview schedule before start
 - Ask all questions of all respondents even if you think you know what some of them will say.
 - Give all respondents an equal hearing.
 - Each question is meant to tap and if you are failing to get relevant material probe further.
 - Be consistent in recording answers.
 - Also encode non-verbal components in face to face interview.

Medium of Interview

A: Face to Face Interview

B: Panel Interview

C: Telephonic Interview

D: Web-based Interview

A: Face to Face Interview

- The most popular and efficient form of assessment. It takes 30 to 45 minutes to complete.
- Allowing researcher to get up close and personal with each participants while keeping an eye on their body language is far more effective than any other interviewing format.
- This is the perfect interview for you if...
 - Researcher don't have a long list of candidates to see.
 - Researcher is comfortable with the interviewing process.
 - Researcher already completed an initial interview stage, via the telephone or video.

A: Face to Face Interview

- **Advantages:**

- The Researcher:

- can build rapport more easily
- can thoroughly assess the individual
- have opportunity to dig deeper
- can read their body language
- can test the candidate's commitment
- Is more flexible with location/ style (informal/ formal).

A: Face to Face Interview

- **Disadvantages:**

- Candidates can rehearse answers
- It's time-consuming
- Researcher must be a trained interviewer.
- Interviewer bias will affect the decision
- There's no one present to assess the interviewer's method
- It's costly
- Possible interview fatigue

B: Panel Interview

- Panel interviews are the same as face-to-face interviews, but with two or more interviewers in the room.
- The main advantage of panel interviewing is that it precludes any personal biases that might creep into the assessment process.
- Each interviewer will pick up on different characteristics, strengths and weaknesses and together (hopefully) make a much fairer judgment.

B: Panel Interview

- This is the perfect interview for you if...
 - There are multiple people who need to meet the participant before final data collection.
 - The primary interviewer isn't experienced.
 - You've reached a fairly late stage of the research.

B: Panel Interview

- **Advantages:**

- No personal biases.
- The chance to compare different opinions.
- More chance to get notes (while others talk).
- All relevant people meet at the same time.
- Weak interviewers might need back-up.

B: Panel Interview

- **Disadvantages:**

- Some interviewers could get complacent.
- It could be overwhelming for the participants
- Interviewers could interrupt each other, striving for dominance.
- There's a risk of disagreement.

C: Telephonic Interview

- Telephone interviews are hugely valuable because they speed up the interview process and minimize time-wasting.
- This is the perfect interview for you if...
 - Researcher don't have a lot of time and money to spend.
 - Participants scattered in larger geographical area.

C: Telephonic Interview

- **Advantages:**

- It's quicker than a face-to-face interview.
- It's cheaper than a face-to-face interview.
- It's less effort for you and the candidate.
- researcher can reach long-distance candidates.

C: Telephonic Interview

- **Disadvantages:**

- The call could be interrupted (bad signal, other calls, background noise).
- can't read a candidate's body language.
- It's difficult to build as much rapport via the telephone.
- If phone picked more by females (probably) so no gender equality

C: Telephonic Interview

- **Disadvantages:**

- Cold calling: without any prior warning or agreement, so it is hard to ascertain whether the context (ex. What they were doing immediately previously.) is important in determining their responses.
- Max 15 min duration (unwilling to talk much over phone)

D: Web-based Interview & IVRs

- Video interviews (for ex. Skype) are a great alternative to telephone interviews.
- The fact that you can actually see each other adds a certain level of importance and professionalism to the 'call' and removes the temptation for either party to multi-task or lose focus.
- Of course, researcher could still face similar issues to those that plague the telephone interview.
- Background distractions could still occur, other calls could come through, bad signal could distort the conversation.

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D: Web-based Interview & IVRs

- **Disadvantages:**

- The video call could be interrupted (bad signal, connection, background noise).
- difficult to read the candidate's body language.
- It's difficult to build rapport via a video chat.
- You have to look professional and focused.

Now Computer based (IVR) interviews are also used for data collection in sensitive issues (ex. Alcoholism, sexuality, and many more)

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- Interview approach relies upon respondents being able and willing to give accurate and complete answers to questions posed no matter what their format. Yet respondents may be motivated to lie. They may dislike or disrupt the researcher. They may be too embarrassed to tell the truth. Even if they wish to cooperate they may be unable to answer accurately because they can not remember the details required or because they do not understand the question.
- To Overcome: ask same thing with different type of questions.

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- If a respondent is inconsistent in the pattern of answers, you may wish to extend the questioning to achieve clarification or you may choose to exclude that data from the analysis.
- Of course, consistency of responses does not guarantee accuracy but inconsistency certainly entails some inaccuracy.

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- Other way: by complementing it with other types of data, ex. Observation, diary or experimental procedures in addition to the interview (not for all participants but few to ensure).
- Validity improves if conduct interview several times. Interviewing someone on several occasions increases openness and honesty. Only people who have a positive attitude towards the research are likely to agree to be interviewed repeatedly (includes frankness and reduce biasness) is called differential drop-out.

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- Researcher Effect: In an interview the characteristics of the researcher- accent, dress, gender, age, power etc., will influence the respondents' willingness to participate and the nature of their answers. (more self-disclosure who is similar to themselves).
- To control it: some interviewer conduct all interviews, it holds stimulus provided by the interviewer constant (but will be difficult for large sample data.)

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- So, the solution is
 - Use many interviews and randomly allocate them to respondents. It also allows to analyze the extent of interviewer differences. All data compare and weighting procedures can be used to moderate the data.

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- Matching procedures may also apply to reduce researcher effect. For ex. If gender is key characteristic identified as researcher effect, then use a pool of interviews who were all female or male. OR interviewer gender might be matched to interviewee gender. (it will work only if researcher's effect is already identified.)

Validity and Reliability of Interview Data

- Researcher effect may also arise from the patterns of asking questions and recording of answers. Training to interviewer may reduce this problem. Even comparing with similar respondents from the sample to check any doubt. If consistencies are there, some interviews being excluded from the subsequent analysis.
- Best way to exclude interviewer bias from the recording of responses is to use audio (cheap and easy) or video recording (fuller range of behaviour). The record is permanent and open to verification by other researchers.

Analyzing Interview Data

- Researcher collect an enormous amount of information and do not know how to interpret it. (Less on fully structured interview schedule).
- For this purpose use content analysis.
 - Trying to generate slice of meaningful information.
 - Spotting what is omitted from what the respondents say in order to draw conclusion.

Analyzing Interview Data

- Analysis should be open to verification as far as possible. Person should provide a description of the data on which researcher base his/her conclusion which is good enough for someone else to repeat what you have done and check your conclusion. (inter-rater reliability). For this, keep raw data for a significant period after researcher publish or report it.
- Stop the analysis only when researcher is satisfied that he/she understand the data fully.