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PCR 716  
RESEARCH METHODS IN PEACE AND  
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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**COURSE  
GUIDE****PCR 716  
RESEARCH METHODS IN PEACE AND CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION**

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## 1.0 Introduction

**PCR 716 Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Resolution** is a one Semester course. It will be available for you to take towards the core module of the Master of Arts in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution. This course is suitable for post graduate students seeking to understand and obtain the required skills necessary for carrying out research in conflict analysis and peace studies.

This course consists of 27 units, it examines in detail certain key terms and instruments necessary for carrying out both qualitative and quantitative research in the social sciences. It presents an overview of theoretical paradigms in research, the meaning and parts of a theory, the various perspectives in research and why we need research, the research methods – both qualitative and quantitative in data collection analysis, and the use of the case study method, etc.

There are compulsory prerequisites for this course. The course guide tells you briefly what the course is all about, what you are expected to know in each unit, what course materials you need to use and how you can work your way through these materials. It also emphasizes the necessity for tutor–marked assignments. There are also periodic tutorial classes that are linked to this course.

### 1.1 What you will learn in this Course

The overall objective of **PCR 716 Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Resolution** is to acquaint you with the array of methods that could be used in carrying social research especially in the area of conflict analysis and peace studies. How to write research proposals, the basic methods of research in the social sciences are revisited with a view to giving you an array of methods, both qualitative and quantitative from which to select suitable instruments for studying problems of our society. The ultimate objective is to sensitize and enhance your capacity to contribute to the various efforts at finding solutions to conflicts within the communities.

Your understanding of this course will serve to expose you to a very important part of peace studies that have to do with the very important perspective of consciously building peace in societies in order to prevent wars.

This course PCR 716, Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Resolution is for an academic Master's degree. In this course, emphasis is on science which focuses on the structural bases. The study of science leads to the practice. This course provides such a platform.

## **1.2 Course Aims**

The basic aim of this course is to expose you to the various methods of research in the social sciences. Get you to appreciate the various efforts and methods of seeking conflict resolution, and the necessity of good background study of a conflict situation to enable a more sustainable resolution.

## **1.3 Course Objectives**

Several objectives can be delineated from this course. In addition, each unit has specific objectives. The unit objectives can be found at the beginning of a unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the particular unit to check on the progress you are making. You should always look at the unit objectives after completing a unit. In this way, you can be sure that you have covered what is required of you in that unit.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

1. Understand the meaning of the Scientific Method in research
2. Be able to understand what a theory is, the nature of theories and the various parts of a theory
3. Understand the steps of research process
4. How to write research proposals
5. Be able to discuss the scope of theories
6. Define research and how to raise research questions
7. Be conversant with the Problem-Solving Approach
8. Understand the meanings of methodology
9. Know the usefulness of Literature Review in Social Research
10. Understand the time dimension in research
11. Understand the meaning and uses of qualitative data
12. Be familiar with Participant Observation and Focus Group Discussions
13. Understand quantitative Data Analysis, know qualitative data analysis
14. Discuss Content Analysis and the use of Secondary Sources of materials
15. Understand the use of quantitative data in research
16. Be familiar with the use of the Questionnaire and the Survey Method

17. Be familiar with the Case Study Method and Coding in conflict research.
18. Experimental Research
19. Understand the usefulness of sampling in Research
20. The Purpose of Field Research

## **1.4 Working through this Course**

To complete this course you are required to read the study units, read recommended books and read other materials provided by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Most of the units contain self-assessment exercises, and at points in the course, you are required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of this course there is a final examination. Stated below are the components of the course and what you are expected to do.

## **1.5 Course Materials**

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks and other Reference Sources
4. Assignment File
5. Presentation

In addition, you must obtain the text materials. They are provided by the NOUN. You may also be able to purchase the materials from the bookshops. Please, contact your tutor if you have problems in obtaining the text materials.

## **1.6 Study Units**

There are twenty-seven study units in this course, as follows:

### **MODULE 1**

Unit 1: Overview of Theoretical Paradigms in research

Unit 2: The parts of a Theory

Unit 3: Classification of Theory

Unit 4: Dimension of Research

**MODULE 2**

- Unit 1: Tools of Research
- Unit 2: Perspective of Research
- Unit 3: Steps of The Research process
- Unit 4: Writing a Research Proposal

**MODULE 3**

- Unit 1: Why do we need Research?
- Unit 2: Data Collection
- Unit 3: Qualitative Research Methods
- Unit 4: Quantitative Research Methods

**MODULE 4**

- Unit 1: Meanings of Methodology in Research
- Unit 2: Feminist and Post-Modern Research
- Unit 3: Reading other people's Research
- Unit 4: Measurement and Research Designs

**MODULE 5**

- Unit 1: The Concept of Reliability and Validity in social research
- Unit 2: Indexes and Scales in Social research
- Unit 3: Quantitative Research Designs
- Unit 4: Sampling

**MODULE 6**

- Unit 1: Experimental Research
- Unit 2: Survey Research
- Unit 3: Field Research
- Unit 4: Qualitative Research Design

**MODULE 7**

- Unit 1: Analyzing Qualitative Data
- Unit 2: Analyzing Quantitative Data
- Unit 3: The Use of Case Studies

Each unit contains a number of self-test. In general, these self-test questions you on the materials you have just covered or require you to apply it in some way and, thereby, assist you gauge your progress as well as reinforcing your understanding of the material. Together with tutor-marked assignments, these exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the Course.

## **1.7 Set Textbooks**

1. Phyllis Brazee, 1999 Research Methods for the Social Sciences, UK, Oxford University Press.
2. Umaru A. Pate, 2002 Introduction to Conflict Reporting in Nigeria, Lagos, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung,
3. E.C Osuala, 1982 Introduction to Research Methodology, Onitsha, Africana-Fep Publishers,

## **1.8 Assignment File**

There are two aspects to the assessment of this course. In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your course facilitator for marking. The marks you obtain for these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignment will be found in the Assignment File itself, and later in this Course Guide in the section on assessment.

There are many assignments for this course, with each unit having at least one assignment. These assignments are basically meant to assist you to understand the course.

## **1.9 Assessment Schedule**

There are two aspects to the assessment of this course. First, are the tutor-marked assignments; second, is a written examination.

In tackling these assignments, you are expected to apply the information, knowledge and experience acquired during the course. The assignments must be submitted to your course facilitator for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the Assignment File. The work you submit to your course facilitator for assessment will account for 30 per cent of your total course mark.

At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final examination of three hours duration. This examination will account for the other 70 per cent of your total course marks.

## 1.10 Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs)

There are 27 tutor-marked assignments in this course. You only need to submit all the assignments. The best four (i.e the highest four of the 27 marks) will be counted. Each assignment counts for 20 marks but on the average when the five assignments are put together, then each assignment will count 10 % towards your total course mark. This implies that the total marks for the best four (4) assignments which would have been 100 marks will now be 30% of your total course mark.

The Assignments for the units in this course are contained in the Assignment File. You will be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your set books, reading and study units. However, it is always desirable at this level of your education to research more widely, and demonstrate that you have a very broad and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter.

When each assignment is completed, send it together with a TMA (tutor-marked assignment) form to your Course Facilitator. Ensure that each assignment reaches your course facilitator on or before the deadline given in the Assignment File. If, for any reason you cannot complete your work on time, contact your course facilitator before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless there are exceptional circumstances warranting such.

## 1.11 Final Examination and Grading

The final examination for **PCR 702 Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Resolution** will be of three hours' duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the practice exercises and tutor-marked assignments you have previously encountered. All areas of the course will be assessed.

Use the time between the completion of the last unit and sitting for the examination, to revise the entire course. You may find it useful to review your tutor-marked assignments and comment on them before the examination. The final examination covers information from all aspects of the course.

## 1.12 Course Marking Scheme

**Table 1:** *Course marking Scheme*

<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>MARKS</b>
Assignments	Best four marks of the Assignments @10% each (on the average) = 30% of course marks
Final examination	70% of overall course marks
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% of course marks</b>

## 1.13 How to get the most from this Course

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecturer. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at any time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you in an in-class exercise.

Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives, lets you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the units. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the set objectives. If this is made a habit, then you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.

The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a Reading section.

The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutorial facilitator. Remember that your tutorial facilitator's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutorial facilitator to provide it.

The following is a practical strategy for working through the course.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organize a Study Schedule. Design a 'Course Overview' to guide you and note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write down your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutorial facilitator know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time.
6. Work through the unit. As you work through it, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
7. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you are unsure of about any objectives review study material or consult your tutorial facilitator.
8. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit objective, you can then start on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the Assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutorial facilitator's comment, both on the tutor marked as well as written

- assignment. Consult your tutorial facilitator if you have any problems.
9. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
  10. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to space your study so that you can keep yourself on schedule.
  11. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutorial facilitator for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the Assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutorial facilitator comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
  12. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

### **1.14 Tutors and Tutorials**

There are 15 hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutorial facilitator, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group.

Your tutorial facilitator will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must mail your tutor-marked assignments to your tutorial facilitator well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutorial facilitator and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutorial facilitator by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board. The following might be circumstances in which you will find help necessary. Contact your tutorial facilitator if -

You do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings.

You have difficulties within the exercises.

You have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face to face contact with your tutorial facilitator and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefits from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn quite a lot from participating in the discussions.

### **1.15 Summary**

This course guide has introduced you to every aspect of your course on Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Resolution. We wish every success in your studies.

**MAIN  
COURSE**

Course Code	PCR 716
Course Title	Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Resolution
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## **MODULE 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Unit 1: Overview of Theoretical Paradigms in Research
- Unit 2: The Parts of a Theory
- Unit 3: Classification of Theory
- Unit 4: Dimension of Research

### **UNIT 1: OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL PARADIGMS IN RESEARCH**

#### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Scientific Method and Theoretical Paradigms in Research.
    - 3.1.1 Theoretical Paradigms
    - 3.1.2 What is Theory?
    - 3.1.3 Exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This is the beginning of this particular course. In this unit, we shall examine the scientific method, and generally examine the linkages between hypotheses, variables, theory and the issue of parsimony. However, the important point for the student is to be able to understand the basis for categorizing Social Sciences as Science and how this can be used in the study of social phenomena including the study of peace and conflicts.

## 2.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the Scientific Method
- Discuss Social Science as Science
- Define what a Theory is
- Understand the following concepts- variables, hypothesis, and parsimony.

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 The Scientific Method and Theoretical Paradigms in Research

When we engage in research of the empirical nature, as opposed to qualitative research, we usually focus our attention on quantitative variables that may help us determine what is happening in society. We are concerned with knowledge based on observations and experimentation. To the extent that we are engaged in discovering and categorizing such empirical knowledge, we are being scientific. Scientists are those engaged in collecting and interpreting empirical information. They do so in order to formulate and test Hypotheses .A Hypothesis is a statement of possible relationships or associations among the phenomena being studied or put in another way, a hypothesis is the possible relationship between two or more variables subject to verification.

Since subjects like Economics, communications, cultural anthropology, political science, sociology and Psychology concern themselves with aspects of society, but especially with the study of human behaviour, they are often termed Social Sciences. They empirically study social phenomena. Their goals are to formulate and test hypotheses or suppositions about relationships and possible causes and effects among various aspects of a society, a culture, or a political system.

Social Sciences share two common features with all Sciences. The first is the commitment to the Scientific Method, which involves a series of logical steps that, if followed, help minimize any distortion of facts stemming from the researcher's personal values and beliefs. The second is the use of quantitative techniques, measuring and counting, for the gathering and analysis of the factual information that is collected. The Scientific Method is really a series of intellectual steps. It is not so much the actual techniques with which the research is carried out, but the thought process whereby hypotheses is formulated, tested, and verified or not verified. If followed,

the Scientific Method provides a basis for acquiring knowledge that will be eventually accepted by the scientific community. Our main focus here is about social research. In simple terms, research is a way of going about finding answers to questions. Social research involves many things. It is how a person finds out something new and original about the social world. To do this, a researcher needs to think logically, follow rules, and repeat steps over and over. A researcher will combine theories or ideas with facts in a systematic way and use his or her imagination and creativity. A good researcher quickly learns to organize and plan carefully and to select the appropriate technique to address a question.

Researchers must be sensitive to treating the people they study in ethical and moral ways. In addition, a researcher must communicate to others clearly.

Social research is a collection of methods people use systematically to produce knowledge. It is an exciting process of discovery, but it requires persistence, personal integrity, tolerance for ambiguity, interaction with others, and pride in doing quality work.

The critical factor that separates social research from other ways of knowing about the social world is that it uses a scientific approach. So, social research is more than a collection of methods and a process for creating knowledge; it is a process for producing new knowledge about the social world that uses a scientific approach. Although, it is known that events of the social world are not repeatable. So, in the social sciences such as anthropology, psychology, political science, sociology and even peace studies, we are involved in the study of people, their beliefs, behaviour, interaction, institutions and so forth.

Meanwhile, science refers to both a system for producing knowledge and the knowledge produced from that system. The system over many years is slowly but constantly changing. It combines assumptions about the nature of the world and knowledge. It is visible in a social institution called the scientific community. The knowledge of science is organized in terms of theories. For now, we can define social theory as a system of interconnected abstractions or ideals that condense and organize knowledge about the social world.

### 3.1.1 Theoretical Paradigms

One of the major functions of theory is in order of experience with the help of concepts. It also selects relevant aspects and data among the enormous multitude of “facts” that confront the investigator of social phenomena.

One may be wondering; where does theory fit into the process of moving from a topic to a hypothesis, which can be tested. Theory takes many forms. Researchers use general theoretical issues and puzzles as sources for topics. *Theories and theoretical frameworks provide researchers with concepts and ideas that they turn into variables.* Theory provides the reasoning or mechanism that helps researchers connect variables into a research question. A hypothesis can be both an answer to a research question and an untested proposition from a theory. Researchers can express a hypothesis as an abstract, conceptual level. They can also restate it in a more concrete, measurable form.

### 3.1.2 What is Theory

It is a systematic and organized postulation about social phenomenon. It can result from testing of phenomenon or an observation. They are usually abstractions from the real world.

Theory plays an important role in research because it helps you to determine how relevant it is to your area. Sometimes we confuse “theory” with “social thoughts” or what great thinkers thought. For example, Marx Weber and Karl Marx played important roles in generating political ideas and espoused certain foundation of other social thinkers, e.g. Awoism is a political thought while Maxism and Communism are more like grand theories. Karl Max and others radically challenged the existing world. Theorists and even thinkers do not have to be geniuses. If we claim that inadequate education can lead to conflict. Is this a theory or a thought? It has to be interconnected, it is tested and then it becomes a theory; taking into consideration so many factors. They do not have to be parsimonious but brief. A parsimonious theory is one with minimum excesses.

The concept of parsimony says that a more powerful theory does more than less. The less complex of the two is a better one.

In general almost all research involves some theory. So, the question is not how much but how do I use the theory. For policy research anchored on good theory is better. But, the presentation is needed to emphasize political ideas or jargons.

### 3.1.3 Exercise

- (i) What is the Scientific Method?
- (ii) How is a theory built?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Though, we have examined the Scientific Method, theory and the various linkages to theory, it is equally essential to note that Social Science research can also be carried out using qualitative research which sometimes is more suitable for the particular kind of study. However, it is always better to make your study as scientific as possible, especially at the post-graduate level. This is important, so that others who want can test the veracity of your claims by following the Scientific Method in assessing your findings.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

We have examined the Scientific Method in this unit, and the basis for saying that Social Science is *Science*. We also defined what theory is and the process of formulating a theory.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define a Theory and discuss the Scientific Method.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Osuala, E.C (1982). Introduction to Research Methodology, Onitsha, Africana-Fep Publishers.

Phyllis Brazee, (1999). Research Methods for Social Sciences, UK, Oxford University Press.

R.Mark Sirkin, (1995). Statistics for the Social Sciences, London, SAGE Publications.

## **UNIT 2: THE PARTS OF A THEORY**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Building Blocks of Theory
    - 3.1.1 Relationship
    - 3.1.2 Scope
    - 3.1.3 Exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall examine the nature of concepts, of the various parts of a concept and the relationships that may exist between concepts. In addition, we will also examine the scope of theories and the different possible levels of abstraction.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the meaning and nature of concepts
- Note that relationships are possible between concepts
- Discuss the scope of theories

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Building Blocks of Theory**

These are building blocks of theory. *A concept is an idea expressed in words or symbols.* Most social science concepts are expressed both in words and symbols. For example, the concept of social relations, peace, conflict and conflict resolution, e.g. What is conflict? Does conflict mean violence? And in physical science we talk of speed and distance etc. So, concepts are the blocks of ideas and concepts are everywhere; but it takes a little effort to get them organized. Concepts have two parts:

- (i) A symbol or a word or term
- (ii) The definition of that word or term or symbol.

The term research is a concept; the definition is the description of research. It varies from one discipline to another depending on the language.

Concepts vary in their level of abstraction and they can be from the most abstract to concrete e.g. ethnic conflict, religious conflicts are abstracts but this can be made concrete when it has physical violence. Thus conflict can be viewed as both concrete concepts and abstract concepts. Some can be very abstract because of lack social control, political control, cognitive disorders, deviant behaviours etc.

Some concepts are concrete while some are physical. Concrete refers to familiar or concrete things or ideas e.g. height, tribe. We also have concepts that are not concrete such as prejudice and they are very important even though they are abstract.

Thus, conflict can be viewed as both concrete concepts and abstract concepts. Concepts are rarely used in isolation thus one of the characteristics of concept is (a) Concept clusters (b) Classification.

Theories make use of variable – concepts and nonvariable concepts. They contain in-built assumptions i.e. statements about the nature of things that are not easily observable or testable. Concept and theories build an assumption about the nature of human social reality or a particular phenomenon. Because assumption can be hidden. Example of concept that can lead to conflict. Racial and ethnic prejudice. We assume that people make distinction based on racial prejudice. People also make generalized assumption.

The third characteristics of concept is classification. This is very important in theory cause. They provide the path way between a single concept and a theory. They help in organizing abstract concepts to create a new classification.

### **3.1.1 Relationship**

Theories specify how concepts are related to one another. Theory states why relationships do or do not exist e.g. Beck and Tolney (1990) Lynching of African Americans by white mobs in late 1800 to the 1930. The theory says that lynching is related to economic distress (lower prices received by white

farmers). But lynching is not related to an increase in crime committed by black Americans. This theory indicates that there are relationship between lynching, economic distress and black victimization. A proposition is a logical statement that a relationship exist between two concepts, e.g. economic distress among farmers is related to increase in mob violence against black Americans. Thus, a proposition is statement that has been stated theoretically without being tested. When a researcher test a relationship empirically it became a hypothesis.

A social theory contains concepts, relationship among concepts and the reasons for the existence of this relationships. The reasons advanced consists a set of logically interconnected proposition and logic. In the process of building a theory, new concepts are built and their relationships specified using general assumption e.g. the theory of inlinching of African Americans.

The southern whites held hostility about the blacks because of the civil war between the north and south.

### **3.1.2 Scope**

The third and final aspect of a theory is the scope of the theory. Some concepts are highly abstract, some at the middle level and some at the concrete level of abstraction. The more abstract a theory is the more applicable it is to a wider range of social phenomenon than those of concrete nature. Example, there is this abstract theoretical relationship which states increased size create centralization which in turn creates formalization. There are 3 abstract concepts here referring to features of a group organization or society. The bigger a group becomes, the tendency is for authority and power to be centralized and once they become centralized, power is concentrated in small elite. And the elites tend to rely more on written policies, rule of law in order to control others within the organization or society. By contrast what we call an empirical generalization is a simple relationship that is not complicated, not very abstract and at the lowest level of relationship and abstraction. It is created by observing the regularity in the analysis of data set.

A theory on a topic often implies many generalization which may be elementary hypothesis. A hypothesis is an empirically tested experiment. An example of an empirical generalization is that those under 30 years are the ones that drive small Japanese cars. Two concepts are involved here i.e. the types of car and the age of the individuals and the relationship between them.

To become a theory we require further elaboration, the reason for the relationship has to be analyzed. In a study of skin tone and social stratification among African Americans Keith and Herin (1991). They linked an empirical generalization to theory. The test of an empirical generalization that African American with lighter skin tone has better economic background as compared to the dark skinned ones. And they found support for generalization. But they then put up a theory in order to justify the generalization, using certain concepts e.g. whites are more willing to help skin toned blacks, which is an indication of partial white ancestry for esthetic reasons the white aristocracy like fair skinned blacks as steward and bedmates. This relationship makes it easier for light skinned slaves to buy their freedom.

Over the years African American with lighter skin tone have greater access to skill education and advantages derived over black skin Negroes.

Finally, African slavery ended and lighter skin was still common in the social elites of the American community subsequent inter-marriage among people with similar amount of education and in perpetuated advantage of light skinned slaves over the black ones. Their skin colour did not put them at an advantage but the opportunity did.

The larger theory makes the empirical generalization richer because, it connects it to other ideas under slavery.

So, to become a theory we require further elaboration, the reason for the relationship has to be analyzed.

### **3.1.3 Exercise**

What is a Concept?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Let us therefore, note that concepts are also the building blocks of theories. We should equally note that the relevance and clarity of any field of study, depends substantially on the quality of concepts in use in that discipline, especially, in terms of a general acceptance of the meanings attached to such concepts for purposes of description and analysis. The more agreement there is about a concept in a particular discipline, the better for that discipline.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have discussed the nature of concepts as an important factor in theory building and research and noted the parts of a concept and relationship that exists amongst the various concepts. We also examined the scope of theory with respect to the level of abstraction.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the meaning of Concept in relation to theory building?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 3 CLASSIFICATION OF THEORY**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Categories of Theory
    - 3.1.1 Direction of Reasoning
    - 3.1.2 Levels of Social Reality
    - 3.1.3 Forms of Explanation
    - 3.1.4 Types of Explanation
    - 3.1.5 Overall Framework and Assumption
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

One of the major functions of theory is to initiate experience with the help of concepts. It also selects relevant aspects and data among the enormous multitude of “facts” that confront the investigator of social phenomena. Thus, the classification of theories is necessitated.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to;

- Highlight how many forms of theories are classified;
- Understand the level of theory;
- Distinguish between different forms of explanation.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Categories of Theory**

- a. Direction of reasoning
- b. Level of social reality explained
- c. The forms of explanation employed
- d. The overall framework of assumptions and concepts are embedded in each other.

### 3.1.1 Direction of Reasoning

- Two approaches / types of theory can be identified
  - a] Deduction
  - b] Induction

In the deduction approach to reasoning, we begin with an abstract logical relationship among concepts and they move to concrete empirical evidence. That is, we create idea on how the world operates and to yeast the idea against hand data.

In an inductive, it begins with details observation of the world and move towards more general abstract generalization and ideas. At the beginning there must be just one or more.

With observation, the concepts are retired, empirical generalization are developed and preliminary relationship are identified. The theory is built from the ground-up i.e. it is a ground-up approach to theory building.

There is a theory of rural crisis related to Jane fitches. This concepts began as farm crisis or crisis in the farm, collapse prices, shortage of food e.t.c. she interviewed and expanded her research and redirected her focus to not just farm issues but to border issues involving the entire rural areas i.e the family structure, issues of firm family, education, health e.t.c. she also retired and generated empirical generalization and finally developed a theory on how people developed self-identity as a rural community e.g crisis in Niger delta can become a crisis in Nigeria. This is as a result of marginalisation, environmental, degradation e.t.c.

Another example by Joseph Shipman's [1991] study of two anti-nuclear groups in San Francisco. Her finding was that different political movement adopts very different strategies based on how the society defined power. This finding arose during her detail observation and differed from her initial goal which was to learn how the single movement organization resolved internal conflict. She said my data forced me to re-define my project.

Theoretical generalization generated by inductive approach is called ground theory.

- General to specific is deduction.
- Specific to general is induction

### 3.1.2 Levels of Social Reality Explained

Social theories can be divided into three grouping according to the level of social reality, these are:

- Micro- level
- Macro- level
- Meso- level

Micro level theory deals with small slices, of time, space and number of people. The concepts are usually not very abstract, e.g. so called “face work” theory of serving caftan. The theory says that people engage in rituals in face to face interaction that is, an individuals adopts a “line” of interaction [design me as an individual and the types of situation that I am in] an individual adopts different “line” of action to suit different situation e.g. in a classroom situation, I can present myself as a good husband at one time or bad husband at another time.

Macro level theory concerns operations of larger aggregates such as social institutions, entire cultural system, whole society, the entire country or the economy. It uses more abstract concept e.g. Gerhard Lenski (1966) presented a Macro level theory of social stratification explaining overall social inequality across thousand of year of human society. He gave this in four main areas:

- (a) He argued that the amount of surplus produced by society increases with the development of that society.
- (b) Surplus grows as society development from an agrarian form to modern industrial form.
- (c) Inequality increases as a small group of the society and take control of the surplus.
- (d) Inequality peaks in historically agrarian society and declined in industrial societies. This defines power among social group. As they gain power, various groups were able to get some of the surplus.

The meso level is relatively rare. It attempt to link Micro and Macro levels or to operate at an intermediately level between them there is macro level theory of control organizations by Colling (1988). The theory identifies three basics methods of controlling people in large organizations.

1. Method of Coercion
2. Method of offering material reward
3. Using internal control

### 3.1.3 Forms of Explanation

The primal purpose of any theory is to explain. You sometimes predict. There are two types of explanation.

Theoretical explanation is a logical statement telling why something has occurred. It refers to general rule or principle. On the other hand an ordinary explanation attempts to make something clear, describes it in a way that illustrates it to make sense.

Researchers use theoretical explanations to indicate relationship or interconnectedness between concepts where as they use ordinary explanation to make the theory themselves reasonable.

What is prediction? It is a statement indicating that something will occur. It is often time easier to predict than to explain. An explanation has more logical power than prediction. However good explanation also predicts e.g. the indigene settler syndrome (Ife – Modakeke) as a cause of conflict in Nigeria.

However an explanation really predicts more than one outcome. But the same outcome can also be predicted by a number of opposing or rival explanation e.g. political opposition parties (Ife – PDP and Modekeke to AD could be a cause of conflict between them.

A good explanation depends on a well developed theory and its confirmed research by empirical explanation.

### 3.1.4 Types of Explanation

#### (a) Causal Explanation:

Is the most common type of explanation with a cause and effect relationship. In everyday terms, a good example should be that poverty and divorce causes conflict in the home.

The concept of cause has been controversy even in philosophy. David Hume a Scottish philosopher (1711 – 1776) is noted for letting us know that the concept of cause is controversial. Some people argued that causality exist in the world in what they called existing reality and researches have only found evidence for it. Others say that causality is only an idea that exists in human mind, it is a mental construct; it is not real. Often people imagine many things. To them it is real, but whatever position we hold of

causality, researchers will still have to look for casual relationship. In CEPAS we need to know conflict and what causes conflict.

There are 3 ways we need in explaining causality.

1. Temporal order (causes before effect).
2. Association relationship between two temporal order e.g Egg & Chicken problem.
3. Elimination of implausible alternatives

Beside these, there is an implicit that makes sense when it fits into a brother assumptions or some theoretical frame work.

### **1. Temporal Order**

This means that cause come before the effect in a conflict. Common assumption establishes the direction of causality from the cause to the effect.

However this is in one of the conditions of causality that exit. It is necessary but not sufficient. It is not always easy to establish temporal order particularly in a cross- sectional data (one – shot data) a data collected now or at a point in time. For example data about the education of people, their income. From that data person with a lot of education are less prejudiced or highly prejudice people lack more interaction with people. What is causing prejudice may be what causes people not to go to school. To resolve such a problem the researchers needs to design the research to specifically have more information.

### **2. Association**

Is also needed to establish causality. Two Phenomena are said to be associated if they occur in a pattern way or seen to come together. Two concepts correlation and association. Correlation is a statistical method of association. And there are many ways of measuring association. It is said to be concomitant association.e.g Race and income in the society. Usually white people, tend to have higher income than blacks. Is it race that causes whites to have better education, better opportunities opened to them? However association should not be confused with causality. In Kano State for example there are more civil unrest on Fridays. Here, using the instrumentality of religion, it is easier to mobilize people on Friday. Association does not mean causality. However a researcher needs to show association to demonstrate causality. Association is necessary but not

sufficient for causality. In causality there must be causality. Association is important to HRS,

### **3.1.5 Elimination of Implausible Alternative**

To establish causality, a researcher needs to know that the effect is uses to particular causal variables and not something that is a research and must eliminate spuriousness. To eliminate major or implausible alternative a researcher can use two alternatives.

1. Through built in design controls
2. By measuring potential hidden causes these two approaches isolates an experimental situation from the influence of all variables except the main causal variables. Through experimental design you can introduce filters for sieving as it where implausible causes, in order to isolate the main causes. Researcher can also eliminate implausible alternative cause, we call this in survey design controlling for other variables. For example Niger Delta – Youth are involved in violence. And you say youths of this place cause violent. You have to look at their age, employment income, and education. It may be unemployment of these youths that causes the conflict. It is done in many areas distinct from social research.

### **b) Interpretative Explanation**

Foster understanding of situation is being studied. These theorists' attempts discover the meaning of an event or practice by placing it within a specific content. He does this for two major reasons.

1. To comprehend or mentally crab the social world.
2. To see the world as another person does.

The reason for doing this is that each person has a subjective view of the world. As an interpretation researcher you should attempt to know other peoples subjective views and their reasoning. The interpretative explanation of a theory is similar to decoding a text or a literary work.

### **3.1.6 Overall Frame Work and Assumption**

Social research device theory into middle rate theories and theories on the topic. Middle range theories are slightly more abstract that empirical generalization or hypothesis on a particular topic. These assumptions are used in social research to guide empirical enquiry. However, a theory on a topic of a theory of ethnic conflict or divorce is broader and more abstract than middle range theory because it uses a range of more abstract concepts

than relationship. This is the mid-way between a theory on a topic e.g. divorce and empirical generalization.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit you have learned about social theory, its classification and types. The dichotomy between theory and research is an artificial one that even misleads some professionals. The value of theory and its necessity for conducting good research should be clear.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

It is now clear to you that researchers who proceed without theory rarely conduct top-quality research and frequently find themselves in a quandary. Likewise, theorists who proceed without linking theory to research or anchoring it to empirical reality are in jeopardy of floating off into incomprehensible speculation and conjecture.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What is the difference between inductive and deductive approach to theorizing?
2. Describe how the micro, meso and macro levels of social reality differ.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 4: THE DIMENSIONS OF RESEARCH**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Why Research
    - 3.1.1 A Temporal View of Research
    - 3.1.2 The Essence of Research Methodology
    - 3.1.3 Erroneous Contemporary Concepts of Research
    - 3.1.4 What is Research?
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Research comes in several shapes and sizes. Before a researcher begins to conduct a study, he must decide on a specific type of research. Good researchers understand the advantages and disadvantages of each type, although most end up specializing in one.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

In this unit you will learn about the four dimensions of social research:

- Define the purpose of doing it
- Explain its intended use
- Discuss how dimensions of research treat time?

The research techniques used in it

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Why Research?**

Research powers the world. Not the planet itself, of course, but the more intimate and intricate world of human activity. That world is in fervent need

of change. It is changing constantly because of the discovery of new information and the resolving of old problems. In the vanguard of this change is a relatively small cadre of dedicated men and women who make it happen. They are the movers and shakers of our age. They attempt to know the unknown and to do the undoable. These are those who do research.

Hidden away in laboratories, offices, libraries and achieves and mingling on city streets with the surging tides of everyday life, unrecognized observers of the rest of us, these individuals are at work discovering the facts that will make the world of tomorrow as different from the world of today as the last century was from this one.

A century ago, we tapped our messages in Morse code and sent them along copper wires that for the most part are paralleled like railroad tracks. Today we fax our messages and transmit them at the speed of light. In the Civil War, men died of their wounds because of raging infection. Today, we have the miracle of antibiotics. At the turn of the century, we cranked the telephone on the wall to talk to a neighbour over a strand of wire that served the communication needs of multiple subscribers. Now, on a fiberglass thinner than a human hair, our words are carried across a continent or beneath the sea on a wavelength of light. Far above, at the edge of space, we survey the civilities of other nations, check global weather patterns, and explore the outer reaches of the universe. Television permits us to see the history of tomorrow as it happens today. The kitchen stove has been replaced by the microwave oven, and instead of laboriously writing out this edition of *Practical Research* in longhand, it was typed, juggled, and edited on a personal computer using convenient word processing software. These are but a few examples of the power of research to revolutionize our way of life. But despite all this, the present is merely a prelude. An unconquered universe lies out there, and we are surprisingly ignorant of either its dimensions or its nature.

### **3.1.1 Dimension Two: A Temporal View of Research**

Research has one prime goal: *discovery*. But that goal is as old as the human race. Discovery was essential for primal existence: how to make fire; how to cover distances more efficiently, more quickly, and without the fatigue of walking; how to cook food and make it more nutritious and palatable. These and other problems faced primeval humans, who needed to find practical ways to solve them.

Let us look for a moment at the first of the problems suggested above. Our ancestors needed to discover how to kindle a fire. The first fire they

experienced was probably with a gift from the heavens. A storm approached. Lightning struck. Thunder crashed, and – Behold! There was fire. But how does one kindle a fire without the pyrotechnics of a storm? Our early ancestors needed fire on demand for comfort, for cooking, for protection. They could not always wait for lightning to start a blaze. How, then, could fire be created? This was, perhaps, one of the earliest problems for research that the human race encountered and, after some experimentation, finally resolved.

Some early experiment discovered that if two sticks were vigorously rubbed together, they became warm. Alas! A brilliant idea exploded within that skull. Fire was in the stick. This was probably the first research hypothesis! Rub the sticks long enough and vigorously enough and the sticks would smoke. Ultimately, the smoke would ignite, solving one of humanity's earliest problems. And it was resolved by research methodology, although certainly unwittingly and unplanned.

This method was empirical. It was elemental. It was simple. But it was the first research method. The term *research methodology* merely means *the way in which we proceed to solve problems*, and that is what this text will explain.

### 3.1.2 The Essence of Research Methodology

We have started with a simple example to illustrate two basic facts:

1. The methodology of research is a basic procedure; and
2. the steps in solving an unsolved problem are practically the same for the modern researcher as they were for our first ancestors.

Let us review those steps briefly:

1. In the beginning was a problem. How can humans kindle a fire?
2. Then came the recognition that there were *data relating to the problem*: sticks rubbed together became warm. That was fact.
3. Next, came a rationalization and a guess: a *hypothesis*, we call it. Logical reasoning entered the process: The sticks are warm. Fire is warm. Thereafter, fire is in the stick. Further data were amazed to see whether the hypothesis should be supported or rejected.

4. The sticks were rubbed against each other with increasing force and vigour. They began to smoke. There was another fact.
5. These additional data seemingly *confirmed the hypothesis* and was leading apparently to solving the problem: further rubbing caused the temperature to rise to the kindling point – the smoke ignited. Fire!
6. *The problem was resolved*, and our ancestor's guess (hypothesis) proved to be correct.

The process of research, then, is largely circular in configuration: It begins with a problem: it ends with that problem resolved. Between crude prehistoric attempts to resolve problems and the refinements of modern research methodology the road has not always been smooth, nor has the researcher's zeal remained unimpeded.

### 3.1.3 Erroneous Contemporary Concepts of Research

Research - It is probably one of the most misused words in the English language. No word in everyday speech has been used with more meanings and given rise to more erroneous concepts than the word *research*. Students have been misled through incorrect teaching and false touch of counterfeit prestige and distinction, while others capitalize on the aura of mystique that the word evokes. Merchandisers profit from the ignorance of "those who know not, and know not that they know not" and offer them a myriad of articles, touting them as being "the result of years of research", the magic phrase that stimulates business and which the gullible readily accept.

### 3.1.4 What is Research?

I have already indicated the nature of research. We looked at the aborigine attempting to produce fire and suggested that this might have constituted a primitive type of research. Now we shall spell out precisely what research is and what makes it a unique procedure, separate them all the pseudo-research situations that we have discussed above.

We begin with a basic definition. It is perhaps the most comprehensive and poignant definition that I have ever seen, and it comes from one of our most accessible sources: *Webster's Dictionary of the English Language*.

*Research*: A studious inquiry or examination, especially a critical and exhaustive investigation of experimentation having for its aim the discovery of new facts and their correct interpretation, the revision of accepted

conclusions, theories, or laws in the light of newly discovered facts or the practical application of such conclusions, theories or laws.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit gave you an overview of the dimensions of social research. You saw that research can be classified in a number of different ways e.g. by its purpose, by its research techniques and that the dimensions of research loosely overlap with each other. The dimensions of research provide a “road map” through the terrain that is social research.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have learnt how the four dimensions reinforce one another; that is, a purpose tends to go with certain techniques and particular uses. Few studies are pure types, but the dimensions organize the complexity of the ways of conducting research.

Before conducting a research project, a researcher makes several decisions. By understanding the dimensions of research, you will be better prepared to make such decisions. In addition, an awareness of the types of research and how they fit into the research process will make it easier for you to read and understand published studies.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. When is explanatory research used, and what can it accomplish.
2. What are the basic uses of research?

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **MODULE 2**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unit 1	Tools of Research
Unit 2	Perspective of Research
Unit 3	Steps of the Research Process
Unit 4	Writing a Research Proposal

### **UNIT 1: TOOLS OF RESEARCH**

#### **CONTENT**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Body
3.1	What are the Tools of Research?
3.1.1	The General Tools of Research
3.1.2	Confusing the Tool with the Method
3.1.3	The Library and Its Resources
3.1.4	Measurement as a Tool of Research
3.1.5	Statistics
3.1.6	Using the Computer for Research
3.1.7	Language and the ability to use it
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Every worker needs tools. The carpenter needs a hammer and saw; the surgeon, a scalpel; the dentist, a drill; and the researcher needs an array of means by which data may be discovered and manipulated, and facts made meaningful.

The tools of research are merely ancillary to the ultimate goal of research itself: to derive conclusion from a body of desperate fact and discover that which was hitherto unknown.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

- Identify “tools of research”
- Explain the General tools of research
- Define Library as a tool of research
- Discuss Measurement as a tool of research
- Explain Statistics as a tool of research
- Define Computer as a tool of research

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 What Are Tools of Research?

Let us simplify the phrase, “tools of research.” We all need tools to work efficiently. Without tools, no house would be built, no life saved, no tooth filled. Tools are indigenous to the task. Every trade, every profession, every academic discipline has its own precise tools. Researchers, likewise, have their own kit of tools to help them achieve their goals and carry out their plans. In some instances, these may not be as tangible as a hammer and saw. Nevertheless, they serve to assist the researcher to reach the final target of all research – the resolution of a problem and the discovery of new knowledge.

Tools vary according to the job to be done. The tools some researchers use to achieve their goals are distinctly different from those of their investigator colleagues. The microbiologist needs a microscope; the attorney, a library of legal decisions and statute law. But these are *specialized* tools, intrinsic and necessary for the solution of research problems within a specialized research of that discipline. Can you imagine attempting to do research in microbiology without a microscope? You would be immobilized.

In this unit, however, our concern will be with the more general tools of research that all researchers, regardless of discipline or situation, are likely to need to derive meaningful and insightful conclusions from their unique data.

#### 3.1.1 The General Tools of Research

For most researchers, there are five general tools of research:

1. The library and its resources

2. Techniques of measurement
3. Statistics
4. The computer and its software
5. Facility with language: both English and required foreign languages.

Volumes have been written on each of these. In this text, we will simply introduce each general tool so that those unfamiliar with its use or its recent developments may begin employing it effectively.

### 3.1.2 Confusing the Tool with the Method

Confusing the tool with the research method is immediately recognizable. Such phrases as “library research” or “statistical research” are telltale signs, and largely meaningless. They suggest immediately that those who use such phrases fail to understand the nature of pure or basic research. They demonstrate, more seriously, confusion in thinking. They reveal the failure to differentiate between tool and method.

The library is merely a place for locating or discovery certain data that will then be analyzed and interpreted later in the research process. Likewise, statistics is merely a way to represent data numerically. By so doing we are able to manipulate those data: to view them in a new environment so that we may see more clearly their nature and significance. The more angles from which we view data, the more meaningful those data become.

Statistics can tell us where the center of an accumulation of data lies, how broadly they are spread, the degree of relationship that exists between one set of data and another, how they conform to an ideal distribution, and other surface characteristics of the data. But statistics cannot *interpret those data and arrive at a logical conclusion as to their meaning*. Only the mind of the researcher can do that. The human brain is the most magnificent research tool of all! Its functioning dwarfs all other gadgetry. Nothing equals its power of comprehension, of insight and of integrative reasoning.

Let us now consider each of the general tools of research separately.

### 3.1.3 The Library and Its Resources

For thousands of years, the library had one basic function. It was a repository of writings, books and manuscripts: the thought and knowledge of great and lesser minds. From the great libraries of antiquity – the clay tablet collections of Babylonia, the temple libraries of Egypt, the renowned

library of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh, and the famous collections at Alexandria and Pergamum – to those of the present day, their sole *raison d'être* has been preserving the sources and expressions of human wisdom.

Traditionally, the library has been a kind of literature mausoleum: a place where manuscripts and books were kept and added to as the slow advance in literature or factual enlightenment became available. It was, for the most part, a static or slowly expanding universe of knowledge, one that could be comfortably contained within masonry walls.

In the twentieth century – and especially in the latter half of the century – the role of the library changed. We had an explosion of information, of knowledge; Research altered old ideas in practically every domain of human interest. Never have the words of Abraham Lincoln been more appropriate: “The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate for the stormy present. We must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves.”

Words that were appropriate for a national crisis in the nineteenth century have become a manifesto for the informational crisis in the closing years of the twentieth. And this is especially true for the library.

The avalanche of new knowledge has caught many libraries unprepared. Most are struggling to revamp their original purpose of providing a repository of written thought and factual information. Today, journals carrying announcements of new discoveries have proliferated in every segment of human endeavour. Books are out of date before they can be put on shelves. One rocket fired into space revises our knowledge and invalidates many of our previous concepts of the universe and our planet. In previous editions of this text, this section gave directions for acquainting you with the traditional library. Much of that information is now passé. A modicum of it is given here in the final pages of this section, merely because some students still need it. Knowledge does not march forward any more; it arrives with the speed of light.

### **3.1.4 Measurement as a Tool of Research**

An old adage says, “If it exists, it is measurable.” In research, we go one step further: If it exists, then it must be measurable.

But what is measurement? Most of us think of measurement in terms of rulers and yardsticks, scales and dials, and values of squared surfaces or cubic units of volumetric objects. In research, measurement takes on an

entirely new meaning. The following definition is probably an entirely new concept of measurement; different from any you have held previously:

*Measurement is limiting the data of any phenomenon – substantial or insubstantial – so that those data may be examined mathematically and, ultimately, according to an acceptable qualitative or quantitative standard.*

Definitions frequently contain more fog than clarity. Their verbal compression often produces such density that discerning the concepts and meanings is most impossible. Because of its etymological overtones, this may be one such, and so let's try to clear the fog and let some light filter through these twenty-nine words. As researchers, we need to understand precisely what measurement really is.

### **3.1.5 Statistics**

Statistics is merely a *tool* of research, nothing more. It provides a means by which the researcher may more comprehensively view data. And viewing data properly is one of the major secrets of successful research. Data should *always be viewed from as many angles as possible* statistically, logically, inquisitively, comparatively and so forth. Because of the undue emphasis that has been placed upon statistics both in textbook and classroom, you frequently consider this as the only way data may be significantly comprehended. Despite that, statistics is a most insightful tool and its importance should be undervalued in the role it plays in comprehending the meaning of the data.

### **3.1.6 Using the Computer for Research**

The computer is perhaps the workhorse of the generalized tools of research. The variety of things it can do is incredible. The speed with which it works is comprehensible. But, like any tool, no matter how powerful, it has its limitations. It is a truism that a computer cannot do anything that you cannot do with pencil and paper, although it can do it in much shorter time. But you can do what no computer can ever do: dream, imagine, plan and create. No computer on earth has this ability.

As tools of research, computers are becoming increasingly commonplace. But to the uninitiated, they still have an aura of mystery. They are sometimes considered a panacea for any problem that the researcher faces. "Let the computer do it" is the contemporary equivalent for the older shibboleth "Let George do it." We often seem to think that whenever the task becomes difficult or the thinking become difficult, a computer will solve all our problems. Nothing could be further from the truth.

### 3.1.7 Language and the Ability to Use It

All research, to be generally useful, must ultimately be issued as a written document. To be able to produce such a document, the researcher must possess the ability to use language to communicate with a degree of skill and accuracy that will clearly delineate all aspects of the research process. We usually refer to the written document as the *research report*. The basic requirement for writing such a report is the ability to use the English language – to write clear, coherent exposition – so that our document will leave no doubt in the reader’s mind precisely what the research problem is and what steps and considerations resulted in its solution.

The problem of research must be set forth with such clarity that it will be impossible not to comprehend precisely what is being investigated. It requires you to have a vocabulary that is adequate for the common exigencies of exposition. But this is a surface manifestation of certain elements of expression that lie much deeper. doing research. Those who operate on that premise are doomed to disaster.

We write the way we do because we think the way we do. Good writing is merely precise, sensitive thinking mirrored in carefully chosen, logically presented words. Sentences lumber across the page because those who wrote them have lumbering minds – minds that have little facility in clothing thoughts with words. Those minds have never been taught to think with verbal precision.

But there is another aspect to language used as a tool of research. We cannot assume that all significant research is reported in English. Most doctoral programs have language requirements, which usually require you to demonstrate as reading competence in two foreign languages in addition to proficiency in writing English. The choice of those languages is usually linked to the area of proposed research.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has provided an orientation to some of the tools of research. We have touched on the use of library, language, computer etc. as tools of research.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The relevance of the procedures of great research has been identified. We have also seen that all research begins with a problem, an observation, a question. Curiosity is the germinal seed. Hypothesis is formulated, and then data are gathered using research tools.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. What are the basic tools of research?
2. Explain the use of language as a tool of research.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Berry, Dorothea M. (1980); A Bibliographic Guide to Educational Research; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

Cook Margaret G. (1975); The New Library Key; 3d ed. New York: H.W. Wilson.

Gold, R.S. et.al., (June 1988); Measurement Issues in Research Design.

## **UNIT 2: PERSPECTIVES IN RESEARCH**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Meaning of Research
    - 3.1.1 Exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In all Social Sciences, and indeed, in the Sciences also, human beings seek to understand particular phenomena in order to be able to make predictions and/or provide explanations about that phenomena, and possibly to gain control over it. Usually two fundamental kinds of questions are raised – What is? And What ought to be? Questions pertaining to knowing “What is” we call empirical, and questions about “What ought to be” we call normative. These two types of questions are found side by side in all disciplines, with the normative dominating in the humanities and the empirical predominating in the laboratory sciences. Questions about what ought to be, form a core essential to understanding our society. We can ask such questions as - What should we do to improve governance in Nigeria? How can we get Nigerians to be conscious about refuse generating and disposal? How can we make our elections less susceptible to rigging by the political parties? How can the Nigerian Police be made more people-friendly and accountable? Why is Lagos so crowded? Who should we hold responsible for attitude menace of Area Boys in Lagos? Why is the Nigerian President very visible in Africa? How can the OPC and the Police be made to be partners? How do we have frequent local violence in Plateau state of Nigeria? These are social and political problems that are germane and researchable within our immediate environment. In this unit, we shall therefore examine the meaning of research and the Problem-Solving Approach to addressing social and political maladies.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the nature of research
- Define research and how to raise research questions
- Identify with the problem-Solving Approach

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 The Meaning of Research

Research can be understood as is a systematic and organized way of investigation or enquiry often undertaken to achieve a purpose of discovering new facts or verifying hypothesis or theory. The key words here are: organized, systematic, AND controlled – Purposeful i.e. to verify hypothesis using the problem solving approach. Sometimes, it is meant to identify a policy problem and it can also be embarked upon to ascertain ways of finding a solution to a problem. For example, the Niger Delta Crisis.

The problem in that Niger Delta area requires investigation or research. Research can be used to generate ideas on how to solve a problem using a Problem-Solving Approach. The problem solving approach is carried out through the use of different approaches.

a) **FIRST APPROACH** - What is the problem? The researcher defines the problem. Until the problem is recognized, solutions to those problems cannot be found. Therefore, the solution to a problem begins with its identification or recognition.

b) **SECOND APPROACH** - Why do we have to solve the problem? What will be achieved by solving it? Otherwise you have to state your objectives of solving the problem. In the case of conflict studies, we can say it is of policy relevance i.e. conflict. The objective must be measurable and must have a general objective i.e. factors or causes of conflicts in the Niger Delta. Also, there must be specific objective, which should be measurable and used to evaluate the project.

c) **THIRD APPROACH** - Design your methodology. How is it done? That is, how the problem or research is done. The literature review is very important in the third approach wherein you distill a methodological framework or theoretical framework depending on your angle of approach.

d) **FOURTH APPROACH** - What are the implications or recommendations i.e. the utility or usefulness of the research. At this stage, the perspective here is that, the researcher's recommendations will serve as policy options for the government in resolving the conflicts.

The foregoing can be summarized thus:

What is to be researched?

Why is it to be researched?

How is it to be researched? What is

the utility of the research?

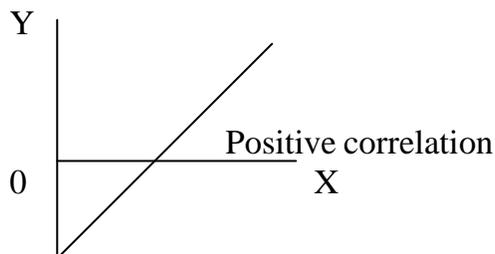
Peace and conflict research is utilitarian, i.e. it is useful and not just research for research sake.

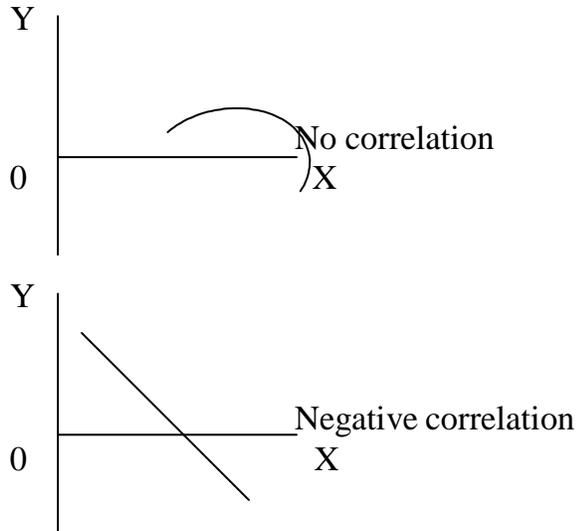
Generally, the approaches to conducting research could be analytical in nature. Research could be done through verbal collection of materials for example ethnographic and histographic research.

Also, a researcher could also be descriptive using mean or averages, proportion or percentages; cross tabulations and graph with text significance e.g. You may wish to know the effects of conflict on the people.

Here, you collect data. Data before conflicts, during and after conflict. You find the averages, percentages and cross tabulates. One can also use the health of refugees in the country (by zones) or outside the country.

In research, there are also relationships between two or more variables of interest with a view to gaining a better or fuller understanding of factors affecting the variables or subjects of interest at such feature times or under predictive studies.





A researcher can also approach its research from an experimental perspective which is common in social and behavioural science e.g. a treated group and a control group. That is by looking at the differences between those affected and those who were not affected. In peace and conflict studies, a group of people are put together for experimental purpose.

### 3.1.2 Exercise

What is Research? Identify researchable problems in the Nigerian Society?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

From our knowledge of this unit, we should realize that research is not necessarily an abstract exercise but a living activity. Often, research is not carried out for its own sake, but is a response to finding solutions to identified problems within the society. People, and especially the young ones in the society, must be trained to be observant, because research begins with observation, and curious at the same time.

Without a questioning in mind, and the urge to contribute to the development of the society through careful work based on research, a society may never progress.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we discussed the nature of research, and the application of this to the society. We also, examined the Problem-Solving Approach to seeking solutions to societal maladies.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

What is Research? Discuss the Problem-Solving Approach.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

E.C Osuala, (1982) Introduction to Research Methodology, Onitsha, Africana-Fep Publishers.

## **UNIT 3: STEPS OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Research Process
    - 3.1.1 Chose a Topic
    - 3.1.2 Focus the Project
    - 3.1.3 Design the Study
    - 3.1.4 Gather the Data
    - 3.1.5 Analyze the Data
    - 3.1.6 Interpret the Findings
    - 3.1.7 Inform Others
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

As earlier discussed, social research is for, and all about people. Thus, we need to learn about how the research process operates and most especially the various steps that are involved in any research process.

In other words, in a research process certain steps must be followed and these steps must be inter-connected; that is, all the steps must link to one another.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explain research process;
- Identify various steps of required in research process;
- Be familiar with basic examples and principles of social science research process.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 The Research Process

The research process requires a sequence of steps. The different approaches suggest somewhat different steps, but most seem to follow the steps in the figure below.

The process begins with a researcher selecting a topic- a general area of study or issues such as divorce, crime, homelessness, or powerful elites. A topic is too broad for conducting research. This is why the next step is crucial. The researcher narrows down, or focuses, the topic into the specific research question that she can address in the study e.g. “do people who marry younger have a higher divorce rate,”]. When learning about a topic and narrowing the focus, she usually reviews past research, or the literature, on a topic or a question.

After specifying a research question, the researcher plans how she will carry out the specific study or research project. The third step involves making decisions about the many practical details of doing the research (e.g. whether to use a survey or observe in the field, how many subjects to use, which question to ask). Now the researcher is ready to gather the data or evidence (e.g. ask people the question, record answers).

Once she collects the data, her next step is to manipulate or analyze the data to see any patterns that emerge. The pattern in the data or evidence helps to research interpret or give meaning to the data (e.g. “people who marry young in cities have higher divorce rates, but those in rural areas do not”). Finally, the researcher writes a report that describes the background to the study, how she conducted it, and what she discovered.

1. *Chose a Topic.* The topic of the study is the moral attitudes of college students. The authors asked how student attitudes had changed from 1948 to 1984. They saw students as the pacesetters of cultural change. Who modifies their older adults.

2. *Focus the project.* Media reports of student attitudes suggested that 1980 were a return to the consent in 1950s the authors asked whether the moral beliefs also shifted. The study on college student 1920 and 1970 found shifts in the strength of religious beliefs. The shifts parallel to conservatism and liberalism on general and political issues. The hypothesis religious and moral beliefs would become conservative in the 1930s than the 1950s following the shifts to more conservation on non religious issues

found in other students. The authors also wanted to see whether any changes had occurred since their publication of a similar study on students religious attitudes five years earlier.

3. *Design the study* in 1948. Philip Hasting used questionnaires to ask a sample of 205 students at Williams College about their religious attitudes. Students were given approximately 20 questions regarding their religious beliefs. For example, one question asked whether belief that science and religion were irreconcilable. The students were also asked about religious upbringing and family income. And other background factors. The design was to ask students at the same college the same question in later years so that trends in attitudes could be detected.

4. *Gather the data:* The 1948 questionnaire was distributed to random samples of Williams College students in 1967, 1979 and 1984. Questions on moral issues were added in 1974. An example of a moral question is, "should laws against homosexual acts between consenting adults be repealed,"

5. *Analyze the data:* The author wanted to be sure that they were comparing similar students over time. Until 1970, Williams College admitted only men, so female students were excluded from the 1974, 1979, and 1984 data; in addition, half of the 1948 students were veterans. To make comparisons, the response of veterans was removed. The author constructed percentage tables to show how students answered the religious questions for 1972 to 1984.

6. *Interpret the findings:* The author found that the percentage of students who retained their parent religion was high before 1967, dropped between 1967 and 1979, as well as between 1967 and 1984. On most religious questions, there was a decline in conservative attitudes between 1948 and 1947, but there was a reversal from 1947 to 1948. On moral questions, the questionnaires' answers also showed increases in conservative attitudes toward sex and drugs. The response also suggested that students have less moral obligation to society between 1974 and 1984. For example, in 1974, 83 percent of students agreed that Americans had a moral obligation to conserve resources; this dropped to 72 percent in 1984. The author concluded that the religious attitudes of Williams College students became increasingly liberal between the 1940s and early 1970s but became more traditional after the mid-1970s. They concluded that the religious and moral attitudes of college students follow the over-all political climate of the country.

7. *Inform others:* This part of the research was written and submitted to social forces for publication.

## EXPLANATION

*Choose a Topic:* The topic of the study was a large growth in the number of people who are in asylums for the insane and its relationship to public policy.

*Focus the Project:* The study focused on a dramatic increase in the number of people in U.S. Insane asylums between the 1880s and the 1920s. It built on two books on the history of mental illness in the United States written by another researcher, Gerald Grob. The book documented that many criminologists, charity experts, and physicians criticized prisons, mental hospitals, almshouses, and reformatories as inhumane and called for reforms in the 1880s and 1890s. Despite some reforms in the penal system and almshouses, the number of people in asylums grew from 40,000 to over 260,000 between 1880 and 1923, and people feared an "epidemic of madness." Grob had argued that the almshouses for poor people were harshly criticized and most were closed yet, no system of welfare was created in their place, especially for the thousands of impoverished elderly in the poorhouses. In this era, prior to programmed social welfare, the asylum was one of the only institutions open to them. Without alternative, thousands of poverty-stricken people were classified as insane as a way to get food, shelter, and care.

Sutton built on Grob's work and focused his study using a theory that says that governments try to expand, responding to public crises in ways that will protect or expand the power of government officials. Sutton noted that most government resources before the 1930s were located in state governments, in which the political party in power provided patronage and construction jobs in order to expand its power. He hypothesized that the growth rate in asylum inmates would vary across different states, depending on the need to expand political power and availability of economic resources in each state.

*Design the study.* Sutton examined details of the historical context and how mental hospitals operated in the period. He also gathered numerous statistics on the economic and political characteristics of each State.

*Gather Data:* Sutton examined historical studies on psychiatry, mental hospitals and government policy in the period. He also gathered quantitative data on the size of sample populations, political competition, wealth available to states, and other state characteristics.

*Analyze Data:* Sutton was able to predict the size of the increase in numbers of asylum inmates in a state largely on the basis of its political and economic characteristic. The insane population grew fastest in states that had more resources, more intense competition between political parties, older people, and more people in cities. At the time, many people in some states received federal government assistance because either they or a relative had fought on the Union side in the U.S. Civil War. Sutton found that asylums grew much less rapidly in states where more people were getting such federal assistance.

*Interpret the Findings:* Sutton argued that asylum expansion occurred because there was no federal government solution to the poverty problem. He agreed with Grob that many impoverished older people were classified as insane by the loose methods of early psychiatry. But he went beyond Grob to show that this did not happen equally across the country. The insane populations grew most where there was little help for impoverished people from federal government coming, where sufficient State- Level resources existed to build and staff the asylums, and where greater competition between political parties formed a need to create patronage jobs. At this time, most of the jobs in asylums and the funds to build the asylums were given out by state – level political party officials. Thus, the State government response to the crisis of thousands of impoverished elderly people, who had no place to go when the old almshouses were shut down. These almshouses were built to staff many new asylums where there was little federal assistance and when political parties sought to expand their power and stay in office by using tax revenue to swell the ranks of those who depended on the party for their jobs. Asylum expansion is the method used to deal with the poor people while providing jobs controlled by the political party in power in the state government.

*Inform Others.* Prior to its publication in the American Sociological Review, this study was reported at a meeting of the American Sociological Association and at Stanford University.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Social research is for, about, and conducted by people. Despite the attention to the principles, rules, or procedures, remember that social research is a human activity. Researchers are people, not unlike yourself, who became absorbed in a desire to create and discover knowledge. Many find social research to be fun and exciting. They conduct it to discover new knowledge and to gain a richer understanding of the social world. Whether you become a professional social researcher, someone who applies a few research

techniques as part of a job, or just someone who uses the results of research, you will benefit from reading about the research process. You will be enriched if you can begin to create a personal link between yourself and the research process

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have examined the necessary sequential steps which are taken during a research process. Followed by a good diagram to illustrate the seven steps involved in a research process. We also cited two basic examples to further demonstrate this.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What steps are involved in conducting a research?
2. What does it mean to say that research steps are not rigidly fixed?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Agnew, Neil McK and Sandra W. Pyke (1991); The Science Game: An Introduction to Research in the Social Sciences; 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall.

Berger, Bennet M., ed. (1990); Authors of Their Own Lives: Intellectual Autobiographies of Twenty American Sociologists; Berkeley University Press.

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## **UNIT 4: WRITING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Meaning of Proposal
    - 3.1.1 A proposal is a straight forward Document
    - 3.1.2 A proposal is not a literary production
    - 3.1.3 A proposal is clearly organized
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Research is never a solo flight, an individual excursion. It begins by researchers communicating their thoughts, their plans their methods, their objectives for other to read, to discuss and to act upon it. The overture opens such a research dialogue for the research proposal. As a point of departure, it must be a precision instrument from the first word to the last.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

Explain what a proposal is?

Why do we need proposal before any research could be conducted?

Highlight Methods of enquiring into any research project.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 The Meaning of Proposal**

Research is never a solo flight. It is an activity that involves many people and presumes the accession to and the use of resources far beyond one's personal possessions. For that reason, research is not some "do-it-in-a-corner" activity. It must be aired, laid out, inspected, and, in nearly every instance, approved by others.

The graduate student must get the approval of an academic committee. A researcher seeking a grant must get approval from the university or the organization for which he or she works, and the projects must merit the approval of the grant-awarding agency. These approvals are usually secured through the submission to proper authorities, a document known as a *research proposal*. The proposal discusses openly the problem for research, exactly how the research will be executed, and spells out in precise detail the sources – both personal and instrumental – that the researcher has available for producing the proposed results.

### **3.1.1 A Proposal is a Straightforward Document**

It should not be cluttered with extraneous matter. It begins without introduction, with a straightforward statement of the problem to be researched. It stands upon its own feet; it needs no explanatory props, no introduction, prologue, or statement of reasons why the researcher became interested in the problem or feels a burning need to research it. That may be interesting, but none of it is necessary or appropriate. Those who will review your proposal are not interested in such autobiographical excursions. These, indeed, suggest that you cannot separate essentials from irrelevancies; and that, unfortunately, will neither enhance your stature as a researcher nor recommend you as one who can think without irrelevancy and digression.

Whatever does not contribute directly to the delineation of the problem and its solution must be eliminated. Anything else only obscures and is diversionary. Remember the architect's drawing: clean, clear and economical. It contains all that is necessary; not one detail more.

Journalists are taught – or if not taught, soon learn – that the first words they write are the important ones. You capture or lose your reader's attention with the first sentence. It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of the beginning, whether of a speech, a news story, an article, or a proposal.

A proposal begins with these words: "Four decades ago the social and economic status of minority groups in the United States were ..." The normal reaction of the reader of such a proposal might readily be: "Who cares, at this moment about what the social and economic status of minorities were, forty years ago? What we want to know is not history but prophecy. What does the researcher propose to do now? C'mon, what's the problem? *State it!*"

You see, your first sentence has irritated your reader, puts you immediately at a disadvantage, and perhaps sacrificed your reader's interest; more

seriously, it has indicated that you cannot distinguish between history and future planning and so casts umbrage upon your ability as a researcher to think clearly and critically.

In fact, such a beginning might even suggest that the writer does not actually know the meaning of proposal, which is a serious indictment, indeed. This is a word that looks forward, to what the researcher plans to do in the future. It is a document that employs the future tense of the verb. If the writer intended to make an analytical comparison of the social and economic conditions of two groups, he or she should have forthrightly begun: This study will analyze the social and economic status of certain specific minority groups today with their similar status four decades ago for the purpose of the research.

This is a no-nonsense beginning, and it indicates that the writer knows what a proposal should be.

### **3.1.2 A Proposal is Not a Literary production**

An architect's drawing is not a work of art; a proposal is not a "literary" (in the sense of being consciously a piece of fine writing) production. The mission of neither is to be artistic; the purpose of both is to communicate clearly. As an architect's drawings present an idea of construction with economy of line and precision of measurement, so also proposal indicates how a research project is to be executed to completion, with an economy of words and a precision of expression. It provides no opportunity for fine writing, for literary composition. Stylistically, it is generally stark and prosaic. When you have written such a document you may discover, perhaps to your surprise, that direct writing is also elegant writing. The language must be clear, precise, and sharp. The proposal provides a chance to show with what ultimate clarity and precision the researcher can state a problem, delineate the treatment of the data and establish the logical validity of a conclusion.

To those who have been nurtured with the idea that writing should be stylistically interesting and artistically creative, the preceding statements may come as a distinct shock. But writing a superb proposal calls for skills of expression quite as demanding as those needed for the forging of an unforgettable sentence.

### 3.1.3 A Proposal is clearly organized

Proposals are written in conventional pros style, and thoughts are expressed in simple paragraph form. The organization of the thought – the outline, as it were – is indicated by the proposed use of heading and subheading. The use of the indented outline is neither conventional nor acceptable in the presentation of formal proposals. Those who employ the indented outline form may lay themselves open to criticism on two counts: They may be suspected of never having learned how to express the outline of their thought by the use of headings and subheadings; but more serious, outlines hint at brevity, brevity hints at superficiality, superficiality suggests a most undesirable quality on the part of the researcher. Such may, of course, not be so; but no proposal should ever result in its author being represented in an unfavourable light.

Nevertheless, organization and outline are absolutely essential. They hinge at an orderly and disciplined mind – one of the highest tributes to a researcher's qualifications. If you are not conversant with the use of headings to indicate thought organization, refer to the section in Chapter 12 titled, Headings Show Organization. There you will find a working knowledge of the basics of this stylistic convention. Efficient readers recognize immediately the outline organization of the thought when expressed with appropriate headings.

There is a rule of thumb that may assist you in reading and writing, headings and in recognizing their relative importance.

1. The most important headings are in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS and centered on the page. These are headings of the largest units of writing. Chapter headings are thus designated in typescript (corresponding to Roman numerals I, II, III, etc., in an outline).
2. Headings in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS, Capital and lowercase – usually boldface – or other distinctly different typographic presentation flush with the left margin and separated from the text. (These are freestanding sideheads – that is, sideheads separated from the text above by two spaces and from the text followed by a single space) are in second order of importance (corresponding to the capital letters A,B,C, etc., in an outline).
3. Headings in capital and lowercase letter, which are also freestanding, are of the next lower order subheadings (corresponding to the 1,2,3, etc., level in an outline). In typescript, underlining means to italicize.

This heading is followed by a period. Other headings have no mark of punctuation following them.

4. Paragraph sidelines are headings inserted into the opening of a paragraph. The first word is printed with a capital letter and the rest of the words begin with lowercase letter. All are in italic. These correspond to the, b, c, etc, level in an outline.
5. Seldom encountered is the least important heading of all. It is a centered heading with the first word capitalized and not underlined. It corresponds to the 1', 2', 3', etc., level in an outline.

Proposals follow a simple, logical form of presentation. Although there are many ways to arrange the items within the proposal.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Usually, mentors or supervisors will want to see the proposal as it is being developed and, equally, will want to monitor your progress as you proceed with your study. This is a desirable relationship; a process of continual guidance and a process of advance and consent.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have seen that the proposal for an anticipated research endeavour merit words that are carefully chosen, style that is clear and concise, attention to the most minute procedural detail, and a rationale for each procedure that is logically and clearly stated. This is a big order; but it reveals the quality of scholarship of the individual writing the proposal as perhaps no other academic assignment would ever do.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. How do you write a research proposal?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Allen, E.M. (1960): Why Are Research Grant Applications Disapproved? Sage Publications (1532 – 34).

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## **MODULE 3**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unit 1	Why do we need a Research?
Unit 2	Data Collection
Unit 3	Qualitative Research Methods
Unit 4	Quantitative Research Methods

### **UNIT 1: WHY DO WE NEED A RESEARCH?**

#### **CONTENT**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Body
3.1	Social Research
3.1.1	Why Conduct Social Research?
3.1.2	Reasons for Research
3.1.3	Exercise
3.1.4	Time Dimension in Research
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we will briefly take a look at the various reasons why a research could be carried out or embarked upon. We will also examine the time dimension in research.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the reasons why a research could be embarked upon?
- Explain the time dimension in research.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 Social Research

##### 3.1.1 Why Conduct Social Research?

Where can you find people conducting social research? Students, Professors, Professional Researchers, and the government, with an army of assistants and technicians, conduct much social research. This research is not visible to the average person. Although the results may appear only in specialized publications or textbooks, the basic knowledge and research methods that professional research develop becomes the basis for all other social research.

In addition to those in universities, people who work for newspaper, television network, market research firms, schools, hospital, social service, government agencies, political parties, consulting firms, school, hospitals, social service agencies, political parties, consulting firms, government agencies, personnel department, public interest organizations, insurance companies, or law firms may conduct research as part of their jobs. Numerous people make use of social research techniques. The findings from this social research usually yield better informed persons. Less biased decisions than the guessing, hunches, intuition, and personal experience that were previously used. Unfortunately, those being studied may feel over studied or overloaded by the research. For example, the many exit poll studied by the mass median during election have promoted a backlash of people refusing to vote and debate over legal restrictions on such polling. Also, some people misuse or abuse social- research -use sloppy research techniques. Misinterpreted findings rig studies to find previously decided results. But the hostile reactions to such misuses may be directed at research in general instead of at the people who misuse it.

People conduct social research for many reasons. Some want to answer practical questions (e.g., “will reductions in average class size from 25 to 2 increase student writing skill?”). Others want to make informed decisions (e.g. “Should our company introduce flex-time to reduce employee turnover?”). Still others want to change society (e.g., “What can be done to reduce rape?”). Finally, those in the scientific community seek to build basic knowledge about society (e.g., “Why is the divorce rate higher for blacks than for whites?”). *You must learn to use your experiences in your intellectual work: continually to examine and interpret it. In this sense*

*craftsmanship is the center of yourself and you are personally involved in every intellectual product upon which you may work.*

### **3.1.2 Reasons for Research**

1. To understand and/or explain a given situation e.g. conflict in a particular area, say for example the Niger Delta, the Ife-Modakeke conflict, the Ijaw and Itsekiri and the Warri crisis, the Kaduna religious crisis.
2. Why a given conflict situation in spite of all efforts to solve it has not been transformed or solved. Here we need to examine the causes before the symptoms.
3. We also conduct research to give information to enhance decision or policy-making.
4. Research can also bring about promotion of objectivity in our policy analysis, policy designs and policy choices.
5. Through research we can also promote meritocracy.
6. To enhance knowledge i.e. to improve on the way things are done in a better way especially how resources are shared to promote equity.
7. To set up a standard operating material procedure for a system e.g. government, community or society or an organization.
8. In peace and conflict studies, research is necessary to draw out the ingredients of reconciliation – that is, understanding, what the aggrieved parties are contesting for, and what they used for a settlement.
9. To determine what we need for the future so that we can do a better planning.

### **3.1.3 Exercise**

Under what circumstances can research be embarked upon?

### **3.1.4 Time Dimension in Research**

Another dimension of social research is the treatment of time. An awareness of the time dimension will help you read or conduct research because different research questions or issues incorporate time in different ways.

Some studies give you a snapshot of what is going on at a single, fixed time point and allow you to analyze it in detail. Other studies provide more of a moving picture that lets you follow events, people, or social relations over extended periods of time. Still other research focuses on one or a very few cases during a limited time period.

Sometimes, these studies have been referred to as longitudinal studies, time series or in a sense as an aspect of participant-observation. You are advised to carry out more researches on the time dimension in research.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, the goal has been to sensitize the student to be conscious of the various reasons that could lead to a need for carrying out research. In addition, the importance of the time dimension in research cannot be overlooked, as sometimes it goes a long way in determining the validity of this study.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have to examine the possible reasons why research could be embarked upon, and the importance of time dimension in research.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. Discuss the time dimension in research.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 2: DATA COLLECTION**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Approaches to Collecting Data
    - 3.1.1 Primary and Secondary data
    - 3.1.2 Telephone Survey
    - 3.1.3 Personal Interview
    - 3.1.4 Mail Survey
    - 3.1.5 Exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we will take a closer look at the various instruments used in data collection in the Social Sciences in a quantitative manner. We will examine the use of primary and secondary sources of data, the questionnaire and the use of surveys.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the sources of quantitative data in research
- Highlight the use of the questionnaire in research.
- Discuss the use of Secondary sources of materials
- List the use of the Survey method

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Approaches to Collecting Data**

##### **3.1.1 Primary and Secondary Data**

Every researcher collects data using one or more techniques. Data collection in research takes two types of approaches:

- (a) Primary data approach
- (b) Secondary data approach

Primary data is the approach through which data is freshly collected by the researcher from primary sources or whose origin of generation of data by the researcher is first hand. Whereas secondary data are already generated data, often published or whose origin belongs to some other researchers. Although, secondary data can be re-analyzed or reproduced by the researcher, it is very essential that we acknowledge the sources of our secondary data or the information that we are using, such as texts, journals, articles, Internet and the media.

Primary data is usually collected through the survey method and the use of the questionnaire.

### The Questionnaire

There are three (3) types of questionnaires:

- (i) Open ended/unstructured
- (ii) Semi-structured
- (iii) Structured/close-ended.

\* In open-ended questionnaire the researcher asks questions and the answers are recorded (audio, picture, video). The answers are then transcribed.

\* Semi-structured questionnaire have some open-ended and close-ended/structured questions together. You ask a question and give answers. The respondents then select the answers that are appropriate to them. The researcher makes sure that all their options are exhaustive. Usually, you make them mutually exclusive and collectively exhausted. To make them this way, the researcher always add the option- OTHERS (SPECIFY).

\* Structured questionnaire – In this type, the questions have already been planned and written down even with expected answers from the respondents. The questionnaire(s) will then be distributed to the respondents and they will tick their selected answers, which the researchers had already pre-empted.

The Survey Method is another source of data collection. It is more of primary data collection. Survey can also be divided into three (3):

- (i) Telephone survey
- (ii) Personal interviews
- (iii) Mail survey.

**3.1.2 Telephone Survey (interview)**

This is often used for opinion surveys i.e. when you want to know the opinion of people about something or about the government or government policies. For example, a representative sample can be selected about the opinion of all Liberians as to whether Charles Taylor should leave office or not, or whether Charles Taylor should be given political asylum in Nigeria or not. The researcher uses the result from the opinion survey to make certain conclusions that will be of use to the country concerned.

All the opinion is not selective in any way, but rather a representative sample of what the people think:

Advantages of telephone survey	Disadvantages of telephone survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) It is very cheap</li> <li>(ii) You do not have to travel</li> <li>(iii) You talk and ask questions on sensitive issues and socially desirable answers may be obtained.</li> <li>(iv) No face to face contact; it is through telephone conversation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) It can easily exclude an important part of the population.</li> <li>(ii) The poor or the illiterate’s opinion are not considered.</li> </ul>

**3.1.3 Personal Interviews**

This involves face-to-face interview of the respondents by the interviewers. In fact, the three types of questionnaires can be used in this method. Meanwhile, your questionnaire should be as short as possible and straight to the point; precise language should be adopted; the interview must be friendly but not to be patronized; the researcher must understand the interpretation of answers to questions; the researcher must respect the privacy and traditions of the respondents.

**3.1.4 Mail Survey**

The researcher may not face the respondent, the questions are mailed to them and they may be bulky. The features of mail survey are,

- (a) It has long reach
- (b) The amount of data desired can be obtained
- (c) The response rate is important
- (d) It can be flexible and controlled.

### **3.1.5 Exercise**

1. Discuss the use of the interview methods in data collection. How is the use of the telephone survey different from personal interviews?
2. What is mail survey?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is important that we understand the use of the above-mentioned methods of data collection, because during field research one may be required to utilize one or more of these methods. Conflict research is also social research and involves the study of human behaviour, but unfortunately at its most sensitive and violent level. It is therefore important that the right approach is used in collecting data and analyzing the results, as this has implications for the resolution of the conflicts.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have examined the various methods of data collection, primary and secondary sources of data, the questionnaire, and the various interview methods including survey research.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What is a questionnaire? Discuss the use of the questionnaire in data collection?
2. What do you understand by the Survey method in social research?

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

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## **UNIT 3: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Qualitative Research
    - 3.1.1 Limits to the use of Qualitative Data
    - 3.1.2 Data and Qualitative Research
    - 3.1.3 The Many Methods of Qualitative Research
    - 3.1.4 Ethnography
    - 3.1.5 Photography
    - 3.1.6 Ethno methodology
    - 3.1.7 Dramaturgical Interviewing
    - 3.1.8 Case Study
    - 3.1.9 Unobtrusive Measures
    - 3.1.10 Content Analysis
    - 3.1.11 Historiography
    - 3.1.12 Secondary Analysis
    - 3.1.13 Exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In research we have different classification schemes or methods. None of them is said to be right, and none is said to be wrong. In the general analytical methods, we have data collection methods and various other methods requiring specific analytical or methodological tools of study. All types overlap and none are mutually exclusive or independent. But our area of study will restrict us to the general analytical method, which is based on the method of analysis used. The General analytical method can be Qualitative or Quantitative research. In this unit, we will focus on Qualitative research, and examine methodologies like Participant Observation, Interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Ethnography, Photography, Ethnomethodology, Dramaturgical Interviewing, Sociometry, Case Study, Unobstructive Measures, Content Analysis, Historiography and

Secondary Analysis. Any of these methods could be used in the study of conflicts depending on the nature of the conflict.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning and uses of qualitative data
- Identify with Participant Observation, Focus Group Discussions
- Discuss Ethnography and Photography
- Define interview

methods

- Explain Sociometry and Historiography
- Define Content Analysis and use of Secondary information

## **3.0 MAIN BODY**

### **3.1 Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research verbally describes or tells what is done or what has been done. It tells the story around events, occurrences and practices. This is allowed in ethnographic studies. It can also be adopted in Peace and Conflict Resolution. This research usually adopts such data collecting methods like personal observations, unstructured or semi-structured interview, containing open-ended questions e.g. the practices of one ethnic group and another on marriage issues. It also uses Focus Group discussions (FGDs). FGDs assemble people or participants and encourage the group to follow some specific questions of discourse or to discuss amongst themselves with a view to delineating possible solutions to a problem. It could also use experts on panel discussions (e.g. committee leaders, youth leaders, elders, soldiers, academics) in its investigation.

However, there is always the fear of bandwagon effects, which must be avoided at all costs. Bandwagon usually involves the overwhelming views of respected people in communities, which tend to override that of the ordinary people in society even if on the panel of experts. Some peoples' opinion due to economic, educational, social status or age usually has the tendency to prevail. When such people talk, others just keep quiet and listen.

### 3.1.1 Limits to the use of Qualitative Data

Qualitative data are in the form of texts, written words, phrases, or symbols describing or representing people, actions, and events in social life. Except for the occasional content analysis study, qualitative researchers rarely use statistical analysis. This does not mean that qualitative data analysis is based on speculation or on vague impressions. It can be systematic and logically rigorous, although in a different way from quantitative or statistical analysis.

In the past, few qualitative researchers explained how they analyzed data. In fact, a common criticism of qualitative research was that data analysis was not made explicit or open to inspection. Much of the best works in sociology, political science and peace and conflict resolution has been carried out using qualitative methods without statistical tests. This has been true of research areas ranging from organization and community studies to micro-studies of face-to-face interaction and macro studies of the world system. Nor should such work be regarded as being weak because of the initial “exploratory” approaches to these topics.

Qualitative explanations take many forms. A qualitative researcher does not have to choose between a rigid ideographic – homothetic dichotomy – that is, between describing specifics and verifying universal laws. Instead, she/he develops explanations or generalizations that are close to concrete data and contexts but are more than simple descriptions. The researcher usually uses a lower level, less abstract theory, which is grounded in concrete details.

A qualitative researcher rarely tries to document universal laws; rather, she/he divides explanations into two categories: highly unlikely and plausible. The researcher using qualitative analysis can eliminate an explanation by showing that a wide array of evidence contradicts it. The data might support more than one explanation, but all explanations will not be consistent with it.

The form of analysis and theorizing in qualitative research sometimes makes it difficult to see generalizations. Some qualitative researchers are almost entirely descriptive and avoid theoretical analysis. In general, it is best to make theories and concepts explicit.

### 3.1.2 Data and Qualitative Research

Data are not inherently quantitative, and can be bits and pieces of almost anything. They do not necessarily have to be expressed in numbers. Frequency distributions and probability tables do not have to be used. Data can come in the form of words, images, impressions, gestures, or tones which represent real events or reality as it is seen symbolically or sociologically (*If people believe things to be real, they are real in their consequences* - the Thomas Dictum). Qualitative research uses unreconstructed logic to get at what is really real -- the quality, meaning, context, or image of reality in what people actually do, not what they say they do (as on questionnaires). Unreconstructed logic means that there are no step-by-step rules, that researchers ought not to use prefabricated methods or reconstructed rules, terms, and procedures that try to make their research look clean and neat (as in journal publications).

It is therefore difficult to define qualitative research since it does not involve the same terminology as ordinary science. The simplest definition is to say it involves methods of data collection and analysis that are nonquantitative (Lofland & Lofland 1984). Another way of defining it is to say it focuses on "quality", a term referring to the essence or ambience of something (Berg 1989). Others would say it involves a subjective methodology and your self as the research instrument (Adler & Adler 1987). Everyone has their favorite or "pet" definition. Historical-comparative researchers would say it always involves the historical context, and sometimes a critique of the "front" being put on to get at the "deep structure" of social relations. Qualitative research most often is *grounded theory*, built from the ground up.

### 3.1.3 The Many Methods of Qualitative Research

- |                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Participant-Observation       | 7. Natural Experiment          |
| 2. Ethnography                   | 8. Case Study                  |
| 3. Photography                   | 9. Unobtrusive Measures        |
| 4. Ethnomethodology              | 10. Content Analysis           |
| 5. Dramaturgical<br>Interviewing | 11. Historiography             |
| 6. Sociometry                    | 12. Secondary Analysis of Data |

**PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION** is the process of immersing yourself in the study of people you are not too different from. It is almost always done covertly, with the researcher never revealing their true purpose or identity.

If it's a group you already know a lot about, you need to step back and take the perspective of a "martian", as if you were from a different planet and seeing things in a fresh light. If it's a group you know nothing about, you need to become a "convert" and really get committed and involved. The more secretive and amorphous the group, the more you need participation. The more localized and turf-conscious the group, the more you need observation. It's customary in the literature to describe four roles:

Complete participation -- the researcher participates in deviant or illegal activities and goes on to actively influence the direction of the group

Participant as observer -- the researcher participates in deviant or illegal activities but does not try to influence the direction of the group

Observer as participant -- the researcher participates in a one-time deviant or illegal activity but then takes a back seat to any further activities

Complete observation -- the researcher is a member of the group but does not participate in any deviant or illegal activities

It is difficult to say which of these four roles are the most common, probably the middle two. The key point behind all of them is that the researcher must operate on two levels: becoming an insider while remaining an outsider. They must avoid becoming oversocialized, or "going native", as well as being personally revolted or repulsed by the group conduct. Going native is sometimes described as giving up research and joining the group for life, but in most criminological circles, it means losing your objectivity and glorifying criminals. Generally, it takes time to carry out participant-observation research, several weeks or months to 2-4 years. Gangs, hate groups, prostitutes, and drug dealers have all been studied by this method.

### 3.1.4 Ethnography

is the process of describing a culture or way of life from a folk peoples' point of view. Another name for it is field research. The folk point of view is the idea of a universe in a dewdrop, each person a reflection of their culture in that all their gestures, displays, symbols, songs, sayings, and everything else has some implicit, tacit meaning for others in that culture. It is the job of ethnography to establish the hidden inferences that distinguish, for example, a wink and a nod in any given culture. Numerous funding opportunities exist both abroad and domestically for ethnographic research.

The ethnographic method involves observation and note taking. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz called it *thick description*. For about every half hour of observation, an ethnographic researcher would write notes for

about two hours. These notes would contain rich, detailed descriptions of everything that went on. There would be no attempt at summarizing, generalizing, or hypothesizing. The notes would capture as factual a description of the drama as possible to permit multiple interpretations, and most of all, to later infer cultural meaning. A coding procedure (much like content analysis) would be used later for this.

One of the assumptions of ethnography is naturalism, or leaving natural phenomenon alone. In essence, the researcher tries to be invisible. There are a variety of ways the researcher develops trust and rapport with the folk group in order to do this, to watch and listen carefully without being noticed. At some point, however, the researcher has to disengage, retreat to a private place, and take notes. The following are some standard rules for taking field notes:

- Take notes as soon as possible, and do not talk to anyone before note taking
- Count the number of times key words or phrases are used by members of the folk group
- Carefully record the order or sequence of events, and how long each sequence lasts
- Do not worry that anything is too insignificant; record even the smallest things
- Draw maps or diagrams of the location, including your movements and any reaction by others
- Write quickly and don't worry about spelling; devise your own system of punctuation
- Avoid evaluative judgments or summarizing; don't call something "dirty" for example, describe it
- Include your own thoughts and feelings in a separate section; your later thoughts in another section
- Always make backup copies of your notes and keep them in a separate location

### 3.1.5 **Photography**

Photography or film making is ethnography with recording equipment. While many ethnographers would advocate staying away from such technology, it is hard to deny the benefits as an aid to recall, multiple interpretations, and reaching a wider audience. Ethnographic film reports on the homeless, for example, may be just what is needed to mobilize community action or public funding. Little has been written on this new qualitative method, but it appears that the technique known as *oral history* is

sometimes combined with it. Oral history is the recording of people speaking in their own words, about their life experiences, both public and private, in ways that are unavailable in writing. You'd be amazed at the things people say, and the nuances they can communicate, while in front of a video camera. It's unfortunate that this method hasn't caught on in criminal justice or criminology.

### **3.1.6 Ethno methodology**

This is the study of commonsense knowledge, and is an ethnographic technique popularized by the sociologist Harold Garfinkel in the late 1960s. It assumes a more active role for the researcher, one that involves "breaking up" the standard routines of folk groups in order to see how strongly and in what ways group members mobilize to restore the cultural order. The researcher would do weird things, for example, at inappropriate times. One of the classic textbook examples is looking up at the ceiling in a crowded elevator. Some people would glance up to see what you are looking at; another person might ask what you are looking at; and yet another person might demonize you by saying "What's the matter, too good to ride the elevator with the rest of us?" The whole idea is not to break the law or even the norms of social conduct, but just do silly little things that violate customs or folkways, which will most likely get you labeled as odd, eccentric, or a folk devil. The researcher is then in a better position to understand the fragile and fluid processes of social control, as well as the rules that people use for maintaining cultural boundaries. In spite of the great theoretical potential of this research method, it is not all that commonly used. In fact, since 1989, most people refer to refined versions of this method as *conversation analysis* or *sociolinguistics*.

### **3.1.7 Dramaturgical Interviewing. or just Plain dramaturgy.**

This is a technique of doing research by role-playing or play-acting your own biases in some symbolic interaction or social performance. Interviewing is conversation with a purpose. Dramaturgy was popularized by the sociologist Erving Goffman in the early 1960s and is also associated with the pseudopatient study "On Being Sane in Insane Places" by Rosenhan in 1973. Both researchers pretended to be mentally ill to find out what it's like in a psychiatric hospital. It's important to note that the acting out doesn't have to be deceptive. In fact, it's preferable if the researcher acts out on a self-conscious awareness of their own bias, and just exaggerates a bit, in order to instigate a more emotional response from the person being interviewed. A researcher interested in the beliefs of devout Catholics, for example, might start asking "So you're Catholic, huh? I hear Catholics

engage in cannibalism when they go to Mass, is that true?" Knowing your biases is different from *bracketing* those biases, the latter requiring not just an awareness, but being hard on yourself, and developing a special openness or frankness that is the hallmark of a dramaturgical researcher. At a minimum, you should examine yourself according to the following:

- your gender, age, ethnicity, religion, political party, and favorite psychological theory
- the ways in which these characteristics might bias you in your efforts at interviewing
- the ways in which you might counteract these biases
- the ways in which your efforts to counteract your biases might lead to other biases

Rapport and trust come from meeting the interviewee's expectations about ascribed and achieved characteristics (gender, age, race, mannerisms, etc.), and then the interview proceeds in a semi-directed manner with the interviewer (always self-consciously) acting out on some bias believed to be associated with their own characteristics or those of the interviewee (if different). In the first case, the researcher is a dramaturgical performer; in the second case, a dramaturgical choreographer. The thing to focus on with this technique is the nonverbal body language, as it is believed that affective messages contained therein are more important than verbal messages. A debriefing session is usually held after the dramaturgical interview. This method is probably one of the most difficult qualitative methods as its basis is in phenomenological theory, but it has many advocates who point to its therapeutic value for both interviewer and interviewee.

### 3.1.8 Case Study

This occurs when all you have is information about one unique offender, and you want to generalize about all offenders of that type. The field of Justice Studies has been slower than Social Work and Clinical Psychology in embracing the value of a single-subject (sample size  $N=1$ ) or case study approach, yet some examples exist:

Almost all case studies involve unstructured interview and ethnographic methodology (meaning the subject was allowed to express themselves in their own words). It's difficult to describe the variety of techniques used to arrive at useful generalizations in a case study. Hagan (2000) even covers a few quantitative techniques. One way to generalize from a sample of one is to argue that group data overlooks or blurs the significance of individual success or failure. Nomothetic (group) designs simply add up the totals and

look at averages. Idiographic (single subject) designs have the advantage of rescuing individual data from the pile of averages. This argument works best if the individual in question falls into some extreme category (successful at crime or a complete failure at it). Scientists refer to these cases as "outliers", and it is probably better to use someone successful than a failure. Studies of so-called successful, or able, criminals are especially useful at finding out how most offenders try to avoid detection by law enforcement.

Another way to generalize from a sample of one is to use the "universe in a dewdrop" argument we saw with ethnography. With case studies, this is called "methodological holism" and is quite common in Historical-Comparative research. The idea is to find a subject so average, so typical, so much like everyone else that he/she seems to reflect the whole universe of other subjects around him/her. Anthropologists used to seek out the witchdoctor of a village, so you need to find someone who is a natural "storyteller". Many offenders, if you can find one you believe to be articulate and truthful, have taken it upon themselves to chronicle, record, or otherwise keep an eye on the careers of others in their particular field of criminal behavior. These particular individuals will often pontificate on and on about what it's like to be someone like them and some of them can be surprisingly accurate about it, even though they lack self-insight themselves. In order for this to be more than an exercise in typicality, you should use some standard protocol. In other words, try to figure out which issues the subject regards as essential or worthwhile and which ones he/she regards as useless. You'll probably need some nonverbal behavior also. Several complex techniques exist for coding and analyzing the data, from content analysis to historiography to meta-ethnography, but a simple, old-fashioned Q-sort technique works well where you put the subject's different ideas down on 3x5 cards, lay them down on the floor, and shuffle them into 3-4 master categories (called "themes") that you make up the names for. Some standard categories might be: (1) growing up a criminal; (2) becoming a successful criminal; (3) trying to stop being a criminal; and (4) adjusting to the criminal life, but use your own creativity in naming the categories, and stay close to the actual statements by your subject.

### **3.1.9 Unobstrusive Measures**

These are ways of gathering data in which subjects are not aware of their being studied, and are sometimes called nonreactive measures. They usually involve clandestine, novel, or oddball collection of trace data that falls into one of two categories: accretion or erosion. Accretion is the stuff left behind by human activity. An example would be going through someone's garbage.

Erosion is the stuff that is worn down by human activity. An example would be examining wear and tear on floor tiles to estimate how much employees use the restroom. Examination of graffiti and vandalism are examples of unobtrusive measures in criminal justice. Nobody claims that unobtrusive measures are superior to other research methods. The only advantage is that it is useful when the subjects to be studied are very suspicious and distrustful.

### 3.1.10 Content Analysis

This is a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of text. The content can be words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, pictures, symbols, or ideas. It can be done quantitatively as well as qualitatively, and computer programs can be used to assist the researcher. The initial step involves sorting the content into themes, which depends on the content. If you were studying white-collar crime, for example, you might have themes like planning, action, and cover up. Then, a coding scheme is devised, usually in basic terms like frequency (amount of content), direction (who the content is directed to), intensity (power of content), and space (size of content). The coding system is used to reorganize the theme of the content in what is called manifest coding. Manifest coding is highly reliable because you can train assistants to do it, ensuring intercoder reliability, and all you're doing is using an objective method to count the number of times a theme occurs in your coding scheme. At the next level, the researcher engages in what is called latent coding. This requires some knowledge, usually gained from fieldwork or observation, about the language rules, or *semiotics*, of your subjects. It is less reliable than manifest coding, but involves the researcher using some rubric or template to make judgment calls on implicit, ironic, or doubtful content. Since not everything always fits in categories, there's always some leftover content to be accounted for, and it must be interpreted in context by a knowledgeable researcher who knows something about the culture of his/her subjects.

There are strict limitations on the inferences a researcher can make with content analysis. For example, inferences about motivation or intent can not normally be made, nor can the researcher infer what the effect of seeing such content would be on a viewer. Content analysis is only analysis of what is in the text. A researcher cannot use it to prove what newspapers intended, for example, to mislead the public, or that a certain style of journalism has a particular effect on public attitudes. The most common inferences in content analysis make use of concepts like unconscious bias or unintended consequences, and these are not the same as saying intentional bias or intended effect. Content analysis has been applied extensively to all

kinds of media: newspapers, magazines, television, movies, and the Internet (see the Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture for some examples of recent research). Intelligence and law enforcement agencies also do content analysis regularly on diplomatic channels of communication, overseas phone calls, and Internet emails. A key point to remember is that the more quantitative aspects of content analysis come first; the qualitative part of the analysis comes last, although some advocates say the technique involves moving back and forth between quantitative and qualitative methods.

### 3.1.11 Histogramy

This is the method of doing historical research or gathering and analyzing historical evidence. There are four types of historical evidence: primary sources, secondary sources, running records, and recollections. Historians rely mostly on primary sources, which are also called *archival data* because they are kept in museums, archives, libraries, or private collections. Emphasis is given to the written word on paper, although modern historiography can involve any medium. Secondary sources are the work of other historians writing history. Running records are documentaries maintained by private or nonprofit organizations. Recollections are autobiographies, memoirs, or oral histories. Archival research, which is the most common, involves long hours of sifting through dusty old papers, yet inspection of untouched documents can yield surprising new facts, connections, or ideas. Historiographers are careful to check and double-check their sources of information, and this lends a good deal of validity and reliability to their conclusions. Inferences about intent, motive, and character are common, with the understanding of appropriateness to the context of the time period. Historical-comparative researchers who do historiography often have to make even more disclaimers about meanings in context, such as how they avoided western bias.

### 3.1.12 Secondary Analysis

This is the reanalysis of data that was originally compiled by another researcher for other purposes than the one the present researcher intends to use it for. Several datasets in criminal justice and criminology exist just for this purpose. The UCR (Uniform Crime Reports), for example, can be analyzed in a number of ways other than for its purpose as being a health scorecard for the nation. Often, secondary analysis will involve adding an additional variable to an existing dataset. This variable will be something that the researcher collects on their own, from another dataset, or from a common source of information. For example, one could take police call for

service data and combine it with lunar cycles from the Farmer's Almanac to study the effect of full moons on weird human behavior. Secondary data analysis is only limited by the researcher's imagination. While the technique is mostly quantitative, limitations exist that often force such researchers to have some qualitative means of garnering information also. In such cases (as with much Historical-Comparative research), the qualitative part of the study is used as a validity check on the quantitative part.

A related technique, called *meta-analysis*, is the results of combining several different studies dealing with the same research question. It is decidedly quantitative, but involves some of the same sorting and coding techniques found in qualitative research. Meta-analysis is no substitute for a good literature review.

### **3.1.13 Exercise**

1. What do you understand by qualitative research?
2. Describe in detail Participant Observation as a method of data collection?
3. What is Focus Group Discussion?
4. Describe the interview method in data collection?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, we discussed the meaning of qualitative data and the various methods of qualitative research. No one method is necessarily superior to the other. However, each of the methods has its own strengths and weaknesses. Hence, what should determine the particular method of research chosen should ideally be the nature of the study in question? However, we should note that qualitative research is just as important as quantitative research.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed the nature and meaning of qualitative research, outlining the various methods or methodological approaches in qualitative research in the social sciences.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What is qualitative research? Identify the various types of qualitative methods and describe in detail the use of Content Analysis and Secondary information?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Adler, P. & P, (1987.) Membership Roles in Field Research, Beverly Hills, Sage

Berg, B, (1989).Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences, Boston, Allyn & Bacon,

Lofland, J. & L, (1984). Analyzing Social Settings, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth,

## **UNIT 4: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives

- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Variables in Peace and Conflict Resolution
    - 3.1.1 Some Variables in Peace and Conflict Resolution
    - 3.1.2 Effects and Solution
    - 3.1.3 Coding
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 47.0 References/Further Readings

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

As the name suggests, quantitative research measures events and occurrences in quantitative terms e.g. in peace and conflict resolution we may want to know the types and numbers of occurrences of conflict by location, by their severity, including the duration of time that the people suffered property loss, values and the magnitude of property that was lost etc. The duration of peace, by location, economic development during peace time, types of governance and peace relationship between governance and peace.

In this type of research, we may evaluate the relationship between variables, estimate values, calculate summary values for them like averages/means proportions, standard deviation or variances, ranges etc.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

Explain the nature of quantitative data

- Identify with averages and means in quantitative research method
- Discuss standard deviation and variances
- Explain how to the analyse conflict data using quantitative method

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Variables in Peace and Conflict Resolution**

Collecting these types of data is usually associated with measures of central tendency. Here, the measures describe how a set of scores on one particular variable for some group is used to describe the group and also to compare with some other group. Two types of measures used for this are the measures of central tendency and the measures of dispersion. The arithmetic mean) is a good example of a measure of central tendency.

Researchers often want to summarize the information about one variable into a single number. They use these measures of central tendency, or measures of the center of the frequency distribution: mean, median and mode, which are often called “averages”.

As measures of variation, researchers also make use of measures of central tendency and as a summary of the distribution employing tools like variance, mean deviation and standard deviation.

The student is encouraged to practice the use of these measures like the mean, mode, median, ratios, and the analysis of variance. However, the important thing is to be able to apply these in the analysis of conflict issues. Below we will take a look at some variables that can be identified in analyzing conflict issues.

##### **3.1.1 Some Variables in Peace and Conflict Resolution**

###### **Severity of Conflict**

In general, variables need to be clearly defined and measure(s) or indices designed for them.

Definition: is the degree, the extent, and the intensity of the occurrence of conflict.

Indices: For Example -

- (i) Number of deaths/fatalities
- (ii) Number of property lost
- (iii) Cost of property lost and/or estimated values

- (iv) Number of people wounded/casualty
- (v) Duration of conflict
- (vi) Number of occurrences
- (vii) Frequency of occurrences
- (viii) Types/group of people involved i.e. status of casualty/fatality e.g. by age, income group, ethnicity and religion
- (ix) Number of internally displaced (IDPs) generated
- (x) Number of refugees created
- (xi) Number of governments involved in the peace talk/resolution
- (xii) Number of warring factions
- (xiii) Types and number of weaponry used.

### **3.1.2 Effects and Solutions/Resolution/ Containment or Management of Conflict**

- (i) Number of peace meetings called/held by location and by whom
- (ii) Number of ceasefires called or brokered
- (iii) Number of successful ceasefires, duration and reasons for breakdown
- (iv) Number of peace treaties signed
- (v) Number of agencies/IDPs or Refugees (the number to be catered for by status e.g. adult, children etc.
- (vi) Cost of resources consumed and for what e.g. medicine, food, housing, clothing etc.

NOTE: that Qualitative data can be turned to quantitative data by the responses.

### **3.1.3 Coding**

Coding is a method used to obtain or generate categorical variables from qualitative data/research.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We note that the measures of central tendency like the mean or averages, median and ratios/percentages can be used to make information more manageable and easy to understand. These can be used in the articulation and interpretation of data from the field.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have been introduced to the rudiments of quantitative data handling and its application to the study of peace and conflict, through the

identification of variables for analyses and the possible effect of these on seeking solutions or containment of conflicts.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

What do you understand by quantitative data and how can this be used in conflict research?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Umaru A. Pate, Introduction to Conflict Reporting in Nigeria, Lagos, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2002.

J.B Johnson and R.A Joslyn (eds.), Political Science Research Methods (rd ed.), Washington D.C, CQ Press, 1995

## **MODULE 4**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unit 1	The Meanings of Methodology in Research
Unit 2	Feminist and Post-Modern Research
Unit 3	Reading other Peoples Research
Unit 4	Measurement and Research Designs

### **UNIT 1: THE MEANINGS OF METHODOLOGY IN RESEARCH**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Body
3.1	The Three Approaches
3.1.1	Positivist Social Science
3.1.2	Interpretative Social Science
3.1.3	Critical Social Science
3.1.4	Exercise
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Many people, including professionals outside of the social sciences and humanities, question whether humanities and the social sciences are really sciences. They think only of the natural sciences (physics, chemistry, biology). So, it is imperative to know the meaning of science in the social sciences.

The question “Where is science in social science?” is relevant to anyone learning social research methods because the answer is found by looking to the methods used by researcher. Social science is scientific because of its research methodology.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

After the proper study of this unit, you should be able to:

Explain “what is scientific about social scientific research?”

Explain what good social research involves?

Discuss the diversity you will encounter as you read social science research studies.

Identify the three approaches that are involved in conducting social science research.

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 The Three Approaches

The approaches are positive, interpretable social science and the critical social science. Most ongoing social research is based on the first two. Positivism is the oldest and the most widely used approach. Critical social science is the most recent approach and is less commonly seen in scholarly journals. It criticizes each of the other approaches and tries to move beyond them.

#### 3.1.1 Positivist Social Science

This is widely used in the social sciences, and positivism is the approach of the natural sciences. In fact, most people never hear of alternative approaches and assume that the positivist approach is science. There are many versions of positivism, and it has a long history within the philosophy of science among researchers. The answers to the eight questions give you a general picture of what a positivist believes to constitute social science. You may encounter varieties of positivism with names like logical empiricism, the covering law model; naturalism, the covering law model; or behaviorism.

Positivism is based on an early nineteenth century philosophical school of thought founded by the father of sociology. Auguste Comte (1789 – 1857). Comte’s major work. *The Course of positive Philosophy*. Outlined many principles of positivism still in the use today. The classical French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917) outlined one version of positivism in his *Rules of the sociological Method*. Which became a bible for many positivism social researchers?

Positivism is associated with many specific social theories. It is best known for its linkage to the structural functional and exchange theory frameworks.

Positivist researchers are likely to favour quantitative social research and to use experiments, surveys, and statistics. They favour “objective” research, attempt to measure precisely things about people, and test hypotheses by carefully analyzing numbers from the measures. The positivist approach is favored by many applied researchers (policy analysts, administrators, program evaluators, market researchers, and planners). Critics say that positivism reduces people to numbers. Its concern with abstract laws and formulas are not relevant to the actual lives of real people.

Positivism says that “there is only one logic to science, to which any intellectual activity aspiring to the titles of ‘science must conform” (Keat & Uris 1975:25 emphasis in original). Thus, the social sciences and the natural sciences must use the same method. In this view, differences between the natural and social sciences are due to the immaturity or youthfulness of the social sciences and their subject matter. Eventually, all science, even the social science, will be like the most advanced science; will be like the most advanced science, physics. There will be differences among the sciences due to their subject matter (e.g. geology requires different techniques than does astrophysics or microbiology because of the objects being studied). But all sciences share a common set of principles and logic.

Positivism defines social science as an organized method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity. Many positive assumptions probably sound familiar because the positivist approach is widely taught as being the same as science. Few people are aware of the origins of the positivist assumption or even of what they are. An early religious aspects exists in some assumption because the positivist principle were developed in western Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by scholars who had religious training and who lived when specific religious beliefs were widely assumed.

### **3.1.2 Interpretative Social Science**

This can be traced to the German sociologist Max Weber (1864 – 1920). Who said that sociologists should study social action. Weber emphasized socially meaningful or purposeful social action. His idea of *Verstehen* (emphatic understanding) also reflects his concern for looking at how people feel inside, how they create meaning, how their personal reasons or motivations can be used to understand them.

We shall speak of “Social actions” whenever human action is subjectively related in meaning to the behaviour of others. An unintended collusion of

two eyelists, for example, shall not be called social actions. But we will define as such their possible priority attempts to dodge one another .... Social action is not the only kind of action significant for sociological causal explanation, but it is the primary object of an “interpretive sociology” (Weber 1981:159)

Interpretive social science is also related to hermeneutics. A theory of evocating that which originated in the nineteenth century but is largely found in the humanities (Philosophy, art history, religious studies, linguistic, and literary criticism). It emphasizes a detailed reading or examination of text, which could refer to a conversation, written words, or pictures. The theory says that people carry their subjective experience to a text. When people study the text, they absorb or get inside the viewpoint it presents as a whole, and then develop a deep understanding of how its parts relate to the meaning of the whole.

There are several varieties of interpretative social science (ISS); hermeneutics, ethnomethodology, verstehen, cognitive, field, idealist, phenomenological. Subjectivist or qualitative sociology. An interpretive approach is associated with the symbolic interactionist or old Chicago school theoretical framework in sociology.

Interpretive researches often use participant observation or field research. These techniques require that they spend numerous hours in direct personal contact with those being studied. Interpretive researches also analyze transcripts of conversations or study videotapes of behaviour in extraordinary detail, looking for subtle nonverbal communication because they want to understand details of interactions in their context.

The interpretive researcher uses rigorous and detailed methods to gather large quantities of qualitative data in the form of specific details, whereas a positivist researcher precisely measures details about thousands of people and uses statistics to test for laws, by contrast the interpretive researcher may spend a year living with a dozen people to get an in-depth understanding of their lives.

In contrast to positivism’s instrumental orientation, the interpretive approach takes a practical orientation and focuses on the issue of social integration. it is concerned with how ordinary people manage their practical affairs in everyday life or how they get things done. it is concerned with how ordinary people manage their practical affairs in everyday life, or how they get things done. It is concerned with how people interact and get along with each other. In general, the interpretive approach is the systematic

analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretation of how people create and maintain their social worlds.

The interpretive approach is very different from positivism. It has existed for many years as the loyal opposition to positivism, and there are many studies in this tradition. Although some positivist social researchers see it as useful in exploratory research few consider it to be truly scientific. The interpretive approach is the foundation of social research techniques that are sensitive to context, that use various methods to get inside the ways others see the world, and that are more concerned with achieving an empathic understanding of feelings and world view than with testing laws of human behavior.

### **3.1.3 Critical Social Science**

Critical social science (CSS) offers a third alternative. Versions of this approach are called dialectical materialism, class analysis, structuralism, and realist social science. It mixes nomothetic and ideographic approaches. It agrees with many of the criticisms the interpretive approach directs at positivism, but it adds some of its own and disagrees with ISS on some points. This approach is traced back to Karl Marx (1818 – 1883), Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939), and other social thinkers. CSS is particularly associated with conflict theory. Feminist analysis and radical psychotherapy.

The interpretive approach criticizes positivism because it does not deal with the meanings of real people and their capacity to feel and think. Does not take account of social context. And is antihumanist. CSS agrees with the criticisms. In addition, it believes that positivism defends the status quo because it assumes an unchanging order instead of seeing current society as a particular stage in an ongoing process.

Critical researchers criticize the interpretive approach for being too subjective and relativist. The critical researcher says that ISS sees all points of views as equal and it's concerned only with subjective reality. Critical researcher sees the interpretive approach as passive; it does not take a value position or help people to see illusions around them so that they can improve on their lives.

In general, CSS defines social science as a critical process of inquiry that goes beyond surface illusions to uncover the real structure in the material

world in order to help people change conditions and build a better world for themselves.

The critical science approach is less common among researcher, these are the two other approaches: - Community action groups and political organization. Social movement use the result of critical science studies, and occasionally appears in scholarly journals.

### **3.1.4 Exercises**

1. What is the purpose of social research according to each approach?
2. How does each approach define social reality?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

You have learned two basic things in this unit. First, there is no single approach to social research. Instead, there are several approaches that are based on different philosophical assumptions about the purpose of science and the nature of social reality.

Second, the three ideal – type approaches to social science answers basic questions about research differently. So far, we have looked at the overall operation of the research process, different types of studies and theory. By now you should have a grasp of the basic contours of social research.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The three approaches treat social research from different angles. A positivist approach implies that researchers begin with a general causal law in general theory. The researcher logically links abstract ideas in laws to precise measurements of the social world.

The interpretative approach is the foundation of social research techniques that are sensitive to context, that use various methods to get inside the way others see the world, and that are more concerned with achieving an emphatic understanding of feelings and world views by testing laws of human behaviour.

The critical researchers use many research techniques, but tend to favour the historical – comparative method because of its emphasis on change and because it helps a research uncover underlying structures.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. How are the criticisms of positivism by the interpretative and critical science approaches similar?
2. How are science and common-sense different in each approach?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Benton, Ted (1977); *Philosophical Foundations of the Three Sociologies*; Boston: Routledge and Kegan Pau.

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckman (1967); *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*; Garden City, NY: Anchor.

Keat, Russel, and John Urry (1975); *Social Theory as Science*; Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

## **UNIT 2: FEMINIST AND POSTMODERN RESEARCH**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Feminist and Post-Modernisation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This is another approach that is different from other approaches discussed earlier in the previous units. Feminist and postmodern researches are new alternatives in social science research. They criticize the positivist social science but build on interpretive and critical social science.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

Discuss the new approaches to conducting social research;

Highlight its principles and procedure;

At what stage would you employ the use feminist and postmodern research?

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Feminism and Post-Modernisation**

You may hear about two additional approaches that are still in a formative stage and are less well known than the three major ones. They are feminist and postmodern social research. Both criticize positivism, another alternative that builds on interpretive and critical social science. They are still embryonic, having gained visibility only in the late 1980s.

Feminist research is conducted by people. Almost all of them are women, who hold a feminist self-identity and consciously use a feminist perspective. They use multiple research techniques. Feminist methodology attempts to give voice to women and correct the male-oriented perspective that has predominated in the development of social science. It is inspired by works

by the likes of (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986) who all argue that women learn and express themselves differently from men. Many feminist researchers argue that positivism is consistent with a male point of view. It is objective, logical, task-oriented, and instrumental. Inflected male emphasizes on individual competition on dominating and controlling the environment, and on the hard facts and forces that act on the world. In contrast, women tend to emphasize on accommodation and gradual development of bonds. They see the social world as interconnected webs of human relations, full of people linked to one another by feeling of trust and mutual obligation. Women tend to emphasize the subjective, emphatic, process-oriented, and inclusive sides of social life. Feminist research is also action-oriented and seeks to advance feminist values.

Feminist researchers argue that a great deal of non-feminist research is sexist, largely as a result of broader cultural beliefs and a preponderance of male researchers. Sexist researchers over-generalize from the experience of men to all people, ignore gender as a fundamental social division, focus on men's problems and concerns, use male as a point of reference, and assume traditional gender roles. For example, a traditional researcher would say that a family has a problem of unemployment when the adult male in it cannot find stable work. When a woman in the family cannot find stable work outside the home, this would not be considered to constitute a family problem. A concept such as "unwed mother" is widely used by traditional researchers, but not a parallel one to "unwed father".

### **Characteristics of Feminist Social Research**

- 
- Advocacy of a feminist value position and perspective
  - Rejection of sexism in assumption, concepts, and research questions
  - Creation of empathic connection between the researcher and those she studies
  - Sensitivity to how notions of gender and power permeate all spheres of social life
  - Incorporation of the researcher's personal feelings and experience into the research process
  - Flexibility in choosing research techniques and crossing boundaries between academic fields
  - Recognition of the emotional and mutual dependence dimension in human experience
  - Action-oriented research that seeks to facilitate personal and social change

As stated by Shulamit Reinharz, a feminist researcher is not detached: she interacts and collaborates with the people she studies. She fuse her personality with her professional life. For example, she will attempt to comprehend an interviewee's experiences while sharing her own feelings and experiences. This process may give birth to a personal relationship between researcher and interviewee that might mature over time.

This blurring of the disconnection between formal and personal relations, just as the removal of the distinction... between the research project and the researcher's life. Is some of the characteristic, if not all, feminist research? The impact of a woman's perspective and her desire to seek and gain an intimate, profound relationship with what she studies occurs even in the biological science. She is rarely rigidly attached to one method but uses multiple methods, often qualitative research and case study. Sherry Gorelick (1991) criticizes then affinity of many feminist researchers for interpretive social science. She feels that ISS becomes limited to the consciousness of those being studied and fails to reveal hidden structures. She wants feminist researchers to adopt a more critical approach and to advocate social change more assertively.

Postmodern research bites the separation between the arts or humanities and social science. This approach began in the humanities and has roots in the philosophers of existention, nihilism, and anarchism and in the ideas expounded by Heidegger, Nietzsche, Sartre, and Wittgenstein. It goes beyond interpretive and critical social science in an attempt to transform social science radically. Extreme postmodernists rejects world. They distrust systematic empirical observation and question whether knowledge is generalizable or accumulates over time. Postmodernist see knowledge as taking numerous forms and as unique as particular people or specific locates. As Pardina Rosenau (1992:77) argues.

Almost all postmodernists reject truth as even a goal or ideal because it is the very epitome of modernity .... Truth makes reference to order, rules and values: depends on logic, rationality and reason, all of which the postmodernists question. Postmodernism rejects "modernism", the assumptions and beliefs that arose in the Enlightenment era of Western history. Modernism relies on logical reasoning, is optimistic about the future, believes in progress, has confidence in technology and science, and embraces humanist value (i.e, judging ideas based on their effect on human welfare). Postmodernism is anti-elitist. It rejects the use of science to predict and to make policy decisions. Postmodernists oppose those who use positivist science to reinforce power relations and positivist science to reinforce power relations and bureaucratic forms of control over people.

Postmodernism shares with critical social science the goal of demystifying the social world.

### Characteristics of Postmodern Social Research

- Rejection of all ideological and organized belief systems, including all social theory
- Strong reliance on intuition, imagination, personal experience and emotion
- Senses odd meaninglessness and pessimism, belief that the world will never improve
- Extreme subjectivity in which there is no distinction between the mental and the external world.
- Ardent relativism in which there are infinite interpretations, none superior to another
- Espousal of diversity, chaos, and complexity that is constantly changing
- Rejection of studying the past or different places since only the here and now is relevant
- Belief that causality cannot be studied because life is too complex and rapidly changing
- Assertion that research can never truly represent what occurs in the social world.

Its approach is to deconstruct or tear apart surface appearances to the real internal hidden structure. Like extreme forms of ISS. It distrusts abstract explanation and holds that research can never do more than describe, with all descriptions equally valid. In postmodernist a researcher's description is neither superior nor inferior to anyone else's. A researcher can do no more than describe his or her personal experiences.

The value of such description is as a story that may stimulate experiences within the people who read or encounter it. Postmodernists object to presenting research results in a detached and neutral way. The researcher or author of a report should never be hidden when someone reads it; his presence needs to be unambiguously evident in the report. Thus, a postmodern research report is similar to a work of art. Its purpose is to stimulate others, give pleasure, evoke a response, or to arouse curiosity. Postmodern reports often have a theatrical, expressive, or dramatic style of presentation. They may be in the form of a work of fiction, a movie, or a play. The postmodernist argues that the knowledge about social life created by a researcher may be better communicated through a skit or musical piece than by a scholarly journal article.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Remember that you can study the same topic from any of these approaches, but each approach implies going about it differently. This can be illustrated with the topic of discrimination and job competition between minority and majority groups in four countries.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

We have learned in this unit what a feminist and postmodern research is. A postmodern research is similar to a work of art. Its purpose is to stimulate others, to give pleasure, evoke a response, or to arouse curiosity. Postmodern reports often have a theoretical, expressive, or dramatic style of presentation.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. How does the feminist approach in social science research criticize the previous approaches?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Benton, Ted. (1977); Philosophical Foundations of the Three Sociologies; Boston.

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckman (1967); The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge; Garden City, NY.

Reinharz, Shulamit (1992); Feminist Method in Social Research; New York: Oxford University Press.

## **UNIT 3: READING OTHER PEOPLE'S RESEARCH**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Why Conduct a Literature Review?
    - 3.1.1 Goals of a Literature Review
    - 3.1.2 Where do I find the Research Literature?
    - 3.1.3 Types of Reviews
    - 3.1.4 Scholarly Journals
    - 3.1.5 Dissertation
    - 3.1.6 Government Documents
    - 3.1.7 Policy Reports and Presented Papers
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Reviewing the accumulated knowledge about a question is an essential early step in the research process no matter which approach to social science you adopt. As in other areas of life, it is best to find out what is already known about a question before trying to answer it yourself.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to

- Explain why conduct a literature review?
- Identify where you can find the research literature?
- Discuss how to conduct a systematic review?
  - How to write a review and its place in a research

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Why Conduct a Literature Review?**

A literature review is based on the assumption that knowledge acumens that we learn from and build on what others have done. Scientific research is not

an activity of isolated hermits who ignore other's findings. Rather, it is a collective effort of many researchers who share their results with one another and who share their results with one another and who pursue knowledge as a community. Although some studies may be especially important and individual researchers may become famous, a specific research project is just a tiny part of the overall process of creating knowledge. Today's studies build on those of yesterday. Researchers read studies to compare, replicate, or criticize them for weakness. They conduct a literature review for several reasons.

Reviews vary in scope and depth. Different kinds of review are stronger at fulfilling one or another of the four goals. It may take a researcher over a year to complete an extensive professional summary review of all the literature on a board question. The same researcher might complete a highly focused review in a very specialized area in a few weeks. When beginning a review, a researcher decides on a topic or field of knowledge to examine, how much depth to go into, and the kind of review to conflict. The kinds are ideal.

### **3.1.1 Goals of a Literature Review**

1. To demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility. A review tells a reader that the researcher knows the research in an area and knows the major issues. A good review increases a reader's confidence in the researcher's professional competence, ability and background.
2. To show the path of prior research and how a current project is linked to it. A review outlines the direction of research on a question and shows the development of knowledge. A good review places a research project in a context and demonstrates its relevance by making connections to a body of knowledge.
3. To integrate and summarize what is known in an area. A review puts together and synthesizes different results. A good review points out areas where prior studies agree. Where they disagree and where major questions remain. It collects what is known up to a point in time and indicates the directions for future research.
4. To learn from others and stimulate new ideas a review tells what others have found so that a researcher can benefit from the efforts of others. A good review identifies blind alleys and suggests hypothesis for replication. It divulges procedure, techniques, and research designs

worth copying so that a research can have better focus hypotheses and gain new insights.

Another kind of review combines the second and third goals. The historical review traces the development of an idea or shows how a particular issue or theory has evolved over time. Researchers conduct historical review only on the most important ideas in a field. They are also used in studies of the history of thought. Sometimes they are helpful, when student are introduced to an area. To show how we got to where we are today. They may show how, during the advance of knowledge a single past idea split into different parts or separate ideas combined into broad thought.

The theoretical review primarily follows the third goal. It presents different theories that purport to explain the same thing, and then evaluates how well each accounts for findings. In addition to examining the consistency of perditions with findings, a theoretical review may compare theories for the soundness of their assumptions, logical consistency, and scope of explanation. Researchers also use it when they want to integrate two theories or extend a theory to new issues. It sometimes forms a hybrid, the historical-theoretical review.

### **3.1.2 Where do I find the Research Literature?**

Researchers present reports of their researchers' projects in several written forms. For the most part you can find them only in a college or a university library. Researchers publish studies as books, scholarly journals, articles, dissertations, government documents, or policy reports. They also present them as papers at the meeting of professional societies. This section briefly discusses each type:

### **3.1.3 Six Types of Reviews**

1. Self – study reviews increase the readers confidence
2. Context reviews places a specific project in the big picture
3. Historical reviews trace the development of an issue over time
4. Theoretical review compares how different theories address an issue.
5. Methodological reviews points out how methodology varies by study.
6. Integrative reviews summarize what it knows at a point in time. And gives you simple map on how to access them. You can find the results of research in text books; newspapers, popular magazine (e.g, Time, News Statesman, and Economist) and radio or television news, but these are not true reports of scientific research. Rather, they are condensed

summaries of true reports. Authors or journalists selected them for their popular appeal or teaching usefulness and rewrote them for a general audience. Such popularizations lack essential details that the scientist community requires for a serious evaluation of the research and for use in building the knowledge base.

### **3.1.4 Scholarly Journals**

A researcher who conducts a complete literature review will examine all research outlets. Different search strategies. We begin with scholarly journals because they are the place in which most reports appear and are the most crucial outlet. They are central to the communication system of science.

Sociology is criticized in the popular press for its severe proliferation of journals. The critics charges that numerous journals have sprung up; that permit any study, no matter how flawed or trivial, to be published, and that no one reads most of the sea articles. The evidence does not support this view.

Some types of social science research are more likely to appear in book form than others. For example, studies by anthropologists and historians are more likely to appear in book – length reports than are those of economists or psychologists. Yet, some anthropological and historical studies are articles, and some economics and psychological studies appear as books. In education social work, sociology, and political science, the results of long complex studies may appear both in two or three articles and in book form. Studies that involve detailed clinical or ethnographic descriptions and complex theoretical or philosophical discussion usually appear in the form of a book.

### **3.1.5 Dissertation**

All graduates students who receive the Ph.D. degree are required to complete a work of original research; which they write up as a dissertation thesis. The dissertation is bound and shelved in the library of the university that granted the Ph.D. about half of all dissertations are eventually published as books or articles, but half are never published. Because dissertation report on original research, are valuable sources of information,. some students who receive the master’s degree conduct original research and write a master’s thesis, but master’s thesis involve serious research, and they are much more difficult to locate than unpublished dissertation completed by students at accredited universities, for example, Dissertation

Abstracts, International lists, dissertation with their authors, titles, and universities.

### **3.1.6 Government Documents**

The federal government of the United States, the governments of other nations, state or provincial level governments, the United Nations, and other international agencies such as the World Bank, all sponsor studies and publish reports of the research. Many college and university libraries have these documents in their holdings, usually in a special “government documents” section. These reports are rarely found in the catalog system. You must use specialized lists of publications and indexes, usually with the help of a librarian, to locate these reports. Most college and university libraries hold only the most requested documents of different persons..

### **3.1.7 Policy Reports and Presented Papers**

A researcher conducting a through review of the literature will examine these two last sources, which are difficult for all but the trained specialist to obtain. Research institutes and policy centers (e.g. Brooking Institute for Research on poverty, Rand Corporation) publish “papers” or “reports” Some major research libraries purchase these and shelves them with books. The only way to get at what has been published is to write directly to the institute or center and request a list of reports.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Literature reviews let consumers of social science get at the information in research reports. They show the reviewers familiarity with a body of knowledge; they show the path, prior research has taken and how a current project is linked to it; they can integrate and summarize the current knowledge in a topic area. They are ways for researchers to learn from others and they often stimulate new ideas and insights.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have discussed the different types of review available in research.

A literature review requires a plan and a clear idea of the topic. When conducting a literature search, researchers use multiple search strategies because each single way of conducting a search has weaknesses.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What are the four major goals of a review of the literature?
2. What type of review is likely to organize studies in chronological order?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Bart, Pauline, and Linda Frankel (1986); The Student Sociologist's Handbook; 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Random House.

Beansley, David (1988); How to Use a Research Library; New York: Oxford University Press.

Katzer, Jeffrey, Kenneth H. Cook and Wayne W. Crouch (1982); Evaluating Information: A Guide for Users of Social Science Research, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

## **UNIT 4: MEASUREMENT AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Why Measure
    - 3.1.1 Measures Extend our Senses
    - 3.1.2 Parts of the Measurement Process
    - 3.1.3 Conceptualization
    - 3.1.4 Suggestions for coming up with a Measure
    - 3.1.5 Abstract Construct to Concrete Measure
    - 3.1.6 Conceptualization and Operationalization
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Many people look surprised when social researchers claim to measure strange, invisible things like affection, self-esteem, ideology, political power, or alienation and conflicts.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

- How social researchers measure?
- The key principles of quantitative measurement

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Why Measure?**

We use many measures in our daily lives. For example, this morning I woke up and hopped onto a bathroom scale to see how well my diet is working. I glanced at a thermometer to find out whether or not to wear a coat. Next, I got into my car and checked the gas gauge to be sure I could make it to campus. As I drove, I watched the speed meter so I would not get a speeding ticket. By 8:00 A.M. I had measured weight, temperature, gasoline volume, and speed – all measures about the physical world. Such precise,

well-developed measures, which we use in daily life, are fundamental in the natural sciences.

We also measure the nonphysical world in everyday life, but usually in less exact terms. We are measuring when we say that a restaurant is excellent, that Pablo is really smart, that Karen has a negative attitude toward life, that Johnson is “really prejudiced”, or that the movies last night has “a lot of violence” in it. However, such everyday judgment is “really prejudiced” or a lot of violence” are imprecise, vague, or intuitive measures. This does not have to be the case.

### **3.1.1 Measures Extend our Senses**

Measurement extends our senses. For example, the astronomer or biologist uses the telescope or the microscope to extend natural vision. In contrast to our senses, scientific measurement is more sensitive, varies less with the specific observer, and yields more exact quantitative information. You recognize that a thermometer gives more specific, precise information about temperature than a touch can. Likewise, a good bathroom scale gives you more specific, constant and precise information about the weight of a 5 year old girl than you get by lifting her and calling her “heavy” or “light”. Social measures provide precise information about social reality.

### **3.1.2 Parts of the Measurement Process**

Before you can measure, you need to begin with a concept. You also need to distinguish what you are interested in from “notice” or other things. The idea that you first need to construct or concept of what is to be measured simply makes sense. How can you observe or measure something unless you know what you are looking for? For example, a biologist cannot observe a cell unless she first knows what a cell is, has a microscope, and has learned to distinguish it from non-cell “stuff” or “junk” under the microscope. The process of measurement involves more than just having a measurement instrument (e.g., a microscope). In order to measure, the researcher needs three things: a construct, a measurement instrument, and an ability to recognize what one is looking for.

### **3.1.3 Conceptualization**

At the beginning of the measurement process, a researcher conceptualizes and operationalizes each variable in a hypothesis. Conceptualization is the process of taking construct or concept and refining it by giving it a conceptual or theoretical definition. A conceptual definition is a definition

in abstract, theoretical terms. In the example, this step came when I asked, “What does morale mean? It refers to other ideas or constructs.

There is no magical way to turn a construct into a precise conceptual definition. It involves thinking carefully, observing directly, consulting with other reading what others have said, and trading possible definitions.

A good definition is unambiguous and has one clear, explicit, and specific meaning. Some article in scholarly journals is devoted to conceptualization. For example, Gibbs (1989) wrote an article on conceptualizing the concept of terrorism.

How can I develop a conceptual definition of teacher morale, or at least a tentative working definition to get started? I begin with my everyday understanding of the idea of morale, something vague like “how people feel about things” “I ask some of my friends how they define it. I also look at an unabridged dictionary and a thesaurus. They give definitions like “confidence, spirit, zeal, cheerfulness, esprit decorps, mental condition towards something. “I go to the library and search the research literature on moral or teacher morale to see how others have defined it. If someone else has already given an excellent definition. I might borrow it (citing the source, of course). If I do not find a definition that fits my purposes, I turn to theories of group behaviour, individual states, and the likes for ideas. As I collect definitions, parts of definitions, and related topics I begin to see the boundaries of the research.

### **3.1.3 Five Suggestions for Coming up with a Measure**

1. Remember the conceptual definition. The underlying principle or any measure is to match it to the specific conceptual definition of the construct that will be used in the study.
2. Keep an open mind. Do not get locked into a single measure or type of measure. Be creative and constantly look for better measure. Avoid what Kaplan (1964:28) called the “law of the instrument”, which means being locked into using one measurement instrument for all problems
3. Borrow from others. Do not be afraid to borrow from others researchers, as long as credit is given. Good ideas for measures can be found in other studies or modified from other measures.

4. Anticipated difficulties. Logical and practical problems often arise when trying to measure variables of interest. Sometime a problem can be anticipate and avoided with careful forethought and planning.
5. Do not forget your interest of analysis. Your measure should fit with the units of analysis of the study and permit you to generalize to the universe of interest.

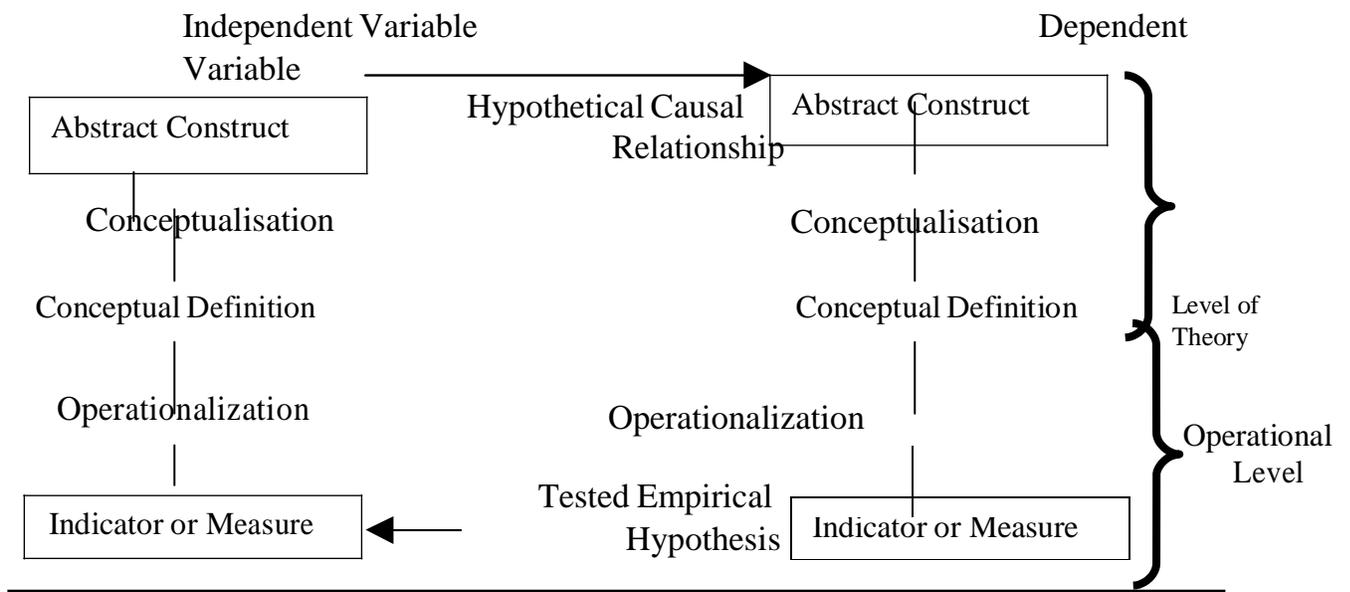
The link between indicators and constructs is a central issue for quantitative measurement. During operationalisation, a research tries to link the world of ideas to observable reality. Rules of correspondence or auxiliary theory link the conceptual definitions of construct to concrete measures or operations for measuring constructs.

Rules of correspondence are logical statements of how an indicator correspondence states that a person's verbal agreement with a set of ten specific statements is evidence that the person holds strongly antifeminist beliefs and values. Likewise, an auxiliary theory is a theory that explains how and why indicator and constructs connect. Such theories play a crucial role in research. As Carmines and Zeller (1979:11) note, "the auxiliary theory specifying the relationship between concepts and indicators is equally important to social research as the substantive theory linking concepts to one another. "For example, a researcher wants to measure alienation. An auxiliary theory suggests that the construct has four parts, each of which is indicated in a different sphere of life: family relations, work relations, relations with community, and relations with friends. The theory further specific that certain behaviours or feelings in each sphere of life express alienation. For example, in the sphere of work, an indicator of alienations is that a person feels a total lack of control over when he works, what he does when he is working, where he works, whom he works with, or how fast he must work.

There are three levels to consider, conceptual, operational, and empirical. At the most abstract level, the researcher is interested in the causal relationship between two constructs, or a conceptual hypothesis. At the level of operational definition, the researcher is interested in testing an empirical hypothesis to determine the degree of association between indicators this is the level at which correlations; statistics, questionnaire and the like are used. The third level is the concrete empirical world. If the operational indicators of variables (e.g., questionnaires) are logically linked to a construct (e.g., racial discrimination) they will capture what actually happens in the empirical social world and relate it to the conceptual level.

The measurement process links the three levels by proceeding deductively from the abstract to concrete. It begins with the conceptualization process, in which a construct is refined. Next a researcher operationalizes the construct by developing an operational definition or set of indicators. The researcher then uses indicators to measure aspects of the empirical world. The link between abstract construct and empirical reality lets a researcher say that a test of the empirical hypotheses in observable, concrete reality informs the conceptual hypothesis in the world of theory, explanation, and causal relationships.

### 3.1.5 Abstract Construct to Concrete Measure



### 3.1.6 Conceptualization and Operationalisation

A hypothesis has at least two variables, and the processes of conceptualization and operationalisation are necessary for each variable. In the preceding example, morale is not a hypothesis. It is one variable. It could be a dependent variable caused by something else, or it could be an independent variable causing something else. It depends on the theoretical explanation and the hypothesis I am testing.

Here is another example of measuring concepts. Seeman and Anderson (1983) conducted a study in which they tested the hypotheses that alienated people from drinking more alcohol. They measure alcohol drinking by a series of questions that tapped different aspects of the construct “drinking behaviour.” They define the construct as having three sub-dimensions: the

frequency of drinking the quantity consumed per drinking occasion, and behavioural impairment due to drinking. They operationalised each dimension as several survey questions combine the answers to question to form an overall drinking measure. For example, they measured the behaviour impairment sub-dimension by asking six questions about how often the respondent missed work because of drinking, was worried about drinking, drank on the job, drank before noon, drank alone, or had family quarrels as a result of drinking. In this way, the authors created a concrete quantitative indicator of drinking behavior.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The ratio level of measurement is rarely used in the social sciences. For most purposes, it is indistinguishable from interval measurement. The only difference is that ratio measurement has a “true zero”.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Measurement in short, is not an end in itself. Its scientific worth can be appreciated only in an instrumentalist perspective, in which we as what ends measurement is intended to survey, what role is it called upon to play in the scientific situation. What functions it performs in inquiry.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What are the three basic parts of measurement, and how do they fit together?
2. Why is a theoretical definition important for measurement?

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Bart, Pauline, and Linda Frankel (1986); The Student Sociologist's Handbook; 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Random House.

Beasley, David (1988); How to Use a Research Library; New York: Oxford University Press.

Katzer Jeffrey, Kenneth H. Cook and Wayne W. Crouch (1982); Evaluating Information: A Guide for Users of Social Science Research, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

## **MODULE 5**

Unit 1	The Concept of Reliability and Validity in social Research
Unit 2	Indexes and Scales in Social Research
Unit 3	Quantitative Research Designs
Unit 4	Sampling

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **UNIT 1: CONCEPT OF RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY IN SOCIAL RESEARCH**

#### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Reliability
    - 3.1.1 Types of Reliability
    - 3.1.2 Validity
    - 3.1.3 Types Measurement Validity
    - 3.1.4 Continuous and Discrete Variables
    - 3.1.5 Level of Scale of Measurement
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Reliability and validity are central issues in all scientific measurement. Both concern how concrete measures, or indicators are developed for constructs. Reliability and validity are salient in social research because constructs in social theories are often ambiguous; diffuse and not directly servable. Perfect reliability and validity are virtually impossible to achieve. Rather they are ideas researchers strive for.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Explain the ideas of reliability and validity;
- Examine the fundamentals of “measurement theory”;
- Distinguish between reliability and validity in social research and their applicability.

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 Reliability

Deals with indicators dependability. A reliable indicators gives the same results each time the same thing is measured as long as the measured items is not changed e.g. measuring weight. Reliability means that information provided by indicator of questionnaire does not vary as a result of the characteristic of the indicator devices as long a it does not change.

#### 3.1.1 Types of Reliability

1. **STABILITY RELIABILITY:** - This is reliability across time. There is stability reliability when the result of an indicator or measure applied to the same thing does not vary over time. Stability Reliability of an indicator can be assured using the text – retest with which the instrument of the indicator is re-administered to the same thing or group being measured.
2. **REPRESENTATIVE RELIABILITY:** - This is reliability across some pop. Or groups of items were measured. An indicator has high representative reliability if it uses the same result for a construct applied to different populations of different social clauses, different races ethic groups etc.
3. **EQUIVALENCE RELIABILITY:** - applies to situations where multiple indicators are used. That is, when multiple specific measures are used in the operationalization of a construct for Example, when several items in a questionnaire are used to measure the same constructs. Of infidelity between spouses. If several indicators measure the same construct then a reliable measure gives, the same result with all indicators.

### 3.1.2 VALIDITY

It is an over used term and can be very confusing, and often confused with some related ideas. Sometimes it is used to mean true or correct values.

However measurement validity is a relative term. When a researcher says an indicator is valid it, is so for a particular purpose and definition. The same indicator can be valid for one purpose but less valid or invalid for another of the concept of morale among workers (the desire to do well). Questions relating to measuring the morale among teacher. This will be valid in the educational context but not valid in the military or police system. A general morale question among workers will be valid for all worker.

### 3.1.3 Types of Measurement Validity

#### 1. Face Validity

The most basic type of validity and easiest to achieve. I addresses the issue of whether on the face value people believe that the definition and method of measurement fit e.g. to know the ability of student in a class.

#### 2. Content Validity

There are special types of validity which addresses the issue of whether the full content of a definition is captured or represented by a measure. We say a conceptual definition “Holds Ideas” or a “Space” of ideas and concepts. The measures should sample or represent all ideas or concept in the ideas space. Content validity involves 3 steps.

- 1) To specify the concept in a constructs definition
- 2) To Sample from all areas of definition
- 3) To develop an indicator that taps or takes from all areas of the definition.

#### 3. Criterion Validity

This uses some standard or criterions that are known to indicate a construct accurately. That is, the validity, of an indicator is verified by comparing it to another measure of the same construct in which a researcher has confidence.

There are 2 types of criterion validity

1. Concurrent Criterion Validity

This is an indicator associated with a presenting indicator that has been judged to be valid of new indicator for measuring peoples intelligences.

## 2. Predictive Criterion Validity

This is criterion validity where an indicator predicts future events that are logically related to construct. The measure and the actions predicted must be distinct and must indicate the same construct, for example SAT that is done in us helps with admission to the University. This high predictive validity of university performance. JAMB has not been a predictive criterion validity of University performance school certificate/JAMB University performance should have high predictive validity of one another.

### 3.1.4 Continuous and Discrete Variables

Continuous variables have an infinite number of values or attribute that flow along a continuum. The values can be divided into infinitely many increment between 0-1 there are infinitely many increments of variables like temperature age, fractions of a second, money, crime rate, death rate, birth rate, population rate, years of selecting all these are continuous variables. But have relatively fixed sets of separate values or variable attributes. Instead of a smooth continuum discrete variables contain distrust categories of gender, Male/Female, religion (in the US we say protestant, Christians, Muslims and others) marital status – never named, named, single or divorced. Whether a variable is discrete or contains affects, its level of scale of measurement leads to discrete variables.

### 3.1.5 Level or Scale of Measurement

There are four levels or scale of measurement each of which is categorized according to the degree of precision of measurement of a variable this depends on two things:

1. How a construct is conceptualized
2. The type of indicator or measurement the researcher uses.

The way a researcher conceptionalizes can be measured. For example, a variable that is normally a continuous variable can be conceptionalize as a discrete variable of temperature and is normally a continuous variable but you can measure it in 2 craterous (hot or cool). Age –infancy children adolescent, young, middle age, old.

However most discrete variable cannot be conceptualized as continuous variable of gender, religion, although related concepts can be conceptualised in femininity (degree of religiousness or religiosity) or commitment to marital relationship. The level of measurement limit satisfied measures that can be used. A wide range of powerful statistical procedure is available for higher levels of measure. But the types of statistics that can be used with the lowest levels are very limited.

There is a practical reason to conceptualize and measure variables at a higher level of measurement. It is possible to collapse from higher levels to lower levels, that is, if you start from simple it becomes difficult.

There are 4 levels of measurement from lowest to higher level

1. Nominal level
2. Ordinary Level
3. Internal Level
4. Ration Level

#### 1. Normal Measures

This indicates the different classes or categories of the measures or items for sample a variable like religion. In Nigeria religion would be classified in categories Muslims, Christians, traditional, others. In the US it is classified into protestants, catholic, Jews Muslims, others, marital status for example married, single divorced cohabiting.

#### 2. Ordinal Measure

This indicates the different categories of the measure and that the categories can be ordered ranked. For Example letter grade A B C by convention A is supposed to be higher than B. And B C etc. Or first second, thirds etc. according to preferences. Or opinion measure for example agree, disagree on opinion strongly agree or strongly disagree. The list of them here is strongly disagree. This measure is usually used like a scale.

### 3. Interval Measure

This measure shows classes and categories that can be in order and in addition indicates and specifies the amount of distance between the different categories e.g. Temperature scale 10°, 20°, 30° etc. here the O's are arbitrary. They are there for the score without any significance for example e.g. IQ Scores.

### 4. Ratio

Contains all the 3 categories that have been measured above. It has a 2.0 making it possible to have competition and proportion of ration. e.g. income (Le 200), age 1 Year 100years etc. but in most practical situation we can seldom differentiate between interval and ration measures e.g a rise in temperature from 30° to 60° does not mean that it is even twice as hot.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Reliability is necessary for validity and is easy to achieve than validity. Although, reliability is necessary in order to have a valid measure concept, it does not guarantee that a measure can be valid. A measure can produce the same result over and over (i.e. it has reliability), but what it measures may not match the definition of the construct (validity).

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The principles of reliability and validity are used in all forms of measurement. They are ideals to approach. You can use them in two ways: to avoid common errors that create unreliability and invalidity and to evaluate your measures. The issue of reliability and validity in measurement will help you become aware of specific instances in which pitfalls are likely to occur in measures of concepts.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. What are ways to improve the reliability of a measure?
2. What is the difference between reliability and validity, and how do they complement each other?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Carmines, Edward G. and Rich and A. Zeller (1970); *Reliability and Validity Assessment*; Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

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## **UNIT 2: INDEXES AND SCALES IN SOCIAL RESEARCH**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Indexes and Scales
    - 3.1.1 Commonly Used Scales
    - 3.1.2 Using Semantic Differential Scale
    - 3.1.3 Guttman Scaling
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 Reference/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Researchers have created thousands of different scales and indexes to measure social variables, scales and indexes have been developed to measure the degree of formalization in bureaucratic organizations, the prestige of occupations, the adjustment of people to manage the intensity of group interaction, the level of social activity in a community.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to

- Explain the Principles of scale and index construction
- Discuss how to explore some major types of Scale and Index?
- Explain that every social phenomenon can be measured.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Indexes and Scales**

The term indexes and scales can be very confusing because they are often used interchangeably. One's researchers' scale can be another index. Both of the produce ordinal or interval level measures. For most purposes in social research can regard scales and indexes as interchangeable because social researchers do not use consistent nomenclature system of naming.

A scale is a measure in which the reliable captures the incentive, directive level or potency of a variable. It arranges responses or observation in a continuous.

A scale can use a single lowest continuous highest indicator or a multiple indicator of which most are of the ordinary level of measurement.

An index is a measure in which the researcher acts or combine several district indicators to consumer index which is a composite score, this composite score is often a simple sum of multiple indicator.

Indexes are often measured at the internal or ratio level where as scales are, measured at the nominal and ordinal levels. Researchers sometimes combine feature of scale and indexes into a single measure. This is a situation where researchers have several indicators that are scales showing intensity and direction.

Examples of indexes.

1. Consumer Price Index (CPI). A measure used in prices and created by combining a total of buying goods and services, e.g. food, rent transportation, clothing etc, compared with a cost at a previous period and see how it has increased.
2. Crime index used in the us by the FBI. A combination of police report in the so called index crime such as criminal homicide, aggravated assault, forceful rape, robbery, burglary harcyery of 50 dollars or more and auto theft.

### **3.1.1 Commonly Used Scales**

#### **1. LIKERT SCALE**

This is widely used in survey research for measuring people's opinions and altitudes. It was developed in the 1930's by Resins Likert and is the summation or addition of a number of responses by persons given the relation of whether they agree or disagree with a statement of whether the statement is true or false. So from that the percentage of people is measured. The Likert scale needs a minimum of two categories of agree/disagree, however it's usually better to have up to 5 categories of strongly agree, agree no opinion, disagree and strongly disagree.

## 2. Thurstone Scaling

This was developed in the 1920's by Lewis Thurstone and it's based on the law of comparative judgment, which addresses the issues of measuring or comparing altitude when each person makes a unique. He does this by according or fixing the position of one person's altitudes relative to that of others as each of them makes individual. Subjective judgment. The law of comparative judgment stated that it is possible to identify a single most common response for each subject or concept being judge" of abortions. Although different people arrive at some different judgment the individual judgment cluster around a single most common respond. The dispersion of the different individual response cluster from this single most common response called the normal distribution. In Thurstone scaling the researcher develop statement regarding an object of interest using scaling to pull than by eliminating ambiguous statement of Niger Delta. Each judge rates the statements on an underline continuum of favorable or unfavourable. The researcher then examines the ratings and keeps those statements based on two factors.

- a) Agreements among judges
- b) Statement location on a range of values.

In Thurstone scaling we begun with a large number of evaluative statements that should be exhausted and covers all shades of opinion. Each statement should be clear and precise and express the same opinion. Good statements refer to the presence and are not capable of being referred to as facts. They are unlikely to be endorsed by everyone and are stated in simple sentences and around words like "Always" and "Never" proven down the statements are randouly mixed and presented to respondent to state whether they agree or disagree. Some of the limitation of Thurstone scaling is:

It measures only agreement or disagreement of statement and not the intensity of agreement

Assumes that judges and others agree on where statements appear in a scheme.

It is time consuming and costly

It is possible to get the same over all score in several ways because agreement and disagreement with different combination of statement can produce the same result.

### 3. Bogardus Social Distance Scale

Also developed in the 1920's by Emory Bogardus to measure the willingness of members of different ethnic groups to associate with one another. It can be used to see how close or distance people feel towards some other groups of religious minority or a deviant group.

The scale is based on a simple logic i.e. people response to a series of ordered statement that are most threatening and are socially distance at one end and those that are least threatening and most socially intimate at another end. The scale is used with one group. The measure of social distant can be used either as independent variable or dependent variable. For example, we may have the hypothesis of social distance, relating to education.

### 4. Semantic Differential Scale

Developed in the 1950'S by Osgood. It provides an indirect measure of how a person feels about a concept, object or another person. It measures subjective feelings towards something using adjective. This is because we communicate evaluation through adjective spoken or written language. Because most adjectives have polar opposite e.g. Light –Dark, Slow – fast, hard – soft etc. The technique uses polar opposite adjective to create a rating measure or scale. The semantic different scale captures the connotation associated with what is being evaluated and provides an indirect measure of it. We can use it in marketing to tell how consumers feel about a product; can be used in politics to tell how voters feel about a candidate or issue. Can be used in health care provision to tell providers how their clients feel about them and their services.

#### **3.1.2 Using Semantic Differential Scale**

1. Preset to reproduce or subjects a list of pared opposite adjective with a continuum of 7 – 11 points between them.
2. Respondents marks the score in the continuum between the adjective that expresses their feelings. The adjectives can be very diverse and should be well mixed e.g. positive attempts should not be located mostly on either the right or left side of the continuum. Result of a SDS tells a researcher how one person perceives a concept and how different people view the same concept e.g. a political analyst might discover that young water perceive a candidate as traditionally meek and slow and half way between good and bad. Whereas elderly

voters can perceive the same candidate as leaders towards strong fast and good and half way between traditional and modern.

### 3.1.3 Guttman Scaling

It is also known as communicative scaling, used to evaluate data after they have been collected. To use this successfully, the researcher must deposit the instrument of data collection with Guttman in mind. This was developed by Louis Guttman in the 1940s and used to determine whether relationships exist among a set of indicators or measurable item such as questionnaire items, Votes or observed characteristics.

Guttman scaling can be used to measure different phenomena like patterns of crimes or drug use, characteristic of societies or organizations, voting or political participation Psychological disorder etc. it uses Yes or No or present/Absence fashions and usually contained about 3-20 indicators. The indicators are selected on the basis of logical relationship amongst them. After which the results are placed into a G/S that determines whether the items form a pattern that corresponded to the identified logical relationship.

The logical relationship amongst items in G/S is Hierarchical. Most items or people have or agree to lower order items and smaller numbers of cases or people or items have the higher order of cases, or relationship. This higher order items are also related to lower order items. e.g. parentage and wealth or children and parents. Lower order items are necessarily suggesting to higher order items. But are not sufficient however, HOI are necessary and sufficient to LOI. The application of GMS are known as scalegram analysis and it allows a researcher to test whether a hierarchical relationship exist among items under studies. For e.g. it is easier for a child to know his/her age than the name of his/her mother friends than the name of political leaders in an Local Government Area. Items are said to be scalable or capable of forming a G/S if a hierarchical pattern exist among them. Wherever a list of items exist e.g. Parents and children have some which are scalable. Scale items which are scalable and those that are non – scale items or errors e.g. children who do not have parents in the camp. e.g. knowing her age, name of mothers friend and the names of political leaders or knowing only one or not know at all. There are other combinations that are not scaled knowing the names of community leaders.

v		v		v
v	v		x	
v		x		x
x		x		x

Other combination of patterns is possible but not scalable. If a Hierarchical relationship exists among items than most answers fits into the scalable pattern. The strength or degree to which items can be scaled is measured with summary statistical indicating whether responses can be reproduced based on the hierarchical patterns. Such strength or degree vary between 0 % and 100%.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The principles of index and scale construction extend the logic of measurement described in the last unit. Researchers use scales and indexes to obtain a more valid and reliable measure of a variable. In addition, you learned about several issues to consider in scale and index construction.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

By now you should be familiar with the names of the major types of scales (Linkert, Thurstone, Bogardus, Semantic Differential, Guttman Scales) etc. because they are often mentioned in published reports. These indexes and scales can be found in so many research literature.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What is the difference between the logic of a scale and that of an index?
2. How do researchers resolve problems of missing data in indexes.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Carley, Michael (1981); Social Measurement and Social Indicators: Issues of Policy and Theory; Allen and Unwin.

Kim, Jae-On, and Charles W. Mueller (1978); Introduction to Factor Analysis: What it is and How to Do it; Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

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## **UNIT 3: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGNS**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Learning the Language of Variable and Hypothesis
    - 3.1.1 What is Variable?
    - 3.1.2 Causal Relationship and Hypotheses
    - 3.1.3 Five Characteristics of Causal Hypothesis
    - 3.1.4 Future Research Test
    - 3.1.5 New Hypotheses Developed
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Quantitative research relies primarily on assumptions from the positivist approach to science. Qualitative research uses a language of variables, hypotheses, units of analysis, and causal explanation. The logical errors that may arise when developing a causal explanation illustrate why it is essential to understand the components of research design and how they relate to one another.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:  
Discuss how to design a quantitative research project;  
Explain the language of quantitative research.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Learning the Language of Variables and Hypothesis**

##### **3.1.1 What is Variable?**

Variation and Variable: the variable is a central idea in quantitative research. Simply defined, a variable is a concept that varies. The language

of quantitative research is a language of variables and relationships among variables.

You learned about two types of concepts, t that refer to a fixed phenomenon (e.g., the ideal type of bureaucracy) and those that vary in quantity, intensity, or amount (e.g. amount of education). The second type of concept and measures of the concepts are variables. Variables take on two or more values. Once you begin to look for them, you will see variables in this order. For example, gender is a variable; it can take on two values, male or female. Marital status is a variable; it can take on the values of never married, single, married, divorced, or widowed. Type of crime committed is a variable; it can take on values of robbery, burglary, theft, murder, and so forth. Family income is a variable; it can take on values from zero to billions of dollars. A person's attitude toward abortion is a variable; it can range from strongly in favour of legal abortion to strongly anti-abortion.

The values or the categories of a variable are its attribute.. It is easy to confuse variables with attributes. Variables and attributes are related, but they have distinct purposes. The confusion arises because the attribute of one variable can itself become a separate variable with a slight change in definition. The distinction is between concepts themselves that vary and conditions within concepts that vary. For example, "male" is not a variable; it describes a category of gender and is an attribute of the variable "gender". Yet, a related idea, "degree of masculinity", is a variable. It describes the intensity or strength of attachment to attitudes, belief, and behaviours associated with the concept of "masculine" within a culture.

It is not always easy to determine whether a variable is independent or dependent. Two questions help you identify the independent variable. First, does it come before other variables in time? Independent variables come before any other type. Second, if the variables occur at the same time, does the author suggest that one variable has an impact on another variable? Independent variables affect or have an impact on other variables. Research topics are often phrased in terms of the dependent variables because dependent variables are the phenomenon if explained. For example, suppose a researcher examines the reasons for an increase in the crime rate in Dallas, Texas; the dependent variable is the crime rate.

A basic causal relationship requires only an independent and a dependent variable. A third type of variable, the intervening variable, appears in more complex chains of causal relations. It comes between the independent and dependent variables and shows the link or mechanism between them. Advances in knowledge depend not only on documenting cause-and-effect

relationships but also on specifying the mechanisms that account for the causal relation. In a sense, the intervening variable acts as a dependent variable with respect to the independent variable and acts as an independent variable toward the dependent variable.

For example, the French sociologist Emile Durkheim developed a theory of suicide that specified a causal relationship between marital status and suicide rates. Durkheim found evidence that married people are less likely to commit suicide than single people. He believed that married people have greater social integration (i.e. feelings of belong to a group or family) and thought that a major cause of one type of suicide was that people lacked a sense of belonging to a group. Thus, his theory can be restated as a three-variable relationship: marital status (independent variable) causes the degree of social integration (intervening variable), which affects suicide (dependent variable). Specifying the chain of casualty makes the linkages in a theory clearer and helps a researcher test complex explanations.

Simple theories have one dependent and one independent variable, whereas complex theories can contain dozens of variables with multiple independent, intervening, and dependent variables. For example, a theory of criminal behaviour (dependent variable) identifies four independent variables: an individual's economic hardship, opportunities to commit crime easily, membership in a deviant subgroup of society that does not disapprove of crime, and lack of punishment for criminal acts. A multicausal explanation usually specifies the independent variable that has the greatest causal effect.

A complex theoretical explanation contains a string of multiple intervening variables that are linked together. For example, family disruption causes lower self-esteem among children, which causes depression, causes poor grades in school, reduced prospects for a good job, a lower adult income. The chain of variables is: family disruption (independent), childhood self-esteem (intervening), depression (intervening), grades in school (intervening), job prospects (intervening), adult income (dependent).

Two theories on the same topic may have different independent variables or predict different independent variables to be important. In addition, two theories may agree about the independent and dependent variables but differ on the intervening variable or causal mechanism. For example, two theories say that family disruption causes lower adult income, but for different reasons. One theory holds that disruption encourages children to join deviant peer groups that are not socialized to norms of work and thrift.

Another emphasizes the impact of the disruption on childhood depression and poor academic performance, which directly affect job performance.

### **3.1.2 Causal Relationships and Hypothesis**

**The Hypothesis and Causality.** A hypothesis is a proposition to be tested or a tentative statement of a relationship between two variables. Hypotheses are guesses about how the social world works stated in a value-neutral form. As Kerlinger (1979:25) notes:

Hypotheses are much more important in scientific research than they would appear to be just by knowing what they are and how they are constructed. They have a deep and highly significant purpose of taking man out of himself, so to speak... hypothesis are powerful tools for the advancement of knowledge, because, although formulated by man, they can be tested and shown to be correct or incorrect apart from man's values and beliefs

A causal hypothesis has five characteristics. The first two characteristics define the minimum elements of a hypothesis. The third restates hypotheses. For example, the hypothesis that attending religious services reduces the probability of divorce and can be restated as a prediction: Couples who attending religious services frequently have a lower divorce rate than do couples who rarely attend religious services. The prediction can be tested against empirical evidence. The fourth characteristic states that hypotheses should not be viewed in isolation. They should be logically tied to a research question and ultimately to a theory. Researchers test hypotheses to answer the research question or find empirical support for a theory. The last characteristic requires that a researcher use empirical data to test hypotheses.

### **3.1.3 Five Characteristics of Causal Hypotheses**

1. It has at least two variables
2. It expresses a causal or cause-effect relationship
3. It can be expressed as a prediction or expected future outcome
4. It is logically linked to a research question and a theory
5. it is probable falsifiable; that is, it is capable of being tested against empirical evidence and shown to be true or false.

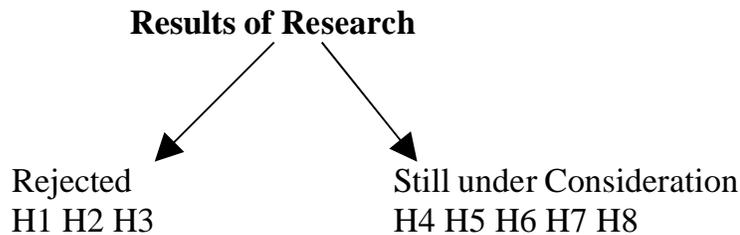
Statements that are necessarily true as logic or questions that are impossible are through scientific observation (What is a life? Is there a God?) cannot be scientific cases.

The result of testing a hypothesis is three outcomes:

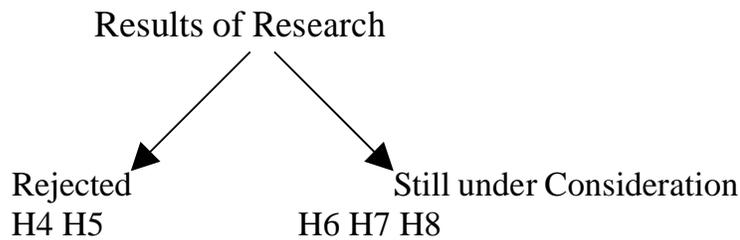
**TIME 1: Which of the eight potential hypotheses in competition to explain a dependent variable is best?**

H1 H2 H3 H4 H5 H6 H7 H8

**TIME 2: Research tests the hypotheses and shows support for some but rejects others.**

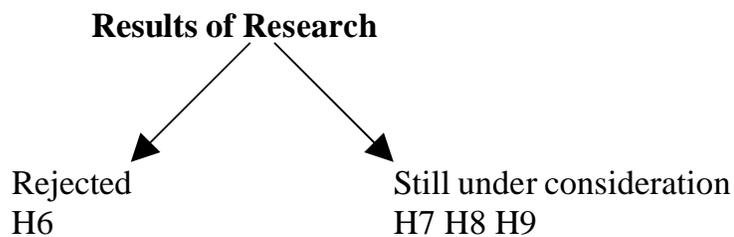


**3.1.4 TIME 3: Future research tests remaining hypotheses in contention**



New hypothesis developed and addressed for consideration: H9

**TIME 4: Future research tests the hypotheses still in contention**



### **3.1.5 New hypotheses developed and added for consideration: H10 H11**

There are several forms researchers use to test both the direction and the strength of a relationship between variables. By ruling out competing hypotheses as alternative explanation for a relationship, a researcher strengthens the evidence for a causal relationship.

When evaluating the test of a hypothesis, researchers treat evidence that supports hypothesis differently from evidence that opposes it. Recall the preceding discussion of proof. A hypothesis cannot be proved, but it can be disproved. Empirical support for a hypothesis means that the hypothesis remains a possibility or is still in the running.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit we have learned about the components of quantitative research that are based on a positivist approach to research. Quantitative research techniques share a language and logic from positivism that separate them from research techniques based on other approaches.

We have also learnt about the language of quantitative research designs.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In retrospect, we have clearly seen that quantitative research design uses a deductive logic. When using it, you begin with a general topic narrow it down to research questions and hypotheses, and finally test hypotheses against empirical evidence.

We saw that theoretical explanations and concepts are a critical part of research design. Explanations and concepts are the basis of variables and the interrelationships.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. Describe the differences between independent, dependent, and intervening variables.
2. Why don't we prove results in social research?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Blalock, Hubert M.Jr. (1969); Theory Construction: From Verbal to Mathematical Formulations; Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Campbell, John P., Richard L. Daft and Charles L. Hulin (1982); What to Study: Generating and Developing research questions Developing Research Questions: Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Davis, James A. (1985), The Logic of Causal order. Beverly Hills. CA; Sage.

## **UNIT 4: SAMPLING**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Why Sample?
    - 3.1.1 Populations, Elements and Sampling Frames
    - 3.1.2 Non-Probability Sampling
    - 3.1.3 Types of Samples
    - 3.1.4 Snowball Sampling
    - 3.1.5 Types of Probability Samples
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Sampling is a powerful technique with wide applications beyond social research. It is used in such fields as accounting, astronomy, chemistry, manufacturing, and zoology. In social research, it is used primarily in survey research, content analysis and non reactive research.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you will be able to:  
Explain sampling and its concepts;  
Discuss how to apply the concept in practice.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Why Sample?**

Sampling, like random assignment, is a process of systematically selecting cases for inclusion in a research project. When a researcher randomly assigns, she sorts a collection of cases into two or more groups using a random process. By contrast, in random sampling she selects a smaller subset of cases from a larger pool of cases. A researcher can both sample and randomly assign. She can first sample to obtain a smaller set of cases (e.g. 150 people out of 20,000) and then use random assignment to divide

by a much larger pool of cases, may be one of the disbelief. It sounds too good to be true. But sampling is powerful and it works. With a well-conducted sample, a researcher can measure variables with 2,000 cases, generalize to 200 million, and not be off by more than 2 to 4 percent from the results that would be obtained if all 200 million were used.

How is it possible to use so few cases to generalize accurately to so many? It is not based on trickery or magic but on logical statistical reasoning that has been tested repeatedly with empirical evidence. Moreover, a researcher cannot use just any sample is generalize accurately. The sample must be selected according to precise procedure, and statements made about it are subject to limitations.

### 3.1.1 Populations, Elements and Sampling Frames

A researcher draws a sample from a larger pool of cases, or elements. A sampling element is the unit of analysis or case in a population. It can be a person, a group, an organization, a written document nor symbolic message, or even a social action (e.g. an arrest, a divorce, a kiss) that is being measured. The large pool is the population which has an important role in sampling. Sometimes the term universe (defined in chapter 6) is used interchangeably with population. To define the population, a researcher specifies the unit being sampled, the geographical location and the temporal boundaries of populations. Consider the examples of population in Box 10.1. All the examples include the elements to be sampled (people, businesses, hospital admissions, commercials) and geographical and time boundaries.

A researcher begins with an idea of the population (e.g. all people in a city) but defines it more precisely. The term *target population* refers to the specific pool of cases that she wants to study. The ratio of the size of the sample to the size of the target population is the sampling ratio. For example, the population has 50,000 people, and a researcher draws a sample of 150 from it. Her sampling ratio is  $\frac{150}{50,000} = 0.003$  or 03%.

### 3.1.2 Non-probability Sampling

Samples can be divided into two groups: those that are based on the principles of randomness from probability theory, and those that are not. Sampling based on probability theory test a researcher say precise things about sampling and use powerful statistics. Samples that are not based on probability theory are more limited. A researcher uses them out of

ignorance, because of a lack of time, or in special situations. Except for special situations, quantitative researchers prefer probability samples.

### 3.1.3 Types of Samples:

<u>Non-Probability</u>	<u>Probability</u>
<i>Haphazard</i> : Select anyone who is on convenient	<i>Simple</i> : Select people based on a true random procedure
<i>Quota</i> : Select anyone in predetermined groups	<i>Systematic</i> : Select every person (quasi-random)
<i>Snowball</i> : Select people connected to select one another groups	<i>Systematic</i> : Randomly people in predetermined
<i>Purposive</i> : Select anyone in a hard-to-random find target population	<i>Cluster</i> : Take multistage samples in each several levels

She selected some because they had low incomes and some because they had high incomes. Some were male and some were female.

In this study of the political influence of corporate elites, Michael Useem (1984) used a type of quota and purposive sampling. He interviewed 72 directors of major British corporations and 57 officials from large U.S. firms. He chose the sample to include both U.S. and British firms and to include some directors who sat on the boards of more than one firm. In addition, he matched firms by industry and size, and limited geographical locations in order to reduce travel costs.

### 3.1.4 Snowball Sampling

Social researchers are often interested in an interconnected network of people or organizations. The network could be scientific around the world investigating the same problem, the elites of a medium-sized city, the members of an organized crime family, persons who sit on the

boards of directors of major banks and corporations, or people on a college campus who have had sexual relations with each other. The crucial feature is that each person or unit is connected with another through a director or indirect linkages. This does not mean that each person directly knows, interacts with, or is influenced by every other person in the network. Rather, it means that taken as a whole, with direct and indirect links, most are within an interconnected web of linkages.

### **3.1.5 Types of Probability Samples**

*Simple Random:* The simple random sample is both the easiest random sample to understand and the one on which other types are modeled. In simple random sampling, a researcher develops an accurate sampling frame, selects elements from the sampling frame according to a mathematically random procedure, then locates the exact element that was selected for inclusion in the sample.

After numbering all elements in a sampling frame, a researcher uses a list of random numbers to decide which elements to select. She needs as many random numbers as there are elements to be sampled, for example, for a sample of 100 you need 100 random numbers. She can get random numbers from a *random number table*, a table of numbers chosen in a mathematically random way. Random number tables are available in most statistics and research methods books, including this one (see Appendix B). The numbers are generated by a pure random process so that any number has an equal probability of appearing in any position. Computer programs can also produce lists of random numbers.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have known sampling as being widely used in social research, especially in survey research and non-reactive research techniques. We are now aware of four types of sampling that are not based on random processes: haphazard, quota, snowball and purposive, only the last two are acceptable, and even then their use depends on special circumstances.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In general, probability sampling is preferred because it produces a sample that represents the population and enables the researcher the researcher to use powerful statistical techniques.

Likewise, sampling issues influence research design, measurement of variables and data collection strategies.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. What is a sampling frame and why is important?
2. When is purpose sampling used?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Davis, James A. (1985); Why Sampling?; Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Campbell, John and Charles L. Hulin (1982); What to Study: Generating and Developing Research Questions; Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

## **MODULE 6**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unit 1	Experimental Research
Unit 2	Survey Research
Unit 3	Field Research
Unit 4	Qualitative Research Design

### **UNIT 1: EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH**

#### **CONTENT**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Body
3.1	Experimental Research
3.1.1	Research Appropriate for an Experiment
3.1.2	Research Question for an Experimental Research
3.1.3	A Short History of the Experiment
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Experimentation, the principal scientific method to be emphasized here, involves a simple level for the comparison of groups or individuals who have been differentially exposed to changes in their environment. Experimental research is the easiest to grasp and is used across many other fields of science.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to

- Explain how to conduct a particular type of quantitative research;
- Discuss the logic that guides experimental research;
- Identify experimental research methods.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Experimental Research**

Experimental research builds on the principles of a positivist approach more directly than do the other research techniques. Researchers in the natural sciences (e.g., chemistry and physics), related applied fields (e.g., agriculture, engineering, medicine), and the social sciences conduct experiments. The logic that guides an experiment on plant growth in biology or testing a metal in engineering is applied in experiments on human social behaviour. Although it is most widely used in psychology, the experiment is found in education, criminal justice, journalism, marketing, nursing, political science, social work, and sociology.

The experiment's basic logic extends commonsense thinking. Commonsense experiments are less careful or systematic than scientifically based experiments. In commonsense language, "an experiment" means modifying something in a situation, then comparing an outcome to what existed without the modification. For example, I try to start my car, to my surprise, it does not start. I "experiment" by cleaning off the battery connections, then try to start it again. I modified something (cleaned the connections) and compared the outcome (whether the car started) to the previous situation (it did not start). I began with an implicit "hypothesis" – a building of crud on the connections is the reason the car is not starting, and once the crud is cleaned off, the car will start. This illustrates three things researchers do in experiments: (1) begin with a hypothesis; (2) modify something in a situation; and (3) compare outcomes with and without the modification.

Compared to the other social research techniques, experimental research is the strongest for testing causal relationships because the three conditions for causality (temporal order, association or alternative explanations) are clearly met in experimental designs.

##### **3.1.1 Research Question Appropriate for an Experiment**

*The Issue of an Appropriate Technique:* Social researchers use different research techniques (e.g. experiments, surveys) because some research questions can be addressed with certain techniques but not with others. New researchers often ask which research technique best fits which problem. This is difficult to answer because there is no fixed match between problems and technique; the answer is, make an informed judgment.

General guidelines exist for fitting techniques to problems. Beyond guidelines, you can develop judgment from reading research reports, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different techniques, assisting more experienced researchers with their research, and gaining practical experience.

### **3.1.2 Research Questions for Experimental Research**

The logic of experimental design guides the types of research problems best addressed by experiments. A crucial factor is that in experimental design a researcher changes a situation and has control over the setting in which the change is introduced. Only those research problems that let a researcher manipulate conditions are appropriate for experimental research. For example, experimental research cannot answer, “Do people who complete a college education increase their average annual income?” Researcher cannot randomly assign thousands of people across the country to a college or noncollege group. Even when a whole nation is not involved, many situations cannot be controlled. For example, do people who have younger siblings (brothers and sisters) have better leadership skills than only children? Researchers cannot assign couples to groups and then force them to produce or not producer children so that they can examine leadership skills.

Social scientists are more limited than natural scientists in the degree to which they can intervene for research purposes. Social researchers are very creative in inventing treatments for independent variables (e.g., pressure to conform, anxiety, cooperation, high self-esteem), but they cannot manipulate or create many independent variables (e.g., sex, marital status, age, religious belief, level of income, parents’ political affiliation, or size of community where raised). Researchers must decide which is most effective for answering the specific question, within practical and ethical limitations. For example, a research question is, “Does fear of crime affect the behaviours of elderly people by motivating them to seek self-protection and security?” An experimental researcher creates different levels of fear of crime among groups of elderly subjects. To create a fear of crime, she has subjects read about crimes, shows them films about crime, or places them in fear-inducing situations (e.g., in a locked room with a dangerous looking person who makes threatening statements). Next, he measures whether the subjects act in self protective ways (e.g., push a button to create a physical barrier between themselves and the dangerous person) or answer questions about hypothetical situations involving security in certain ways (e.g., plan to buy new locks).

Other techniques (e.g., survey research) can address the same issue. A survey researcher asks elderly people questions about how much they fear crime and what they have done for self-protection and security. He measures fear by asking subjects to tell how much they already fear crime on the basis of their previous experiences.

A source of confusion is that researchers can use a prior fixed condition (e.g., age or sex) as a variable in experiments. For example, Spillers (1982) asked whether age affected a child's decision to play with a disabled child. Her subjects were 32 preschool and 32 third-grade children. She showed each subject four pairs of photos, each pair showing one child in a wheelchair and the other standing. The children in the photographs were mixed for physical attractiveness, age, and sex. Each subject was asked, "Which child would you like to play with?" Spillers found that more third-graders than preschool children accepted the disabled child. Spillers did not modify the independent variable, age, to find its effect on the dependent variable, playmate choice, but she manipulated the decision process and controlled the setting in which it occurred.

### **3.1.3 A Short History of the Experiment in Social Research**

The experimental method was borrowed by the social sciences from the natural sciences, and began in psychology. It was not widely accepted in psychology until after the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, the experimental method was not a method for social research until after 1900.

Wilhelm M. Wundt (1832 – 1920), a Germany psychologist and physiologists, introduced the experimental method into psychology. During the late 1800s Germany was the center of graduate education, and leading social scientists from around the world went to Germany to study. Wundt established a laboratory for experimentation in psychology which became a model many other social researchers. By 1908 researchers at many African and other universities established psychology laboratories to conduct experimental social research. The experiment placed a more philosophical, introspective narrative approach that was closer to interpretative social science. For example, William, J. (1842 – 1910), the foremost American philosopher and psychologist of the 1890s, did not embrace the experimental method.

From the turn of the century to the time of World War II, the experimental method was narrated and became entrenched in social research. The method's widespread appeal was that it deferred an objective, unbiased,

scientific writers study of human mental and social life at a time when the scientific study of social life was just given acceptance.

Four trends speeded the expansion of the experimental method in this period: the rise of behaviourism, the spread of quantification, choice in research subjects, and practical applications.

Early reports of empirical social research gave the names of the people who participated in research and most early subjects as professional researchers. During the first half of the twentieth century reports treated subjects anonymously and only reported the results of their actions. Subjects were increasingly college students or school-children. These changes reflected an increasingly objective and distant relationship between the researcher and the people studied. People increasingly used experimental methods for applied purposes. For example, intelligence testing was adopted by the US Army during World War I to sort thousands of men into different positions. The leader of the “scientific management” movement, Frederick W. Taylor, advocated the use of the experimental method in factories and worked with management to modify factory conditions to increase worker productivity.

Through the 1950s and 1960s researchers continued to use the experimental method. They became concerned with artifacts, or sources of alternative explanations that could slip into experimental design. They discovered new artifacts and created ways to reduce these possible sources of systematic error in experiments with new research designs and statistical procedures. Experiments became more logically rigorous, and by the 1970s methodological criteria were increasingly used to evaluate research. A related trend that began in the 1960s was the increased use of deception and a concern with ethical issues. For example, a now common practice of debriefing did not come into use until the mid-1960s. The experiment is still widely used because of its logical rigour and simplicity, consistency with positivist assumptions, and relatively low cost.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, we have discussed about the methods of experimental research. Again, experimental research provides precise and relatively unambiguous evidence for a causal relationship.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

On the whole, the real strength of experimental research is its control and logical rigour in establishing evidence for causality. In general, experiments tend to be easier to replicate less expensive, and less time-consuming than the other techniques.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. What are the seven elements or parts of an experiment?
2. What distinguishes pre-experimental designs from the classical design?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Campbell, Donald T., and Julian C. Stanley (1963); Experimental and Quasi-Experimental designs for Research; Chicago: and McHally.

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## **UNIT 2: SURVEY RESEARCH**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Meaning of Survey Research
    - 3.1.1 Research Questions Appropriate for a Survey
    - 3.1.2 A History of Survey Research
    - 3.1.3 Steps in Conducting a Survey
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Every method of data collection, including the survey is only an approximation to knowledge. Each provides a different glimpse of reality, and all have limitations when used alone. Before undertaking a survey the researcher would do well to ask if this is the most appropriate and fruitful method for the problem at hand. The survey is highly valuable for studying some problems, such as public opinion, and worthless for others.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to;

- Explain when a survey research method is employed.
- Highlight the techniques of survey.
- Discuss the logic of survey research.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 The Meaning of Survey Research**

The survey is the most widely used data-gathering technique in sociology, and it is used in many other fields as well. Social researchers and others use surveys for many purposes. In fact, surveys are almost too popular. People sometimes say, “Do a survey” to get information about the social world,

when they should be asking, “What is the most appropriate research design?” Despite the popularity of surveys, it is easy to conduct a survey that yields misleading or worthless results. Good surveys require thought and effort. “Surveys, like other scientific and technical tools, can be well made or poorly made and can be used in appropriate or inappropriate ways” (Bradburn & Sudman, 1988:37).

This chapter focuses on surveys in social research because of surveys are based on the professional social research survey. In this chapter, you will learn the main ingredients of good survey research, as well as the limitations of the survey method.

### 3.1.1 Research Questions Appropriate for a Survey

Survey research has been developed within the positivists approach to social science. Surveys produce quantitative information about the social world and describe features of people or the social world. They are also used to explain or explore. The survey asks many people (called respondents) about their beliefs, opinions, characteristics, and past or present behaviour.

Surveys are appropriate for research questions about self-reported beliefs or behaviours. They are strongest when the answers people give to questions, measure variables. Researchers usually ask about many things at one time in surveys, measure many variables (often with multiple indicators).

Although the categories overlap, the following can be asked in a survey:

1. *Behaviour*: How frequently do you brush your teeth? Did you vote in the last city election? When did you last visit a close relative?
2. *Attitudes/beliefs/opinions*: Do you think other people say many negative things about you when you are not there? What is the biggest problem facing the nation these days?
3. *Characteristics*: Are you married, never married single, divorced, separated, or widowed? Do you belong to a union? What is your age?
4. *Expectations*: Do you plan to buy a new car in the next twelve months? How much schooling do you think your child will get? Do you think the population in this town will grow, shrink, or stay the same?
5. *Self-classification*: Do you consider yourself to be liberal, moderate, or conservative? Into which social class would you put your family? Would you say you are highly religious, or not religious?

6. *Knowledge*: Who was elected mayor in the last election? About what percentage of the people in this city are nonwhite? Is it legal to own a personal copy of Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* in this country?

### 3.1.2 A History of Survey Research

The modern survey can be traced back to ancient forms of the census. A census is a compilation of the characteristics of the entire population statutory. It is based on what they tell officials or what officials observed. For example, the *Domesday Book* was a famous census of England conducted in 1085 – 1086 by William the Conqueror. Early census assessed the property available for taxation or the young men available for military service. With the development of representative democracy, the use of the census expanded to assigning a number of elected representatives based on the population in a district.

The survey method was used in the United States and Great Britain to document the extensive urban poverty that followed industrialization in the late nineteenth century. Early surveys were overviews that examined an area using several data collection methods, including questionnaires. Scientific sampling and statistical analysis were very limited or absent.

Early surveys were associated with social reform movements and the formation of the social science and social service professions. For example, between 1851 and 1864 Henry Mayhew published the four-volume *London Labour and the London Poor*, based on conversations with street people and observations of daily life. Charles Booth's seventeen-volume (1889 – 1902) *Labour and Life of the People of London* and B. Seebohm Rowntree's *Poverty: A Study of Town Life* (1906) also examined the extent of urban poverty. In the US, a similar concern is found in two early survey, *Hall House Maps and Papers of 1895* and W.E.B. DuBois' *Philadelphia Negro* (1899).

Three developments shaped the expansion of survey research between 1900 and World War II. First, scientific (i.e., random) sampling techniques were expanded to surveys, especially after the *Literary Digest* debacle, and more sophisticated opinion polling was advanced by the Gallup organization. Second, the development of scales and indexes improved the measurement of attitudes, opinions, and subjective aspects of social life. Third, the survey method was used for a variety of purposes. Market research emerged as a distinct field and adapted surveys for studying consumers. Journalists used surveys to measure public opinion and the impact of a new invention for

example, the radio. Reformers used surveys to study rural life. Religious organizations and chantries used surveys to identify areas of need. Government agencies used surveys to better deliver services for agricultural and social programmes. Social scientists also began to use surveys for basic research.

Survey research expanded and matured during World War II, especially in the US. Academic social researchers and practitioners from industry converged on Washington, D.C., to work in the war effort. Survey researchers studied morale, consumer demand, production capacity, enemy propaganda, and the effectiveness of bombing.

The wartime cooperation helped academic social researchers and applied practitioners learn from each other and gain experience in conducting many large-scale surveys. The academic researchers helped practitioners appreciate precise measure, sampling, and statistical analysis. Academic social scientists learned the practical side of organizing and conducting large-scale surveys.

After World War II the extensive government survey research establishment was dismantled. This was in part a cost-cutting move; also, the members of Congress feared that survey research could be used to advance particular social or economic policies, including helping African Americans who lived in racially segregated southern states.

Survey researchers returned to universities and created new social research organizations. All the universities were hesitant to embrace survey search. Survey research was expensive and involved many people. In addition, traditional social researchers were wary of quantitative research and are skeptical of a technique used in private industries. The culture of applied researchers and basis oriented polltakers clashed with that of trade and basic researchers who lacked statistical training.

This growth of surveys was not limited to United States. Scheuch (1990) reports that within three years of the ending of World War II, action survey research institutes had been established within France, Norway, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, and Britain.

Despite initial uncertainty, survey research grew from the 1940s to the 1970s. For example, about 18 percent of articles published in social journals used the survey method in 1939 – 1945 this rose to 55 percent by 1964 – 1965. A drawn expansion of US higher education and of social science fields during the 1960s also spread the growth of survey research. More

people learned about survey research, and the members gained in popularity. Five factors contributed to the growth of survey research.

### **3.1.3 Steps in Conducting a Survey**

The survey researcher follows a deductive approach. He begins with a theoretical or applied research problem and ends with empirical measurement and data analysis. Once a researcher decides that the survey is an appropriate method, two basic steps in a research project, the research design and data collection.

In the first phase, the research develops an instrument, a survey questionnaire or interview schedule, which he uses to measure variables. Respondents read the questions themselves and mark answers on a questionnaire. An interview schedule is a set of questions read to the respondent by an interviewer, who also records responses. To simplify the discussions, I will use only the term questionnaires.

A survey researcher conceptualizes and operationalizes variables as questions. He writes and rewrites questions for clarity and completeness. He organizes questions on the questionnaire based on the research question, the respondents, and the type of survey. The types of surveys are discussed later.

When preparing a questionnaire, the researcher thinks ahead of how he will record and organize data for analysis. The pilot tests the questionnaire with a small set of respondents similar to those in the final survey. If interviewers are used, he trains them with the questionnaire. He asks respondents in the pilot test whether the questions were clear and explores their interpretations to see whether his intended meaning was clear. The researcher also draws the sample during this phase.

After the planning phase, the researcher is ready to collect data. This phase is usually shorter than the planning phase. He locates sampled respondents in person, by telephone, or by mail. He gives respondents information and instructions on completing the questionnaire or interview. The questions follow, and there is a simple stimulus-response or question-answer pattern. He accurately records answers or responses immediately after they are given. After all respondents complete the questionnaire and are thanked, he organizes the data and prepares them for statistical analysis.

Survey research can be complex and expensive. It can involve coordinating many people and steps. The administration of survey research requires

organization and accurate record keeping. The researcher keeps track of each respondent, questionnaire, and interviewer. For example, he gives each sampled respondent an identification number, which also appears on the questionnaire. He then checks completed questionnaires against a list of sampled respondents. He reviews responses on individual questionnaires, stores original questionnaires, and transfers information from questionnaires to a special form. Meticulous bookkeeping and labeling are essential. Otherwise, the researcher may find that valuable data and effort are lost through sloppiness.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The survey research often called the sample survey because random sampling is usually used with it, it is a distinct technique. It is also a process of asking many people the same questions and examining their answers.

Survey research can be thought of as “data construction”. The survey is a process in which researchers translate a research problem into questionnaires, and then use these with respondents to create data.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have seen that survey research is the most widely used social research technique. It has a long history, but it has undergone dramatic expansion and maturation in the past three decades. We have also learnt about the principles of writing good survey questions. There are numerous things to avoid and to include when writing questions. We are now aware of the advantages and disadvantages of three types of survey research: mail, telephone interviews, and face-to-face interviews. We saw that interviewing, especially face-to-face interviewing, can be difficult.

In other words, the survey is a method of constructing quantitative data that can be analyzed from the answers respondents give to questions.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. What are the six types of things surveys often ask about? Give an example of each that is different from the examples in the book.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS.**

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## **UNIT 3: FIELD RESEARCH**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Field Research
    - 3.1.1 Appropriate Questions for Field Research
    - 3.1.2 The Logic of Field Research
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Field research is the study of people acting in the natural courses of their daily lives. The field worker ventures into the worlds of others in order to learn first hand about how they live, how they talk and behave, and what captivates and distresses them. It is also seen as a method of studying which practitioners try to understand the meanings that, activities observed have for those engaging in them.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the logic of field research;
- Discuss the method of observing and collecting data in field research.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Field Research**

In field research, the individual researcher directly talks with and observes the people being studied. Through interaction over months or years, the researcher learns about them, their life histories, their hobbies and interests as well as their habits, hopes, fears, and dreams. Meeting new people, developing friendships, and discovering new social worlds can be fun. It is also time – consuming emotionally draining, and sometimes physically dangerous.

### 3.1.1 Appropriate Questions for Field Research

When should you use field research? Field research is appropriate when the research question involves learning about, understanding, or describing a group of interacting people. It is usually best when the question is: “How do people do in the social world?” or “what is the social world of X like?” It can be used when other methods (e.g, survey experiments) are not practical, as in studying street gangs. Jack Doughlas (1976) says that most of what social researchers really want to learn about can be studied only through the direct involvement of a researcher in the field.

Field researchers study people in a location or settings. It has been used to study entire community. At the beginning, field researchers should start with a relatively small group (thirty or fewer) who interact with each other on a regular basis in a relatively fixed setting (e.g., a street corner, church, bathroom, beauty parlor, baseball fields).

Field research is also used to study amorphous social experience that are not fixed in a place, but where intensive interviewing and observation are the only way to gain access to the experiences for example, the feelings of a person who is being mugged, or who is a widow or somebody who committed suicide.

In the second phase, from the 1940s to the 1960s. The Chicago school developed participant observation as a distinct technique. It applied an expanded anthropological model to group and setting in the researcher’s society. Three principles emerged.

1. Study people in their natural settings, or in situations
2. Study people by directly interacting with them
3. Gain an understanding of the social world and make theoretical statements about the member’s perspective.

Over time, the method moved from strict description to theoretical analyses based on involvement by the researcher in the field.

After World War II, field research faced increased competition from survey and quantitative research. Field research declined as a proportion of all social research from World War II to the 1970s. In the 1970s and 1980s, however, several changes rejuvenated field research. First, field researchers borrowed from cognitive psychology, cultural anthropology, folklore, and linguistics. Second, researchers examined the epistemological roots and philosophical assumptions of social science (see Chapter 3) that

justified their method. Finally, field researcher became more self-conscious about their techniques and methods. They wrote about methodology and became more systematic about it as a research technique.

Today, field research has a distinct set of methodologies. Field researchers directly observe and interact their perspective. They embrace an activist or social constructional perspective on social life.

A simple definition of *Ethomethodology* is “the studies of common sense knowledge”. *Ethomethodologist* is a common sense by observing its reaction and use in ongoing social interaction in natural settings. *Ethomethodology* is a radical in natural settings. *Ethomethodology* is a radical or extreme form of field research, based on phenomenological philosophy and a social constructionist approach. It involves the specialized, highly detailed analysis of micro situations (e.g, transcripts of short conversations or videotapes of social interactions). Compared to Chicago school field research. It is more concerned about method and argues that research findings result as much from the method used as from the social life studies.

*Ethomethodology* assumes that social meaning is fragile and fluid, not fixed, table, or solid. Meaning is constantly being created and re-created in an ongoing process. For this reason, *Ethomethodologist* analyze language, including pauses and the context of speech. They assume that people “accomplish” common sense understanding by using tacit social – cultural rules, and social interaction is a process of reality construction. People interpret everyday events by using cultural knowledge and clues from the social context. *Ethomethodologists* examine how ordinary people in everyday settings apply tacit rules to make sense of social life (e.g, to know whether or not someone is joking).

*Ethomethodologists* examine ordinary social interaction in great detail to identify the rules for constructing, social reality and common sense, including how these are applied, and how rules are created. For example, they argue that standardized tests or survey interviews measure a person’s ability to pick up implicit clues and apply common sense more than measuring objective facts.

*Ethomethodologist* sometimes use “breaching” experiments to demonstrate the simple tacit rules that people rely on, to create a sense of reality in everyday life (also see the discussion of breakdown later on). The researchers purposefully violate a tacit social norm. The breach usually creates a powerful social response, which verifies the rule’s existence,

shows the fragility of social reality, and demonstrates that such tacit rules, are essential for the flow of ordinary life. For example, *Ethnomethodology*'s founder, Harold Garfinkel, sent students to stores where they were told to “mistake” customers for sales clerks. At first, the customers were confused and stammered explanations. But as the student persisted in the misinterpretation, the bewildered customers either reluctantly accepted the new definition of the situation and awkwardly filled the sales clerk role, or “blew up” and “lost their cool.” The breach illustrated how the operation of social reality depended on tacit knowledge (e.g., distinguishing sales clerks from customers). Filmmakers use similar situations for comic effect when people from a different culture who do not share the same tacit rules or are unaware of the unspoken rules of proper behaviour are seen as humorous.

### **3.1.2 The Logic of Field Research**

What is Field Research?

It is difficult to pin down a specific definition of field research because it is so amorphous, more of an orientation toward research than a fixed set of techniques to apply. A field researcher uses various methods to obtain information. As Schatzman and Strauss (1973: 14) said, “field method is more like an umbrella of activity beneath which any techniques may be used for gaining the desired knowledge, and for process of thinking about this information.” A field researcher is a “methodological pragmatist” (Schatzman and Strauss, (1973: 7). A resourceful, talented individual who has ingenuity, and an ability to think on her feet while in the field.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit we have discussed about field research and the field research process (choosing a site and gaining access, relating in the field, observing and collecting data, and the field interview). Although field researchers begin data analysis and theorizing during the data Collection Phase.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The emphasis in this unit has been on what field research involves its origins, its use, and the overall process. You can now appreciate implications of saying that in field research the researcher is directly involved with those being studied and is immersed in natural setting.

Social researchers use it as a way to study parts of the social world that otherwise could not be studied.

Field research is strongest when a researcher wants to study a small group of people interacting in the present. It is valuable for micro-level or small-group of face-to-face interaction.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. List five of the ten things the “methodological pragmatist” field researcher has to read in the literature before beginning fieldwork? How does this relate to defocusing?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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Spradley, James P. (1979); Participant Observation; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

## **UNIT 4: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Qualitative Research Design
    - 3.1.1 The Qualitative Orientation
    - 3.1.2 Non-Positivism
    - 3.1.3 A Logic in Practice
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Social researchers systematically collect and analyze empirical evidence in order to understand and explain social life. But a qualitative researcher goes about this differently than a quantitative researcher does. The most obvious difference is that qualitative data have to be in the form of words, sentence, and paragraphs rather than numbers.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:  
Discuss the qualitative research orientation;  
Explain qualitative research design;  
Highlight qualitative research techniques.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN**

The orientation of qualitative research, its assumptions about social life, its objectives for research, and the way it deals with data are often at odds with the quantitative approach. Such differences can create confusion among students, researchers, and the readers of research reports. Those who judge qualitative research by quantitative standards are often disappointed.

Nevertheless, most people find reports of qualitative research more enjoyable to read. Instead of a formal, neutral tone with statistics, qualitative reports often contain rich description, colourful details, and unusual characters; they give the reader a feel for social settings.

Some people think that qualitative research is easier to do than quantitative research. They believe that a qualitative researcher simply wanders into an intriguing area of social life, keeps her eyes open, and generates an insightful, fascinating report. Although qualitative researchers do not have to know about statistics and rarely begin with a formal theory, the belief that qualitative research is easy is a myth. Simple dichotomies between better and worse or easier and harder research will not help you understand the differences between qualitative and quantitative research. The triumph of classic qualitative studies is due more to the dedication, hard work, sensitivity, and writing skill of the individual researchers than to anything intrinsic in the research approach itself.

Qualitative research contains several techniques (e.g., grounded theory), ethnography, life history, conversational analysis). Specific techniques are more appropriate for particular topics. Interestingly, female researchers are more likely than male researchers to use qualitative research. This chapter does not give specific rules of qualitative research, nor does it explore the types of qualitative research. It emphasizes their common elements, how they differ from quantitative research, and characteristics of qualitative research design. Of course, researchers often combine elements from qualitative and quantitative methods in specific research projects.

### **3.1.1 The Qualitative Orientation**

In this section you will learn some ways in which a qualitative research orientation differs from that of quantitative research – a reliance on non positivist approaches to science, the greater use of “logic in practice”, and the following of a more cyclical research path also.

### **3.1.2 Non positivist**

Qualitative social research relies largely on the interpretive and critical approaches to social science. The two approaches differ from each other in important ways, but both are alternatives to positivism, which is the foundation of quantitative research. Quantitative research is contrary to most of the core assumptions and goals of interpretive social science (see Chapter 4). In contrast to interpretive researchers, critical researchers use quantitative live techniques. When they do so, however, radical social

researchers diverge from strict positivism. They apply them in a different way; give theoretical context a major role, critique social conditions, and reveal deep structure of social relations.

There is no one-to-one correspondence between research techniques and the approaches to social science. Nevertheless, historical-comparative research is most compatible with a critical approach. Sometimes it is also used by researchers who adopt the interpretive or the positivist approach. Field research is suited to the assumptions of an interpretive approach, but some critical researchers also use it.

The significance of the three approaches is evident in how a researcher sees data. A quantitative researcher assumes that sociological concepts can be conceptualized as variables, and that he can develop objective, precise measures that attach numbers which capture important features of the social world. By contrast, a qualitative researcher focuses on subjective meanings, definitions, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of specific cases. She attempts to capture aspects of the social world (e.g., sights, odours, atmosphere) for which it is difficult to develop precise measures expressed as numbers.

The three approaches' relate to research techniques can be illustrated by the contrast between the technocratic and transcendent perspectives to research. The technocratic perspective fits better with positivism, and quantitative researchers more frequently, albeit unknowingly, fall into it. In it the researcher is the expert, and research questions often originate with the sponsors of the research (i.e., those who supply funds). The goal of research is to discover and document law-like generalizations that are oriented toward increasing efficiency. Thus, this is the perspective of a technician who serves bureaucratic needs.

By contrast, the transcendent perspective more closely fits the interpretive and critical approaches. In it, research questions originate with the standpoint of the people being studied, not that of outsiders. Its goal is to remove false beliefs held by those being studied and to treat people as creative, compassionate living beings, not as objects. It often raises questions about power or inequality and views social relations more as the outcome of willful actions than as laws of human nature. It tries to help people grow, take charge of their lives and engage in social change- that is, to transcend current social condition.

### 3.1.3 A Logic in Practice

According to Kaplan (1964:3-11) statements about how to do social research follow two logics: reconstructed logic and logic in practice. All research mixes both types, although the proportion of each type of logic varies. Statements about quantitative research are likely to be “reconstructed”, whereas qualitative research arises more “in practice”.

Reconstructed logic means that the logic of how to do research is highly organized and restated in an idealized, formal, and systematic form. It is “reconstructed” into logically consistent rules and terms. It is a “cleansed” model of how good research should proceed. This logic tends to appear in textbooks and in published research reports. For example, the rules for conducting a simple random sample are very straightforward and follow a step-by-step procedure.

Logic in practice is the logic of how research is actually carried out. It is relatively messy, with more ambiguity, and is tied to specific cases and oriented toward practical completion of a task. It has fewer set rules and is based on judgment calls or norms shared among experienced researchers. It depends on an informal folk wisdom passed among researchers when they get together over lunch, dinner, or beer and discuss doing research.

Quantitative research is usually described as using reconstructed logic. This makes it easier to define and learn about from books or formal instruction. Quantitative research reports can also describe the technical research procedures used (e.g., a systematic random sample of 300 drawn from a telephone directory (Likert scaling), which are based on shared, explicit methods.]

Quantitative research uses more of a logic in practice. It relies on the informal wisdom that has developed from the experiences of researchers. Qualitative research reports may not discuss method (common for historical comparative research) or may have a personal autobiographical account tailored towards a particular study (common for field research). Few procedures or terms are standardized and there is a debate among qualitative researchers about whether they ever should be. Many qualitative researchers learned how to do research by reading many reports, by trial and error, and by working in an apprentice role with an experienced researcher. This does not mean that qualitative research is less valid, but it may be more difficult for someone learning about it for the first time to grasp.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

We have discussed about specific ways to design research. As the logic in practice and a cyclical research path suggest, such issues are difficult to separate from doing the research itself.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit focused on the differences between quantitative and qualitative research and the general characteristics of qualitative research. Its primary purpose has been to acquaint you with the point of view of qualitative research. It is important to make the transition from the mind set of quantitative research before examining specific ways to conduct qualitative research.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. What are the implications of saying that qualitative research uses more of logic?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## **MODULE 7**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unit 1	Analysing Qualitative Data
Unit 2	Analysing Quantitative Data
Unit 3	The Use of Case Studies

### **UNIT 1: ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA**

#### **CONTENT**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Body
3.1	The Process of Analysis
3.1.1	Differences between Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis
3.1.2	A Comparison
3.1.3	Explanation and Qualitative Data
3.1.4	Conceptualization in Qualitative Research
3.1.5	Coding Qualitative Data
3.1.6	Analytic Memo Writing
3.1.7	Method of Qualitative Data Analysis
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Qualitative data are in the form of text, written words, phrases, or symbols describing or representing people, actions and events in social life. Except for the occasional content analysis study, qualitative researchers rarely use statistical analysis. This does not mean that qualitative data analysis is based on speculation or on vague impressions. It can be systematic and logically rigorous, although in a different way from quantitative or statistical analysis.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:  
Discuss the methods of qualitative data analysis;  
Explain qualitative analysis techniques and the approaches.

## **3.0 MAIN BODY**

### **3.1 The Process of Analysis**

In the past, few qualitative researchers explained how they analyzed data. In fact, a common criticism of qualitative research was that data analysis was not made explicit or open to inspection. Qualitative data analysis has moved to a more explicit and systematic step-by-step approach. Nevertheless no single qualitative data analysis approach is widely accepted. In this chapter you will learn about a few qualitative analysis techniques. Some of the approaches are used more often in historical comparative and some more in field research.

#### **3.1.1 Differences Between Quantitative And Qualitative Analysis.**

One way to learn about qualitative data analysis is to compare it with something some thing already familiar to you qualitative data analysis.

#### **3.1.2 A Comparison**

Qualitative data analysis differs from quantitative analysis in four ways, first, quantitative researcher chooses from a specialized, standardized set of data analysis techniques. Hypothesis testing and statistical method vary little across different social research project or across the natural and social science. Quantitative analysis is highly developed and builds on applied mathematics. By contrast, qualitative data analysis is less standardized. The wide variety in possible approaches to qualitative research is matched by many approaches to data analysis. Qualitative research is often inductive. Researcher rarely knows the specific data analysis to use when they begin a project. As Schatzman and Strauss (1973:108) remarked that “qualitative analysis do not often enjoy the operational advantages of their quantitative cousins in being able to predict their own analytic process; consequently, they cannot refine and order their raw data by operations built initially into the design of the research.”

A second difference is that quantitative researcher does not begin data analysis until they have collected all the data and condensed them into several numbers. They then manipulate the numbers in to see patterns or relationships. Qualitative researchers can look for patterns or relationships, but they begin analysis early in a research project, while they are still collecting data. The result of the early data analysis, guide subsequent data collection. Thus, analysis is less a distinct final stage of research than a direction of research that stretches across all stages.

A third difference is in how each relates to social theory. Quantitative researcher manipulates number that represents empirical facts in order to test an abstract hypothesis with variable constructs. By contrast, qualitative researchers create new concepts and theory by blending together empirical evidence and abstract concepts. Instead of testing a hypothesis, a qualitative analyst may illustrate or color as evidence, showing that a theory generalization, or interpretation, is plausible.

A last difference is the difference of abstraction or distance from the details of social life. In all data analysis a researcher plans for data into categories which he manipulates in order to identify patterns and arrive at generalization that summarises distinction within the concrete, raw data. In quantitative analysis this process is clothed in statistic, hypotheses, and variables. Quantitative researchers use the symbolic language of statistical relationships between variables to discuss causal relations. They assume that social life can be measured using numbers, and when they manipulate the number according to the law of statistics, the number reveal features of social life.

Qualitative analysis is less abstract than statistical analysis and is closer to raw data. Qualitative analysis does not draw on a large, well-established body of formal knowledge from mathematics and statistics. The data are in form of words, which are relatively imprecise, diffuse and context-based, and can have more than one meaning.

Words are not only more fundamental intellectually: one may also say that they are necessarily superior to mathematics in the special structure of the discipline. For word is a mode of expression with greater open-endedness, more capable of connecting various realms of arguments and experience, and more capacity for reaching intellectual audience.

### 3.1.3 Explanation and Qualitative Data

Qualitative explanation takes many forms. A Qualitative researcher does not have to choose between a rigid ideologic-nomothenic-dischotomy, that is, between describing specific and verifying universal laws. Instead, she develops explanation or generalization that is close to concrete data and contexts but is more than simple descriptions. She usually uses a low level, less abstract theory, which is grounded in concrete details. She may build new theory to create a realistic picture of social life and stimulate understanding more than, to test a causal hypothesis. For explanations tend to be rich in detail, sensitive to context, and capable of showing the complex process or sequences of social life. The explanation may be causal. But this is not always the case. Her goal is to organize a large quantity of specific details into a coherent picture, model, or set of interlocked concepts.

A qualitative researcher rarely tries to document universal laws; rather she divides explanation into two categories highly unlikely and plausible. The researcher is satisfied when she “bulk a case” or “supplies supportive evidence” she may eliminate some theoretical explanation and will be considered with a pattern in the data. Qualitative analysis can eliminate an explanation by showing that a wide array of evidence contradicts it. The data might support more than one explanation will not be consistence in addition to eliminating less plausible explanations, qualitative data analysis help to verify a sequence of events or the steps of finding associations among variables, and it is useful in supporting canal arguments.

The form of analysis and theorizing in qualitative research sometimes make it difficult to see generalization. Some equalization researchers are almost entirely descriptive and avoid theories and concepts explicit without an analytic interpretation or theory provided by the researcher, the readers of qualitative research may use their own everyday, taken – for – granted ideas. Their commonsense frame work is likely to contain implicit assumption, biases, ethnocentrism and ill-defined concepts from dominant cultural values.

### 3.1.4 Conceptualization in Qualitative Research

Quantitative researchers’ conception variables and refine concepts as part of the process of measuring variables that comes before data collection or analysis. By contrast, qualitative researchers form new concept or refine concepts that are grounded in the data. Concept formation is an integral part of data analysis and begins during data collection. Thus,

conceptualization is one way that a qualitative researcher organizes and makes sense of data.

A qualitative researcher analyzes data by organizing it into categories on the basis of themes concepts, or similar features. He develops new concepts, formulates conceptual definitions and examines the relationships among concepts. Eventually, he links concepts to each other in terms of a sequence, as oppositional sets (X is the opposite of Y), or as sets of similar categories that he interweaves into theoretical statements. Qualitative researchers conceptualize or form concepts as they read through and ask critical questions of data (e.g., Field notes, historical documents, secondary sources).

### **3.1.5 Coding Qualitative Data**

A quantitative researcher codes after all the data has been collected. She arranges measures of variables, which are in the form for statistical analysis.

Coding data has a different meaning and role in qualitative research. A researcher organizes the raw data into conceptual categories, and creates themes or concepts which she then uses to analyze data. Instead of a simple clerical task, qualitative coding is an integral part of data analysis. It is guided by the research question and leads to new questions. It frees a researcher from entanglement in the details of the raw data and encourages higher-level thinking about them. It also moves her towards theory and generalizations. Miles and Huberman (1984:156) define qualitative research codes:

A code is an abbreviation or Symbol applied to a segment of words ... in order to classify the words. Codes are categories. They usually derive from research questions. Hypothesis. Key concepts and important themes. They are retrieval and organized devices that allow the analysis to spot quickly, pull out the and cluster all the segments relating to a particular question, hypothesis, concept, or theme. (Emphasis is original)

### **3.1.6 Analytic Memo Writing**

Qualitative researcher is always writing notes. Their data are recorded in notes; they write comments on their method or research strategy in notes, and so on. They are compulsive note-takers, keep their notes organized in files, and often have many files with different kinds of notes, files on methodological issues. (e.g. location of sources or ethical issues). Files of maps or diagrams, files on possible overall outlines of a final report or chapter, files on specific people or events.

The analysis memo is a specific type of note. It is a memo, or discussion of thought and ideas about the coding process, which a researcher writes to him-selves. Each coded theme or concepts form the basis of separate memo, and the memo contains a discussion of the concepts of theme. The rough theoretical notes form the beginning of analysis memos.

### **3.1.7 Method of Qualitative Data Analysis.**

The coding and memo-writing techniques discussed in the previous section are generic and can be used in most types of analyses. There are also more specific method of qualitative data analysis. In this section you will learn about five such methods selected from the all possible method: successive approximation, and illustrative method, analytic comparison, domain analysis, and ideal types. Qualitative researcher sometimes combines the method or uses them with quantitative analysis.

In general, data analysis means a search for pattern in data-recurrent behaviors, object or body knowledge. Once a pattern is identified it is interpreted in term of a socials theory and the setting in which it occurred. The qualitative researcher moves from the description of a historical events or social setting to a more general interpretation of its meaning.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In many respects qualitative data are more difficult to deal with than data in the form of numbers. Numbers have mathematical properties that let a researcher use statistical procedures. Qualitative analysis acquires more effort by an individual researcher to read and re-read data notes, reflect on what is read, and make comparisons based on logic and judgment.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have seen that most forms of qualitative data analysis involve coding and writing analytic memos. Both are labour-intensive efforts by the researcher to read over data carefully and think about them seriously. In addition, you learned about methods that researchers have used for the analysis of qualitative data. They are, a sample of the many methods of qualitative data analysis. You also learned about the importance of thinking about negative evidence and events that are not present in the data.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. Identify four differences between quantitative and qualitative data analysis.
2. How does the process of conceptualization differ in qualitative and quantitative research?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 2: ANALYSING QUANTITATIVE DATA**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Process of Quantitative Analysis
    - 3.1.1 Computers and Social Research
    - 3.1.2 How Computers Help the Social Researcher
    - 3.1.3 Results with one Variable Frequency Distribution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Readings
- 1.0 Introduction

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

If you read a research report or article based on quantitative data, you will probably find that it has charts, graphs and tables full of numbers. The charts and tables allow you see the evidence collected by the researcher and learn for yourself what is in it.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Explain the use of computers in social research;
- Discuss the fundamentals of organizing and analyzing quantitative data.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 The Process of Qualitative Analysis**

The analysis of quantitative data is a complex field of knowledge. It is as large as the rest of the research methods put together. This chapter cannot substitute for a course in social statistics. It covers only the basic statistical concepts and data-handling techniques necessary to understand social research.

Coding can be a simple clerical task when the data are recorded as numbers on well-organized record sheets, but it is very difficult when, for example, a researcher wants to code answers to open-ended survey questions into numbers in a process similar to latent content analysis.

Researchers use a coding system and a code-book for data coding. The coding system is a set of rules stating that certain numbers are assigned to variable attributes. For example, a researcher codes males as 1 and females as 2. Each category of variable and missing information needs a code. A *codebook* is a document (i.e. one or more pages) describing the coding system and the location of data for variables in a format that computers can use.

When you code data, it is very important to create a well-organized, detailed codebook or make multiple copies of it. If you do not weigh down the details of the coding system or if you misplace the codebook, you have lost the keys of the data and will have to recode the new data over again.

A researcher transfers information from questionnaires, recording sheets, or similar raw data forms into a format for computers in four ways: code sheets, direct entry, optical scan sheets, and CATI. First, she can use graph paper or special grid forms for computers (called transfer or code sheets) by writing code numbers in squares that correspond to a row and column location, then typing it into a computer. Secondly, she can sit at a computer and directly type in the data.

After very careful coding, a researcher checks the accuracy of coding, or “cleans” the data. A researcher may code a 10 to 15 percent random sample of the data a second time. If no coding errors appear, she proceeds. If she finds errors, she rechecks mail coding.

Researchers verify coding after the data are in a computer in two ways. *Possible code cleaning* (or wild code checking) involves checking the categories of all variables for impossible codes. For example, respondent sex is coded 1 = Male, 2 = Female. Finding a 4 for a case in the field for the sex variable indicates a coding error. A second method, *contingency cleaning* (or consistency checking), involves cross-classifying two variables and looking for logically impossible combinations. For example, education is cross-classified by occupation. If a respondent is recorded as never having passed the eighth grade and also is recorded as being a legitimate medical doctor, the researcher checks for a coding error.

A researcher can modify data after they are in a computer. She cannot use more refined categories than were used when collecting the original data, but she can combine or group information. For example, she can group ratio-level income data into five ordinal categories. Also, she can combine information from several indicators to create a new variable or add the responses to several questionnaire items into an index score.

### 3.1.1 Computers and Social Research

#### *What is a Computer?*

Computers have revolutionized social research and are now a standard tool in social research. Researchers who analyze quantitative data use a computer. Just as people operate certain machines (e.g. telephones, televisions, automobiles), so they can perform specific tasks more efficiently (e.g. talk to someone across the country, watch programs, travel). Researchers use computers to perform specialized tasks, e.g. organize data, calculate statistics, write reports) much more effectively and efficiently.

This section cannot teach you how to use computers. That requires hands on assistance and instruction tailored to the specific computer system you will be using. Instead, it gives you a general background on computers, some basic terminology, and explains how computers are used in quantitative research.

*Early Computers:* By today's standards, the early computers of the 1960s were very large, very expensive, and very slow. They could cost as much as \$1 million, and were the size of a dozen large refrigerators, consumed huge quantities of electricity, had to be kept in special rooms under controlled temperature conditions and were constantly maintained by a team of technicians. Nevertheless, these large computers called *mainframe computers* were more accurate, handled more information and could precisely perform complex calculations much faster than the older card-sorting or calculating machines combined. In addition, they could "read" and follow complex instructions called *computer programs*.

By the 1970s, mainframe computers had become cheaper and much more powerful. Colleges, government agencies and companies still use mainframe computers for analyzing large amounts of data. Modern mainframe computers are extremely powerful and can be used by many people at the same time thorough time-sharing. This means that the computer is so powerful and fast that it can do many different tasks for many people simultaneously. Researchers who use complex statistics that

involves many calculations with dozens of variables and very large data sets (e.g. a million cases) still use mainframes.

### **3.1.2 How Computers Help the Social Researcher**

Computers are a necessity for today's quantitative social researcher. Social researchers use mainframe or microcomputers for many purposes: to write reports, to organize large amounts of data and to compare statistical measures. Computers help them perform these tasks much faster and with much greater accuracy than is possible by hand. Without the appropriate computer a researcher cannot analyze data from a large-scale research project or calculate complicated statistics. Although a person must invest time in learning how to use computers, the investment saves an enormous amount of time later when it is used. A trained researcher with the proper computer can do in minutes what once took a year to do by hand.

The electronic apparatus (boxes, switches, machines, wires) of the computer is called *hardware*. This is to distinguish it from *software*, the electronic messages that computers can read, including computer programs (e.g. instructions that computers read and follow). A researcher needs both hardware and software to use a computer. Without the correct software, hardware can do nothing. and various kinds of statistics.

### **3.1.3 Results with one Variable Frequency Distribution**

The word *statistics* has several meanings. Statistics can mean a set of collected numbers (e.g., numbers telling how many people live in a city). It can mean a branch of applied mathematics used to manipulate and summarize the features of numbers. Social researchers use both types of statistics. Here, we focus on the second type – ways to manipulate and summarize numbers that represent data from a research project.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

You learned about organizing quantitative data to prepare them for analysis, and analyzing those (organizing data into charts or tables, or summarizing them with statistical measures). Researchers use statistical analysis to test hypotheses and answer research questions.

Beginner researchers sometimes feel they have done something wrong if their results do not support a hypothesis. There is nothing wrong with rejecting a hypothesis. The goal of scientific research is to produce knowledge that truly reflects the social world, not to defend pet ideas or

hypotheses. Hypotheses are theoretical guesses based on limited knowledge; they need to be tested. Excellent-quality research can find that a hypothesis is wrong, and poor-quality research can support a hypothesis. Good research depends on high quality methodology, not on supporting a specific hypothesis.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

We have seen how data must first be coded and then analyze using univariate or bivariate statistic. Bivariate relationship might be spurious, so controlled variables and multivariate analysis are often necessary. We have also learnt some basics about the use of computers in social research and about inferential statistics.

Good research means guarding against possible errors or obstacles to true inferences from data to the social world. Errors can enter into the research process and affect results at many places: research design, measurement, data collection, coding, calculating statistics and constructing tables, or interpreting results. Even if a researcher can design, measure, collect, code and calculate without error, another step in the research process remains. It is to interpret the tables, charts and statistics and answer the question: “What does it all mean?” The only way to assign meaning to facts, charts, tables or statistics is to use theory.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TAM)

1. What is a codebook and how is it used in research?
2. How do researchers clean data and check their coding?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 3 THE USE OF CASE STUDIES**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Different Examples and Coding
    - 3.1.1 Actions of the Researcher
    - 3.1.2 Exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall examine the use of case studies in social research.. It is often desirable, especially when detailed information is required about a particular societal problem. Instead of trying to study very large samples, a case study/or case studies may be chosen to enable in-depth study of phenomena that may otherwise be too expensive to study in totality.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Appreciate the role of case studies in social research
- Identify studies that are more useful through the use of case studies
- Explain the meaning of coding
- Discuss the problem of overgeneralization of findings in Peace and Conflict Research

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Different Examples and Coding**

For example, if we take the Niger Delta case, the researcher may ask open-ended or unstructured questions thus: What are the factors promoting conflict in the Niger Delta? The answers respondents may possibly give include:

1. Unemployment
2. Poor allocation of resources
3. Environmental degradation
4. Inequality
5. Oppression
6. Sense of resource ownership
7. Marginalization
8. Age long enmity and ill-feelings
9. Age long differences
10. Social stratification
11. Lack of unity
12. Low standard of living
13. Restiveness of youth
14. Inherent selfish nature of human beings
15. Greed
16. High level of illiteracy
17. Enlightenment
18. Awareness of human right
19. Class struggle/tussles
20. Political differences
21. Jealousy
22. Hunger
23. Instability of government.

When all these answers are given to the researcher, he then tries to codify them e.g. by putting likely/similar answers together e.g.

- unemployment, restiveness of youth, hunger, low standard of living
- inequality, age long enmity/ill-feelings, social stratification
- oppression, marginalization etc.

Actions Taken By The Researcher Before Coding:

- (i) Types of agencies involved, which could be international or domestic; multilateral or bilateral, governmental and nongovernmental organizations;
- (ii) Number of governments involved in the resolution of the conflicts;
- (iii) Number of warring factions involved in the peace meeting/resolution of conflicts etc;
- (iv) Number of sources of weapons identified by the conflict managers
- (v) Number of sources of weaponry willing to cooperate with resolution efforts.

Coding requires that the researcher while examining and analyzing quantitative data to test hypothesis, needs to put them in a different form.

This is called data coding. It means systematically reorganizing raw data into a format that is *machine-readable* (i.e. easy to analyze using computers). In content and data analysis, researchers create and consistently apply rules for transferring information from one form to another. Let us take an example from a study of the American society. In a study of skin tone and social stratification among African Americans Keith and Herin (1991) linked an empirical generalization to a theory. In the test, they raised a hypothesis that African Americans with lighter skin tone tend to have better economic background as compared to the dark skinned ones. And they found support for this generalization. They then put up a theory in order to justify the generalization using certain concept that whites are more willing to help skin toned blacks, which is an indication of partial white aristocracy like using fair skinned blacks as stewards and bedmates. This relationship made it easier for lighter skin slaves to buy their freedom than the darker ones.

Other generalizations include: that over the years African Americans with lighter skin tone tend to have greater access to skill education and advantages than black skinned Negroes. The same also went with the access of lighter skinned Negroes to opportunities, including that of belonging socially in the community, and engaging in inter-marriages with the whites.

The larger theory makes the empirical generalization richer because it connects it to other ideas under slavery i.e. opportunity to obtain education and patterns of selecting marriage patterns. These are the causes of differences in education and income between dark skinned and light skinned blacks.

### **Exercise**

Discuss the use of case studies in conflict research.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Case study is an important way of engaging in research in such a way that the researcher has concrete information as is possible. If the case study is carefully selected, it is possible to have a reasonable degree of generalization of the findings of the study. However, one must always be careful of the tendency at overgeneralization of findings. However, there is a saying in conflict studies, that no one conflict is the same as the other, in

other words conflicts usually have different causative factors. It is therefore, imperative often to use case studies to study a particular conflict in order to be able to proffer workable solutions to the conflict.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed the use of case studies in carrying out research in the Social Sciences, but especially as this relates to conflict studies. The point remains that the use of case studies is highly relevant in the study of peace and conflict.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. The Case study method is crucial in Conflict research. Discuss.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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