

Research for Marketing Decisions

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Lecture - 18

Descriptive Research Techniques

In exploratory, actually, all techniques are over. So exploratory, we discussed about disguised and non-disguised, and we had some fair idea about what happens in focus groups in depth, which are direct techniques and projective techniques, which are non-disguised, right? They are part of qualitative research and then in the exploratory research there is secondary data also. Now observation although I have included it in descriptive research but it can be part of exploratory research as well one could do observation in exploratory research as well but observation is also a part of descriptive research when you are you know describing some behavior let's say you know describing some behavior in terms of how people how a certain person acts in a retail store? So you are noting down the behavior but, that same behavior you could be doing for exploratory or descriptive research depending upon what is the situation at hand in exploratory you do not know much about the situation, whereas in descriptive you will be noting down behavior related to a particular variable regarding observation method. Now observation as I said you can both both you can use both in exploratory and descriptive in exploratory when you use you would be broadly looking at people's behavior in the natural settings whereas when you are doing in descriptive you would be looking at not the entire behavior but related to certain variables for which you have framed some components and research questions but in observation what happened you try to observe people either in natural or artificial settings. Natural settings are the settings where they behave real, they act real and they are real life situations.

Artificial settings are which are artificially created for research purposes. Now this is an example of how observation research can be useful for market, can be useful for new

product development. So let's watch it. One of the largest oral health care companies in America, a company you've probably heard of called Oral-B.

And they said, look, we'd like a new kid's toothbrush because Ours is starting to get commoditized. It looks like a lot of kids' toothbrush is out there and you can't have that. We want to be special. Right? So we say, okay, we'll do this.

We want to go out in the field and do some field research. And they're kind of not sure about that. It's not rocket science. We're talking about kids brushing their teeth. How hard could that be?

They would really like us to stop fooling around and start designing. But we want to go through this process, this observation process, because And so we go out, and we're on like the first day of observations, and we make a small discovery. The small discovery we make is that every kid's toothbrush in the history of the world has had the same implicit assumption. It's a logical assumption.

It just isn't exactly right, which is the assumption always was parents have big hands, kids have small hands, and so when you want to make the kid's version, make it like the parent's brush, only smaller and skinnier. perfectly logical, until you go out in the field. Until you actually watch humans, little tiny humans, brushing their teeth. And what you notice right away, you get a five-year-old boy brushing his teeth, he's not holding his toothbrush in his fingertips the way mom and dad do, he's fisting it. He's holding it like this because he doesn't have the dexterity, he doesn't have the fine motor controls that his parents have, and so he's got to hold it like this.

In fact, the other thing he does is, he holds the brush too far up very frequently, and so he's punching himself in the face as he's trying to brush his teeth, and we solved that problem too. But the main thing was, came back from the field and said, uh-oh, kids don't need little skinny toothbrushes. Kids can do fat toothbrushes, right? Let's make them big, fat, squishy toothbrushes.

And you may have noticed, now every toothbrush company in the world makes these, but our client... reports that after we made that little tiny discovery out in the field, sitting in a bathroom watching a five-year-old boy brush his teeth, they had the best-selling kid's toothbrush in the world for 18 months. So when you think about power, when you think about credibility, if you could go out in the field and do that observation and come up with that finding, and your company, your organization was the best in its field for 18

months afterwards, would that be worth it? I think that would be worth it. And so that's this message about think like a traveler, being anthropologist, use your powers of observation, have that part of your brain turned up as high as you can all along.

So it is very simple. You have to just observe people in the natural settings and note down their behavior. So you might hit some discovery, you might get some, you might be able to see that where are the problems and the next product could improve this. Now, simply for example, Whenever I go to wash basin and wash my hands, the soap jar is there.

So there is very little space in many of these wash basins to keep them. So every time you try to take it, if it hits little bit, it would fall. Many times it falls, especially when the amount of content left is less and I don't see any soap jar or any soap bottle in the market which can actually you know which can be sturdy and which may not fall just by a simple touch or something. You have toothpaste which can stand which has those sticky handle which can stand but can it be so, there are many discoveries that you can make in your daily life just by the observation method and observation method you can use the technology also to observe people's behavior.

This is one of the example where technology is used to find out where people see When they are in retail market ? which particular color or package attracts them? and what their environment has an influence? but also their goals have a powerful influence on their visual attention. You just have the name Frosted Cheerios in mind. Takes you about 9.4 seconds to find the product on the shelf. On Walmart again, and they're buying.

Something more interesting is he's saying that how could one use the bills from a particular customer to find out why they are buying? what they are buying? So a store manager can actually use those bills to identify the reasons behind why people are buying? what they are buying? So this is one of the examples which he is sharing. But we can learn more than just people's preferences for individual products.

So now let's go to Case hook, Iowa. And this is a shopper who visited a Walmart and they picked up some Diet Pepsi, an Atkins bar, and some SlimFast. So it looks like someone's counting calories here. But you wonder why they're also buying Cheetos and ice cream and popsicles.

Maybe they have got kids in the family. Well, if you look just a few days later, they're back in Walmart again. And they're buying Major League Baseball cards. So it does look

maybe like they have a child, at least one child in the house. And they're buying dog treats.

So it looks like they might have a dog as well. A few days later, they're back in the store. And they're getting some fishing hooks. So they like to fish. And they're buying marine oil.

So they actually have a boat. So as you look across these transactions, you start to get a picture of the household, the profile of the shopper. the DNA that's going to drive their purchases in the future. Now, it's not enough just to know what people's needs and desires are. We also need to understand how that interacts with the store environment.

So we've done research where we... So that was about how one could use these information in the bills. If you have two, three bills, you would know the composition of the family and, to a certain extent, why they buy? what they buy? and so on. Now this is an example of how you do the observation research. This is a sample which is in the YouTube about how you do the observation research. I would not play this entirely but just see when the interviewer is, when the observer is watching the

respondent doing something, how he or she is noting down the observations and what happens then, how to do the observation and follow up questioning. Inaccurately. So, don't do as I do. You'll see how that echoes. So, there's an echo.

Sorry, everybody. It'll only be this episode. I hope. Maybe others. Hi, special guest.

Hi. So, here, if you look at on the right, she is starting to note down what the respondent is, how the respondent is what he is doing for a particular, you know, topic in this case, the topic was how the man uses the kitchen to prepare something what he is doing right now. So, it is just an example of how observations have to be made and some of the questions that you could ask later and to be a bit more time efficient, let's start with the kettle. No, you're not supposed to see that.

You're not supposed to see that. You're a researcher, and we don't want to see the sausage in things. Accidentally, I do have a kettle on. I will turn this on. So, when he took the kettle, the observation is made. He started with the kettle, but there could be a question why he started with the kettle, why not something else, maybe. So one could actually after just observing the behavior after just observing the behavior one could write down the questions also for that particular behavior which could be asked later.

Okay, so I'll be cooking spaghetti, which I don't dare calling cacio e pete, as they are usually called. So my quick version is spaghetti with parmigiano and black pepper, and these are the spaghetti. Okay. So also for Italian, sorry, I'm cooking number three, I shouldn't. This is the

Spaghetti for people in a hurry or on a diet and sometimes I check both categories. So, you usually want to make spaghetti. So, you see here the observations, so the observations are being made here and the ask later has questions for follow-up of behavior asking about why a certain behavior uh why in a in why the certain behavior was done why not any other thing, that will reveal the observation will tell you the behavior and the ask later questions that you would have to ask the respondent they would give the reason why people did what they did during the observation research. Again this is the this is just an example to show you how the observations have to be made this is not the real research a sample. But again when you looked at the tooth toothbrush example, you would I think would have got a hint about how strong the method is how

useful the method could be used in the right way so there can be mechanical observation which is done through devices you have eye-tracking devices to find out let's say in the computer where on a particular website where people are looking at and not looking at suppose you would want to improve the website interface, increase the time of of customer stickiness to a particular page. So eye tracking is one software one device which could be used to find out what is working with a particular website? what is not working? and so on... There are various methods of observation, but the best observation is when it is done in the natural setting. I think some of these methods you can directly read from the book there are three types of observations: one is structured versus unstructured. Structured observation is when you are look at a particular behavior you know what you are going to look at. Let's say how many times uh how many times I use a let's say somebody notes down how how many times I use a particular word actually actually so many people have the habit of saying actually so many times you try to note that particular that is a kind of structured observation you are making unstructured will be where you broadly look at the behavior, you do not define what you are going to look at, but you broadly observe that is more exploratory in nature and structured behavior is more conclusive in nature, the one you use in descriptive research. There is disguised and the observation can also be undisguised as well, where you tell people that they are being observed.

In addition to being disc. So disguised is one form. Undisguised is another form. And then natural and contrived. Contrived is the observation which is done in the artificial settings.

Natural is in the natural settings. Where they really use the product. In their daily life. There is a mystery shopper method of observation as well. Many brands use that.

So they send their mystery shopper to the stores for observation of how the staff really behaves with them, acts with them. So this is again another form of mystery shopping is, has the observation as one of the, you know, method which is used during mystery shopping. Isn't this the spy?

Yeah, it is disguised, yes. It is, I don't know whether it is spying or not, but that method is called mystery shopper. Okay, so as I said the observation can be used both in exploratory and descriptive research design. Now, whatever time is left we will quickly look at the descriptive research design, the major method of descriptive research design which is survey method. And in the next class we will get started with the experiments which comes under causal.

But throughout the course we will be discussing more of the survey design. But today we will just have the introduction of the survey method. So there are two methods of descriptive study. Exploratory research we completed which happened in the problem definition step. In the second conclusory research or conclusion based research where we conclude

Conclusive research. Yes, the right name is conclusive research. There are two research designs. One is descriptive and causal. In descriptive, there are two methods.

One is survey and observation. Observation, as I said, can be used in exploratory depending upon what is being observed. If a particular variable or behavior is being observed for the purpose of answering a research question on hypothesis which is stated in step number two, it becomes the method for the descriptive research design whereas, if the observation is exploratory in nature which means you are just observing all kind of behavior of a customer in a store or how child engage how children engage with the toys when they are given toys? how they play with toys? maybe you try to observe broadly their behavior different kinds of behavior that will be more exploratory in nature which a toy company would found useful so, observation we already looked at survey research is

a method where we use questionnaire and more structured questionnaire to conduct the research so survey is a structured questionnaire structured means there are

the questions and you will be asking answers to only those questions and they are closed-ended question not open-ended with certain choices given so the customers will be answering out of those choices for those questions that is what is surveys is. Surveys can be done through various means telephone survey, personal survey, mail survey, electronic survey, internet survey so in electronic there is internet survey so, there are various methods by which survey questionnaire can be administered. Telephone surveys where we call up ask the questions get the answers survey is done. Personal survey is where you personally in person go and either on a paper pen questionnaire or with a device you tell them in your presence to complete the questionnaire, whether it is in home mall, intercept or computer-assisted it is in person survey in person method. Mail is when you send the survey over postal mail and tell them to answer and send you back through a return envelope which is a part of that survey which you send them. The envelope would have the survey the uh the return envelope, the postal stamp for returning and the electronic method of doing surveys either on the email itself or on a web page on a survey website page you will create the survey where the respondents will answer the questions. Now if the survey is let's say lengthy,

Would you use the telephone survey method? There. Would you use the telephone survey method when the survey is lengthy? We will use, right? If the survey questionnaire is lengthy, we will use the telephone survey.

We will call up and ask half an hour with the respondent. No? Sure? okay. The telephone survey is not used when the questionnaire is lengthy and complex. If this survey questionnaire is lengthy and complex would you think electronic survey is a good method, may not be because lengthy and complex, whenever you are wanting customer to fill up the survey with in your absence on their own, you would want survey length to be short and survey format to be simple not complex. Complex means there are many different type of questions that will make it complex. Simple is you have let's say same type of or one or two different types of not many different types of questions that become simple.

Personal where the person in person takes the survey either on tablet, on phone or on the paper and paper on the paper but, when in person goes and get the answers on the survey in his or her presence that becomes the personal method but what would be the

disadvantage that you would see of this method personal survey expensive because you would have to travel to each and every and time taking travel to each and every respondent and get the answer right? inflexible sorry sorry tell me complex surveys if the survey is complex you cannot avoid that then better method would be what? personal, because then you would be able to explain What one has to do in a particular question? Permitted to avoid conflicts as much as possible. Yes.

So we will look at one way of not, one way of how telephone survey should not be done. Not how it should be done, but how it should not be done. Hi, yes, I'm calling for Christina. Thank you. Hello?

Hi, is this Christina? Yes. Hi, this is Eric from the front desk. How are you today? I'm great.

First, I'd like to thank you for staying at the I would tell. I wanted to ask you a couple of questions regarding our service. It should only take a couple of minutes. Is that okay with you, ma'am?

I suppose so. Okay. So on a scale of 1 to 100, how would you rate our service today so far? 1 being the worst, 50 being the best, 100 being somewhere in the middle. 1 being the worst, 50 being the best, and 100 being somewhere in the middle?

Yes. I'm sorry, should I repeat the question? Okay, I'll ask the question again. On a scale of 1 to 100, how would you rate our service today so far? 1 being the worst, 50 being somewhere in the middle, 100 being the best.

I'm sorry, what? 40 Okay. On a scale of yes or no, how comfortable are you with the pillows you have this evening? Yes being the worst, no being the best, 50 being somewhere in the middle.

Yes is the worst, no is the best. So it's yes or no? 50. I'm sorry, no, ma'am, I'm new here. I just have to, this is like my job. I have to call the guests and, you know, basically it's like quality control.

We're trying to see how our guests are enjoying the rooms. Okay. So... The pillows are fine. The pillows are fine. So would that be like a yes or a no?

A no. No meaning that, ok no I think was, no was good right. So this is not how to conduct the telephone surveys. This was just you know small, small one to make the

atmosphere little lighter because the session becomes little longer when it goes for one and a half hours. So this is not how somebody has to conduct the telephone survey.