

each time. The item should appear in logical groupings and in order in which the observer would observe them.

Field observation: This may take the form of a diary or cards. Each item of observation is recorded under appropriate sub-heading. At the time of observation, rough noting may be made, and at the end of the day, full log may be made. The card system is flexible and facilitates arrangement and re-arrangement of items in any desired order.

Mechanical devices: These may include cameras, tape recorders, videotapes and electronic devices. Still, motion, sound, color and time lapse cameras give a permanent record of events, Microscopic and telescopic lens may be used in cameras.

Advantages of observation

Observation has certain advantages

1. The main virtue of observation is its directness, it make it possible to study behavior as it occurs.. The researcher need not ask people about their behavior and interactions, he can simply watch what they do and say.
2. Data collected by observation may describe the observed phenomena as they occur in their natural settings. Other methods introduce elements or artificiality into the researched situation.
3. Observation is more suitable for studying subjects who are unable to articulate meaningfully.
4. Observation is less demanding of the subjects and less biasing effect on their conduct than does questioning.

Limitations of study

1. Observation is of no use of studying past events or activities. One has to depend upon documents or narrations by people for studying such things.
2. It is not suitable for studying opinions and attitudes.
3. Observation poses difficulties in obtaining a representative sample.
4. Observation is a slow and expensive process. Requiring human observes and/or costly surveillance equipments.

Interview

Interviewing is one of the prominent methods of data collection. An interview is a face to face interaction between two individuals in which a person asks questions from another person in order to gather information. Interview emerged as a tool of data collection by the turn of the last century and has by now become an integral part of social research. During earlier times, interviews were conducted more in the nature of probing conversation. Guided by a careful observer this method was used as a powerful instrument for obtaining information.

It involves not only conversation, but also learning from the respondent's gestures, facial expressions and pauses, and his environment. Interviewing requires face-to face contact or contact over telephone and calls for interviewing skills. It is done by using a structured schedule or an unstructured guide.

Importance of interview

Interviewing may be used either as a main method or as a supplementary one in studies of persons. Interviewing is the only suitable method for gathering information from illiterate or less educated respondents. It is useful for collecting a wide range of data from factual demographic data to highly personal and intimate information relating to a person's opinions, attitudes, and values, beliefs, past experience and future intentions. When qualitative information is required or probing is necessary to draw out fully, and then interviewing is required. Where the area covered for the survey is a compact, or when a sufficient number of qualified interviews are available, personal interview is feasible.

Interview is often superior to other data- gathering methods. People are usually more willing to talk than to write. Once rapport is established, even confidential information may be obtained. It permits probing into the context and reasons for answers to questions.

Interview can add flesh to statistical information. It enables the investigator to grasp the behavioral context of the data furnished by the respondents. It permits the investigator to seek clarifications and brings to the forefront those questions, that for one reason or another, respondents do not want to answer.

Characteristics of interview

Interview as a method of data collection has certain characteristics.

1. The participants- the interviewer and the respondent- are strangers. Hence, the investigator has to get him introduced to the respondent in an appropriate manner.
2. The relationship between the participants is a transitory one. It has a fixed beginning and termination points. The interview proper is a fleeting, momentary experience for them.
3. Interview is not a mere causal conversational exchange, but a conversation with a specific purpose, viz., and obtaining information relevant to study.
4. Interview is a mode of obtaining verbal answers to questions put verbally.
5. The interaction between the interviewer and the respondent need not necessarily be on a face to face basis, because interview can be conducted over the telephone also.
6. Although interview is usually a conversation between two persons, it need not be limited to single respondent. It can also be conducted with a group of persons, such as family members, or a group of children or a group of customers, depending on the requirements of the study.