

Chapter 3

Method of data Collection

- Collection of data refers to a purposive gathering of information relevant to the subject matter of the study from the units under investigation.
- There are two types of data to be used in research endeavors. These are:
 - Secondary data
 - Primary data

- Secondary data means data that are already available i.e., they refer to the data which have already been collected and analyzed by some one else.
- Secondary data are collected by others and used by others.
- Any data that has been collected earlier for some other purpose are secondary data in the hands of an individual who is using them.

Collection of Secondary Data

- Secondary data may either be published or unpublished data.
- Usually published data are available in:
- Various publications of the central, state, or local government
- Various publications of international bodies or their subsidiaries or foreign governments
- Technical or trade journals
- Books, magazines and news papers
- Reports and publications of various organizations
- Reports of research scholars in different fields
- Public records and statistics
- Historical documents and other sources of published information.

Evaluating Secondary Data

1.AvailabilityofSecondaryData

- The first and foremost requirement is that secondary data must be available for use.
- At times, one may find that secondary data are just not available on a problem at hand.

2. Relevance/suitability of the data

- Relevance means that the data available must fit the requirements of the problem.
- This would cover several aspects
- Unit of measurement should be the same as that in the problem at hand.
- The concepts used should be the same as are envisaged in the problem.
- The data should not be obsolete.

3. Reliability of the data

- The reliability can be tested by finding out such things about the said data:

Who collected the data

What were the sources of the data

Were they collected by using proper method

At what time were they collected

Was there any bias of the compiler

What level of accuracy was desired? Was it achieved?

- ***4. Accuracy***
- The other requirement is that the data should be accurate.
- ***5. Sufficiency***
- The data should be sufficient.
- If the data are inadequate, then compliance with the preceding requirements will be vain.

Primary Data

- Primary data are original observations collected by the researcher or his agents for the first time.
- Methods of Primary Data Collection
 1. Questionnaires
 2. Schedules
 3. Interview method
 4. Observation method
 5. Focus group discussion (FGD)
- The most common means of collecting data are the interview and the questionnaire.
- In the past, the interview has been the most popular data-collecting instrument.
- Recently, the questionnaire has surpassed the interview in popularity.

1. The Questionnaire

- **is a formulated series of questions, especially for statistical analysis.**
- The advantages
 - 1.Lower costs
 - 2.Better samples
 - 3.Standardization
 - 4.Respondent privacy (anonymity)
 - 5.It is free from the bias of the interviewers, answers are in respondents own words.
 - 6.Respondents have adequate time to give well thought out answers.
 - 7.Respondents, who are not easily approachable, can also be reached conveniently.

Disadvantages

- 1.Non-returns
- 2.Misinterpretation
- 3.Validity problems
- 4.It can be used only when respondents are educated and cooperating.
- The control over the questionnaire may be lost once it is sent.
- 5.It is the slowest of all.

The Contents of a questionnaire

- There are three portions of a questionnaire
- **the cover letter,**
- **the instructions, and**
- **the questions**
- *The cover letter*
- It should explain to the respondent the purpose of the survey and motivate him to reply truthfully and quickly.
- If possible, it should explain why the survey is important to him, how he was chosen to participate, and who is sponsoring the survey (the higher the level of sponsorship the better).
- Also the confidentiality of the results should be strongly stressed.
- It should identify the survey as official.