

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

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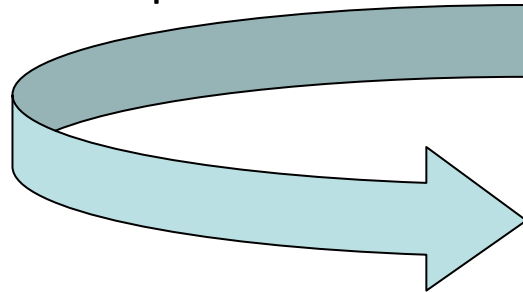


The plan

- 1/ Introduction: What is exploratory research?;
 - 2/ Definition;
 - 3/Characteristics
 - 4/exploratory research methods and types
 - 5/ Steps to conduct research ;
 - 6/EXAMPLE;
 - 7/ Conclusion .
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1/WHAT IS EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

- Imagine you're considering developing a new product and want to find out whether there's any interest in it. Or, your product is already developed, and you want to find out whether there are any competitors in the market (find out who they are!). How would you start this research? How would you even know what kinds of questions to ask?



The answer is exploratory research,

2: Definition

- Exploratory research is defined as a type of research that can be used to investigate a problem which is not clearly defined. It is conducted to have a better understanding of the existing research problem, but it is not necessary that it will provide conclusive results.
 - It is often used with a grounded theory approach or interpretive research, as it is used to answer questions like **what, why and how**.
 - The phrase « **exploratory study** » was first proposed in 1929 by Hankins in a Sociology journal in the United States.
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3: Characteristics:

- It is usually low cost, interactive and open ended.
 - It enables a researcher answers questions like **what is the problem? What is the purpose of the study? And what are the studied topics?**
 - To carry out exploratory research, generally there is no prior research done or the existing ones do not answer the problem precisely enough.
 - It is a time consuming research and it needs patience and has risks associated with it.
 - The researcher will have to go through all the information available for the particular study he is doing.
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3: Characteristics:

- There are no set of rules to carry out the research per se, as they are flexible, broad and scattered.
 - The research needs to have importance or value. If the problem is not important in the industry the research carried out is ineffective.
 - The research should also have a few theories which can support its findings as that will make it easier for the researcher to assess it and move ahead in his study
 - Such a research usually produces qualitative data, however in certain cases quantitative data can be generalized for a larger sample through the use of surveys and experiments.
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4: Exploratory Research methods and types



Primary research;

- **Survey methodology:** Surveys involve collecting information using questionnaires with a set of questions regarding the topic being studied.
 - **Interviews:** One-on-one interviews conducted between an interviewer and a subject can provide the researcher with in-depth qualitative information on the research problem.
 - **Focus groups:** A focus group is a small group of carefully selected participants that have certain common characteristics. Their reactions, responses, and conversations are studied to get an in-depth understanding of a research problem. For example Compiling groups of 8–10 and discussing
 - **OBSERVATIONS:** a company wants to know how it's consumer react to the new shape of their product. The researcher observes the customers first reaction and collects the data, which is then used to draw inferences from the collective information.
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Secondary research

- **Online research:** The internet has a vast amount of information available on almost any topic. It is one of the fastest ways to gather information in a cost-effective way. It can, however, contain an abundance of unreliable information as well.
 - **Literature reviews** Literature research involves gathering data from sources such as newspapers, magazines, online sources, books from libraries, government documents, articles, annual reports, and public records and statistics.
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- **Case studies:** A case study is a detailed examination of a particular case within a real-world context. This source of secondary data allows researchers to analyse existing cases regarding the research problem they are studying.

5: Steps to conduct exploratory research

- **1/ Identify the problem**

First, identify the problem you are trying to solve, or the research question you want to address. Remember: this doesn't need to be very specific. Exploratory research is not about specifics, but more about generating knowledge and insight.

2/ Create the hypothesis

After you have conducted your research, use the findings to create a hypothesis. For instance, if you're interested in learning how customers perceive your product relative to competitors', you might first conduct some exploratory research to identify the products that customers view as rivaling yours, and then develop a hypothesis about customers' preferences for yours versus those goods.

3/ Obtain necessary data

- Data can be collected through market research surveys, interviews or observations.

4/ Conduct further research

Finally, conduct follow-up research based on the insights gleaned earlier. In our above example, you might develop a market research survey on customers' perceptions of the various products in order to test your hypothesis

6: EXAMPLE of an article

- ***OLD AND NEW IDEAS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND SCIENCE: An Exploratory Study.***
- Castro, P., & Lima, M. L. (2001). Old and new ideas about the environment and science: An exploratory study. *Environment and behavior*, 33(3), 400-423.

ABSTRACT:

Using the framework of social representations theory, this article examines predictors of two belief systems linking beliefs about the environment with beliefs of scientific knowledge

Step 1: identify the problem

- To explore that, the authors set the following steps:
- 1/ They identify the problem in the introduction to explore the linkage between representations of the environment and representations of scientific knowledge

Step 2: Example of the Form of Hypotheses

- 1/ New ecological beliefs were expected to receive higher levels of agreement than old anthropocentric ones
 - 2/ social identities (not only objective positions) were expected to be important predictors of respondents' beliefs.
 - 3/ the explanatory power of social identity variables was expected to be higher for those beliefs receiving lower levels of agreement.
 - 4/ we expected some respondents to express coherent representations and other respondents to express noncoherent representations.
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Step 3: **OBTAIN NECESSARY DATA**

- In this article the authors describe the views of the environment held by a Portuguese sample, examine whether they are closer to the old (anthropocentric) or to the new (ecological) ideas, and analyze some of the predictors of these preferences.
 - To test the guiding ideas mentioned; they designed a questionnaire with 460 Portuguese respondents.
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Step 4: Conduct further research

- Results support the hypothesis.



7: CONCLUSION

- To sum up; an exploratory study can essentially be carried out for two different purposes. The first is to increase the knowledge of a topic that is a little known, but it needs to be better known. The second is to generate new and interesting hypotheses about a topic that is already known.
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