A Glance of Business Research Methodology for Researchers

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Abstract This paper deals with the conceptuality of the Business research methodology e.g. the meaning of the research, objectives, motivation and types of research. The basic approaches to research, research methods versus methodology, research process, sorts of research i.e formulation of the research problem, extensive literature survey, development of working hypotheses, preparing the research design, execution of the project, analysis of the data, hypothesis- testing, generalizations and interpretations and preparation of the report have also been described along with the criteria of good research and problems, issues experienced encountered by Iranian researchers.

Keywords: business research methodology, research process, type of research, research approach, good research

1. Introduction

The entire advance in the general public is conceived of request. Uncertainty is regularly superior to presumptuousness for it prompts request and request prompts innovation. In this way an expanded measure of request makes look into conceivable. Research teaches Scientifics and inductive considering. Research likewise advances the improvements of propensities for sensible considering and association. It gives the premise to about all administration approaches in our monetary framework.

Indeed, the part of research in a few fields of connected financial aspects, regardless of whether identified with business or to economy in general, has extraordinarily expanded. Research has its exceptional hugeness in taking care of different operational and arranging issues of business and industry.

Research is equally important for social scientists in studying social relationships and in seeking answers to various social problems. Likewise, in every field of science, the research plays a significate role in providing the intellectual satisfaction of knowing a few things just for the sake of knowledge and also has practical utility for the scientist and engineers to know for the sake of being able to do something better or in a more efficient manner.

On account of the afore-mentioned facts, authors have given their contribution in order to improve the concepts of research methodology. Researchers have laid emphasis on the challenges which the present research methodology is faced with toward the maintenance and sustenance of its quality, implementation aspect of any research by way of proposing a heuristic and working taxonomy of eight conceptually distinct implementation outcomes such as acceptability, adoption, appropriateness, feasibility, fidelity, implementation cost, penetration and sustainability, multiple qualitative studies for enhancing transparency in reporting the synthesis of quality research by way of generating new theoretical and conceptual models.

Research is an academic activity that comprises defining and redefining problems; formulating hypothesis; collecting, organizing and evaluating data; making deduction and reaching conclusion to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis. They have defined research as manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalising to extend, correct or verify knowledge. Research is thus an original contribution to the existing treasure of knowledge. It is the pursuit of truth with the help of study, observation, comparison and experiment research refers to the systematic method consisting of enunciating the problem, formulating a hypothesis, collecting the data, analysing the facts and reaching certain conclusion problem. In fact research is an art of scientific investigation leading to systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic.

1.1. Objectives of Research

The reason for any examination is to find reply to address through the use of logical systems. The fundamental goal of research is to discover reality which is covered up and which has not been found up 'til now.

The main objective of the research fall into the following grouping:

1.1.1. Exploratory or Formative Research Studies

The main objective of this kind of research is to gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insight in to it.

1.1.2. Descriptive Research Study

The main objective of this kind of research is to portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or group.

1.1.3. Diagnostic Research Study

The main objective of this kind of research is to determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something else.

1.1.4. Hypothesis- testing Research Study

The main objective is to test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables.

1.2. Motivation in Research

The inspiration driving any examination is of major noteworthiness. A portion of the thought processes in doing research perhaps at least one of the accompanying:

1. Desire to get a research along with its consequential benefits;
2. Desire to face the challenges in solving the unsolved problems;
3. Desire to get intellectual joy of doing some creative work;
4. Desire to be of service to society;
5. Desire to get respectability;
6. Directives of the government;
7. Employment condition;
8. Curiosity about new things;
9. Desire to understand causal relationships, social thinking and awakening.

However, this is not an exhaustive list of motives to undertake research there may be many more such motives which may motivate or at times compel people to undertake research.

1.3. Types of Research

The basic types of research are:

(i) Descriptive Vs. Analytical

Descriptive research includes surveys and fact finding enquiries of different kinds. The main objective of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables. The researcher can only report what has happened or what is happening. This kind of research is also called ex post facto research in social or business research. In this kind of research, the researchers also try to find causes even when they cannot control the variables. In descriptive research, the researchers use survey methods of all kinds, including comparative and correlational methods. In analytical research, on the contrary, the researcher has to use facts or information already available. The researcher analyses the information to do a critical evaluation of the material.

(ii) Applied Vs. Fundamental

Research can either be applied or fundamental. An applied research aims at finding a solution for an immediate problem facing a society or an industrial/business organisation. The fundamental research, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with the formulation of a theory. The fundamental research is also called 'pure' or 'basic' research.

According to the researcher gathers knowledge for knowledge's sake. Research concerning some natural phenomenon or relating to pure mathematics are examples of fundamental research. The research studies concerning human behaviour to make generalisations about human behaviour are also examples of fundamental research. The research aimed at certain conclusions facing a concrete social or business problem is an example of applied research.

(iii) Quantitative Vs. Qualitative

The quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with qualitative phenomena e.g. reasons for human behaviour, motivation research, etc.

Motivation research aims at discovering the underlying motives and desires. This kind of research uses in-depth interviews, word association tests, sentence completion tests, story completion tests and similar other projective techniques. The qualitative research is specially important in the behavioural sciences where the aim is to discover the underlying motives of human behaviour. The qualitative research is relatively a difficult job and therefore one should seek guidance from experimental psychologists while doing research.

(iv) Conceptual Vs. Empirical

The conceptual research is related to some abstract ideas or theory. It is generally used by philosophers and thinkers to develop new concepts or to interpret existing ones. On the other hand, empirical research relies on experience and observation alone. This does not give due regard for system or theory. It is a data-base research. This research comes up with conclusions verifiable by observation and experiments. This is in fact experimental type of research in which it is necessary to get at facts first hand, at their source, and actively to go about doing certain things to stimulate the production of desired information. Empirical research, on the other hand, is appropriate when proof is sought that certain variables affect other variables in some way. Evidence gathered through experiments or empirical studies is today considered to be the most powerful support possible for a given hypothesis.

2. Research Approaches

The before said sorts of research uncover the way that there are two essential ways to deal with explore, viz., quantitative approach and the subjective approach. The previous includes the information in quantitative frame which can be subjected to thorough quantitative examination in a formal and unbending design. This approach can additionally be ordered into inferential, test, and re-enactment ways to deal with examine. The motivation behind inferential way to deal with inquire about is to frame a database from which to surmise attributes or connections between different parameters influencing the nature of the item, process and administration. Exploratory

approach is described by substantially more noteworthy control over the examination condition, and for this situation a few factors are controlled to watch their impact on different factors. The scientific approach is utilized uniquely in science and designing to discover arrangements of the issues. Recreation approach includes the development of a simulated domain inside which significant data and information can be produced. This allows a perception of the dynamic conduct of a framework under controlled conditions. Reproduction approach can likewise be valuable in building models for understanding future conditions.

Qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour. Research in such a situation is a function of researcher's insights and impressions. Such an approach to research generates results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis. In qualitative approach, the techniques of focus group interviews, projective techniques and depth interviews are used.

3. Research Methods against Methodology

There is a contrast between inquire about techniques and research procedure. Research strategies might be comprehended as each one of those techniques/methods that are utilized as a part of the direct of the exploration. Research strategies or systems along these lines allude to the techniques the specialists use in performing research operations. Along these lines, every one of those strategies which are utilized by the analyst over the span of concentrate the examination issue are named as research techniques.

Research methodology, then again, is a more extensive idea. It is an approach to efficiently take care of the examination issue. It might be comprehended as a study of considering how investigate is done logically. In it, we think about the different strides that are for the most part embraced by a specialist in concentrate his exploration issue alongside the rationale behind them. It is, in this manner, essential for the analyst to know the exploration strategies/systems as well as the procedure. Analysts need to comprehend the suspicions hidden different strategies and they have to know the criteria by which they can choose that specific systems and methodology will be appropriate to specific issues and others won't. All this means that it is necessary for the researcher to design his methodology for his problem as the same may differ from problem to problem.

Thus the scope of research methodology is wider than that of research methods. In research methodology, the researcher not only talk of the research methods but also considers the logic behind the methods he use in the context of his research study and explains why he is using a particular method or technique.

4. Research Process

Research process comprises of a progression of activities or steps important to viably complete research and wanted sequencing of these means.

A brief description of the research process is as follows:

4.1. Formulating the Research Problem

At the very outset, the researcher must single out the problem he wants to study, i.e., he must decide the general area of interest or aspect of a subject matter that he would like to inquire into. Initially, the problem may be stated in a broad general way and then ambiguities, if any, relating to the problem be resolved. Then, the feasibility of a particular solution has to be considered before a working formulation of the problem can be set up. Essentially two steps are involved in formulating the research problem; viz., understanding the problem thoroughly and rephrasing the same into meaningful terms from an analytical point of view.

4.2. Extensive Literature Survey

Once the problem is formulated, the brief summary of it should be written down. It is compulsory for a research worker writing a thesis for a Ph.D. degree to write a synopsis of the topic and submit it to the necessary Committee or Research Board for approval. At this juncture, the researcher should undertake extensive literature survey connected with the problem. For this purpose, the abstracting and indexing journals and published or unpublished bibliographies are the first place to go to. Academic journals, conference proceedings, government reports, books etc., must be tapped depending on the nature of the problem.

4.3. Development of Working Hypotheses

After extensive literature survey, researcher should state in clear terms the working hypothesis or hypotheses. Working hypothesis is tentative assumption made in order to draw out and test its logical or empirical consequences. Research hypotheses are developed to provide the focal point of the research. The hypotheses also affect the manner in which tests must be conducted in the analysis of the data, and indirectly the quality of data which is required for the analysis. The hypothesis should be very specific and limited to the piece of research in hand because it has to be tested.

4.4. Preparing the Research Design

The research problem having been formulated in clear cut terms, the researcher will be required to prepare a research design; i.e., he will have to state the conceptual structure within which research would be conducted. The preparation of such a design facilitates research to be as efficient as possible yielding maximal information. In other words, the function of research design is to provide for the collection of relevant evidence with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. But how all these can be achieved depends mainly on the research purpose. The research purposes may be grouped into four categories; viz., (i) Exploration, (ii) Description, (iii) Diagnosis, and (iv) Experimentation. A flexible research design which provides opportunity for considering many aspects of a problem is considered appropriate if the

purpose of the research study is that of exploration. But when the purpose happens to be an accurate description of a situation or of an association between variables, the suitable design will be one that minimises bias and maximises the reliability of the data collected and analysed.

4.5. Execution of the Project

The execution of the project is a very important step in the research process. If the execution of the project proceeds on correct lines, the data to be collected would be adequate and dependable. The researcher should see that the project is executed in a systematic manner and in time.

4.6. Analysis of Data

After the data have been collected, the researcher turns to the task of analysing them. The analysis of data requires a number of closely related operations such as establishment of categories, the application of these categories to raw data through coding, tabulation and then drawing statistical inferences.

4.7. Hypothesis Testing

After analysing the data as stated above, the researcher is in a position to test the hypotheses, if any, he had formulated earlier. Do the facts support the hypotheses or they happen to be contrary is the usual question which should be answered while testing hypotheses.

4.8. Generalisations and Interpretation

If the hypothesis is tested and upheld several times, it may be possible for the researcher to arrive at generalisation; i.e., to build a theory. As a matter of fact, the real value of research lies in its ability to arrive at certain generalisations. If the researcher has no hypothesis to start with, he might seek to explain his findings on the basis of some theory. It is known as interpretation. The process of interpretation may quite often trigger off new questions which in turn may lead to further researches.

4.9. Preparation of the Report or the Thesis

Finally, the researcher has to prepare the report of what has been done by him. Writing of report must be done with great care keeping in view the following:

(a) The layout of the report should be as follows:

(i) The preliminary pages; (ii) the main text and (iii) the end matter. In the preliminary pages, the report should carry title and date followed by acknowledgements and foreword. The main text of the report should have the following parts:

(i) Introduction: It should contain a clear statement of the objective of the research and an explanation of the methodology adopted in accomplishing the research. The scope of the study along with various limitations should as well be stated in this part.

(ii) Summary of findings: After introduction there would appear a statement of findings and recommendations

in non-technical language. If the findings are extensive, they should be summarized.

(iii) Main report: The main body of the report should be presented in logical sequence and broken down into readily identifiable sections.

(iv) Conclusion: Towards the end of the main text, the researcher should again put down the results of his research clearly and precisely. In fact, it is the final summing up.

At the end of the report, appendices should be enlisted in respect of all technical data. Bibliography, i.e. list of books, journals, reports, etc. consulted, should also be given in the end. Index should also be given specially in a published research report.

(b) The report should be written in a concise and objective style in simple language avoiding vague expressions such as 'it seems,' 'there may be', and the like.

(c) Charts and illustrations in the main report should be used only if they present the information more clearly and forcibly.

5. Benchmark of Good Research

Whatever might be the sorts of research works and studies, one thing that is vital is that they all meet on the shared opinion of logical strategy utilized by them.

One expects scientific research to satisfy the following criteria.

(i) The purpose of the research should be clearly defined and common concepts be used.

(ii) The research procedure should be defined in sufficient detail.

(iii) The procedural design of the research should be carefully planned to yield results that are as objective as possible.

(iv) The analysis of the data should be sufficiently adequate to reveal its significance and the methods of analysis used should be appropriate. The validity and reliability of the data should be checked carefully.

(v) Conclusions should be confined to those justified by the data of the research and limited to those for which the data provide an adequate basis.

In other words, the qualities of a good research are as under:

(i) **Good research is systematic**: It means that research is structured with specified steps to be taken in a specified sequence in accordance with the well-defined set of rules.

(ii) **Good research is logical**: This implies that research is guided by the rules of logical reasoning and the logical process of induction and deduction are of great value in carrying out research. Induction is the process of reasoning from a part to the whole whereas deduction is the process of reasoning from some premise to a conclusion which follows from that very premise. In fact, logical reasoning makes research more meaningful in the context of decision making.

(iii) **Good research is empirical**: It means that the research is related basically to one or more aspects of a real situation and deals with concrete data that provides a basis for external validity to research results.

(iv) **Good research is replicable**: This characteristic allows research results to be verified by replicating the study and thereby building a sound basis for decisions.
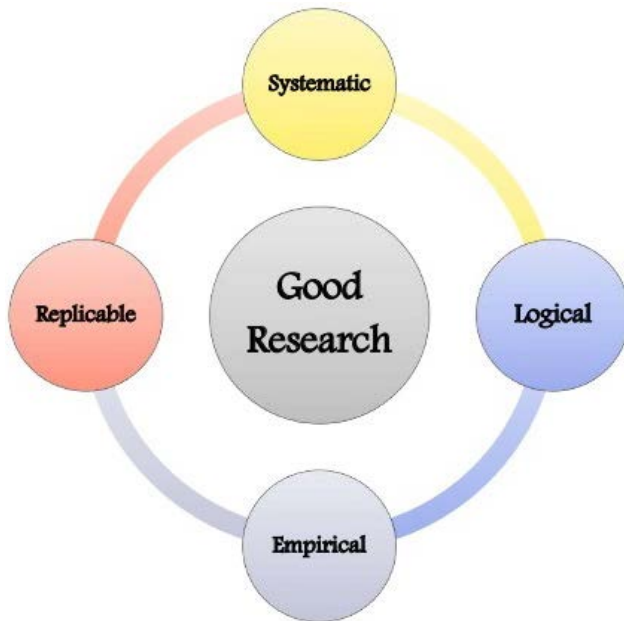

Figure 1. Good Research Graph

6. Conclusion

Researchers and Scientists in Iran are confronting a few issues while seeking after their examination. The absence of logical preparing in the approach of research is an incredible hindrance for scientists in our nation. There is paucity of competent researchers in our country. Many researchers take a loop in the dark without knowing the research methods and unreliable the research done without knowing the models of scientific research methodology, the research done in this way cannot be used by other researchers. Also there is an insufficient interaction between the university research departments on one side and industrial/business/government departments and research institutions on the other side. So efforts should be made to develop satisfactory liaison among all concerned for better and realistic researches. The library management and functioning is not satisfactory at many places and much of the time and energy of researchers are spent in tracing out the books, journals, reports, etc. So, for quality research, all these problems are required to be eliminated from our research organizations.

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