

Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the various methods--whether procedures or processes--by which research is developed and conducted.

Research can be defined as “an activity that involves finding out, in a more or less systematic way, things you did not know” (Walliman and Walliman, 2011, p.7).

“Methodology is the philosophical framework within which the research is conducted or the foundation upon which the research is based” (Brown, 2006).

Research Methodology chapter of a research describes research methods, approaches and designs in detail highlighting those used throughout the study, justifying my choice through describing advantages and disadvantages of each approach and design taking into account their practical applicability to our research.

O’Leary (2004, p.85) describes methodology as the framework which is associated with a particular set of paradigmatic assumptions that we will use to conduct our research. Allan and Randy (2005) insist that when conducting a research methodology should meet the following two criteria:

Firstly, the methodology should be the most appropriate to achieve objectives of the research.

Secondly, it should be made possible to replicate the methodology used in other researches of the same nature

The differences between objectivist and subjectivist dimensions are presented by Cohen et al (2007) as taken from Greenfield (1975) in the following manner:

Dimensions of comparison	Objectivist	Subjectivist
Philosophical basis	Realism – the world exists and can be studied as it is	Idealism – the world exists, but is studied differently by different people
Role of social science	Exploring universal laws of the society and the behaviour of people within it	Exploring how the world is interpreted by different people
Basic units of social reality	Society or organisation(s)	Individuals
Comprehension methods	Studying the type and nature of various relationships that allow the collectivity to exist	Studying subjective meanings that individuals impose upon their actions
Theory	A rational construction that has been proposed by researchers in order to explain the human behaviour	Sets of meanings used by individuals in order to interpret their world and behaviour
Research	Validation of theory through experimentation or quasi-experimentation	Looking for meaningful relationships and establishing the consequences of actions
Methodology	The use of quantitative analysis and mathematical methods	The analysis and interpretation of reality
Society	Is managed by a set of general values, rules and regulations	Is managed on the basis of values possessed by people with power

The most comprehensive information regarding vital aspects of methodology is provided by Jackson (2011) that can be summarised in the following table:

Goal met	Research methods	Advantages/disadvantages
<i>Description</i>	Observational method Case study method Survey method	Allows description of behaviour(s) Does not support reliable predictions Does not support cause-and-effect explanations
<i>Prediction</i>	Correlational method Quasi-experimental method	Allows description of behaviour(s) Supports reliable predictions from one variable to another Does not support cause-and-effect explanations
<i>Explanation</i>	Experimental method	Allows description of behaviour(s) Supports reliable predictions from one variable to another Supports cause-and-effect explanations

Source: (Jackson, 2011)

References

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