

COURSE : DISASTER MANAGEMENT (MA/ MSc PART I)

Paper : VI

Prepared by : Prof. B. K. Mishra, Course coordinator

Topic : Primary & Secondary Sources of Data

INTRODUCTION

The basic data has a direct affect on the answers to the various questions and hence the source of the data is very much important as it provides the necessary information. The various sources of the data can be summarized as follows –

Primary sources – These types of the sources refer to the first hand sources or the original sources at the hands of a researcher, which is not collected in the past.

Collection of the primary data can be done with the help of the principle sources of the observation and also the surveys. Primary data in very simple and general language can be defined as the first hand information relating to any type of the research that has been gathered or collected by the researcher or by any of his assistant or an agent.

This type of the data helps in the original investigations and observations, which automatically further leads to the achievement of the various useful and meaningful results. A very important point to be kept in mind about these types of results obtained, which are based on the primary data are bound to be empirical in nature and also play a very critical and defining role in the research methodology.

If the primary data that has been collected and compiled is not bias in the nature acts as a tool of great utility value as then this type of the data becomes very much reliable, accurate and dependable in nature that ultimately helps a great deal in carrying out the various specified investigations.

Once this primary data is used the original features or the characteristics of these data diminish resulting in the formation of the secondary data.

Hence it can be said that the data which acts as primary data at one point of time is bound to become secondary data at some stage or time in the future.

Methods of the collection of the primary data can be categorized as –

Observation – In general terms observation can be defined as the process involving the collection of the data by either viewing or listening or both. The best method in this category is to directly and personally observe something to get meaningful data this method is also called as the Direct Personal Observation. In this type of the observation the situation is observed by the researcher in order to collect data relevant to the research. If the observation is without any bias the data that is collected with the help of this type of method acts as the most reliable information.

Observation is also a very cheap method and then also is very effective in its nature of working this method is a very old one data collected in the past about the human race, the environment etc used this method only.

But a major drawback of this type of method is that with the help of observation one is not able to quantify the data and also one cannot reach to some concrete solutions on the basis of the data collected by this method. So it can be said that observation method should generally be used for carrying out hypothesis testing.

Questionnaire and Schedule – With the help of this type of method, data is collected by getting questionnaires completed by the various respondents. This method of questionnaire and schedule is generally employed in order to collect the primary data in a very systematic manner. A questionnaire can be defined as a schedule having a number of coherent questions related to the topic which is being studied. A questionnaire acts as a formulated series of the questions and helps in the collection of the information directly by the investigator himself. A schedule can be defined as the collection of the details in a tabulated form and can be sometimes identical to the questionnaire.

Types of Questionnaire –

Structured questionnaire –

- Consists of definite, concrete and pre ordinate questions.
- Has some additional questions as well, limited to those necessary for the classification of the inadequate answers.
- Is segmented in nature.
- Provides information under given titles and the sub titles.
- Helps in getting accurate response and apt information.
- Saves time and also the energy.

Non Structured questionnaire –

- Is very simple in nature.
- Is non segmented.
- Has no sub division.
- Can be used for very simple types of studies.

Codified questionnaire –

- Expected answers are given in the code numbers.
- Very easy for carrying out the processing.
- Very suitable and also very convenient for the informant.

Un Codified questionnaire –

- Very simple in nature.
- Consist of no codification.
- Codification may be sometimes made at the time of compilation but only if it is necessary.

Experimentation – Forms a very commonly used and very popular ingredient of the research process, being used in the physical sciences for a long time. An experiment is the process of studying the various aspects of the relationships between the independent and the dependent variables in a controlled situation. It acts as a test or a trial method in order to test a hypothesis in a laboratory.

Stimulation – Stimulation can be defined as the technique used for performing the various sampling experiments on the model of the systems. According to Abelson, stimulation is “the exercise of a flexible imitation of processes and outcomes for the purpose of clearing or explaining the underlying mechanisms involved.”

Stimulation is the form of observational method acting as the theoretical model of the elements, relations and the processes.

This method is very widely used in the war strategies and the tact business problems etc.. It is also used in the various economical problems, political problems, and behavioral problems and also in the social problems.

Interview method – This method acts as a very important and a critical way to collect data involving a very planned and a very systematic conversation that takes place between the interviewer/ investigator and the respondent. By this one is able to get very suitable information related to a specific research problem. By this method of data collection one can get a very suitable range of data having both demographic as well as the social characteristics or any one of them.

In today's world, most people like to talk rather than to write so this method is very much preferred compared to other methods of the data collection. By this method one can get a very deep and in depth view of the problem, hence helps in probing into the problem efficiently.

Projective Techniques – The various direct methods are generally based on some assumptions, for e.g. the direct methods like the personal interview, telephone interview etc pre suppose about a person that he is willing to provide some important information about his own behavior, beliefs, feelings etc.. But this is not the case in all the aspects.

There may be some persons who may not give any type of information about themselves or may not give their opinion in a true sense.

In such cases these techniques play a very vital role as these are not dependent on the subject's self insight.

2. Secondary sources – Data can be referred to be secondary in nature if the information provided by the data is not related to the purpose of the research project work i.e. secondary data accounts to the information for the various other purposes and not the purpose involved in the given research work. Secondary data is readily available and the researcher himself has no control over the shape of the data as it is given shape by the others. This type of data is based on the second – hand information i.e. the data that has been collected, compiled and presented in the past by some other company or group and is now being used in the various investigation procedures, this type of data is referred to as the secondary data.

Methods of the collection of the secondary data can be categorized as

Internal –

- Involves data that a company is already having.
- This type of data is collected by the company in routine.
- This data is used by the company itself.
- Data collected by such method is always in tune and regard with the research operation's purpose.

External –

- Involves data collected by the individuals.
- Data collected acts as a very useful and a meaningful tool for the researcher in carrying out the various research operations.
- Further are of two types – personal sources and the public sources.

Personal Sources – These type of sources for the collection of the secondary data generally involve –

- (a) Autobiographies
- (b) Diaries
- (c) Letters
- (d) Memoirs

ii. Public Sources – These are further of two types –

A. Unpublished – Due to various reasons sometimes the data is not at all published and some examples of such sources can be reports of inquiry commissions, report of special inquiry etc.

B. Published – Such sources include the following –

- (a) Books
- (b) Journals
- (c) Newspapers
- (d) Reports of the government departments
- (e) Reports of the autonomous institutes

Advantages of the secondary data

1. Collection of such data is very economical.
2. Is available quickly.
3. Saves a lot of time.
4. Helps in verifying the primary data.
5. Leads to widening of the data base.

Disadvantages of the secondary data

1. There may be some times when this data is not able to provide the necessary information.
2. Data may not be accurate.
3. The data may not be latest.
4. Data may not be reliable in nature.
5. Has a limited utility.
6. Such data based on the unpublished sources may not be obtained by everyone.