

COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON RESEARCHERS WHILE CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

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ABSTRACT:

The Covid-19 pandemic has induced a heightened sense of digital presence in our everyday lives. Within such a context, I will find out the relevance of humanistic research methodology such as interviewing and how it impacted the researcher. It is also the digital world that made it possible for researchers to conduct the research. It's secondary research that I have done to know about the demerits that researchers faced during the pandemic. The outcome of how the researcher faced the problem and still tried to get the answers to the question. Though we see that the answers were not so appropriate and for this, the researchers struggled. The entire paper picturizes the difficulties one faces while conducting interviews online and via telephone. Despite there being some advantages of interviews digitally but disadvantages are also explained with examples.

KEYWORDS:

Interviews, Structured, Unstructured, Researchers, Respondents, Ethics, Technology.

INTRODUCTION:

Covid-19 has flourished our network society. It has impacted an increase in digital presence in everyone's life. Be it online classes or online business, technology has played a huge role. Despite the huge role of technology, this pandemic has also affected researchers from conducting humanistic research. The interview is one of the humanistic research methodologies which helps to understand individual lives. For conducting humanistic research, we can use an interpretative paradigm for understanding human subjectivity through the help of interviews.

DISCUSSIONS:

As we know the interview is the most powerful tool and an oral method of asking questions to obtain answers pertinent to research problems. This process of taking interviews got constrained in this covid 19. The strict implementation of covid 19 measures such as lockdown and social distancing have constrained the researcher from taking face-to-face interviews. The respondents are also not willing to meet the researcher physically. For this reason, the researchers are bound to conduct interviews through the digital platform by taking virtual interviews or interviews via telephone communication. These online interviews have made researchers stick to the method of structured interviews. In structured interviews, a researcher asks respondents some series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories. Whereas, the unstructured interview is an in-depth interview that is impossible without physical face-to-face interviews and observations done by the researcher. Through unstructured interviews, researchers get appropriate results but the structured interviews possess a variety of errors to be it in respondents' behavior, nature of the task, sequence of wording, or questioning technique. This happened in the pandemic due to less time and virtual process of interview, the researchers are conducting the structured interview and their answers were not so appropriate. The researchers are also bound to maintain the ethical concerns while taking interviews virtually or through phones.

EXAMPLE 1:

Researchers are involuntarily part of this pandemic situation. For instance, a survey conducted in Bihar, India on child health and impact on women lives in covid 19. The researchers while writing this research article shared their experiences. Researchers intended to take telephone interviews due to the pandemic situation and the telephone interview results in absence of a visual image that lacks the data quality that the researcher collects. While taking interviews the interviewer should speak in the local dialect to build rapport but that was not possible during that pandemic time so many of the women hesitated and children were unable to answer and understand the interviewers' dialect. For building up a rapport with the respondents the researchers worked hard to explain the purpose, benefits of the research and this was done repeatedly. The interviewers tried their best throughout the study to safeguard and maintain data security. Conducting interviews based on respondents' convenience

was an advantage of phone-based data collection. The interviewers had to work hard by going through the recordings repeatedly to get more clarity of the interviews taken.

Sometimes there might not be enough lucidity of the data collected and that makes errors in the results. Thus, due to this pandemic situation, the researchers have to face hardships while conducting interviews.

EXAMPLE 2:

Another example of interviewing is when the researcher takes interviews in the United States. The researchers were surveying the impact of covid 19 on the mental problems of college students. The researcher designed a Semi-structured survey which means few questions are pre-determined while some are not designed in advance. They researched through zoom and audio recording. The researcher took the ethical consent from the participants and they were also asked to respond to a questionnaire about their demographic information. Many of them didn't feel reliant on the virtual interview session, hence the sample size of their study was small. Some of the participants don't want to speak about mental problems because of insecurity and lack of trust. So, the researcher didn't get correct information which lacks the quality of data. The researcher was also unable to build trust within the interviewee. As the researchers were unable to go to the field to conduct the study, they focused on only one university so the findings can't be generalized for all students across the world. Hence the study was not so appropriate, researchers need to work further and must take face-to-face interviews in the future to get a proper result that will work for countries across the world.

CONCLUSION:

Therefore, interviews in this digital platform may not always be accurate. But the advancement of technology also helped many of the researchers to conduct their studies in these exigencies. Technology also helped many companies to recruit their employees through virtual interviews. The rise of the pandemic impacted the entire nation but with time researchers will get accustomed to conducting interviews through the digital platform.

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