

Course title: Qualitative Research Methods in Management				
Course code: MPP 173		No. of credits: 2	L-T-P: 27-00-06	Learning hours: 30
Pre-requisite course code and title (if any): NA				
Department: Department of Business and Sustainability				
Course coordinator:			Course instructor:	
Contact details:				
Course type: Core			Course offered in: Semester II	
Course description: In taking critical decisions, managers need to be aware of scientific tools and techniques that can be used to good effect to minimise the level of risk involved in taking such decisions. Some of these tools focus on quantitative, statistics backed methodologies while others focus on qualitative tools and techniques which aim at using semi and unstructured information to arrive at solutions. This is especially useful in many situations where problem definition, hypothesis development or even solution identification is highly nuanced and hence not easily measurable with statistical tools. This course focuses on qualitative tools and techniques which lean heavily on right brain, non-sequential approaches to understand a problem and identify solutions. As complexity of problems faced in today's world multiply, qualitative methodologies, if implemented with the right understanding and in specific situations, complementarily with quantitative methods in certain other situations, can prove to be very effective in decision making. The course aims to arm managers with knowledge of such tools and techniques and helps them understand how and when they need to be used to minimize risk and improve creative ways of solving both long term, strategic problems as well as short-term, tactical problems. There will be a strong emphasis on applied work with focus on applying the tools and techniques in varied real life decision environments including project work and case studies.				
Course objectives: The main goals of this course are to prepare the students: 1. To identify, conceptualize, plan and execute a qualitative research project 2. To apply latest tools and techniques available 3. To build a credible, objective and structured approach to problem solving to enable good decision making (especially of problems that are amenable to qualitative research approaches).				
Course contents				
Module	Topic	L	T	P
1	Understanding Qualitative Research Basic principle of qualitative research; integration with aspects like anthropology, sociology & psychology Why to use and when to use it (vis-à-vis Quantitative methodologies)	2		
2	Qualitative methodologies & rationale: Focus groups Vs Depth interviews Vs ethnographic processes Variations in group settings: traditional, conflict, specialist, parallel, clinics, creative workshops; Ethnography and its uses; Broad methods of target selection and sampling	4		
3	Translating problems to research issues: Selection of qualitative Vs quantitative, methodology rationale & sampling rationale	4		
4	Qualitative research typologies and exploration Approaching different issues at different stages of product/service development cycle (Exploratory Vs diagnostic Vs evaluative researches) Qualitative data collection process Qualitative facilitation techniques: use of projectives, synectics, metaphor elicitation Data collection to actionable insights	7		6
5	Unique research areas:Rural research Media exploration & Content/ programming development Retail research Customer segmentation New product development Social research	2		
6	Emerging challenges of research Fusion of qualitative & quantitative and broad role of consultancy Political research New media scenario like Internet, mobiles and their impact on qualitative research Data collection limitations	2		

7	Quiz and others	2		
8	Class presentations(Group of 4)	4		
	Total	27	0	6

Evaluation Criteria:

Test 1: Class participation – 5%

Test 2: Quiz – 10%

Test 3: Assignment – 20%

Test 4: Business research group work – 25% (paper submission 20% & presentation 5%)

Test 5: Written exam – 40%

Learning outcomes:

1. Develop the knowledge and skills required to specify, evaluate and utilise different types of unstructured and semi-structured information.

2. Develop a competence in:

a) Problem formulation, hypothesis generation in situations where exploratory nature of research work plays a critical role;

b) Implementing the process of research design through collection of data methods like focus groups, depth interviews, observation and other advanced data collection methods;

c) Analysing the semi-structured and unstructured data so collected; and Executing projects with a focus on decision making and action.

Pedagogical approach:

A combination of class-room interactions, assignments and Presentation.

Materials:

Required textbooks

Designing Qualitative Research by Catherine Marshall, Gretchen B. Rossman (Paperback - 2006/03/07)

Suggested readings

Basics of Qualitative Research by Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss Qualitative Research Design by Joseph A. Maxwell

Reflexive Methodology by Mats Alvesson and KajSkoldberg Qualitative Research (Journal by Sage Publications)

Qualitative Research Journal (Journal by Emerald Group Publishing)

Additional information (if any):

Specific tasks:

Client questions: Selection of methodology, target selection & sampling and rationale for the same Developing discussion tools for data collection process

Analysis frameworks, especially decoding what specific ‘qualitative data’ means – Ex: user imagery, brand world etc.

Complete case studies at the final level (approach, objectives, designing, questioning process, data collection, analysis and final presentation)

– Including conducting mock focus groups, interviews, ethnographic observations

Student responsibilities:

Attendance, feedback, discipline: as per university rules.

Prepared by: Ritika Mahajan & Montu Bose

Course reviewers:

Mr.P.S.Narayan, Ecoeye, Social and Community Initiatives, Wipro

Mr Brij Sethi, Ecoeye, Social and Community Initiatives, Wipro

Mr Rakesh Sharma, Strategy & Business Development, Philips Electronics India Limited

Mr Pawan Deep Singh, Strategy & Business Development, Philips Electronics India Limited