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Research Paper Management

Management Methodology for Research Projects

KASETTI VENKATESWARLU HOD IN COMMERCE DEPARTMENT, AG & SG SIDDHARTHA DEGREE COLLEGE, VUYYRURU-521165

ABSTRACT

Research Methodology means the complete strategy and approach towards the objective. Methodology is a body of practices, procedures, and rules used by those who work in a discipline or engage in an inquiry, using a set of working methods. Research Methodology essentially requires support and application of an integrated management methodology for achieving a desired accomplishment.

The management methodology essentially is of a systems approach, consisting of: strategy, planning, resources optimization, feedback and control. Any research work has to be dealt with appropriate project management methods. This is because research is all about future, unknown, uncertainty, change and working under constraints with many agencies about which the researcher has little control. The essentials ingredients such as work identification inform of activities and components, field work arrangements and practice of ethical code/guidelines at every stage of research project are discussed suitably.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

A research methodology defines what the activity of research is, how to proceed, how to measure progress, and what constitutes success. This means management of research. In the contest of research management, it is all about:

- Strategy.
- Planning.
- Arranging resources.
- Providing appropriate technology support.
- Monitoring.
- Control and accomplishment.

Research methodology consists of various methods to be used and applied. Method means manner of procedure, especially a regular and systematic way of accomplishing something; orderly arrangement of parts or steps to accomplish an end. Research accomplishment requires a set of integrated management tools with a system approach.

The important tools of management that have to be adopted for the research problem on hand include the following:

- List of detail activities and elements required to be planned and executed.
- Providing operational support for conducting field work.
- Corporate management support in the form of: - research strategies, - allocation of necessary money, - catering of required time duration, - providing guidelines of ethical practices to be adapted in conducting the research project, - providing necessary training and skills required to carry out the research work as planned,

ACTIVITIES AND COMPONENTS FOR RESEARCH PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Brief descriptions of activities and components are as presented below:

Purpose to be demonstrated:
Significance to current societal issues; contributions to current knowledge base or policy; production of a set of outcomes (report, recommendations); research questions.

Relevance to be demonstrated:
Literature review; significance of the problem; need for development.

Feasibility to be demonstrated:
Availability of resources – time, financial and human; list of activities to carry out research method; acknowledgements of any limitation.

Accuracy to be demonstrated:
Congruence with theoretical predictions, available statistical data and scores of similar studies achieved in different localizations; identifying indicators; reference to experts.

Accountability to be demonstrated:
Account of actions taken and decisions made; justifications for any digression from original research design; acknowledgements of limitations of the activities carried out.

Research Project Management Tools:
Resources plan; activity plan; monitoring; standards.

Project Document:
Project development flowchart; understand each component of the Document.

Terms of Reference:
Objectives, roles and responsibilities; required and desirable qualification.

Contract:
Rights/obligations of the researcher; clauses to avoid problematic ambiguities.

Training:
Research context; research objective; population of interest; methods of survey distribution, completion and processing; interview and note-taking skills.

Research Methodology:
Methods and approach to be applied in the study.

Survey method:
To be chosen as appropriate- Checklist for code and guide lines of Ethics: Respect the laws and cultural norms of the society; Conduct the research with professional integrity, honesty, transparency, objectivity.

Pre research activities:
Prepare guidelines (ethical etc.), remunerations / administrative arrangements, action plans; involvement from local communities.

During research activities:
Ensure that the data collection occurs in a neutral and secure setting; Give sufficient information about the nature of the research study to the participant.

Post-research activities:
Treat all information obtained from participants as confidential; pro-

tect the anonymity of participants; Undertake reasonable measures to maintain the security of data- Checklist for planning interviews: Allocate time for: Creation of an interview's guideline – list of topics to be discussed; arranging a suitable time and place for the interview; Conducting interviews.

Transcription and analysis:
Documentation and records- Check list for conducting interviews: Follow established process.

Monitoring system:
Key issues; Underlying meanings; cost; time; thanking respondents.

Analyzing Interviews:
Consider effects of interview context; - Checklist for self-administered Questionnaires: Planning time; Pilot; Modifications – Checklist for report writing: Clear, logical, organized structure, Defined context.

PREPARATION FOR FIELD WORK

Some of the important components to be structured and made ready as per pre decider strategies and guide lines are as follows:

Field research / primary market research infrastructure – Communication: media, technology communication skills and training –Design of questionnaire – Decision on parameters such as: objectivity; accuracy of measurement; validity; reliability; - Training and prepare the team on basic interviewing principles. – Checklist: prepare and adhere of basic reminders of what not to –Monitoring system: prepare plans and monitoring system for good filed work management:

ANALYTICAL APPROACH FOR APPROPRIATE SELECTION OF RESEARCH DESIGN

The approach consists of considering and analyzing following important items: - Nature scope and object of enquiry; Availability of funds:; Time factor; Precision required: - Understanding basic purpose of the assignment.- Make a comparative study of basic survey design methods. – To decide on the mode of data collection, consider the following factors: Population characteristics of the sample, types of questions question topic, response rate, cost and time – Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of various data collection and interviewing approaches.

Factors to be considered for comparison of data collection methods and decision making are: variable-mail/phone; cost; response rate; sampling need, address/telephone number; control participation length of questionnaire; sensitive question; open-ended questions; complexity of questionnaire possibility of interviewer bias.

CODE AND GUIDE LINES FOR ETHICS IN RESEARCH

Research ethics involves the application of fundamental ethical principles to a variety of topics involving scientific research. These include the design and implementation of research involving human experimentation, animal experimentation, whistle blowing; regulation of research, etc.

Ethics are norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Ethics' focuses on the disciplines that study standards of conduct and ethical norms in research. The norms are to promote the aims of research, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. Ethical standards promote the values that are essential to collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness. Norms of research promote a variety of other important moral and social values, such as social responsibility, human rights, and animal welfare, compliance with the law, and health and safety. Ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human and animal subjects, students, and the public.

Codes and policies for research ethics: many different professional associations, government agencies, and universities have adopted specific codes, rules and policies relating to research ethics. The following is a general summary of some ethical principles that various codes address:

Honesty; Objectivity, strive to avoid bias; Integrity, keep your promises and agreements; Carefulness, avoid careless errors and negligence; Openness, hare – data, results, ideas; Respect for intellectual property; Confidentiality; Responsible publication; Social responsibility; ; Ethical decision making in research it is important to remember that ethics and law are not the same. An action may be legal but unethical.

CONCLUSION

All research is a practical activity requiring the exercise of judgment in context; it is not a matter of simply following methodological rules. The ultimate aims of research are to generate measurable and testable data / information, gradually adding to the accumulation of human knowledge.

It is important to remember that science and philosophy are interwined and essential elements of human advancement; both contribute to the way we view the world. Philosophy is the study of assumption, foundations, and the implications of science. Research is a scientific enabler to make: observation and description; make predictions; arrive at determination of causes; provide ability to explain and find new directions with validly and reliability.

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