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Used to describe characteristics of a phenomenon being studied Descriptive research is used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about how/when/why the characteristics occurred. Rather it addresses the "what" question (what are the characteristics of the population or situation being studied?).[1] The characteristics used to describe the situation or population are usually some kind of categorical scheme also known as descriptive categories. For example, the periodic table categorizes the elements. Scientists use knowledge about the nature of electrons, protons and neutrons to devise this categorical scheme. We now take for granted the periodic table, yet it took descriptive research to devise it. Descriptive research generally precedes explanatory research. For example, over time the periodic table's description of the elements allowed scientists to explain chemical reaction and make sound prediction when elements were combined. Hence, descriptive research cannot describe what caused a situation. Thus, descriptive research cannot be used as the basis of a causal relationship, where one variable affects another. In other words, descriptive research can be said to have a low requirement for internal validity. The description is used for frequencies, averages and other statistical calculations. Often the best approach, prior to writing descriptive research, is to conduct a survey investigation. Qualitative research often has the aim of description and researchers may follow up with examinations of why the observations exist and what the implications of the findings are. Social science research In addition, the conceptualizing of descriptive research (categorization or taxonomy) precedes the hypotheses of explanatory research.[2] (For a discussion of how the underlying conceptualization of exploratory research, descriptive research and explanatory research fit together, see: Conceptual framework.) Descriptive research can be statistical research. The main goal of this type of research is to describe the data and characteristics of what is being studied. The idea behind this type of research is to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. Although this research is highly accurate, it does not gather the causes behind a situation. Descriptive research is mainly done when a researcher wants to gain a better understanding of a topic. That is, analysis of the past as opposed to the future. Descriptive research is the exploration of the existing certain phenomena. The details of the facts won't be known. The existing phenomena's facts are not known to the person. Descriptive science Descriptive science is a category of science that involves descriptive research; that is, observing, recording, describing, and classifying phenomena. Descriptive research is sometimes contrasted with hypothesis-driven research, which is focused on testing a particular hypothesis by means of experimentation.[3] David A. Grimaldi and Michael S. Engel suggest that descriptive science in biology is currently undervalued and misunderstood: "Descriptive" in science is a pejorative, almost always preceded by "merely," and typically applied to the array of classical -ologies and -omies: anatomy, archaeology, astronomy, embryology, morphology, paleontology, taxonomy, botany, cartography, stratigraphy, and the various disciplines of zoology, to name a few. [...] First, an organism, object, or substance is not described in a vacuum, but rather in comparison with other organisms, objects, and substances. [...] Second, descriptive science is not necessarily low-tech science, and high tech is not necessarily better. [...] Finally, a theory is only as good as what it explains and the evidence (i.e., descriptions) that supports it.[4] A negative attitude by scientists toward descriptive science is not limited to biological disciplines: Lord Rutherford's notorious quote, "All science is either physics or stamp collecting," displays a clear negative attitude about descriptive science, and it is known that he was dismissive of astronomy, which at the beginning of the 20th century was still gathering largely descriptive data about stars, nebulae, and galaxies, and was only beginning to develop a satisfactory integration of these observations within the framework of physical law, a cornerstone of the philosophy of physics.[according to whom?] Descriptive versus design sciences Ilkka Niiniluoto has used the terms "descriptive sciences" and "design sciences" as an updated version of the distinction between basic and applied science. According to Niiniluoto, descriptive sciences are those that seek to describe reality, while design sciences seek useful knowledge for human activities.[5] See also Methodology Normative science Procedural knowledge Scientific method References ^ Shields, Patricia and Rangarajan, N. 2013. A Playbook for Research Methods: Integrating Conceptual Frameworks and Project Management. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press. See Chapter 4 for an in-depth discussion of descriptive research. ^ Shields, Patricia and Hassan Tajalli. 2006. "Intermediate Theory: The Missing Link in Successful Student Matters by D.A. Grimaldi & M.S. Engel ^ Heikki J. Koskinen et al. (eds.) Science – A Challenge to Philosophy? - Peter Lang GmbH, Frankfurt am Man, 2006. Archived 2011-06-10 at the Wayback Machine article The scope and limits of value-freedom in science - Panu Raatikainen External links Descriptive Research from BYU linguistics department Retrieved from " There are many types of research, but today we want to talk to you about one, in particular, that will give you a new perspective on your objects of study; for that, we have created this guide with everything you need to know about explanatory research. After all, what is the purpose of explanatory research? What is explanatory research? Explanatory research is a method developed to investigate a phenomenon that had not been studied before or had not been well explained previously in a proper way. Its main intention is to provide details about where to find a small amount of information. With this method, the researcher gets a general idea and uses research as a tool to guide them quicker to the issues that we might address in the future. Its goal is to find the why and what for an object of study. Explanatory research is responsible for finding the why of the events by establishing cause-effect relationships. Its results and conclusions constitute the deepest level of knowledge, according to author Fdidas G. Arias. In this sense, explanatory studies can deal with the determination of causes (post-facto research) and effects (experimental research) through hypothesis testing. Characteristics Among the most critical characteristics of explanatory research are: It allows for increased understanding of a specific topic. Although it does not offer conclusive results, the researcher can find why a phenomenon occurs. It uses secondary research as a source of information, such as literature or published articles that are carefully chosen to have a broad and balanced understanding of the topic. It allows the researcher to have a broad understanding of the topic and refine subsequent research questions to augment the study's conclusions. Researchers can distinguish the causes why phenomena arise during the research process and anticipate changes. Explanatory research allows them to replicate studies to give them greater depth and gain new insights into the phenomenon. Types of explanatory research The most popular methods of explanatory research: Literature research: It is one of the fastest and least expensive means of determining the hypothesis of the phenomenon and collecting information. It involves searching for literature on the internet and in libraries. It can, of course, be in magazines, newspapers, commercial and academic articles. In-depth interview: The process involves talking to a knowledgeable person about the topic under investigation. The in-depth interview is used to take advantage of the information offered by people and their experience, whether they are professionals within or outside the organization. Focus groups: Focus groups consist of bringing together 8 to 12 people who have information about the phenomenon under study and organizing sessions to obtain from these people various data that will help the research. Case studies: With this method, researchers can deal with carefully selected cases. Case analysis allows the organization to observe companies that have faced the same issue and deal with it more efficiently. Check out our library of QuestionPro Case Studies to learn more about how we help organizations conduct market research. Importance of explanatory research Explanatory research is conducted to help researchers study the problem in greater depth and understand the phenomenon efficiently. The primary use for explanatory research is problem-solving by finding the overlooked data that we had never investigated before. At the same time, it might not bring out conclusive data; it will allow us to understand the issue with more efficiency. In carrying out the research process, it is necessary to adapt to new findings and knowledge about the subject. Although it is impossible to obtain a conclusion, it is possible to explore the variables with a high level of depth. Explanatory research allows the researcher to become familiar with the topic to be examined and design theories to test them. Advantages and conclusions This method is precious for social research. It allows researchers to find a phenomenon we did not study in depth. Although it does not conclude such a study, it helps to understand the problem efficiently. It's essential to convey new data about a point of view on the study. People who conduct explanatory research do so to study the interaction of the phenomenon in detail. Therefore, it is vital to have enough information to carry it out. Finally, we invite you to refer to our market research guide. You can do incredible research and collect data free with our survey software. Get started now! LEARN MORE





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