

SES'S L.S.RAHEJA COLLEGE OF ARTS AND COMMERCE

Course: Mass Media Research

Unit: 1 & 2

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Relevance and scope of Mass Media Research**What is Research?**

Research is a derivative of the French word; Recherche means quest, search, pursuit and search for truth. In common dialect refers to a search for knowledge. It is a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge. It is systematized effort to gain new knowledge.

The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions or problems through the application of scientific procedures.

Objectives of Research

- To gain familiarity with a phenomenon
- To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or a group
- To test a hypothesis
- To find out the cause of a phenomenon
- To establish the cause and effect relationship between variable
- To explore new ideas and thoughts
- To experiment new methods of problem solving

Types of Research

- Descriptive research
- Ex-post facto research
- Applied research
- Conceptual research
- Qualitative research
- Quantitative research
- Empirical research
- Exploratory research
- Historical research

Scope of Mass Media Research

- Find out about Target audience
- Research thus aids decision making.
- Understand numbers: audience size, profits, or unit sales.
- three-step process to reach the goal of getting the highest number:
 1. Find out what the people want (customers, audience, readers, etc.).

2. Give it to them
3. Tell them that you gave it to them

In mass media research is an important criterion of decision making regardless of the media – print, broadcast, outdoor, etc.

Use of Research in different media forms:

- Electronic Media
- Print Media
- Advertising and Public Relations
- Internet

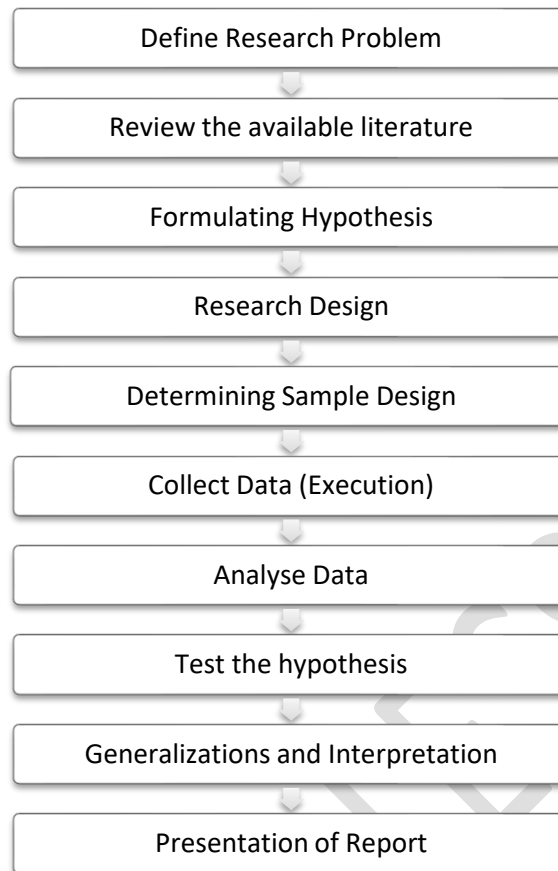
Research methods

Research methods may be understood as all those methods/techniques that are used for conduction of research. Research techniques refer to the behaviour and instruments we use in performing research operations such as making observations, recording data, techniques of processing data and the like and Research methods refer to the behaviour and instruments used in selecting and constructing research technique.

Research methodology

Research methodology is a way or approach to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically.

Steps involved in research process



Indicative questions for practice:

1. What is research?
2. What are the types of research?
3. Discuss the scope of research in depth.
4. Explain the importance of research.
5. What is Research methodology?
6. Explain the process of research in depth.

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Unit: 3 & 4

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Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations.

Some examples of when qualitative research is helpful include:

- Testing response to advertising messages and concepts
- Analyzing response to products and features
- Exploring what issues should be tested during quantitative research

What are some qualitative research methods?

- Focus Group Discussions
- Case Studies
- In-depth Interviews

Advantages of Qualitative Research:

- Qualitative methods in exploratory research is that use of open-ended questions and probing gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do.
- Qualitative methods allow the researcher the flexibility to probe initial participant responses – that is, to ask why or how.
- Useful for studying a limited number of cases in depth and provides understanding and description of people's personal experiences of phenomena
- Useful for describing complex phenomena
- Can determine how participants interpret constructs (e.g., self-esteem, IQ)
- Data are usually collected in naturalistic settings in qualitative research

Disadvantages of Qualitative Research:

- Knowledge produced might not generalize to other people or other settings (i.e., findings might be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study).
- It is difficult to make quantitative predictions.
- It generally takes more time to collect the data when compared to quantitative research.
- Data analysis is often time consuming.
- The results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies

Qualitative Research

Aliaga and Gunderson (2000), describes defines quantitative research as: Quantitative research is 'Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods.

Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into useable statistics.

Quantitative research is the method to use when:

- Measuring market size
- Analyzing demand of a new product
- Determining how many people exhibit a particular attitude or behavior
- Measuring the size of particular market segments

Typical quantitative data gathering strategies include:

- Experiments/clinical trials.
- Observing and recording well-defined events (e.g., counting the number of patients waiting in emergency at specified times of the day).
- Obtaining relevant data from management information systems.
- Administering surveys with closed-ended questions (e.g., face-to face and telephone interviews, questionnaires etc).

Advantages of Quantitative Research:

- Provides estimates of populations at large
- Indicates the extensiveness of attitudes held by people
- Provides results which can be condensed to statistics
- Allows for statistical comparison between various groups
- Has precision, is definitive and standardized.
- Measures level of occurrence, actions, trends, etc.
- Can answer such questions as "How many?" and "How often?"

Disadvantages of Quantitative Research

- No human perception and beliefs, thus it limits the researcher's understanding of why the population reacts in a certain way.
- Effective quantitative research usually requires a large sample size sometimes several thousand households. However, lack of resources sometimes makes large-scale research of this kind impossible
- In term of disaster survey, the shortcoming of quantitative data is that it fails to provide an in-depth description of the experience of the disaster upon the affected population.

Discovery of research problem, identifying dependent and independent variables, developing hypothesis

Problem Discovery

It involves a search for causation among symptoms, problems, and decisions.

Problem Definition

The first step in any marketing research project is to define the problem. In defining the problem, the researcher should take into account the purpose of the study, the relevant background information, what information is needed, and how it will be used in decision making.

Research Objective

The research objective is a statement, in as precise terminology as possible, of what information is needed.

Hypothesis

A tentative explanation for an observation, phenomenon or scientific problem that can be tested by further investigation is termed as hypothesis.

Types of hypothesis:

- Null hypothesis
- Barren hypothesis
- Relational hypothesis
- Descriptive hypothesis
- False hypothesis

Hypothesis Development

Development of an approach to the problem includes formulating an objective or theoretical framework, analytical models, research questions, hypotheses, and identifying characteristics or factors that can influence the research design.

Variable

The empirical counterpart of a construct or a concept is called a variable. They are of importance because they link the empirical with the theoretical.

Types of variable

1. Independent variable
2. Dependent variable

An independent variable is the treatment, the intervention, or the experimental activity that is manipulated or varied by the researcher during the research study in order to create an effect (i.e. change) on the dependent variable.

A dependent variable is the response, the behaviour, or the outcome that is predicted and measured in research.

Indicative questions for practice:

1. Explain Qualitative research
2. Explain quantitative research
3. Differentiate between qualitative and quantitative research
4. What is hypothesis?
5. Explain independent and dependent variable.
6. What is problem discovery in research?
7. What is research objective?

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Concept, types and uses of Research Designs

Research Design

According to David J Luck and Ronald S Rubin, "A research design is the determination and statement of the general research approach or strategy adopted for the particular project. It is the heart of planning. If the design adheres to the research objective, it will ensure that the client's needs will be served.

Research design means to prepare detailed plan and procedures for the conduct of the research project. A research design will typically include how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analysing data collected.

Functions of a research design:

- Identify the problem clearly and justify its selection.
- Review previously published literature dealing with the problem area.
- Clearly and explicitly specify hypotheses central to the problem selected.
- Clearly describe the data which will be necessary for an adequate test of the hypothesis and explain how such data will be obtained.
- Describe the methods of analysis which will be applied to the data in determining whether or not the hypotheses are false.

Types of Research Design:

1. Causal research design:

Causality studies may be thought of as understanding a phenomenon in terms of conditional statements in the form, "If X, then Y." This type of research is used to measure what impact a specific change will have on existing norms and assumptions.

2. Descriptive research design

Descriptive research designs help provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem; a descriptive study cannot conclusively ascertain answers to why.

3. Exploratory research design

An exploratory design also referred to as formulative research design is conducted about a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies to refer to or rely upon to predict an outcome.

Date Collection Methods

Primary Data Collection Methods:

1. Depth Interviews

Depth Interviews or In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. It is often described as a conversation with a purpose. It is an extensive dialogue between the researcher and the respondent.

2. Focus Groups

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group of participants is guided by a moderator who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst them. It is a form of group interviewing in which a small group – usually 10 to 12 people – is led by the moderator in a loosely structured discussion of various topics of interest.

3. Survey

Surveys represent one of the most common types of quantitative, social science research. In survey research, the researcher selects a sample of respondents from a population and administers a standardized questionnaire to them. The questionnaire, or survey, can be a written document that is completed by the person being surveyed, an online questionnaire, a face-to-face interview, or a telephone interview.

4. Observations

According to Oxford Concise Dictionary, observation means 'accurate watching, noting the phenomenon by which they occur in the nature with regard to the cause and effect of mutual relations.'

Observation is way of gathering data by watching behaviour, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. Observations can be overt or covert.

5. Experimentation

An experiment is a controlled study in which the researcher attempts to understand cause-and-effect relationships. The study is "controlled" in the sense that the researcher controls (1) how subjects are assigned to groups and (2) which treatments each group receives.

Secondary Data Collection Methods:

The secondary sources can be classified into two categories - Published and unpublished sources.

1. Published Sources

- Govt. Publications
- International Bodies
- Semi Govt. Publications
- Private Publications
- Reports of Committee and Commissions
- Newspapers and Magazines
- Research Scholars

2. Unpublished Source

- There are certain records maintained properly by the govt, agencies, private offices and firms. These data are not published.

Literature Review

A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers. Mostly it is part of the introduction to an essay, research report, or thesis. In writing the literature review, your purpose is to convey to your reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

Indicative questions for practice:

1. What is research design?
2. Explain exploratory research design
3. Explain descriptive research design.
4. Explain causal research design.
5. What are the different methods of primary research?
6. Write a note on secondary data collection methods.
7. Write a note on literature review.

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Designing Questionnaire

Questionnaire

A questionnaire is simply a 'tool' for collecting and recording information about a particular issue of interest. It is made up of a list of questions, and may also include clear instructions and space for answers or administrative details.

Types of questionnaire:

1. Structured questionnaire
2. Unstructured questionnaire

Characteristics of a good questionnaire:

- Brief & limited questions
- Simple & clear
- Unambiguous questions
- No personal questions
- Use of proper words
- Only objective questions
- Sequence of questions
- Pre-testing
- Instructions
- Cross-examination
- Attractive

Types of Questions

- Open ended questions
- Closed ended questions
- Scaled questions
- Pictorial questionnaire
- Mixed questionnaire

Projective Techniques

Projective Techniques are indirect and unstructured methods of investigation or data collection.

Projective techniques are typically divided into five groups (Linzey, 1959):

1. Associative techniques
 - Word association test

- Successive word association test
2. Completion techniques
 - Sentence completion
 - Story completion
 3. Constructive techniques
 - Thematic Apperception test
 - Bubble drawing (cartoon method)
 4. Expressive techniques
 - Roleplay
 - Brand personification
 5. Choice / ordering techniques

Measurement Scales:

1. Nominal scale
2. Ordinal scale
3. Interval scale
4. Ratio scale

Attitude measurement scales

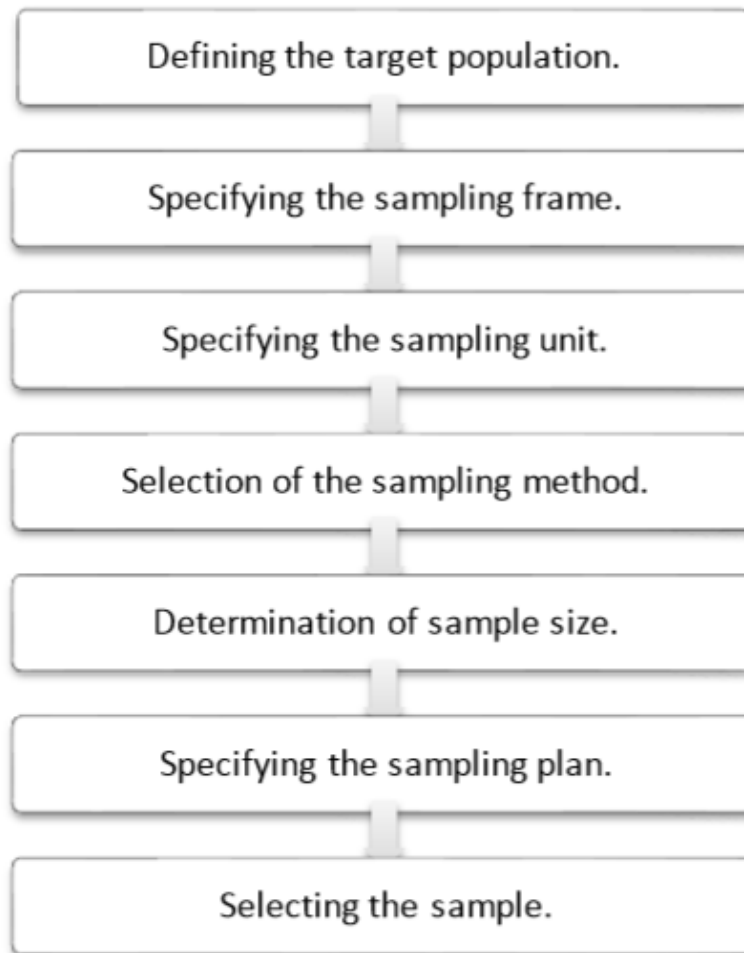
1. Likert scale
2. Semantic differential scale
3. Stapel's scale
4. Thurstone scale
5. Guttman scale

Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting units (e.g., people, organizations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen.

Sampling Process

An operational sampling process can be divided into seven steps as given below:



Probability Sampling techniques

- Random sampling
- Systematic sampling
- Stratified sampling
- Cluster sampling

Non-probability Sampling techniques

- Convenience sampling
- Judgmental sampling
- Quota sampling
- Snowball sampling

Indicative questions for practice:

1. What is a questionnaire?
2. What are the characteristics of a good questionnaire?
3. Explain projective techniques
4. What are measurement scales?
5. Explain attitude measurement scales.
6. Explain the process of sampling.
7. What are probability sampling techniques?
8. What are non-probability sampling techniques?

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Data Tabulation**Tabulation**

Tabulation is the systematic arrangement of the statistical data in columns or rows. It involves the orderly and systematic presentation of numerical data in a form designed to explain the problem under consideration. Tabulation helps in drawing the inference from the statistical figures.

Types of tabulation:

1. One-way table

ONE-WAY TABLE	
DIVISION	POPULATION (Millions)
State 1	10.875968
State 2	14.186954
State 3	12.994401

2. Two-way table

TWO-WAY TABLE			
DIVISION	POPULATION (Millions)		
	Male	Female	Total
State 1			
State 2			
State 3			

3. Two-way table

THREE-WAY TABLE									
DIVISION	POPULATION (Millions)								
	Male			Female			Total		
	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total
State 1									
State 2									
State 3									

Research Report

Preparation of a comprehensive, well-documented and appropriately referenced written research report is an essential part of a valid research experience.

The general guidelines that should be followed for any report or research paper are as follows:

- Consider the audience
- Be concise and precise
- Understand the results and draw conclusions

Stages of writing a research report:

- Preparing
- Collecting and organising information
- Planning Before writing the report, prepare a detailed plan in outline form.
- Writing the report

Structure of a research report

1. Preliminary pages
2. Main Text
 - Introduction
 - Statement of findings and recommendations
 - The results
 - The implications drawn from the results
 - The summary
3. End Matter

Applications of Research in Mass Media

There are five research areas in media research that has been developed:

- Antisocial and Prosocial Effects of Media Content
- Uses and Gratifications
- Agenda Setting by the Media
- Cultivation of Perceptions of Social Reality
- Social Impact of the Internet

Indicative questions for practice:

1. What is Data tabulation?
2. What are the types of Data tabulation?
3. Explain the structure of a research report.
4. What are the stages in writing a research report?
5. Explain in brief the applications of research in mass media.

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Unit: 11 & 12

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Introduction to Semiology

Semiology

Semiology or semiotics is a science of study of signs, symbols or signification. It is the study of all patterned communication systems, both linguistic and non-linguistic. Thus it would reveal what signs consist of and what laws govern them.

Semiotic Approach to construction of meanings

Semiotics is commonly defined as the study of signs or symbols and their transmission through and between cultures. Often also studied is the relation between the sign and not just what it represents, but also how the connection is formed between the thing represented and that particular sign—why is that sign that sign.

Study of construction of meanings evolves from semiotics.

A sign can be a word, a sound, or a visual image. It can mean anything that people may agree that it means, and it can mean different things to different people.

Barthes – Primary Level and Secondary level Signification

Roland Barthes was a French literary theorist, philosopher, linguist, critic, and semiotician.

Barthes identifies two orders of signification:

1. the first is that of denotation - Denotation or the first level of Signification is the primary meaning that we give a word or an image.
2. the second is that of connotation - connotation or the secondary order of signification, the secondary meanings and associations that you have with a sign.

The denotative meaning of a white dove will be a bird of a particular colour; however the connotative meaning will be a symbol of peace.

Semiotic Analysis

Semiotics has been applied, with interesting results, to film, theatre, medicine, architecture, zoology, and a host of other areas that involve or are concerned with communication and the transfer of information.

Semiotic analysis views the sign and use of signs as a part of a sign system. A sign system directs the use of the sign and thus, the system always has an effect on the contents of individual signs. A sign is never independent of the meanings and use of other signs. Semiotic analysis uses both qualitative and interpretative content analysis involving semiotic concepts and terms.

Semiotic Analysis and Advertising

Contemporary advertising depends primarily on assumed meanings of images and signs. Semiotic analysis focuses on the meaning of these images or signs in advertising based on a code system of consumption.

Robert Goldman (1992) notes that: Modern advertising thus teaches us to consume, not the product, but its sign.

Advertising therefore constructs the meaning of sign values associating with constructing identities.

Content Analysis

Content Analysis is described as the scientific study of content of communication. It is the study of the content with reference to the meanings, contexts and intentions contained in messages.

Berelson defined content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.

Uses of Content Analysis

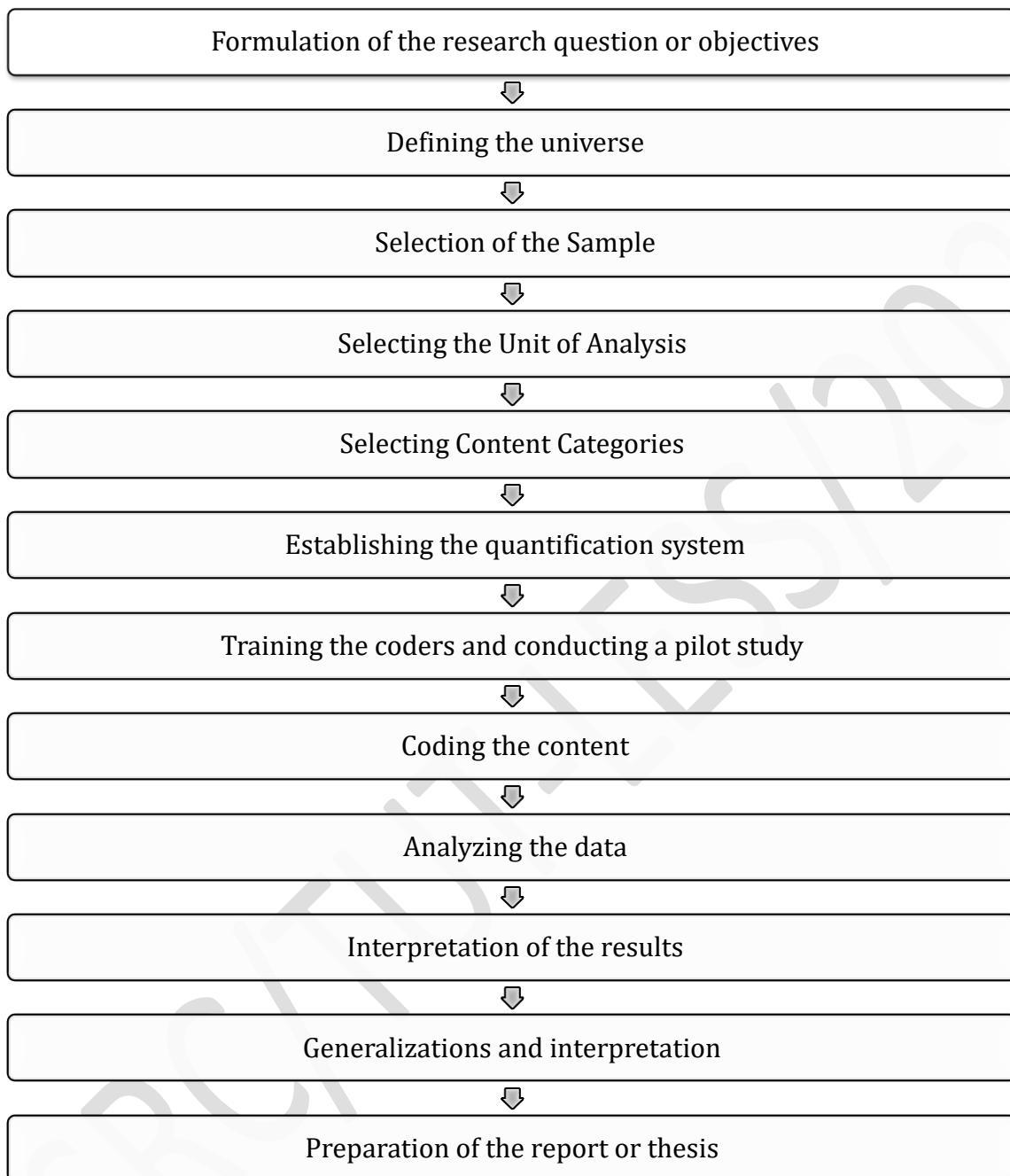
Berelson (1952) suggested five main purposes of content analysis as follows:

- To describe substance characteristics of message content
- To describe form characteristics of message content
- To make inferences to producers of content
- To make inferences to audiences of content
- To predict the effects of content on audiences

Quantitative and Qualitative approach

- Quantitative content analysis collects data about media content such as topics or issues, volume of mentions, 'messages' determined by key words in context, circulation of the media (audience reach) and frequency. Quantitative content analysis also should consider media form, for example, television or print.
- Qualitative content analysis examines the relationship between the text and its likely audience, recognizing that media texts mean different things to different audiences. It pays attention to audience, media and contextual factors – not simply the text.

Steps in Content Analysis



Types of Content Analysis

- Conceptual Analysis
- Relational Analysis

Advantages of Content Analysis

- Looks directly at communication via texts or transcripts, and hence gets at the central aspect of social interaction

- Can allow for both quantitative and qualitative operations
- Can provide valuable historical/cultural insights over time through analysis of texts
- Allows a closeness to text which can alternate between specific categories and relationships and also statistically analyses the coded form of the text
- Can be used to interpret texts for purposes such as the development of expert systems (since knowledge and rules can both be coded in terms of explicit statements about the relationships among concepts)
- Is an unobtrusive means of analysing interactions
- Provides insight into complex models of human thought and language use
- When done well, is considered as a relatively “exact” research method (based on hard facts)

Disadvantages of Content Analysis

- Can be extremely time consuming
- Is subject to increased error, particularly when relational analysis is used to attain a higher level of interpretation
- Is often devoid of theoretical base, or attempts too liberally to draw meaningful inferences about the relationships and impacts implied in a study
- Is inherently reductive, particularly when dealing with complex texts
- Tends too often to simply consist of word counts
- Often disregards the context that produced the text, as well as the state of things after the text is produced
- Can be difficult to automate or computerize

Indicative questions for practice:

1. What is semiology?
2. Explain Barthes primary and secondary level of signification.
3. What is connotation and denotation?
4. What is content analysis?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of content analysis?
6. Explain step by step process of content analysis.