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1. Role of research in decision making

A. To remain well informed

Research would provide key information related to different area of the business. This information will be analyzed & used for improving the efficiency of the business; because research indicates the employee preference, consumer preference, different channels and degree of competition etc.

B. To develop the best strategy

The information so gathered by a business about different area aids in determining the ideal and best strategy suited to the organization. Before starting the business or introducing new product, the research will indicate the viability of the project.

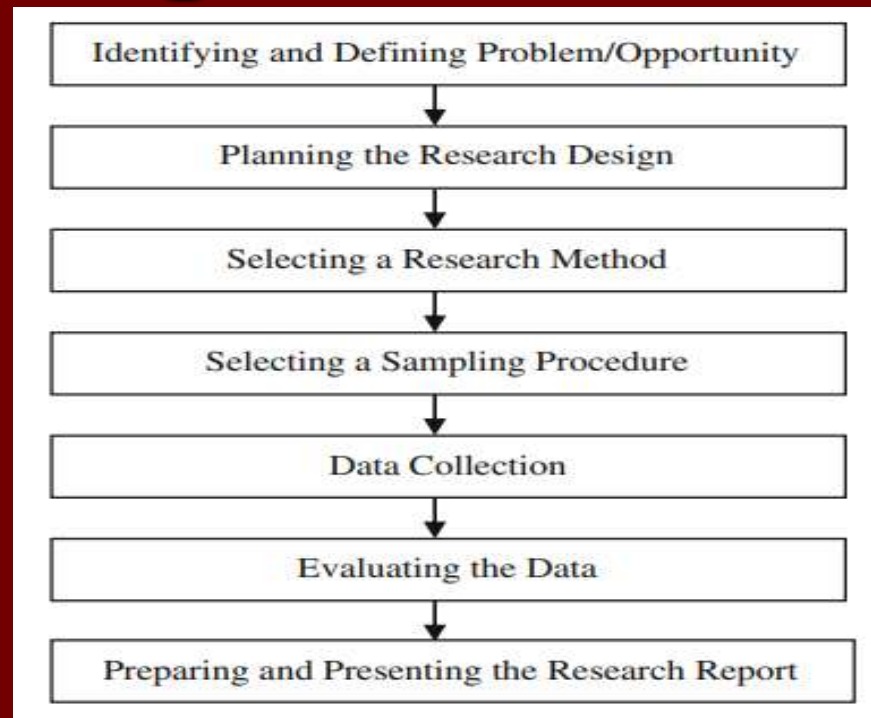
C. In ascertaining staff satisfaction

Through well conducted research helps the management to know the expectations and difficulty faced by staff. it will facilitate the much needed to introduce the changes in the organization for improving satisfaction, commitment and efficiency.

D. Effective managerial decision making

Effective research undertaken provides an answer to all the problems of a business. Research helps in taking the decisions to help the increasing productivity and profitability.

2. Defining Research Problem



Research really begins when the researcher experiences some difficulty, i.e., a problem demanding a solution within the subject-area of his discipline. This general area of interest, however, defines only the range of subject matter within which the researcher would see and pose a specific problem of research.

3. Choosing the Problem: sources

The sources from which one may be able to identify research problems or develop problems awareness are:

- **Review of literature**
- **Academic experience**
- **Daily experience**
- **Exposure to field situations**
- **Consultations**
- **Brain storming**
- **Research**
- **Intuition**
- **Delphi technique**

4. Objective of formulating the problem

A problem well put is half-solved. The primary task of research is collection of relevant data and the analysis of data for finding answers to the research questions.

Once the exact data requirement is known, the researcher can plan and execute the other steps without any waste of time and energy.

5. Techniques involved in formulating problem

The process of defining a problem includes:

- A. Developing title**
- B. Building a conceptual model**
- C. Define the objective of the study**

RL Ackoffs affords considerable guidance in identifying problem for research. He visualizes five components of a problem.

- i. Research-consumer:** There must be an individual or a group which experiences some difficulty.
- ii. Research-consumer's objectives:** The research-consumer must have available, alternative means for achieving the objectives he desires.
- iii. Alternative means to meet the objectives:** The research-consumer must have available, alternative means for achieving the objectives he desires.
- iv. Doubt in regard to selection of alternatives:** The existence of alternative courses of action is not enough; in order to experience a problem, the research consumer must have some doubt as to which alternative to select.

v. There must be one or more environments to which the difficulty or problem pertains: A change in environment may produce or remove a problem. A research-consumer may have doubts as to which will be the most efficient means in one environment but would have no such doubt in another.

Objectives

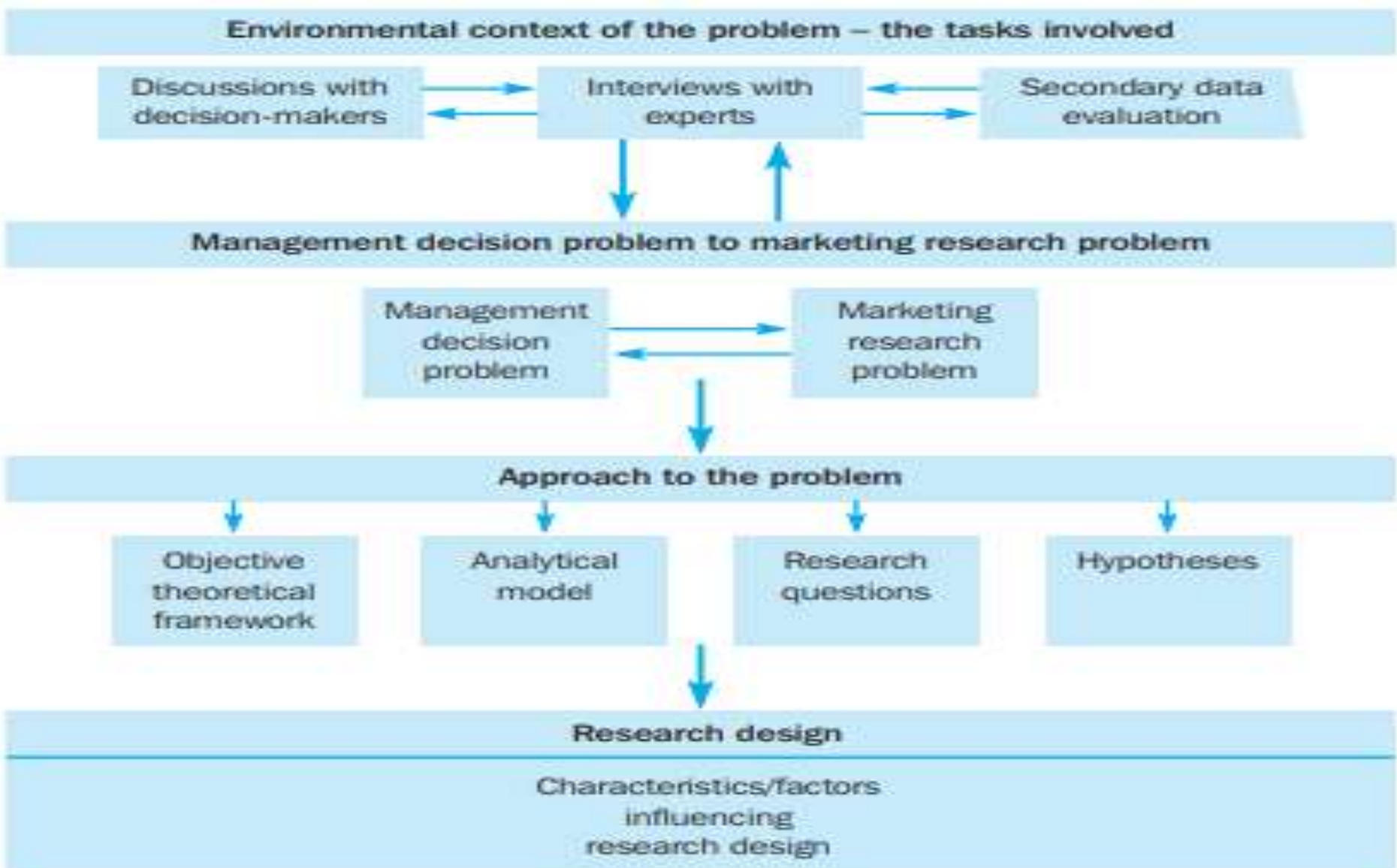
- The meaning of research problem
- **Choosing the problem**
- Review of literature
- **Criteria for formulating the problem**
- Objective of formulating the problem
- **Techniques involved in formulating the problem**
- Criteria of good research problem

6. Process of defining the problem & developing an approach

By formally developing and exchanging a marketing research brief and research proposal, the marketing decision-maker and the marketing researcher utilize their distinctive skills. They ensure that the marketing problem and research problems have been correctly defined and an appropriate research approach is developed. The research brief & the research proposal are the formal documents that ensure each party is clear about the nature and scope of the research task. These documents allow decision-makers and researchers to formally present their perspective of the task in hand.

The detail of defining the nature of problems and developing an appropriate research approach to the point of creating a research design is shown in Figure.

Process of defining the problem & developing an approach



7. Developing an appropriate research proposal

The selection of an appropriate researchable problem, out of the identified problems requires evaluation of those alternatives against certain criteria, which may be grouped into

Internal Criteria

A.Researcher's Interest: The problem should interest the researcher and be a challenge to him. Without interest and curiosity, he may not develop sustained perseverance. Even a small difficulty may become an excuse for discontinuing the study. Interest in a problem depends upon the researcher's educational background, experience, outlook and sensitivity.

Developing an appropriate research proposal

B. Researcher's competence: A mere interest in a problem will not do. The researcher must be competent to plan and carry out a study of the problem. He must have the ability to grasp and deal with int. he must possess adequate knowledge of the subject-matter, relevant methodology and statistical procedures.

C. Researcher's own resource: In the case of a research to be done by a researcher on his own, consideration of his own financial resource is pertinent. If it is beyond his means, he will not be able to complete the work, unless he gets some external financial support. Time resource is more important than finance. Research is a time-consuming process; hence it should be properly utilized.

8. External Criteria

- A. Research-ability of the problem:** The problem should be researchable, i.e., amendable for finding answers to the questions involved in it through scientific method. To be researchable, a question must be one for which observation or other data collection in the real world can provide the answer.
- B. Importance and urgency:** Problems requiring investigation are unlimited, but available research efforts are very much limited. Therefore, in selecting problems for research, their relative importance and significance should be considered. An important and urgent problem should be given priority over an unimportant one.

External Criteria

C. Novelty of the problem: The problem must have novelty. There is no use of wasting one's time and energy on a problem. This does not mean that replication is always needless.

D. Feasibility: A problem may be a new one and also important, but if research on it is not feasible, it cannot be selected. Hence feasibility is a very important consideration.

E. Facilities: Research requires certain facilities such as well-equipped library facility, suitable and competent guidance, data analysis facility, etc. Hence the availability of the facilities relevant to the problem must be considered.

F. Usefulness and social relevance: The study of the problem should make significant contribution to the concerned body of knowledge or to the solution of some significant practical problem.

G. Research personnel: Research undertaken by professors and by research organizations require the services of investigators and research officers. But in India and other developing countries, research has not yet become a prospective profession. Hence, talent persons are not attracted to research projects.

9. Yardsticks to see Good Research Proposal

- I. Verifiable evidence:** That is factual observations which other observers can see and check.
- II. Accuracy:** That is describing what really exists. It means truth or correctness of a statement or describing things exactly as they are and avoiding jumping to unwarranted conclusions either by exaggeration or fantasizing.
- III. Precision:** That is making it as exact as necessary or giving exact number or measurement. This avoids colorful literature and vague meanings.

IV. Systematization: That is attempting to find all the relevant data or collecting data in a systematic and organized way so that the conclusions drawn are reliable. Data based on casual recollections are generally incomplete and give unreliable judgments and conclusions.

V. Objectivity: That is free being from all biases and vested interests.

VI. Recording: That is jotting down complete details as quickly as possible. Since human memory is fallible, all data collected are recorded.

VII. Controlling conditions: That is controlling all variables except one and then attempting to examine what happens when that variable is varied. This is the basic technique in all scientific experimentation – allowing one variable to vary while holding all other variables constant.

VIII. Training investigators: That is imparting necessary knowledge to investigators to make them understand what to look for, how to interpret in and avoid inaccurate data collection.

10. Literature review

An exploratory study is concerned with an area of subject matter in which explicit hypothesis have not yet been formulated. The researcher's task then is to review the available material with an eye on the possibilities of developing hypothesis from it. In some areas of the subject matter, hypothesis may have been stated by previous research workers.

The researcher has to take stock of these various hypotheses with a view to evaluate their usefulness for further research and to consider whether they suggest any new hypothesis. Sociological journals, economic reviews, the bulletin of abstracts of current social sciences research, directory of doctoral dissertation accepted by universities etc., afford a rich store of valuable clues.

What is literature review?

A literature review is a comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic. The literature review surveys scholarly articles, books, and other sources relevant to a particular area of research. The review should enumerate, describe, summarize, objectively evaluate and clarify this previous research. It should give a theoretical base for the research and help you (the author) determine the nature of your research. The literature review acknowledges the work of previous researchers, and in so doing, assures the reader that your work has been well conceived. It is assumed that by mentioning a previous work in the field of study, that the author has read, evaluated, and assimilated that work into the work at hand.

11. Importance of Literature Review in Research



12. How to do literature review?

There are five key steps to writing a literature review

- a. Search for relevant literature**
- b. Evaluate sources**
- c. Identify themes, debates, and gaps**
- d. Outline the structure**
- e. Write your literature review**

13. Purpose of literature review

In writing the literature review, the purpose is to convey to the reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. The literature review must be defined by a guiding concept (eg. your research objective, the problem or issue you are discussing, or your argumentative thesis). It is not just a descriptive list of the material available, or a set of summaries.