

COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Communication research generally refers to the attempt to discover trends or facts in the field of **communication** and mass media. ... According to Wimmer and Dominick, **researchers** should learn what they can do with **research** methods, instead of how they work.

Why is communication research important?

We gather information depending on others to develop relationships. The effectiveness of our **communication** is related to our capabilities to interpret the world. **Communication Research** is conducted to clarify the **communication** process and help us to understand the **importance** of **communication** in our everyday life.

What is the purpose of communication research?

The primary **purpose of Communication Research** is to special search or investigate and help people understand **communication** phenomena and direct their **communication** towards accomplishing individual and organizational goals.

Need for Communication Research

Communication Research is conducted to help people understand complex and challenging communication phenomena as well as the average and apparently simple everyday routines like ordinary conversation. Many areas of communication research demonstrate the complex, multifaceted nature of communication. Further, the centrality of communication in modern life makes knowledge about communication processes crucially important.

SCOPE OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Communication Research undertakes the scientific study of communication process. Being scientific it is objective and deterministic. It is interdisciplinary in nature as it borrows heavily both in terms of theory and methods from social and other sciences. In essence it involves application of social behavioural and scientific method to the study of communication issues and problems.

It has got a wide scope because it helps in building relations which eventually leads us to the process and path of progress & development, otherwise we will be self centered, self contained which will ultimately lead us nowhere. The exchange of idea motivates us to brainstorm, leading to research in related aspect.

- **Message Analysis:**

A message is not only about the advertising slogan or a marketing line; a message is an easy and clear idea that describes about the entire project as a whole. It should function as a guiding standard for every type of communications, from the contents of leaflets, brochures and websites and also for media interviews or conversations with important people. The main point is that messages must be simple and steady across all kinds of communications.

- **Channel Analysis:**

A channel analysis is an evaluation of how and where a product should be sold. It starts with an assessment of the options for getting a specific product or service into the hands of the end user.

1. **Audience Analysis:**

Audience analysis is about gathering and analysing information about the receivers of oral, written, or visual communication. There are many methods that a communication researcher can use to conduct the analysis. Because the task of completing an audience analysis is huge, therefore using a multi-pronged approach to conduct the analysis is recommended by most of the researchers, often resulting in improved precision and efficiency. Michael Albers suggests that, “An analysis uses several independent dimensions that work together, such as readers’ knowledge of the topic and readers cognitive ability.”

STAGES OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

The communication research process can be divided into five interrelated phases of research activity:

1. **Conceptualization:**

Conceptualization is the first phase of communication research. In this phase the researcher invites formulation of an idea about what needs to be studied. The researcher begins communication inquiry by engaging in such conceptualizing activities as identifying a topic worth studying, defining the primary concepts relevant to the topic and reviewing the literature to learn what is already known about the topic, and phrasing the topic as a formal research problem.

2. Planning and Designing:

Moving from the conceptualization stage to planning and to designing research demands that the researcher transforms abstract concepts into operational or measurable terms. Operationalization involves determining the observable attributes, or characteristics of the concepts of interest. In this stage researcher must develop strategies for measuring those observable concepts. Communication researchers usually rely on three general techniques for measuring research concepts: questionnaire, interviews and observations. These three measurement techniques produce different types of information.

Planning and designing communication research involves number of ethical decisions. Ethics affects each stage of the research process: how researcher chooses the research topic and frames questions; how the literature is reviewed and how research is designed and conducted; how the data is analyzed and how the findings are interpreted and used.

3. Methodology:

Once the topic has been chosen and the research questions have been determined and the review of literature has been conducted and research has been designed, then the researchers are ready to conduct their studies. Conducting research carefully demands understanding and adhering to the specific assumption and requirements of the methodology chosen. These methods guide the researchers to what evidence to look for and how to look for it.

4. Analyzing and Interpreting Data:

Once data or evidence has been gathered through the use of the methodology, it needs to be analyzed and interpreted. For methods like experimental, survey and sometimes textual analysis it means processing quantitative data through the use of appropriate statistical procedures.

5. Reconceptualizing:

In this stage the researcher rethinks on the topic of enquiry. As a result of the systematic process associated with conceptualization, planning and designing of research, using methodology to conduct research, and analyzing the data acquired through research. Once data has been collected and analyzed, the findings need to be interpreted within the broader context of the research process.

What is the importance of media research?

Mass **media research** is the **study** of information related to any form of mass communication. Mass **media research** is **important** for businesses as it helps them decide which types and forms of social **media** are most beneficial to use for business purposes, as well as considering public health concerns.

Responsibility of researcher?

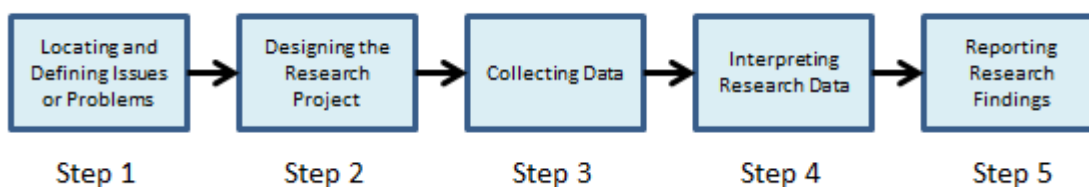
Researchers have a **responsibility** to communicate their **research**, to collaborate with others where appropriate and to transfer and exploit knowledge for the benefit of your employer, the economy and society as a whole. **Researchers** have a **responsibility** to behave honestly and ethically in the course of their **research**.

Scientific and Nonscientific method

The **scientific method** is a logically stepped **process** used for investigating and acquiring or expanding our understanding. **Nonscientific methods** rely on tradition, personal experience, intuition, logic and authority to arrive at conclusions.

5 STEPS IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The five (5) steps in the research process are:



Step 1 – Locating and Defining Issues or Problems

This step focuses on uncovering the nature and boundaries of a situation or question related to marketing strategy or implementation. In defining the issues or problems, 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.

Step 2 – Designing the Research Project

This step is focused on creating a research plan or overall approach on how you are going to solve the issue or problem identified. A research plan or approach is a framework or blueprint for conducting the marketing research project. It details the procedures necessary for obtaining the required information, and its purpose is to design a study that will test the hypotheses of interest, determine possible answers to the research questions, and provide the information needed for decision making.

Research design involves the following steps: [2]

1. Secondary data analysis
2. Qualitative research
3. Methods of collecting quantitative data (survey, observation, and experimentation)
4. Definition of the information needed
5. Measurement and scaling procedures
6. Questionnaire design
7. Sampling process and sample size
8. Plan of data analysis

Step 3 – Collecting Data

This step revolved around obtaining the information that you will need to solve the issue or problem identified. Data collection involves a field force or staff that operates either in the field, as in the case of personal interviewing (in-home, mall intercept, or computer-assisted personal interviewing), from an office by telephone (telephone or computer-assisted telephone interviewing), or through mail (traditional mail and mail panel surveys with prerecruited households).

Step 4 – Interpreting Research Data

Interpreting research data: This step is focused on examining the data and coming up with a conclusion that solves the problem.

Step 5 – Report Research Findings

The final step is to report the research findings to those who need the data to make decisions. The findings should be presented in a comprehensible format so that they can be readily used in the decision making process. In addition, an oral presentation should be made to management using tables, figures, and graphs to enhance clarity and impact.