



B.Com Honours

Semester VI

Calicut University

METHODOLOGY FOR BUSINESS RESEARCH

Course Code: COM6CJ306 • Module 3 Notes

Module III: Data Collection Methods, Tools, & Pilot Study

Covers primary vs secondary data sources, data collection methods (observation, surveys, experiments), questionnaire design essentials, interview schedules, pre-testing, and pilot studies.

Unit 10: Primary & Secondary Data Collection Methods

Primary Data: First-hand original data collected directly for specific research purpose (Observation, Surveys, Interviews, Experiments).

Secondary Data: Previously collected data published by government, industry reports, or journals (RBI Bulletins, Census, Annual Reports).

Unit 11: Data Collection Tools & Questionnaire Essentials

Questionnaire Construction Rules: Clear unbiased wording, avoiding double-barreled questions, logical sequence (general to sensitive), structured open vs close-ended items. Interview Schedule: Administered by trained enumerator.

Unit 12: Pre-Testing, Pilot Study, & Reliability Analysis

Pilot Study: Small-scale preliminary trial run of research design & questionnaire on sample ($n = 30-50$).

Reliability Metric: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient ($\alpha \geq 0.70$) indicates acceptable internal consistency reliability).

Practical Case Framework 1 (Primary vs Secondary Data Collection Methods Matrix): Compare data source, collection cost, speed, specificity to problem, and control over bias.

Primary vs Secondary Data Comparison Table:		
Data Source Dimension	Primary Data Collection	Secondary Data Collection
Data Originality	First-hand original empirical data	Second-hand pre-existing compiled data
Cost & Time Required	High cost; lengthy collection time	Low cost; rapid immediate availability
Problem Specificity	100% tailored to research objective	General relevance; may lack exact fit

Practical Case Framework 2 (Questionnaire Design Errors & Mitigation Matrix): Detail questionnaire design flaw, bad question example, and corrected research wording.

Questionnaire Essentials & Correction Table:	

Question Flaw Type	Flawed Question Example	Corrected Unbiased Question Item
Double-Barreled Question	"Are you satisfied with price AND quality?"	Separate into 2 distinct Likert items
Leading / Biased Question	"Don't you agree our product is superior?"	"How would you rate the product quality?"

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