Applications

Methods

Characteristics

Examples

Definition

Advantages

What is Descriptive Research?

Descriptive research

What is descriptive research?

Descriptive research is defined as a research method that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon studied. The descriptive research method primarily focuses on describing the nature of a demographic segment, without focusing on "why" a particular phenomenon occurs. In other words, it "describes" the subject of the research, without covering "why" it happens.

For example, an apparel brand that wants to understand the fashion purchasing trends among New York buyers will conduct a demographic survey of this region, gather population data and then conduct descriptive research on this demographic segment. The study will then uncover details on "what is the purchasing pattern of New York buyers," but not cover any investigative information about "why" the patterns exits. Because for the apparel brand trying to break into this market, understanding the nature of their market is the study's objective.

Some distinctive characteristics of descriptive research are:

Quantitative research:

- Descriptive research is a quantitative research method that attempts to collect quantifiable information for statistical analysis of the population sample. It is a popular market research tool that allows us to collect and describe the demographic segment's nature.

Uncontrolled variables:

- In descriptive research, none of the variables are influenced in any way. This uses observational methods to conduct the research. Hence, the nature of the variables or their behavior is not in the hands of the researcher.

Cross-sectional studies:

- Descriptive research is generally a cross-sectional study where different sections belonging to the same group are studied.

The basis for further research:

- Researchers further research the data collected and analyzed from descriptive research using different research techniques. The data can also help point towards the types of research methods used for the subsequent research.

Advantages of descriptive research

Data collection:
- A researcher can conduct descriptive research using specific methods like observational method, case study method, and survey method. Between these three, all primary data collection methods are covered, which provides a lot of information. This can be used for future research or even developing a hypothesis of your research object.

Varied:
- Since the data collected is qualitative and quantitative, it gives a holistic understanding of a research topic. The information is varied, diverse, and thorough.

Natural environment:
- Descriptive research allows for the research to be conducted in the respondent's natural environment, which ensures that high-quality and honest data is collected.

Quick to perform and cheap:
- As the sample size is generally large in descriptive research, the data collection is quick to conduct and is inexpensive.
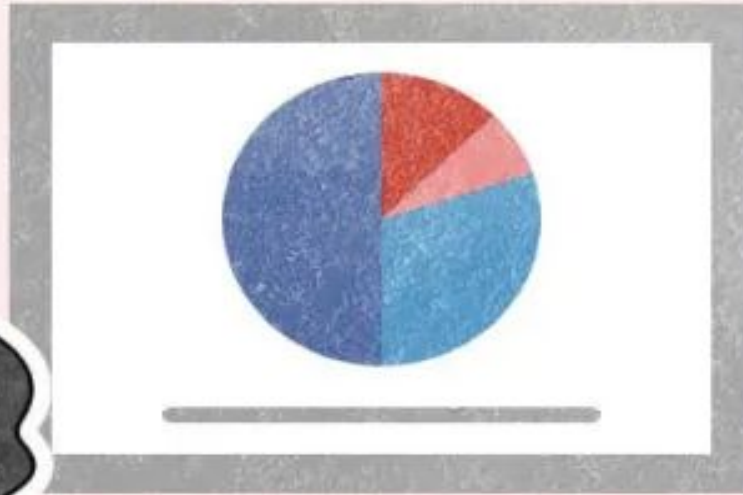
What Is Analytical Research?

Analytical research is a specific type of research that involves critical thinking skills and the evaluation of facts and information relative to the research being conducted.

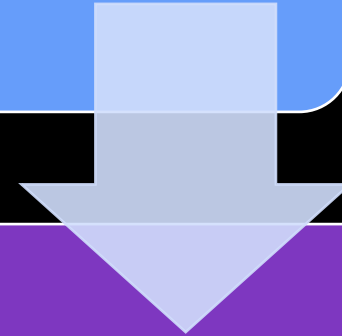# Descriptive and Analytical Research: What's the Difference?

Both descriptive and analytical research serve a key role in statistics and data analysis. The difference is in what they look at.

Descriptive research asks "what?" It describes something. Meanwhile, analytical research asks "why?" We try to find out how something came to be.

Comparing Examples

Descriptive

How many disabled people face social isolation?

What is the unemployment rate for disabled people?

How many siblings of people with Down syndrome have positive experiences?

Analytical

What causes social isolation in disabled people?

Why do disabled people have a harder time finding work?

Why do so many siblings of people with Down syndrome have positive experiences?

Qualitative Research In a nutshell

Qualitative research is a research methodology where "quality" or opinion based research is conducted to derive research conclusions. This type of research is often conversational in nature rather than being quantifiable through empirical research and measurements.

Qualitative research:

01

focuses on words, concepts, descriptions, and ideas.

02

studies topics with a small body of knowledge.

03

gathers facts through interviews, questionnaires, and existing literature.

Quantitative Research In a nutshell

Quantitative research is a research methodology which uses questions and questionnaires to gather quantifiable data and perform statistical analysis to derive meaningful research conclusions.

Quantitative

Research

Guide

Quantitative research:

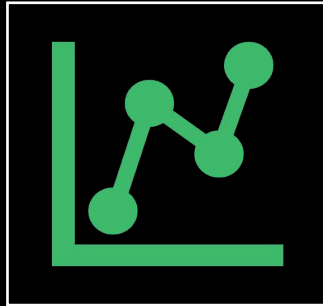**01**

is concerned with numbers.

02

measures quantifiable units, analyzed with graphs and other data visualization techniques.

03

studies assumptions using measurable units, unlike qualitative research, which studies non-numerical concepts and ideas.

The main differences between qualitative vs. quantitative research

Qualitative Research

Expressed in numbers, graphs, models

Data is collected through interviews, observations

Answers the question "why?" by evaluating and compiling responses

Assumes a dynamic pool of responses

Quantitative Research

Expressed in statements and ideas

Data is collected through surveys, experiments

Answers the question "what?' by creating statistical patterns

Assumes a fixed set of variables