

MARKET RESEARCH METHODS

METHOD	STRENGTHS	LIMITATIONS
QUALITATIVE METHODS	Contextual, open-ended, reveals "hot spots" for further exploration	Samples may not be representative
Observational or ethnographic studies	Can be participatory, meanings/reasons can be uncovered "in vivo," differences between actual/reported behavior revealed, extemporaneous questioning possible	Intrusiveness, privacy, diversity issues
Individual interviews	Open-ended questions adjusted to context, uncovers attitudes/feelings, good for complex or sensitive subjects, topics influenced by peer pressure, hard-to-reach interviewees	Time-consuming, disallows observers, interviewer must be knowledgeable, many interviews needed
Focus groups	Compare themes across groups, social influence observable, suppressed themes may emerge, generates breadth of responses	Social pressure may skew results, moderators/interpreters must be highly skilled, results unquantifiable, many groups needed,
QUANTITATIVE METHODS	Confirms segmentation; identify behavioral determinants; prioritize factors to address,	May overlook important variables
Surveys (intercept, phone, mail, door to door, internet)	statistical analyses, specificity	Closed-ended, validity issues, expensive, time-consuming to pre-test and administer
Structured observations	differences between actual/reported behavior revealed	Intrusiveness, privacy, diversity issues
Structured interviews	validity, specificity	Time-consuming, many interviews needed
SECONDARY METHOD	Pre-existing information	Not valid for or specific to our case
Literature review	Aggregated experience, diversity of data	Non-specificity, lack of transferability, efficacy often undocumented