

# North East Institute of Social Sciences and Research

## 7<sup>th</sup> Mile, Chumoukedima Nagaland- 797103

North East Institute of Social Sciences and Research (NEISSR) organized a program on the topic Tools of data collection on 27th September 2022. Dr. Lily Sangpui, Assistant Professor NEISSR, served as the resource person for the session. The program aimed at providing students with an understanding of the diverse methods employed in gathering data for research purposes. Dr. Lily Sangpui emphasized on the importance of data collection methods with research objectives and contextual constraints.

### **Three Approaches to Data Collection:**

Dr. Lily Sangpui explained about the three main approaches to gathering data, each catering to specific research needs:

#### **1. Asking Questions and Receiving Responses:**

- Description: Engaging respondents through inquiries to elicit information.
- Application: Appropriate for obtaining direct responses from individuals or groups.
- Example: Surveys and structured interviews.

#### **2. Observing Behaviors:**

- Description: Directly observing individuals, groups, or organizations in their natural settings.
- Application: Ideal for studying behaviors, interactions, or events requiring real-time observation.
- Example: Field observations and ethnographic studies.

#### **3. Examining Existing Records or Data:**

- Description: Analyzing data already collected by others, considered as secondary data.
- Application: Suitable for obtaining information from pre-existing sources.
- Example: Reviewing archival records and datasets.

### **Primary Data Collection Methods:**

Dr. Lily Sangpui also elaborated on the primary data collection methods, highlighting key considerations for each:

#### **1. Observation:**

- Description: Directly observing individuals, groups, or organizations in their natural settings.
- Application: Useful when studying behaviors, interactions, or events.
- Advantages: Provides firsthand, real-time data without relying on recall or interpretation.
- Considerations: Acknowledged the potential for observer bias and the Hawthorne effect.

#### **2. Interview:**

- Description: Engaging in direct, face-to-face conversations with individuals or groups.
- Application: Suitable for in-depth exploration, understanding perspectives, and qualitative data.
- Advantages: Allows for clarification, probing deeper, and rapport-building.
- Considerations: Acknowledged it can be time-consuming and influenced by interviewer bias.

#### **3. Questionnaire:**

- Description: Designing structured sets of questions for respondents, often in written form.
- Application: Efficient for standardized data collection from large samples.
- Advantages: Cost-effective, allows for anonymity, and facilitates large-scale data collection.
- Considerations: Acknowledged limitations in capturing nuances and reliance on respondents' literacy.

Dr. Lily Sangpui concluded by emphasizing on the importance of a judicious combination of observation, interviews, and questionnaires tailored to the unique requirements of each research study. He stated that the researchers must align chosen methods with research objectives and contextual constraints to ensure the collection of relevant and reliable data.

