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Pilot Studies, Case Studies, Focus Groups and other Research Methods as Forms of Experimentation

Module 5: EXPERIMENTATION (ENSURING PRACTICES TO RESPOND TO THE INQUIRY)

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Introduction

Research methods are essential for gathering data and testing hypotheses in various fields. Pilot studies, case studies, focus groups, and other methods can all be considered forms of experimentation, though they serve different purposes. This presentation explores these methods and explains why they are considered experimental.

Presentation Objectives

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- Provide an overview of various research methods used in experimentation, including pilot studies, case studies, focus groups, surveys, experiments, and observational studies.
- Offer clear definitions and explanations of each research method to distinguish their unique characteristics and purposes.
- Describe why each research method is considered a form of experimentation, highlighting their roles in testing hypotheses, refining methodologies, and gathering preliminary data.

Pilot Studies

Pilot Studies, Pilot Test, Pilot Experiment are small-scale preliminary studies conducted to evaluate the feasibility, time, cost, risk, and adverse events of a research project. They help refine the research design and improve the methodology for larger studies.

Why considered experimentation:

- Testing initial hypotheses
- Experimenting with methodologies
- Collecting preliminary data

Case Studies

Case studies involve in-depth investigations of a single individual, group, event, or community. They provide detailed insights and help generate hypotheses for further research.

Why considered experimentation:

- In-depth exploration of specific cases
- Generating hypotheses
- Testing theoretical concepts in real-world settings

Focus Groups

Focus groups are a qualitative research method where a small group of people discuss a topic guided by a moderator. They gather insights, opinions, and attitudes about a particular subject.

Why considered experimentation:

- Exploring participant reactions and thoughts
- Generating hypotheses
- Testing different ways of presenting information

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SURVEYS

Surveys are a quantitative research method used to collect data from a predefined group of respondents. They are useful for gathering information on a wide range of topics and can provide statistical insights.

Why considered experimentation:

- Testing hypotheses on a larger scale
- Collecting quantitative data
- Refining questions and survey

Observational Studies

Observational studies involve observing subjects in their natural environment without interference. They provide insights into natural behaviours and are useful for studying phenomena that cannot be ethically or practically manipulated.

Why considered experimentation:

- Gathering data in natural settings
- Observing real-world behaviours
- Identifying correlations and patterns

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Conclusion

Pilot studies, case studies, focus groups, surveys and observational studies are all valuable forms of experimentation. They allow researchers to test and refine their methods, gather preliminary data, and explore new hypotheses. Understanding the experimental nature of these methods helps improve research design and outcomes.

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