

Data Collection Method & Ethics

RSM 321 (Lecture 14-15)

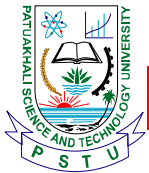
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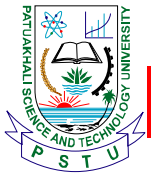
Date: 06 Oct. 2013

Outline

❖ Data collection methods

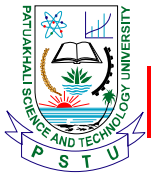
- Asking question: open-ended and close-ended
- Content analysis

❖ Ethics in research



Asking questions

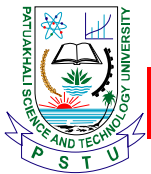
- Open ended interview
- Closed ended interview



Open interviews



- **Open ended**
 - answer categories are not given
- **Unstructured or semi-structured**
 - the order of questions may be different for each respondent
- **Flexible (unstandardized)**
 - All respondents may not get the same questions
 - The topics discussed may differ between respondents



Open interview: formulating questions

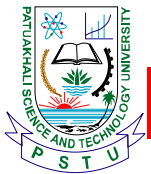
- Define key concepts of your research question
- Define relevant aspects of the key concepts
 - a tree diagram may be useful
- Formulate initial open-ended questions
- Formulate the most important strategies for probing
- Consider the logical order of the questions



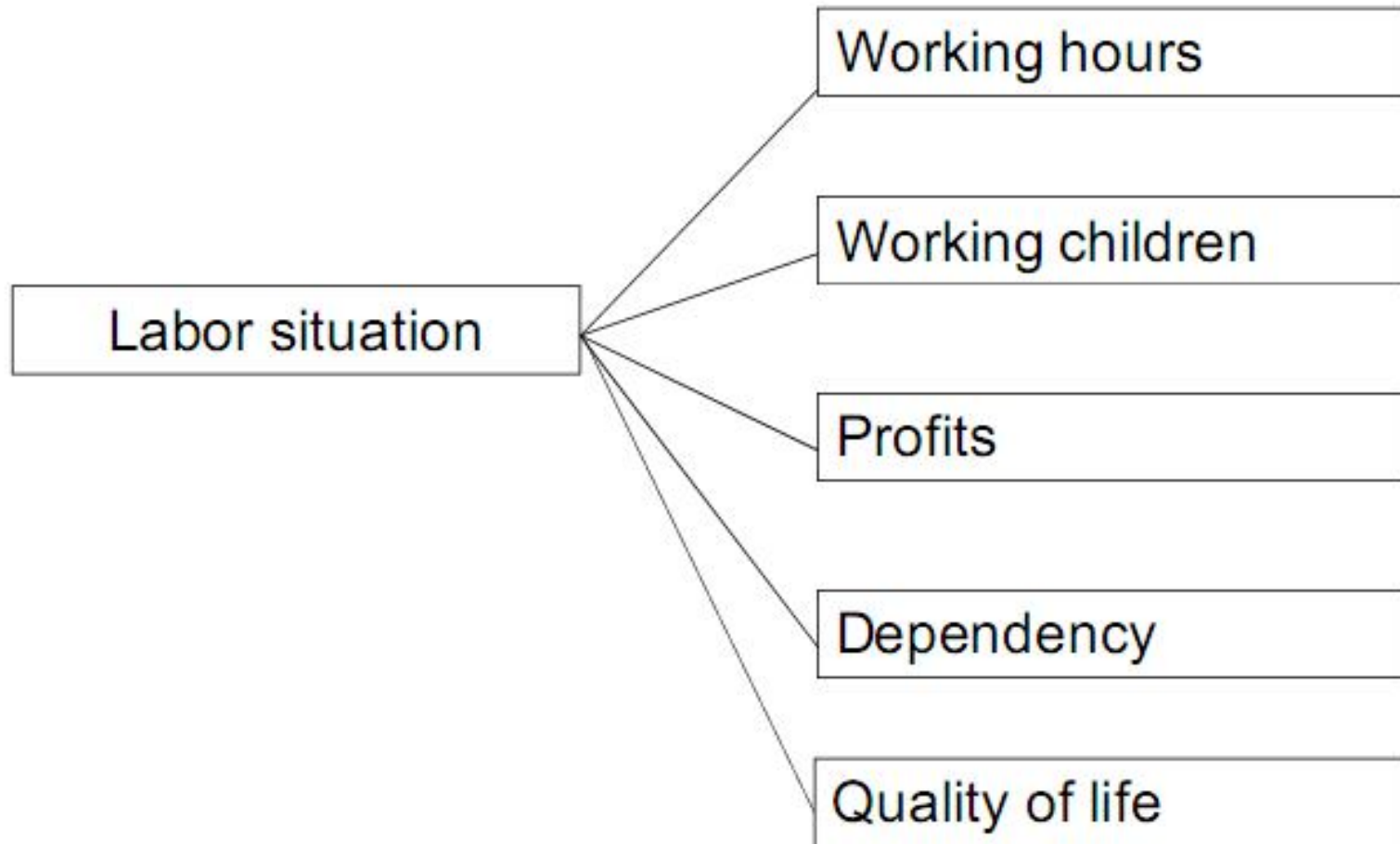


Open interview: formulating questions

- GRQ: What are the effects of the Fair Trade labeling system on the labor situation of participating coffee farmers?
- Initial open-ended question (to a coffee farmer):
 - How has your labor situation changed since you began participating in the Fair Trade labeling system?



Open interview: formulating questions

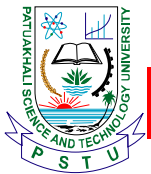


Open interview: formulating questions



Open-ended questions

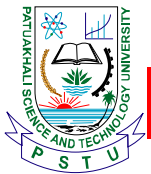
- Initial Question 1: How much time do you spend working?
 - PQ. How many hours per day do you work? Is it more than that during harvest time?
 - PQ. Did you work the same number of hours before you started to work with FT?
- Initial Question 2: Who helps you with the production of coffee?
 - PQ. [If children] What are the ages of the children?
 - PQ. [If children] Did they help you before you started to work with FT?
 - PQ. [If no children] Did they help before you joined FT?



Criteria for evaluating the response



- **Completeness:** The respondent has given all the relevant information
- **Clarity:** The interviewer understands the answer
- **Relevance:** The response refers to the object, person, situation or event in the question (and not to something else)
- **Consistency:** Statements made by the respondent are non-contradictory throughout the interview



Examples of insufficient answers

I: What would you do if you would get fired?

R: That will not happen.

(Not relevant: it does not answer the question)

I: How often do you attend the lectures?

R: When my grandfather is not ill.

(Not clear)

I: What kind of job do you have?

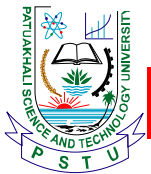
R: Well, I work with people.

(Not complete: teachers, doctors, colleagues)

I: How often do you set out for a holiday?

R: Rarely, like... six months every year.

(Not consistent)



Open interview: process



Introduction

- Introducing oneself
- Respondent selection
- Interview objective
- Making notes and/or using a tape recorder
- Personal questions
- Confidentiality
- Length of interview

Asking questions

- One topic at a time
- Clear & unambiguous
- Truly open ended
- No presuppositions
- Not leading

Evaluation of the response

- Completeness
- Clearness
- Relevance
- Consistency

Finishing

- Debrief
- Promises
- Further contacts

Probing the response

- Active silence
- Encouragement
- Elaboration
- Clarification
- Repeat the question
- Repeat the answer

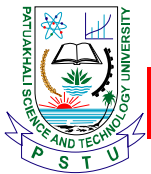


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Closed ended interviews



Closed ended interviews



■ Closed ended

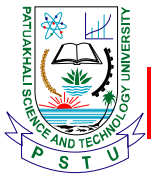
- If possible answer categories are given
- Otherwise, values (age, place of birth) will be recorded

■ Structured

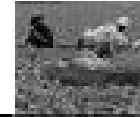
- the order of questions is the same for each respondent

■ Standardized (inflexible)

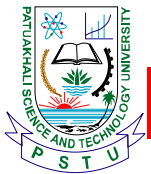
- All respondents get the same questions
- Adaptations of the questionnaire in function of answers given are possible



Example from a questionnaire



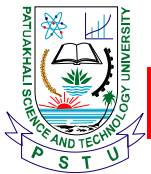
- Do you have other sources of income? Yes/No
- What is the percentage contribution of farming to total household income? _____
- How long have you been engaged in urban farming? _____
- Do you see urban agriculture as continuing activity? Yes/No
- If not, why? _____
- Compared to previous years, the harvest is...
Increasing/ Decreasing / Same



Content analysis



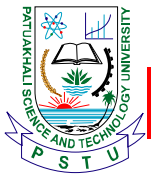
- Content analysis is a method of data collection in which 'texts' are the research units
- Researchers analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of words and concepts in the selected 'texts'
- The 'texts' are not limited to printed words (in books, newspapers, magazines, etc). They can also be blueprints, photographs, footage, etc.



Ethics in research



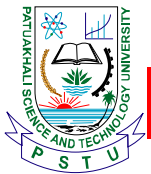
- Professional groups (e.g., market researchers) have established **codes of ethics** to which all members are obliged to adhere.
 - ISI Declaration on Professional Ethics of the International Statistical Institute
- Most universities have **codes of ethics**, enforced by ethics committees, which must approve all research projects involving humans or animals
 - Wageningen Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice
(<https://portal2.wur.nl/sites/DMW/SSG/Gedeelde%20documenten/Wageningen%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20Scientific%20Practice%20SSG.doc>)
- Functions of codes of ethics:
 - Protection of integrity and safety of humans, animals and environment
 - Professionalization of researcher and his/her organization





Stakeholders in a research activity

1. The participants (research units)
 2. The researcher
 3. The commissioner (funder)
- Each category of stakeholders in the research activity may have different interests, perspectives, purposes and aims and motivations that could affect the way the research is conducted or the way the report is written.





Ethical behavior regarding subjects

■ Animals

- You need the permission of Ethical Committees for research with living animals

■ Humans

● Respect for persons

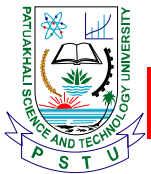
- Each person should have the ability to make an informed, free choice about participating
- The purpose and basic procedures of the study
- The identity of the researcher and the commissioner
- The use to which the data might be put

● Beneficence

- "maximize possible benefits and minimize possible harms" (Belmont Report 1979)

● Justice

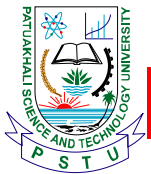
- The risks and benefits of the research should be distributed fairly
- Participants should not be selected solely because they are available, manipulable, or unable to refuse.



Potential problems when studying humans



- Respect for persons
 - Pressure to participate
 - Insufficient information provided
 - Misuse of incentives
 - Covert research/deception (sometimes in observational studies)
- Beneficence
 - More risk/harm than potential benefits
- Justice
 - Certain groups of people bearing an unjust amount of the risk involved in research
 - Participants selected because of their limited ability to refuse
 - Excluding certain groups of people from the research



Scientific misconduct



Fraud

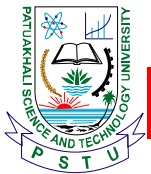
- Knowingly selecting a highly biased sample
- Knowingly using a biased instrument
- Knowingly drawing misleading conclusions
- Forging/faking/inventing of data
- Incorrect reporting to serve your own or someone else's interest
- Deliberate attempt to either hide what you have found in your study, or to highlight something disproportionately to its true existence

Theft

- Plagiarism (use of others' ideas without proper acknowledgement)
- Copy-pasting without proper acknowledgement
- Use of others' data without proper acknowledgement

Misdemeanors

- Becoming co-author for the sake of publication
- Not rectifying small errors in publications

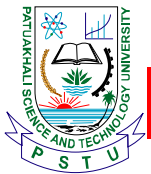




Ethical behavior of the commissioner

Funds are usually provided by:

- Businesses
 - Government institutions
 - NGO's
-
- Problems relating to the pursuit of own agenda
 - Selective funding
 - Censoring of outcomes of the research
 - Altering of outcomes of the research
 - Funders are not always bound by the same ethical considerations as the researcher
 - Violating confidentiality
 - Unjust (non) application of results



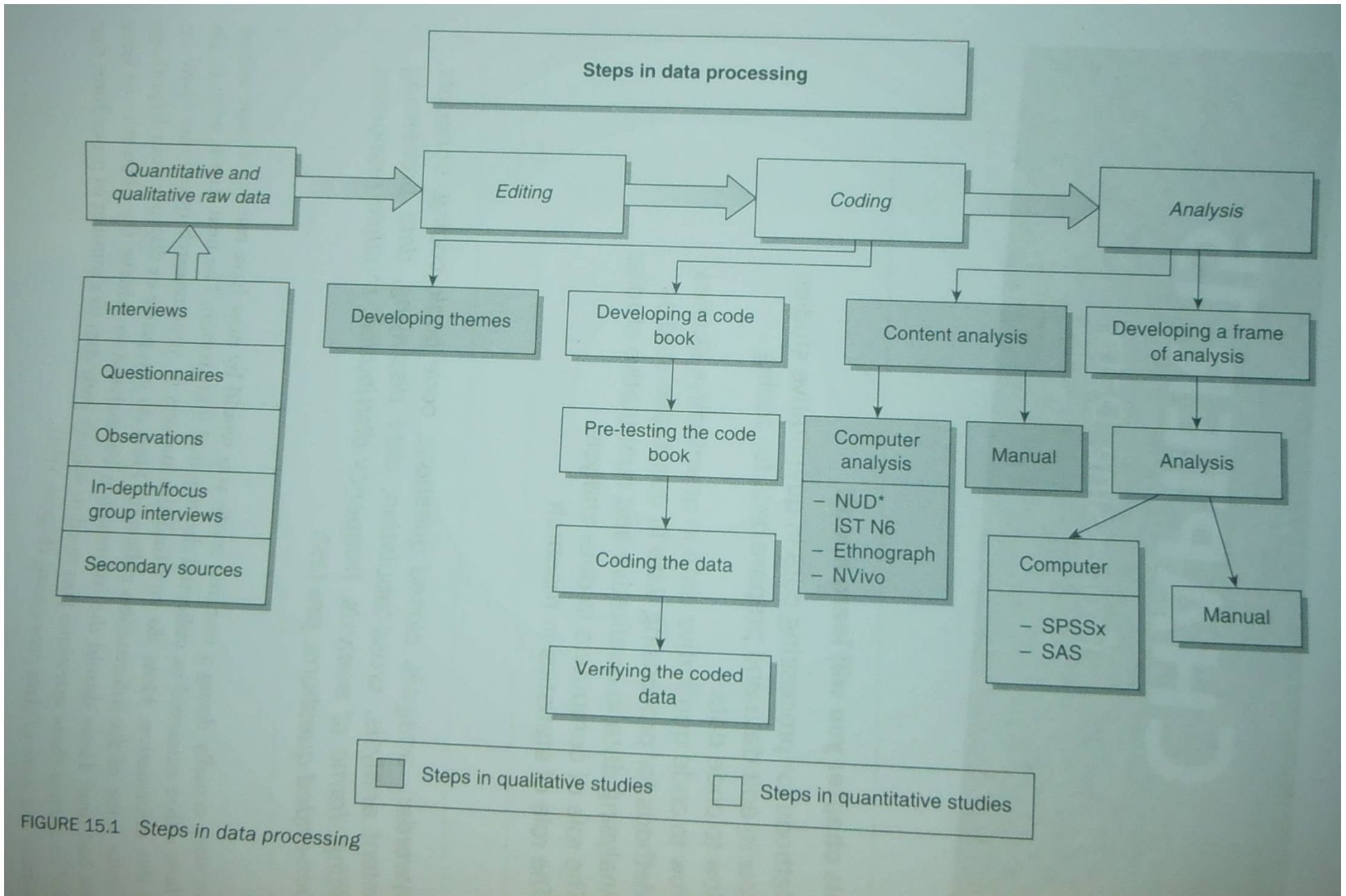
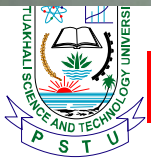
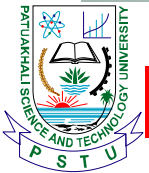


FIGURE 15.1 Steps in data processing

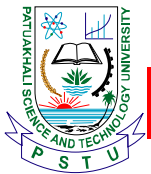


Contents of a research proposal

- an introduction, including a brief *literature review*;
- *theoretical framework* that underpins your study;
- *conceptual framework* which constitutes the basis of your study;
- *objectives or research questions* of your study;
- *hypotheses* to be tested, if applicable;
- *study design* that you are proposing to adopt;
- *setting* for your study;
- *research instrument(s)* you are planning to use;
- *sampling design and sample size*;
- *ethical issues* involved and how you propose to deal with them;
- *data processing procedures*;
- *proposed chapters* of the report;
- *problems and limitations* of the study;
- *proposed time-frame* for the project.



Thank YOU



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Questions??