Researching the research: applying qualitative techniques to the respondents of the media survey

1999 EMRO Conference
Voss, Norway - May, 1999

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Precedent: Meter Panel

In 1994, we conducted a qualitative study on individuals that had been members of the peoplemeter panel, using a combination of techniques:
- Focus groups (people from different households)
- In-depth personal interviews
- Family groups (all the family members together)
Precedent: Meter panel

Some basic results

Discipline problems at the very initial phase: testing, showing the “toy” to neighbours and friends, etc. Even some negative impact on “registered” viewing behaviour.

Early integration phase. The meter very soon becomes a familiar household element (though eventually a somewhat irritating one).

Personal interpretation of the requested registration discipline.

Precedent: Meter panel

Some basic results

Relationship with the meter panel company: too cold and professional. Didn’t care of the panellists as human beings.

No relevant feeling of panel fatigue

Low recall of purposely misreporting
1998/1999 study

**General goal:** to apply a similar methodology to the respondents of our multimedia survey with the purpose of identifying the basic feelings and perceptions of the EGM informants after the experience of being interviewed.

**Methodology**

- A sample of people interviewed during 1998 in the EGM survey was drawn (properly balanced in relation to geographical areas, city sizes, age groups and socioeconomical status).
- 37 in-depth personal interviews and 10 focus groups were conducted between October 98 and February 99.

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1998/1999 study

**Discussion topics:**

- Reasons to participate in the study
- Interaction with the interviewer
- Degree of recall of the interview
- Feelings about the content, structure and length of the interview
- Evaluation of the EGM survey. How interesting or useful they feel the study could be.
- Reliability level of the answers
- Etc.
1998/1999 study
Some results

- Degree of the interview recall: Relatively good up to 2-3 months. Somewhat confuse and vague afterwards.

- Interview
  - Long. About 20 minutes (in fact, average of 50 minutes).
  - Good appraisal of the interviewer
  - Pleasant experience
    - To talk about oneself is always rewarding.
    - Variety of aspects being asked.

Questionnaire and survey evaluation

- Wide range of questions
- Institutional character of the research (associated to the Administration).
- Most embarrassing questions: Political opinions and income level.

Reliability

- Nobody recognized to have lied
- With so many different questions, it is difficult to cheat.
- Only source of potential bias: own image in front of the interviewer.
1998/1999 study
Some results

Others

☑ Most frequent topic of conversation with the interviewer: how the audience is measured (interviews / TV meters).

☑ In the media usage part, they tend to recall being asked about habits more than about actual behaviour within specific period.

☑ Difficulties in precisely reporting the specific listening or viewing periods.