

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

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What is Focus Group Discussion?

- ❑ **Focus Group Discussion** is a qualitative research tool.
- ❑ **In depth information** about **intergroup** dynamics in everyday life situation.
- ❑ Organised discussion with a selected group of individuals.
- ❑ Views and experiences of a topic or an issue.

Historical Background

- FGD were used for product marketing between World War II and the 1970s (Merton&Kendall, 1946)
- During 1980s expanded to include social science research – assessing individual values and attitudes
- Inclusiveness in terms of Process and results

Uses of FGD

- Obtaining background information about a topic of interest
- Generating research hypothesis that can be submitted to further research
- Stimulating new ideas and creative concepts
- Diagnosing the potential for problems with a new program, service or product
- Generating impressions of products, programs, services, institutions or other objects of interest
- Learning how respondents talk about the phenomenon of interest – facilitate design of questionnaires, survey instruments or other research tools
- Interpreting previously obtained qualitative results

Advantages of FGD

- FGD provide data more quickly and at less cost
- Researcher can directly interact with respondents. Opportunity for follow up questions and probing responses. Can observe non verbal responses – gestures, smiles etc
- Researcher can obtain deeper levels of meaning and make important connections
- Allow respondents to react to and build upon the responses of other group members – result in the production of data or ideas
- Can be used to examine a wide range of topics with a variety of individuals and in a variety of settings
- Researchers and decision makers can readily understand the verbal responses of most respondents

Limitations of FGD

- Limit generalisation to a larger population
- Interaction of respondents with one another and with the researcher has 2 undesirable effects 1) responses from members are not independent 2) results obtained may be biased by a very dominant or opinionated member
- Researcher or decision maker to place greater faith in the findings than is actually warranted
- Open ended responses often makes summarization and interpretation of results difficult
- Moderator may bias results by knowingly or unknowingly

When to conduct FGD

- ❑ Used **before survey** to facilitate questionnaire design.
- ❑ Used **after survey** to explore in depth research.
- ❑ Use **concurrently with surveys** as complementary components of a unified research design.
- ❑ Questionnaire and FGD guidelines are designed in advance to gather independent quantitative as well qualitative perspectives on the research questions.

Elements of Focus Group

Format-	Group discussion
Size-	8-12 per session
Length-	1.5 to 2 hours
N of session-	Varies; should be 1<
Participants-	Selected and homogeneous
Forms of data-	Conversation, Silences, Body language
Data collection-	Audio-video tape, transcribe
Moderator-	Flexible, focused, uses interview guide
Reporting-	Quotations, analysis of repeated theme

Logistics needed

Two moderators

Two tape recorders/ video camera

A FGD venue

Moderators Assignments

- ❑ Each group have a **moderator** and an **assistant moderator**.
- ❑ The **moderator** leads the discussion, keeps the conversation flowing and takes a few notes to remember comments that s/he may want to use later on.
- ❑ The **assistant moderator** takes comprehensive notes, operates the tape recorder/ video camera, handles the environmental conditions and logistics, responds to unexpected interruptions and keeps track of time.

Prelude to Conducting FGD

- Developing Purpose Statement for FGD
- Determine the best Participants
- Recruit Participants
- Select a location and time for FGD
- Select moderators and tape recorder
- Create a FGD guide

Developing Purpose Statement

- To understand the process of implementation of MGNREGS in the villages.
- To comprehend the participation of different section of people in planning and implementation of MGNREGS.
- To understand the impact of MGNREGS on labour relations in villages.

Recruiting Participants for FGD

- MGNREGS participants(2 fgd)
- Women MGNREGS participants(1fgd)
- MGNREGS workers benefited by private and community assets created under the scheme(1fgd)

Location of FGD Venue/ time

- Location of FGD venue should be free from any bias (*choupati* used by dominant people should not be chosen for FGD of marginalised people).
- Location should be not very far from the residing place of the group members.
- Time should be convenient so people can come without having to leave work early or get home too late.

Sample Moderator's Guide

Namaskar. My name is _____. I'd like to start by thanking each of you for taking time to come today. We'll be here for about an hour and a half.

The reason we're here today is to get your opinions and attitudes about issues related to MGNREGS.

I'm going to lead our discussion today. I am not here to convince you of anything or try to influence your opinion.

My job is just to ask you questions and then encourage and moderate our discussion.

I also would like to introduce [name of recorder]. [He or she] will be recording our discussion today for my report.

To allow our conversation to flow more freely,

I'd like to go over some **ground rules** for our discussions.

1. Please talk one at a time and avoid side conversations.

2. Everyone doesn't have to answer every single question, but I'd like to hear from each of you today as the discussion progresses.

3. This will be an open discussion ... feel free to comment on each other's remarks.

4. There are no "wrong answers," just different opinions.

Say what is true for you, even if you're the only one who feels that way. Don't let the group influence you.

5. Just let me know if you need a break.

Before we start talking about MGNREGS, I'd like to **meet each of you**. Please tell me:

- Your name
- How many family member you have...
- For how many days you have worked in MGNREGS last year...(approximate...)
- Number of MGNREGS workers in your family...
- Whether you have allocated private assets under MGNREGS.

Moderators Dos

Do ...

- Make everyone feel welcome
- Speak in a loud, clear voice (If possible in local language)
- Be flexible
- Include everyone in the discussion
- Leave enough time for people to answer questions (enjoy the silence!)
- Vary your style of asking questions to get a variety of answers
- Probe for clarity
- Allow diverse opinions to emerge

Moderator Don't

Don't ...

- Talk too much
- Let one person dominate the discussion
- Fail to stay neutral on the issue
- Ask more than one question at a time
- Ask “yes” or “no” questions (instead ask open-ended questions)
- Go over the allotted time
- Forget to thank people for participating

Use Probes When You Need More Information

- Would you explain further?
- Would you give me an example of what you mean?
- Would you say more?
- Tell us more.
- Is there anything else?
- Please describe what you mean.
- I don't understand.
- Does anyone see it differently?
- Has anyone had a different experience?

Procedure of Data Collection

- **Tape Recorder**

The microphones and recorder should be set up prior to the interview and should be visible to participants.

The moderator must encourage participants to speak one at a time and to avoid grabbing the tape.

It is also suggested that members of the group will need to identify themselves before they speak.

- **Video Camera**

In video footing it is easy to identify the speakers and their other physical attributes.

It gives a clear picture of group dynamics during the discussions.

Note Taking

Analysis of FGD Data

- ❑ Recorded conversations are transcribed into text
- ❑ Texts are sorted into emergent themes (index) by the moderators/transcribers.
- ❑ Analytical induction method is used to analyze transcripts through indexing.

- ❑ Several people *within a focus group* repeated them or made very similar statements
- ❑ People *from several focus groups* repeated them or made very similar statements
- ❑ When someone in the group made a statement, a substantial number of people in the group demonstrated agreement /dissent either verbally or nonverbally.
- ❑ Make a list of themes or patterns.

FGD Questions on MGNREGS

1. Whether your suggestions are considered while working out village development plan under MGNREGS in the gram sabha
2. Whether MGNREGS reduced intensity of migration in your family
3. Whether MGNREGS has improved livelihood opportunities for your family.....

Matrix for Analyzing Consensus in the Focus Group

FGD Questions	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4.....
1	A	SA	SD	SA
2	NR	SD	SA	SD
3	D	SD	SD	D

1. **A** = Indicated **agreement** (i.e., verbal or nonverbal)
2. **D** = Indicated **disagreement** (i.e., verbal or nonverbal)
3. **SA** = Provided significant statement or example **suggesting agreement**
4. **SD** = Provided significant statement or example **suggesting disagreement**
5. **NR** = Did not indicate agreement or dissent (i.e., **non response**)

Be careful !

- Be as **objective** as you can while asking questions
- Leave behind **preconceived ideas** or **personal opinions**
- When reporting participants' opinions do not use numbers or percentages
- Be as concise as possible while note taking
- Use **'verbatim'** participant's comments to illustrate points
- Adhere to the parameters of confidentiality you followed while holding the focus groups

In what way FGD can be used in Social Survey (triangulation)

- Illustration and confirmation of survey analysis
- Clarification and elaboration of survey results
- Determination of new explanatory categories

Software for qualitative data analysis

- Atlas-ti
- Ethnograph
- Nudist
- Nvivo
- QDA Miner
- Tams Anazyler
- Dedoose
- MAXQDA
- HyperRESEARCH
- Aquad
- Mendeley
- Transana

Why do you need qualitative analysis software?

- To save time
- To be able to analyze large amounts of qualitative data
- For improved validity and credibility of your research
- For improved research collaboration
- To simplify complex data analysis
- To enhance final report writing
- To organise large amounts of data



Thank
You