

Chapter 3 Research Methods

Topic 5 Interviews

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 131

1. Unstructured: a; b; e; g; i; j. Structured: c; d; f; h.

2. True.

3. Any two of the following:

- Participants may feel more comfortable being with others, so are more likely to open up.
- Participants often throw ideas around the group, stimulating each other's thinking to produce richer, more reflective data.
- They can generate initial ideas that can be followed up in later research.
- The researcher can combine questioning with the opportunity to observe group dynamics and norms.

4. A relationship of trust and understanding between interviewer and interviewee.

5. Any two of the following: both usually use closed-ended questions and pre-coded answers; both cover large numbers/samples; both are good for gathering straightforward factual information; respondents to both may be untypical and unrepresentative of target population; both produce reliable data; both are inflexible because of pre-set questions.

6. In an unstructured interview, the interviewer may be more likely to ask 'leading' questions because there are no restrictions on how they phrase questions. They are freer to influence the answer by their facial expression, body language or tone of voice. They may be more likely to identify too closely with the interviewees.

7. There may be misunderstandings as a result of different meanings being given to the same words. The cultural gap may mean that interviewers cannot tell when they are being lied to.

8. Any two of the following:

- By giving interviewees little time to think when answering questions
- Using some questions to check the answers interviewees gave to earlier questions
- Using follow-up interviews to check earlier answers
- Using aggression, disbelief and 'playing dumb' to extract sensitive information from interviewees that they might not otherwise reveal
- Making sure interviewers and interviewees are ethnically and language-matched.