Introduction to Demand-side Research

CPRsouth 2017
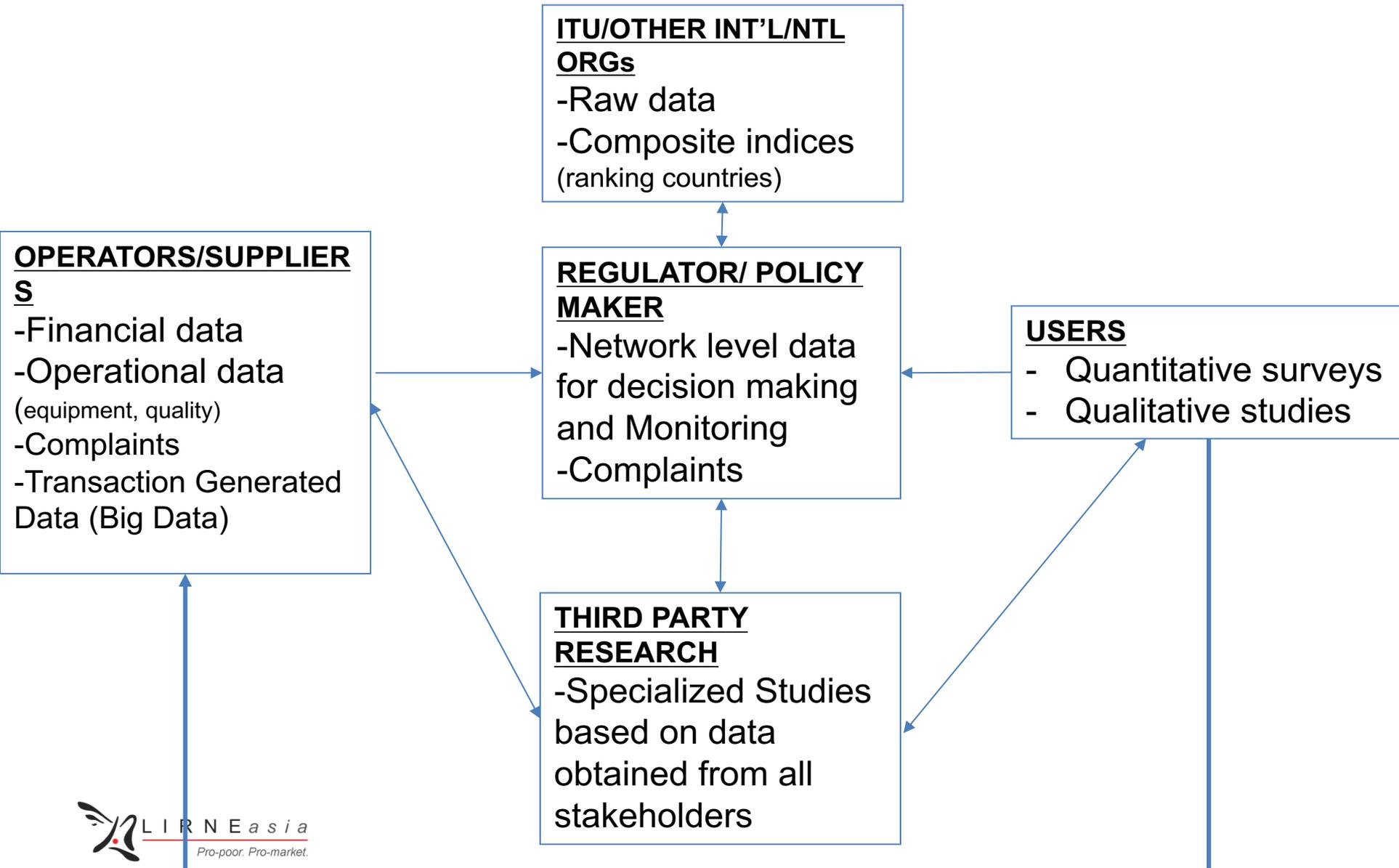

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IDRC ✳ CRDI

Canada

Data sources

- Operators/ Suppliers
- IGOs
- Regulator/ policy makers
- Users
- Third party research

Types of data... plenty to pick from...

ITU/OTHER INT'L/NTL ORGs
-Raw data
-Composite indices
(ranking countries)

OPERATORS/SUPPLIERS
-Financial data
-Operational data
(equipment, quality)
-Complaints
-Transaction Generated
Data (Big Data)

REGULATOR/ POLICY MAKER
-Network level data
for decision making
and Monitoring
-Complaints

USERS
- Quantitative surveys
- Qualitative studies

THIRD PARTY RESEARCH
-Specialized Studies
based on data
obtained from all
stakeholders

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Data sources

- Operators/ Suppliers
- IGOs
- Regulator/ policy makers
- **Users: Demand side**
- Third party research

What is demand-side research?

- Study of the end users/consumers or analysis of data from customers or end users
  - Quantitative Data
  - Qualitative Data

To understand our users mainly at the BOP we did…

- Mobile and Internet access by the BOP: Surveys in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2013, 2015
  - Over 30,000 face to face interviews in 8 countries since 2005: Bangladesh; Pakistan; India; Sri Lanka; Philippines; Thailand; Indonesia (Java only), Myanmar
  - Beyond access: India, Pakistan, Cambodia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia

- Qualitative studies in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015

- Analysis of telecom sector transaction generated data since 2012

Quantitative Vs. Qualitative

- Combination was ideal; timing was crucial
  - E.g. identifying the context of online freelancing in Sri Lanka (17,000-22,000 online freelancers)
  - Qualitative told us
    - Challengers faced by online freelancers
  - → policy implications?

Final outcome depends on your objectives and resources

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QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

Qualitative research

- In-depth and detailed.
- Helps understand a research problem from the perspective of the 'affected' local population.
- Its never just about what they say, but also what they do.
  - Visual cues as important as verbal cues
- Effective in getting culturally specific information about particular populations:
  - Values, opinions, attitudes, behaviors and social contexts

When do we use qualitative research?

- When we don't know enough about
  - *E.g. What are the information requirements of Micro-entrepreneurs in Myanmar*
  - Could be a precursor to a quantitative study and/or be considered exploratory research
- When we want to know in detail why a certain phenomena occurs?
  - *E.g. Why do people in the ages 10-16 use their phones more when they are at home and you want to know why?*
  - May be the phenomena was discovered during a previous quant study
  - Could be considered as explanatory research
- Purely descriptive
  - *E.g. How do women use phones for livelihood improvement and what information do they access?*

Different ways of doing qualitative research

Focus groups

Unstructured interviews

Photo novellas

Ethnographic studies

Case studies

- Focuses on an individual or a **small** group **in-depth**
  - **characteristics**, **circumstances** and **complexity**

- Lots of different methods:
  - Unstructured/semi-structured interviews
  - Observations

- Given that it is not sampling research, case selections must be done to maximize learnings, within the study scope

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Ethnographic studies

- Observational field work done in the actual context being studied.
  - Participant observation i.e. "immersion of researcher in actual context"
  - *E.g. trying to understand call behavior at work.*
- A heavy focus on how individuals interrelate in their environment and the influence of this environment on individuals.
  - *E.g. how long is he on the phone when his boss is around?*
  - *E.g. What is his body language when talking on the phone with boss around, in front of colleagues, when no one is around, etc.*

Focus groups

- Aids in understanding audience, group, users.
- Concentrates more on group interactions more than individual responses.

- Pros:
  - Collective discussion gives more data than individual discussions
  - Group discussions can trigger individual memories/ recall.
- Cons:
  - Group think
  - Social/ cultural issues can affect how one acts in front of a group

User personas/ profiles

- It is a profile of a specific type of user/ individual

- Could have been developed using multiple approaches:
  - Ethnographies
  - Case study
  - Photo novella

- Useful in communicating research results to others

58% in LK do not get an advance notice about power cuts
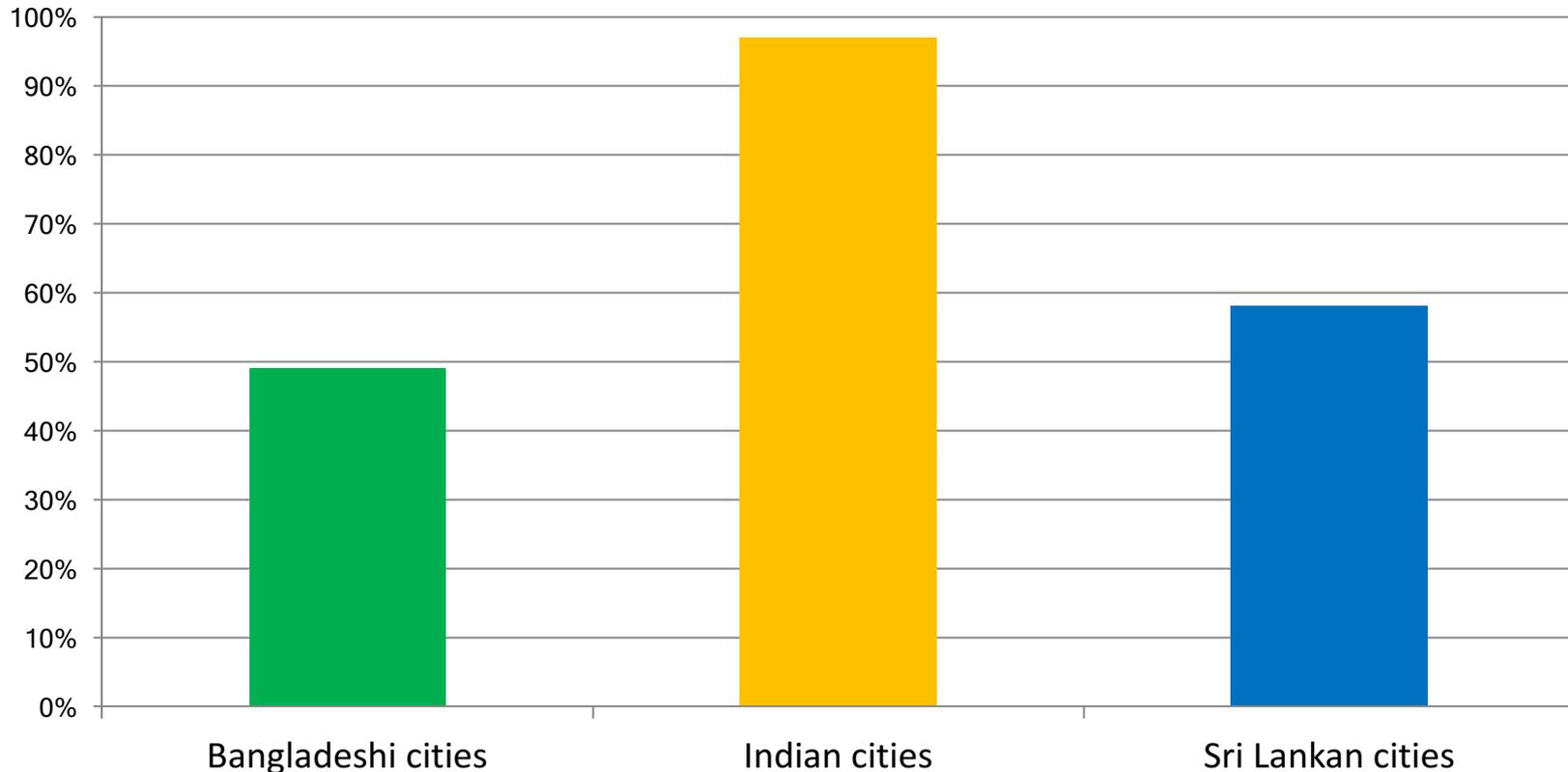
Do you get advance notice about power blackouts? - NO (%BOP MEs who use electricity for business)

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Name: Mihiri
Age: 30 years
Education: Secondary Education
Location: Colombo
Business: Services– Beauty Parlor
Employees: None
Years of Service: 3

Inside the Beauty Parlour

- Runs her business from rented accommodation
- Has an electricity connection.
- Electricity is essential for her business.
- Unable to serve her clients if there is no electricity.
- Lack of information on power-cuts has an adverse effect on her livelihood.

Ethics of demand side research

- Prevention of deception
  - Why are you doing the study, what you want to talk them about, what you are hoping to achieve.

- Protection of privacy
  - How will what they say or the visual information captured be used (what kind of identifiable information will you use)
  - *E.g. is it ok to take photographs of them, their children or their personal properties; what will the photos be appearing in; will they be identifiable; do the faces need to be blurred out?*

- Obtain informed consent
  - In the case of FGDs this may mean much before the actual event.

Practical lessons for qualitative research

- Is compensation required or not?
  - Depends from situation to situation.
  - If non-monetary then what?
    - *E.g. Giving a farm tool to farmers i.e. it is something he appreciates.*
- Preparatory work is essential:
  - Unstructured interviews **DOES NOT** mean there is no plan
  - Know all the subject areas you want to cover.
  - Have your research tools ready
    - *E.g. charts, tables that you want to fill while following a subject.*
- Sensitivity to cultural/ social/ class issues is very important
  - *E.g. is it ok to accept refreshments from case study participant?*
  - *E.g. will subject feel uncomfortable if you use his bathroom.*

Practical lessons for qualitative research

- Logistics for an FGD
  - Do I bring them somewhere or do I meet them in their own surroundings?
    - Best to arrange meeting in an environment they are comfortable in.
  - How do I record (writing, audio recording, video recording)
    - Always have a back up plan so do two methods atleast
  - How many resource people?
    - Not a great idea to have more resource people than subjects
    - Clearly defined roles for resource people
    - Clearly defined modes of interaction between resource people during the FGD

Practical lessons for qualitative research

- If you are using video recording
    - Focus always on the subject(s)
    - Researcher and resource people should avoid being in the frame
- De-briefing quickly is **VERY** important
    - Do it on the day of the FGD/ interview preferably right after
    - Researcher and resource persons should compare notes, thoughts and collate

Comparison

	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
Type of data	Numerical data, use of statistical methods	Non-numerical data that is observed (verbal as well as non-verbal responses/ reactions)
Level of understanding of the users	Not necessarily in-depth Explains what people do	In-depth understanding of human behaviour Can explain why people do something
Method of obtaining data	Surveys, big data	Focus group discussions, key informant interviews, ethnographic story-telling, content analysis

Comparison contd…

	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
Sampling technique	Multiple sampling techniques	Purposeful sampling
Generalizability	More generalizable	Less generalizable
Objectivity of the data	More objective: provides observed effects (interpreted by researchers)	More subjective: describes a problem or condition from the point of view of those experiencing it
Purpose of the using the data	Deductive process to test pre-specified concepts, constructs, hypotheses that make up a theory	Can also be an inductive process to formulate a theory.

If demand-side, then what method do I use?

- Depends on research requirements:
  - Research goals/ questions
  - Time and funds
  - Researcher's own skills, beliefs and values