UNIT 6 : TYPES OF DATA

UNIT STRUCTURE

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6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand the concept of primary and secondary data collection
- explain the differences between the Primary and Secondary Data
- understand which form of data collection will be most helpful for your own future research activity.

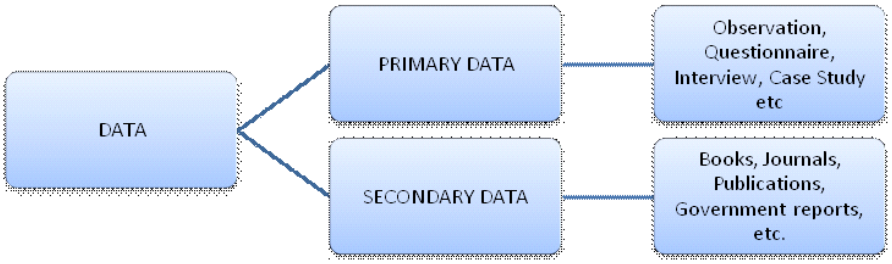
6.2 INTRODUCTION

Data in simple terms is an information about a variable or a particular occurrence. Through the process of data collection a researcher gather and measure information. While conducting all forms of research including physical sciences, social sciences, business studies etc. Data collection

is an essential component. The goal of data collection is to find credible answers to our research questions through the analysis of said data. These data provide reliability and credibility to a research and thus facilitate drawing of conclusions in one research. Hence, a researcher should have good knowledge of the different techniques associated with data collection so that he/she can opt for the one most appropriate for his/her research.

In research, there are different methods used to gather information, all of which fall into two categories, i.e. primary data, and secondary data. As the name suggests, primary data is one which is collected for the first time by the researcher while secondary data is the data already collected or produced by others. In this unit we shall not only learn about meaning and types of data but also the sources, advantanges and disadvantages of each of the types of data.

Table 1: CLASSIFICATION OF DATA



6.3 PRIMARY DATA-MEANING AND DEFINITIONS

Data originated for the first time by the researcher through direct efforts and experience, specifically for the purpose of addressing his research problem is primary data. It is also called as first hand, unorganised or raw data. The researcher collects primary data from field or his research area which is best suited to find conclusions in his research. It is a direct approach of gathering first hand information that is to be explained and hence provide specific answers to a research problem.. Primary data can be quantitative –focussing on numbers and measurements, or qualitative-emphasising on opinions or attitudes. As such conducting research by using primary data is often costly and time consuming. Primary