

# Introduction to Demand-side Research

Nilusha Kapugama  
25 September 2015



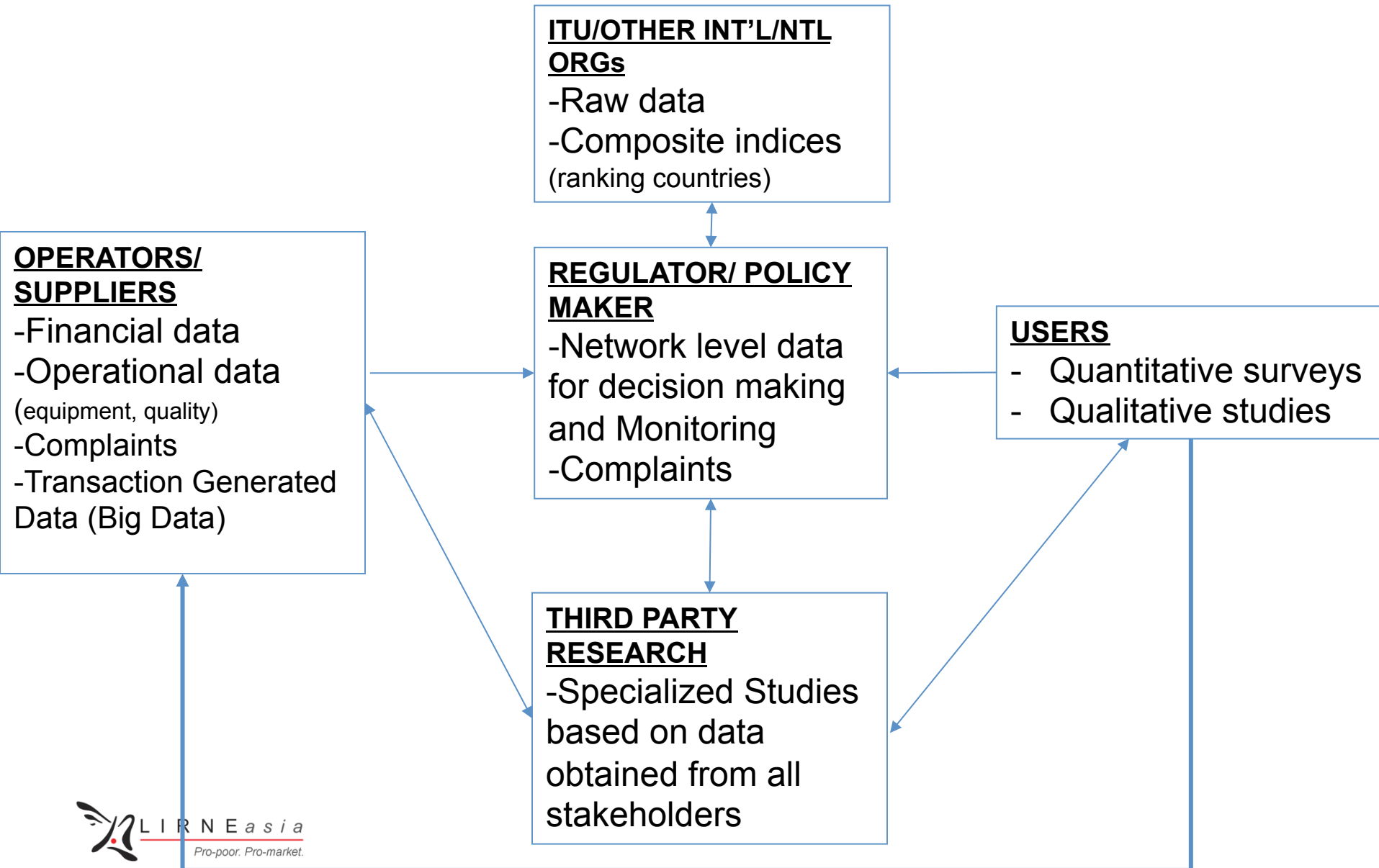
FORDFOUNDATION



LIRNEasia

*Pro-poor. Pro-market.*

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



# 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...

- Pilot surveys in 2004
  - Very limited traction
- Large 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
- 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. multiple SIM ownership question

	Bangladesh		Pakistan		India		Sri Lanka		Philippines		Thailand	
	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	2006	2008	
More than 1 SIM	10%	12%	23%	5%	9%	9%	16%	9%	19%	1%	13%	

- Qualitative told us
  - Why

→ policy implications?

**Final outcome depends on your objectives and resources**

# **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. What are the attitudes of users to having off-peak time*





# Different ways of doing qualitative research

**Case studies**

**Focus groups**

**Unstructured interviews**

**Diary/ Journal method**

**Ethnographic studies**

**Photo novellas**

# 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

# Case studies

- Pros:
  - In-depth and detailed
  - Helps identify variables/ phenomena for further study
  - When it is possible, comparing cases allows for a comprehensive analysis
  
- Cons:
  - Time consuming
  - Limited breadth
  - Not representative

# 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.*

# Ethnographic studies

- Pros:
  - Richer understanding of complex social/ cultural actions
- Cons:
  - Difficult to interpret and analyze.
  - Time consuming and expensive.
  - Researcher can influence behavior.

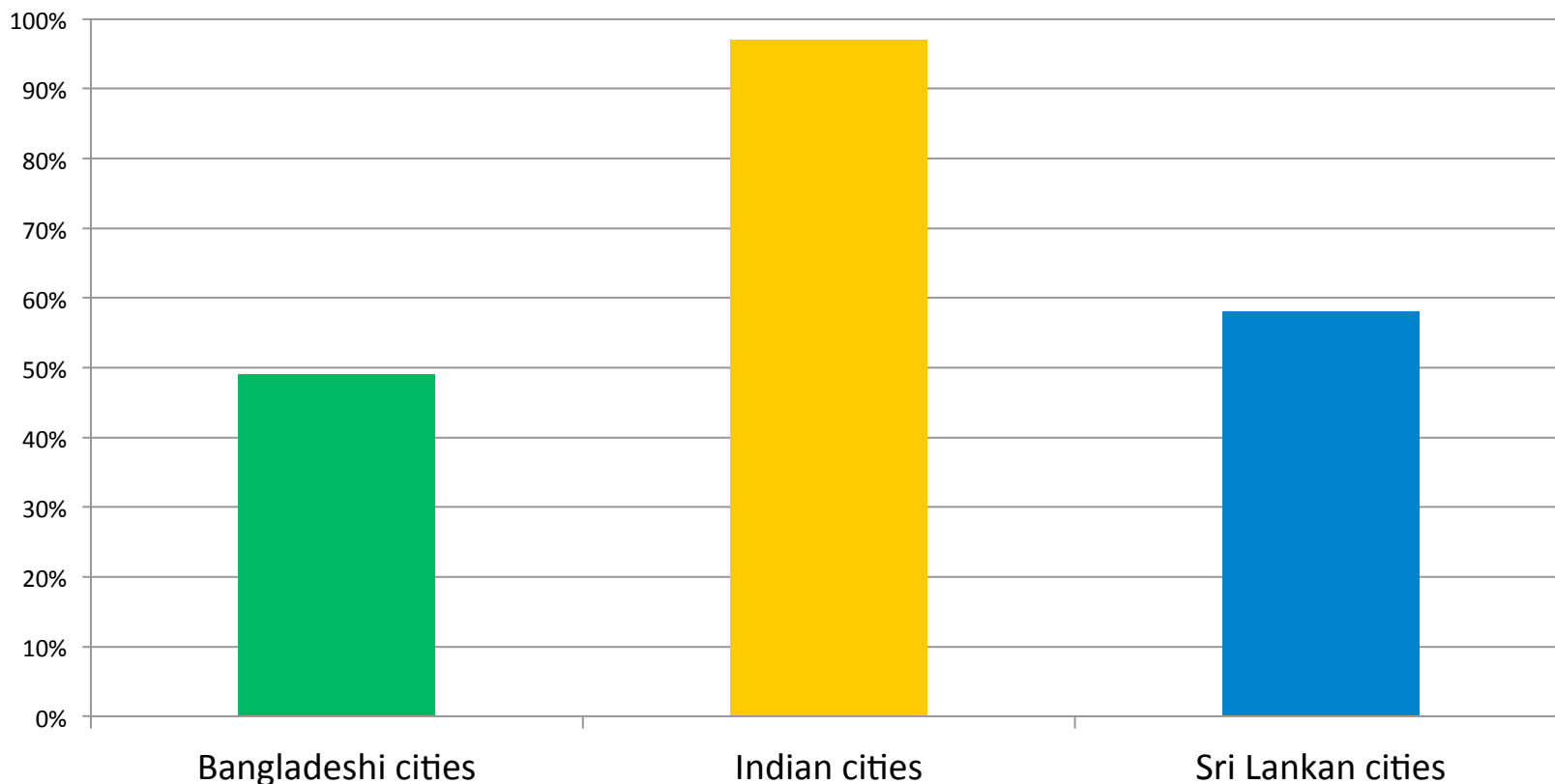
# Focus groups

- 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

- 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)**





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?*



# 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 at least
  - 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
<b>Type of data</b>	Numerical data, use of statistical methods	Non-numerical data that is observed (verbal as well as non-verbal responses/reactions)
<b>Level of understanding of the users</b>	Not necessarily in-depth	In-depth understanding of human behaviour
<b>Method of obtaining data</b>	Surveys, questionnaires	Focus group discussions, key informant interviews, ethnographic story-telling, content analysis

# Comparison contd...

	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
<b>Sampling technique</b>	Multiple sampling techniques	Purposeful sampling
<b>Generalizability</b>	More generalizable	Less generalizable
<b>Objectivity of the data</b>	More objective: provides observed effects (interpreted by researchers)	More subjective: describes a problem or condition from the point of view of those experiencing it
<b>Purpose of the using the data</b>	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