Chapter 5
Personal Diary Method:
A Way of Collecting Qualitative Data

Farrah Zeba
IFHE Hyderabad, India

Pankaj Kumar Mohanty
IFHE Hyderabad, India

ABSTRACT

There is a growing interest towards using diaries as a tool of data collection for gathering information pertaining to consumer research. However, the bigger challenge is the qualitative analysis of the data collected through this technique. Hence, the objective of the chapter is to illustrate how diary method of data collection can be a better option than other data collection tools in cases where the informants are likely to experience difficulties in recalling past consumption experience. To delineate the steps and different types of codes used in inductive content analysis to analyze the qualitative data collected through the personal diary method, the chapter will also present an exploratory study with airline consumers using self-completion diaries about their online ticket purchasing experience followed by qualitative analyses of this information collected through diary using inductive content analysis. Each step of the content analysis will be illustrated in the full chapter.

INTRODUCTION

Everyone in this world understands the importance of using a diary in daily life. Some people use it to document their daily activities, events or track their upcoming appointments (Butcher and Eldridge, 1990). Other may use it as a Pandora box for

secret information, daily work experiences and so on. Individuals often write their diaries to keep their classified information whereas others may like to publish their life history, personal experience, thoughts or feelings about an event in the form of books or articles (Kenten, 2010). For example, many biographies and autobiographies are written on business leaders (e.g., Bill Gates, Steve Jobs), management thinker's (e.g. Michael Porter), country statesman (e.g. Mahatma Gandhi), Spiritual leaders (e.g. Swami Vivekananda) and many more to convey the success, failure or the experiential learning of the great protagonist. In today's world where the longitudinal research plays an important role, written diaries were used as a key method for data collection.

This chapter is expected to (1) explain the meaning and components of diary method, (2) demonstrate important characteristics of diary research method, (3) explain different types of research diaries, (4) describe the advantages and disadvantages of using diaries method, (5) explain the issues involved in hiring diarists for an experiential research, (6) explain the method for analyzing diary research, (7) describe the process of content analysis for analyzing diary data, and (8) highlight the researcher's bias in dairy method.

Diary method originated from the field of psychology and anthropology and then widely used in other areas such as social science (Alaszewski, 2006; Suveg, Payne, Thomassin, & Jacob, 2010; Bryman, 2015) and medical research (Freer, 1980; Coxon, 1994) to gather the real-time qualitative data obtained from the customer and patient's experience respectively. It is considered as a primary source of the qualitative data analysis. Diaries were often referred as the written materials or transcripts which were kept for further synthesis by the researcher.

Diary research has three main components such as; 1) initial interview, 2) research diary, and 3) debriefing of the interview (Alaszewski, 2006).

- Initial Briefing: In the first step of the diary method, the researcher provides a complete presentation of the process followed during the writing.
- Research Diary: This is the actual stage of diary research, where the participants engage him/her in documenting the personal experiences for a specified time and return the same to the researcher after meeting the deadlines. The researcher then read and analyzes the complete diaries for debriefing purpose.
- Debriefing: The last stage of a diary method deals with a complete debriefing exercise conducted by the researcher for the previously written logs. The analysis of diaries acts as resources for the debriefing interview with the participants.

19 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/personal-diary-method/207793

Related Content

How Does Empowering Leadership Contribute to Organizational Commitment of Millennials?: An Indian Perspective
Mohammad Faraz Naim (2018). *Harnessing Human Capital Analytics for Competitive Advantage (pp. 180-197).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/how-does-empowering-leadership-contribute-to-organizational-commitment-of-millennials/199997

Application of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Techniques for IVF Analysis and Prediction
Satya Kiranmai Tadepalliand P.V. Lakshmi (2019). *International Journal of Big Data and Analytics in Healthcare (pp. 21-33).*
www.irma-international.org/article/application-of-machine-learning-and-artificial-intelligence-techniques-for-ivf-analysis-and-prediction/247456

For Better Healthcare Mining Health Data
Güney Gürsel (2017). *Intelligent Multidimensional Data Clustering and Analysis (pp. 135-158).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/for-better-healthcare-mining-health-data/172554

A Fuzzy Measure of Vulnerability for the Optimization of Vehicle Routing Problems With Time Windows
Kris Braekersand Gerrit K. Janssens (2018). *Optimization Techniques for Problem Solving in Uncertainty (pp. 167-197).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-fuzzy-measure-of-vulnerability-for-the-optimization-of-vehicle-routing-problems-with-time-windows/206634

Resilience by Academic Institutions During COVID-19: A Review-Based Study
Rashmi Aggarwal, Tanvi Vermaand Rishu Chhabra (2021). *Big Data Analytics for Improved Accuracy, Efficiency, and Decision Making in Digital Marketing (pp. 85-101).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/resilience-by-academic-institutions-during-covid-19/280645