

Chapter 7

Deductive Approach to Content Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This chapter initially introduces content analysis and elicits different approaches to content analysis. These include the distinctions based on qualitative and quantitative content analysis. It clarifies the differences between inductive and deductive content analysis. It then moves on to deductive content analysis. Through an example, this chapter explains how deductive content analysis is used to elicit different factors that affect job performance of call center workers. The steps of coding, grouping, abstraction, and model development are explained with excerpts from two interview transcripts. The interview transcripts that deal with developing a model for the factors that affect job performance of call center employees in India.

INTRODUCTION

Qualitative methodology in itself offers varying methods and analysis techniques aiming to sieve knowledge from information and information from data (Acharya & Gupta, 2016a; Acharya & Gupta, 2016b; Gupta, Ganguli, & Ponnamp, 2015) by aiding quantitative analysis (Pandey & Singh, 2016) or especially in settings where other methods like quantitative survey pose restrictions (Ghanshala, Pant & Pandey, 2013; Pandey & Singh, 2015a; Pandey & Roberts, 2012; Pandey & Varkkey, 2017). One such technique is content analysis; this chapter utilizes conceptualization and utilization of this technique in the dissertation by Pandey (2017). Content analysis could broadly be defined as the “technique for making inferences by objectively and

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-5366-3.ch007

systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (Holsti, 1969, p. 14). Content analysis deals with analyzing messages in verbal, visual and written form (Cole, 1988) for systematic and objective description (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). Some have described content analysis as “a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method and is not limited to types of variables measured or context of messages” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 10) and those emphasizing on text have termed it as a “systematic reading of texts and symbolic matter not necessarily from an author’s or user’s perspective” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 3).

On the other hand, those who have concentrated specifically on its technique, have termed it as a “technique for objective, systematic, & quantitative description of manifest content communication” (Berelson, 1952, p. 8) and “a research technique that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text” (Weber, 1990, p. 9). Content analysis also leads to condensed but broad-based description of a phenomenon in the form of categories and concepts that aid in the development of a model or conceptual map (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The advantage of content analysis is that this research method leads to valid and replicable findings from contextual data, which further help in generating new data and thereby enhance existing knowledge; most importantly, it assists in developing practical action guides (Klaus, 1980), which happens to be the principal objective of this study. The other benefits include its sensitivity to content–context, thereby facilitating flexible research design for dealing with meaning and intention, identifying critical processes (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Harwood & Garry, 2003; Klaus, 1980). Content analysis thus forms the basis for many studies that utilize data in the form of text, ranging from for instance, analysis of a newspaper (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Meyer et al., 2016), magazine (Bazzini, Pepper, Swofford, & Cochran, 2015; Döring, Reif, & Poeschl, 2016), websites (Bazzini et al., 2015), religious texts (Pandey & Singh, 2015b) to transcripts of interviews (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). This chapter addresses the positivist, qualitative-deductive form of content analysis.

ABOUT: APPROACHES TO CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis encompasses many approaches ranging from interpretive analyses to strict positivist analyses (Rosengren, 1981) and should not be restricted to any one particular ontological and thus epistemological position. In the interpretivist paradigm, content analysis could be used to uncover previously unknown information through generation of themes or in strict positivist paradigm. The positivist view would focus on quantifying content of text whereas interpretive view will focus on counting interpretations of the contents (Ahuvia, 2001). The quantitative aspect of content analysis deals with quantification of data followed by further analysis into

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