CHAPTER 9

USING SECONDARY DATA AND ARCHIVAL SOURCES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Differentiate between primary and secondary data.
- Source secondary data.
- Explain the importance of archives and archival sources.
- Evaluate and critique secondary data.
- Use secondary data and archival sources appropriately in their research projects.
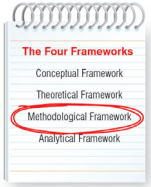
RESEARCH SKILLS

At the end of this chapter the student should, using the exercises on the accompanying online platform, be able to:

- Source a set of secondary data.
- Explore and use that data set.
- Evaluate the utility and quality of the data in that data set.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the student to the differences between primary and secondary data and to show the advantages and disadvantages of both data types. The chapter explores secondary data sets and explains how to obtain them. The chapter explains how secondary data sets are to be used. The chapter highlights and explains the potential limitations of secondary data sets. There are two research methodologies in focus in this chapter, they are historical research and archival research.
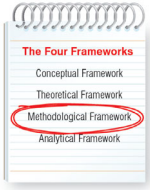
RESEARCH DIARY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 9.1

Source a secondary data set and explain why you think the data set has value as a secondary data set. Write a brief account of the utility and quality of the data set.
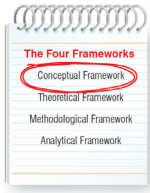
ANSWER:

ACTIVITY 9.2

In your research diary, record your exploration and use of the secondary data set you sourced. Briefly outline any limitations you encountered in your use of the data set.

ANSWER:

ACTIVITY 9.3

Read the Real World Research textbox on pages 240-241. Reflect on the contribution to knowledge that your research will make and then write an outline and an explanation of this contribution in your research diary.
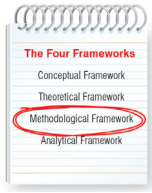
ANSWER:

ACTIVITY 9.4

The Four Frameworks
Conceptual Framework
Theoretical Framework
Methodological Framework
Analytical Framework

Detail in your research diary any new ideas that you have for research projects. These ideas should be recorded in your research diary for safe keeping. Then when you are asked to carry out a research project, or when you want to carry out a research project, you can refer to these notes in your research diary. They might be very helpful in terms of coming up with ideas for that research project.
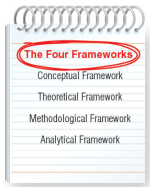
ANSWER:

ACTIVITY 9.5

In your research diary make a note of the contribution that secondary data could make to your research project. Write a note on your decision to use, or not to use, secondary data in your research project.

ANSWER:

YOUR RESEARCH DIARY

Please use this section to start your own Research Diary and keep accurate records of your research as it progresses

DATE:

RESEARCH ELEMENT/ASPECT:
Detail the topic or section of research being undertaken

SOURCE:
Record website addresses, book citations, library references, contact details etc.

SUMMARY:
Reflect on your experiences, thoughts, ideas and developments

NOTES:
Make general notes on your research, for example questions for further reflection and/or investigation, your thoughts, your observations and plans for future research.