

CHAPTER 10

USING OBSERVATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- Understand the concept of observation in research and be aware of the different kinds of observation engaged in by researchers.
- Know how to use observation in data gathering and be able to design a method of data collection using observation.
- Understand the need to rigour in observation.
- Critique the use of observation in research studies generally.

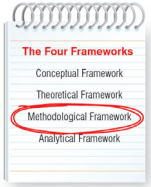
RESEARCH SKILLS

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

- Design a small observation study.
- Create an observation schedule for that small study.
- Complete an ethical reflection on that observation study.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the student to the concept of observation. Observation is a key data collection method in social science research. It involves the observation of the phenomenon under investigation, the recording of that observation and the subsequent analysis of that recording. The different kinds of observation used in data gathering are participant observation, non-participant observation (or simply observation) and covert observation. This chapter explores the ways in which observation can be used in business research.

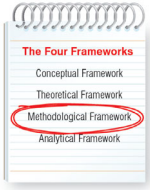
RESEARCH DIARY ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITY 10.1

Read the Your Research textbox on page 267 and complete the research diary exercises outlined in it. This exercise will help you develop your knowledge and understanding of observation as a data gathering method.

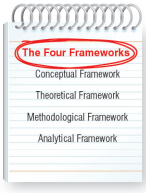
ANSWER:



ACTIVITY 10.2

Read the Real World Research textbox on page 269. Then carry out the research diary exercise outlined at the end of the textbox. This exercise will help you develop your understanding of how participant observation is used as a data gathering exercise. It will also help you to develop your awareness of the ethical issues in using participant observation as a data gathering method.

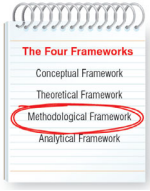
ANSWER:



ACTIVITY 10.3

Read the end of chapter case study and in your research diary record your answers to the questions asked and your reflections on the issues raised and highlighted at the end of the case study.

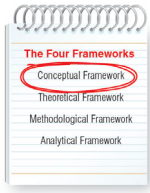
ANSWER:



ACTIVITY 10.4

In your research diary, design a small observation study and create an observation schedule for that study. Write an ethical reflection on that observation study.

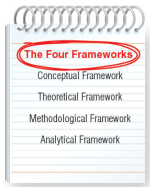
ANSWER:



ACTIVITY 10.5

In your research diary, list five ideas for research projects. Then draw a spidergram to help you develop your idea for one of those research projects.

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.