

## CHAPTER 6 - RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapters two to four a thorough theoretical study has been done on the appropriate subjects for this specific study, i.e. new economy leadership, customer relationship management (CRM) and relationship marketing. Chapter six outlines a systematic exposition of the procedures and methodology that were followed in order to achieve the research objectives set out in Chapter one.

### 6.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Zikmund (2003:65) states: “A research design is a master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information.” Exploratory research will be conducted and the study is of a qualitative nature.

### 6.3 EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

Exploratory research is the initial research conducted to clarify and define the nature of a problem (Zikmund, 2003:110). According to Zikmund (2003:111) exploratory research provides greater understanding of a concept or problem, rather than providing quantification. Exploratory research will be used in this study to provide greater understanding of the impact of new economy leadership amongst relationship managers in ABSA Personal Financial Services.

### 6.4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Shao (1999:151) states that data is either quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative research uses mathematical measures and statistical techniques to determine relationships and differences among large samples of target populations (Shao, 1999:151). Highly structured, quantitative research involves designing questions with a choice of specific responses so that the responses can be measured and analysed mathematically (Shao, 1999:151).

Qualitative research is less formally structured than quantitative research and it uses smaller samples. The data gathered using qualitative techniques is subjective and

non-quantifiable (Shao, 1999:151). The primary data collection technique that will be used in this study will be of a qualitative nature. The qualitative method to be used in this study is in-depth interviews. The qualitative research is not very large, because the research is organisation specific. The interviews will be conducted face to face with pre-selected respondents on an individual basis, where the subject matter of the interview will be explored in detail. The selected respondents for the interviews are all specialists in a specific field and for this reason the researcher found this qualitative method appropriate.

## **6.5 METHODS OF COLLECTING QUALITATIVE DATA**

Dillon, Madden and Firtle (1993:134) define qualitative research methods as techniques involving small numbers of respondents who provide descriptive information about their thoughts and feelings that are not easily projected to the whole population. Shao (1999:152-167) identifies three common types of qualitative research techniques; focus groups, in-depth interviews and projective techniques.

- Focus groups: is a qualitative research technique in which a skilled moderator leads a small group of participants in an unstructured discussion about a particular topic.
- In-dept interviews: are typically unstructured, one-on-one conversations between a highly skilled interviewer and a member of a target population.
- Projective techniques: provide verbal or visual stimuli that encourage respondents to reveal unconscious feelings and attitudes.

Depth interviews will be used in this study as a method to collect qualitative data. Zikmund (2003:130) states that a depth interview is a relatively unstructured, extensive interview used in the primary stages of the research process. Zikmund (2003:130) comments that in the interviewing session the researcher asks many questions and probes for elaboration after the subject answers. Dillon, Madden and Firtle (1993:141-142) states that the depth interview, also referred to as one-on-one interviews uncovers people's underlying motivations and attitudes beyond straightforward responses to structured questions. Dillon et al. (1993:141) further states that depth interviews can prove most useful if the marketing research issue under study deals with;

- (i) Personal, emotionally charged, or embarrassing matters.
- (ii) Behaviours where socially acceptable norms exist and where pressures to conform in group discussions would influence responses.
- (iii) A complex behavioural or decision-making process that requires a detailed, situation-specific, step-by-step description.
- (iv) When group interviews are difficult to schedule for the target population.

Shao (1999:160) states that in-depth interviews have been proven to be better at assessing beliefs and attitudes than focus groups. In-depth interviews give researchers ample opportunity to explore individuals' responses (Shao, 1999:160).

### **6.5.1 In-depth interviews**

Shao (1999:161-162) identifies two types of in-depth interviews, i.e. structured and unstructured interviews.

- Unstructured interviews: These types of interviews allow the participants to freely float from one issue to the next. Roux (2001:74) also refer to these interviews as non-directive, where the respondent is given maximum freedom to respond, within the bounds of topics of interest to the interviewer.
- Structured interviews: The interviewer uses checklists to cover narrowly focused topics. The timing, exact wording and time allocated to each question area are left to the interviewer's discretion. Roux (2001:74) refer to semi-structure interviews where the interviewer attempts to cover a specific list of topics or sub-areas. Roux (2001:74) states that this method is effective with busy executives, technical experts and strong leadings. The open structure ensures that unexpected facts or attitudes that arise can be pursued easily.

Given the research objectives, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. The selected respondents for the interviews are all specialists in their specific job profiles, and play an important role in the decision-making process on certain strategic issues. For this reason, the researcher found this qualitative method appropriate.

### **6.5.2 Advantages of in-depth interviews**

Shao (1999:162) identifies the following advantages of in-depth interviews over other research techniques;

- When the topic is embarrassing or highly sensitive, respondents may feel more comfortable discussing the issues with just one person. Responses may be more frank because interviewees aren't concerned about group reaction.
- One-on-one conversations are often much more detailed and revealing than group discussions. The interviewer can probe more deeply in a personal interview than in a group session. One-on-one situations allow the interviewer to investigate feelings that may come up during the interview.
- One-on-one interviews are much easier to schedule than group interviews. It is difficult to find a convenient time so that all members can be in attendance.
- In-depth interviews can handle more complex topics. More detail about the topic can be obtained in a personal interview. For example, interviewing financial experts on investment strategies.

### **6.5.3 Disadvantages of in-depth interviews**

Shao (1999:162-163) identifies the following disadvantages of in-depth interviews over other research techniques;

- Inability of the participants to interact with others and bounce ideas off them. Sometimes respondents feel alone. The lack of group dynamics is an argument in support of focus groups.
- Cost of implementation. Interviewing enough individuals to collect sufficient data can be quite expensive.
- Interviewers may not be reliable. Reliability demands consistency, but interviewers differ in their approach and style and therefore in the impressions they make on subjects. Variations can cause respondents to differ in their behaviour.
- Interviewer's energy levels tend to deplete rapidly. It is difficult to talk to individuals for hours about only a few topics.
- In-depth interviews lack consistency and thus reliability, because taped conversations are interpreted differently by different people.

- Since in-depth interviews are fairly unstructured, they are unscientific, so they lack statistical validity.

#### **6.5.4 Requirements for effective in-depth interviews**

Shao (1999:161-162) identifies six requirements for effective in-depth interviews. Here are some guidelines for setting up the interview situation:

- Allow between a half hour and two hours for each session. Every interview has its own set amount of time. However, a session should not be more than two hours, so that fatigue does not impact the respondent's answers.
- Screen each respondent carefully. It is important that the respondent be a worthy representative both of the target group and the topic of interest.
- Make sure the interviewer is capable. The interviewer should have knowledge of techniques that psychologists use to reveal hidden motivations. In addition, because the topics for discussion are largely at the discretion of the interviewer, the success of the research is dependent on the discretion of the interviewer's skill.
- Use a tape or video recorder. The tape recorder is used to document the interview. Transcription is one step in the research process where results can be tainted by personal biases.
- Make the interview setting comfortable. Respondents must feel relaxed with both the interviewer and the surroundings where the interview takes place. Respondents will "open up" if they feel relaxed. Make sure that refreshments and a comfortable chair are available during the interview.
- Provide rewards for participation. Besides cash rewards, other incentives may be offered to recruit participants. Giving participants some type of reward should not be construed as unethical behaviour since participation is voluntary and the outcome is a win-win situation.

## **6.6 EXTERNAL SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS**

According to Zikmund (2003:136) secondary data are data gathered and recorded by someone else prior to the current needs of the researcher. Zikmund (2003:115) further states that: “secondary data analysis is the preliminary review of data collected for another purpose to clarify issues in the early stages of a research effort.” An extensive literature search on the study will be done. External data are generated or recorded by an entity other than the researcher’s organisation (Zikmund, 2003:144). The literature on new economy leadership, customer relationship management and relationship marketing will be discussed in chapters two to four.

## **6.7 INTERNAL SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS**

Zikmund (2003:143) defined internal data: “as data that originated in the organisation.” Internal records- Internal memorandums and strategic documents will be analysed. Analysing of the Beehive model and the 360° strategic strategies and action plans. These models will be used to implement new economy leadership and the monitor and feedback thereof.

## **6.8 METHODS OF SAMPLE SELECTION**

Zikmund (2003:71) identifies two basic sampling techniques: probability and non-probability sampling. A probability sample is defined as a sample n which every member of the population has a known, nonzero probability of selection. Zikmund (2003:71) states that if sample units are selected on the basis of personal judgment, the sample method is a non-probability sample.

Non-probability sampling will be used in this study to select the respondents who will be interviewed. Relationship managers in the Personal Financial Services division of Absa Bank have been selected to be interviewed.

### 6.8.1 Universe of the sample size

Sample size will consist of the client segment of the Personal Financial Service division of ABSA Bank. In-dept interviews with six relationship managers in the Fourways suite of ABSA Personal Financial Services division will be conducted. The interviews were limited to the relationship managers in the Fourways suite only for convenience purposes. The client base however presents the whole of Gauteng. The sampling units will be explained in Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1: Sampling units in the ABSA relationship management unit:**

<b>RELATIONSHIP MANAGER</b>	<b>SEGMENT</b>
Mr. Andre Smith	Medical Market – Doctors
Mrs. Estie Beetge	Medical Market- Doctors
Mr. Morne Van Greunen	>R750 000 Gross income per annum
Mr. Lawrence Padayachee	>R750 000 Gross income per annum
Mrs. Rashika Aungunu	≥R500 000 <R750 000 Gross income per annum
Mrs. Ashie Inderpersad	≥R500 000 <R750 000 Gross income per annum and senior citizen clients, age 60 and older.

### 6.9 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Shao (1999:246) defines a questionnaire as a: “formal set of questions or statements designed to gather the information from respondents that will accomplish the goals of the research project.” Questionnaires measure people’s attitudes, behaviour and feelings toward just about everything-products and services, new product features, advertising-the list is endless (Shao, 1999:246).

In view of the qualitative nature of this study questionnaires will not be used. A discussion guide will be used. Refer to Appendix A for detailed information about the discussion guide.

## **6.10 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Shao (1999:173) describes content analysis as a research technique in which the content of a communication vehicle is examined to see whether a study inference is valid.

According to Zikmund (2003:248) content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. Once the data has been gathered, the data must be analysed by turning the data into actionable sets of conditions and reports. The use of content analysis will enable to measure the extent of emphasis on any analytical category. Zikmund (2003:491) states: “interpretation is the process of making inferences and drawing conclusions concerning the meaning and implications of a research investigation.” Interpretation of the data is an important aspect for this qualitative study and for managerial implications.

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:102) states that qualitative content analysis is the preferred choice of novice researchers because it is easy to access and it works on one level of meaning. This method of analysis unfortunately is also a method that may lead to superficial and naively realistic findings because it captures what is presumed to be the ‘real world’ through the eyes of the research participants (Henning et al., 2004:102).

### **6.10.1 Qualitative content analysis: a tool for reduced, condensed and group content**

Henning et al. (2004:104) comments that in this basic way of ‘working the data’ a researcher starts with a set of data, such as a transcribed interview. The transcription has to be verbatim, but it does not need the type of information required for conversation analysis texts. For purposes of this study a tape recorder has been used to record all six interviews with participants. The set of data has then been



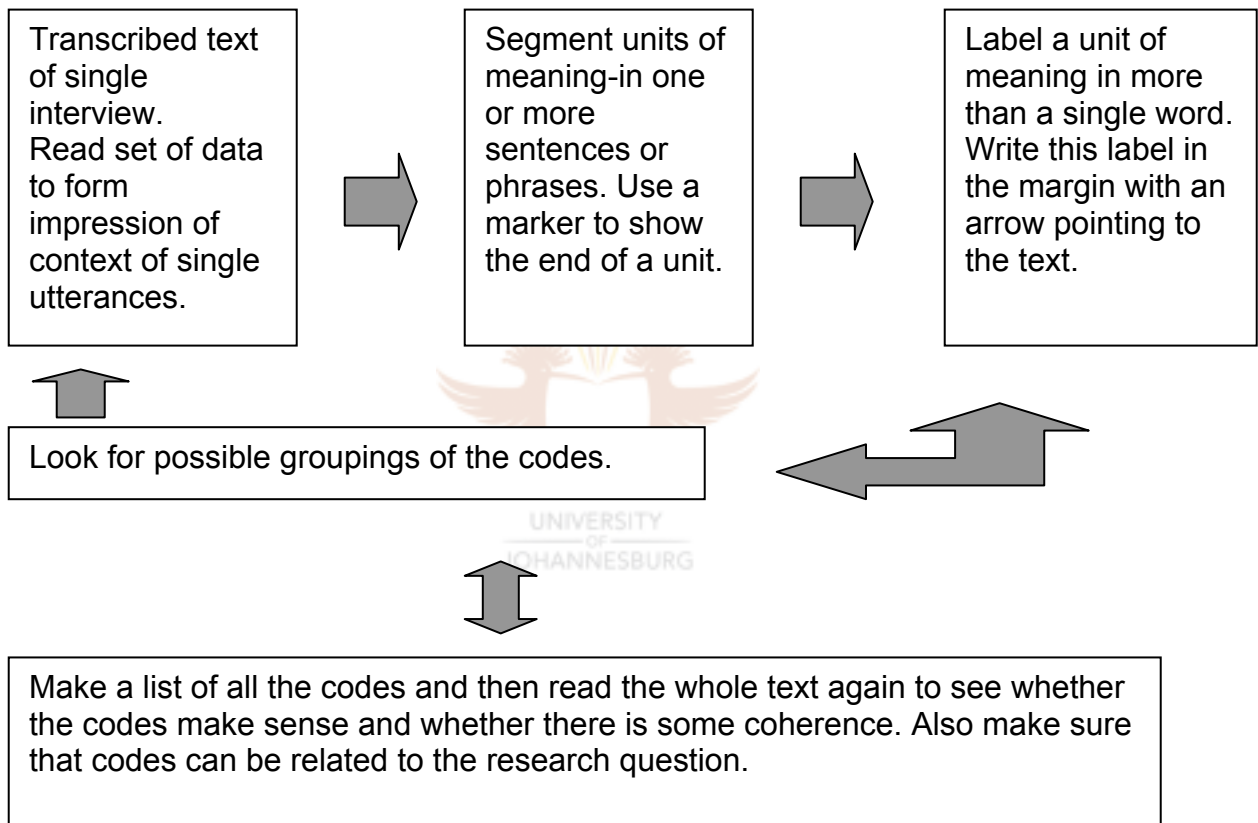
transcribed to a written format. The process of inductive making of meaning, which is highly interpretive, is then preceded by a more technical process—the conversion of spoken to written language (Henning et al., 2004:105).

### **6.10.2 Coding from texts**

Henning et al. (2004:104) suggests that one should leave a wide margin (on the right-hand side of the page) for notes and the writing of codes. In what is known as open coding, the analyst reads through the entire text in order to get a global impression of the content. According to Henning et al. (2004:104) states that at this point that themes will be observed, but the coding process does not begin as yet. Henning et al. (2004:104) comments that some researchers prefer to read the transcripts of all the interviews that have been conducted in a series. According to Henning et al. (2004:104) codes are selected according to what the data mean to the researcher. An overview of as much contextual data as possible is therefore needed. It is recommended to read all the relevant transcriptions before any formal meaning is attributed to a single unit. This process is illustrated in Figure 6.1.

After the first reading, a transcript or a set of fields notes are then read again and units of meaning are identified. It is further noted that the temptation of repeat codes must be resisted. Henning et al. (2004:105) also argues that it is important not to be fixed in the immediate context of the section of text in which you are coding at any given moment as the meaning of a phrase may only become clear later in the interview notes. Henning et al. (2004:105) states:” human communication is not linear and the interpretation of meaning should not be linear either.”

**Figure 6.1. Coding from texts**



Source: Adapted from Henning E, Van Rensburg W, Smit B (2004). Finding your way in qualitative research, Van Schaik South Africa

### 6.10.3 How are codes constructed or selected

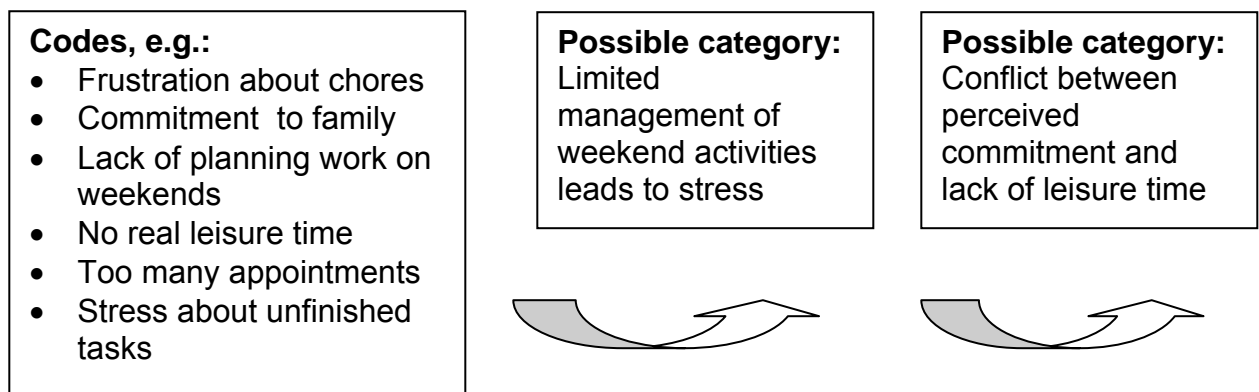
Henning et al. (2004:105) states that in open coding, codes are made up as the researcher works through the data. The better a researcher knows the data, the more competent the researcher will be in labelling units of meaning.

Once the transcription is ready and codes have been awarded to different segments or units of meaning, the related codes can be grouped or categorised (Henning et al., 2004:105).

### 6.10.4. From codes to categories

A category will already begin to show the themes that will be constructed from the data that will be used in the discussion of the inquiry. Figure 6.2 shows the move from codes to categories. Categories are important as it invokes the broader context.

**Figure 6.2: From codes to categories in qualitative content analysis**



Source: Adapted from Henning E, Van Rensburg W, Smit B (2004). Finding your way in qualitative research, Van Schaik South Africa

In a further reading of the data and in working through more data sets it may become clear that one of them is closer to the overall picture and then it may be used (Henning et al., 2004:106). Once all the sets of data have been coded and categorised the researcher is left with all the important task of seeing the whole.

Henning et al. (2004:106) states that the questions that are asked at this point in time are:

- What are the relationships in meaning between all these categories?
- What do they say together?
- What do they say about each other?
- What is missing?
- How do they address the research question(s)?
- How do these categories link with what I already know about the topic?
- What has been foregrounded in the analysis?
- What has moved to the background?
- What additional data gathering and /or analysis have to be completed?

Henning et al. (2004:07) points out that when a researcher is satisfied that the themes represent a reasonably 'research chunk' of reality, each theme can be used as the basis for an argument in a discussion around them. Processed data do not have the status of 'findings' until the themes have been discussed and argued to make a point, and the point that is to be made comes from the research questions (Henning et al., 2004:107).

## **6.11 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the researcher attempted to give a summary of the methodology followed in this study. The research design and methodology were divided into three phases, which followed in chronological order but were not necessarily completed before the next phase started. These three phases included:

- External secondary data analysis
- Internal secondary data analysis
- Primary Qualitative research

Chapter seven will include the major findings of the study.

