

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

“Just as painters need both techniques and vision to bring their novel images to life on canvas, analysts need techniques to help them see beyond the ordinary and to arrive at a new understanding of social life.”

(Strauss & Corbin)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a classification of OOH advertising media types from a South African perspective were proposed and published research on each of the major OOH advertising media platforms were presented.

In this chapter all the empirical facets of the research conducted – the qualitative research strategy, methods and procedures – will be discussed in detail, while motivating the selection thereof. This will be followed by a description of the quality issues in evaluating this qualitative study, as well as the ethical considerations and the measures relevant thereto.

The main purpose of the current study was to explore how experienced OOH advertising media specialists are planning and integrating different OOH advertising media platforms in South Africa, in order to propose a framework for the planning and integration of OOH advertising media in South Africa.

5.2 THE RESEARCH ORIENTATION AND PARADIGM

Researchers’ basic beliefs and worldviews lie behind their theoretical perspective and approach to an inquiry. A philosophical paradigm represents different views on the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge and the process by which it is acquired, as illustrated by the perceived relation between the inquirer and what is being researched (epistemology), the role that values play in research (axiology), the process of research (methodology) and the language used in the reporting of the research process and outcomes (Merriam, 2009:8).

Each paradigm is based on definite philosophical principles, also referred to as the metatheory (Babbie & Mouton, 2005:20). This indicates the nature of the inquiry within the particular paradigm. The metatheory determines, amongst others, the view of reality, the view of truth, and which scientific theories are appropriate for research to be conducted in the paradigm. It follows that the researcher's choice of paradigm will determine which research design and methods can be used for the specific study.

The positivist paradigm views reality as a singular objective entity, while post-positivism recognises that knowledge is relative rather than absolute, although it is possible, using empirical evidence, to distinguish between more and less plausible claims (Patton, 2002:93). A common goal for positivists, as well as post-positivists, is to find an explanation for phenomena that leads to prediction and control. Positivism is characterised by objective data collection, and measuring is done by using research instruments with exact scales, objective data analysis, a deductive approach to test the apriori theory and a formal writing style (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2009:24).

Positivists believe that the purpose of science is to uncover the truth, and to prove it via empirical means (Henning, Smit & van Rensburg, 2010:17). Conducting research in this paradigm implies the collection of mainly quantitative data, which are then analysed by means of statistical techniques (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2009:29). If text data are collected from large numbers of respondents, the frequency of the appearance of certain words or phrases is calculated, which implies a quantitative approach to the text analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1278).

The research paradigm followed in this study reflects the principles of Interpretivism. In the interpretivistic worldview or paradigm, the aim is to understand the way in which people construct their own reality, and thus the social world in which they live and work. Through interaction between the researcher and other individuals, interpretive qualitative research seeks to understand how people make meaning of their experiences (Merriam, 2009:5). It attempts to capture and represent voices, perspectives, motives, and actions of those studied.

A major goal of the interpretive researcher is to create a text that permits the reader to share in the experiences of the participants in the study. Thick descriptions are used to capture and record the participants' lived experiences (Stake, 2010:37). A distinctive characteristic of interpretive qualitative research is that it is an attempt to make meaning or gain understanding of the phenomena being studied (Stake, 2010: 38) from the insider's (emic) perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2005:53).

In interpretive research, the subjective meanings made of individual experiences are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to consider the complexity of their views and perspectives on the phenomenon being studied. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals, but are formed through interaction with others, and through historical and cultural values and norms that operate in the environments in which individuals live and work.

According to this social construction of reality, individuals seek understanding of their world by developing subjective meanings and understanding of their experiences. This paradigm is characterised by a far closer relationship between the researcher and the participants, a more subjective interpretation of the data collected, an inductive research approach and a rather informal writing style, when compared with other paradigms (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2009:24).

For interpretive research, the emphasis is on in-depth understanding, as opposed to explanations. The purpose of this current study has been to understand and describe the process of how OOH advertising media are planned and integrated by specialists in the field in South Africa. The aim was neither to describe or predicate phenomena, nor the simple testing of a specific prior theory, or generalising from a sample to the total population. This study was undertaken because the existing theory does not adequately explain how OOH advertising media are planned as part of an overall IMC plan, or how different OOH advertising media platforms are combined and integrated in a campaign.

5.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research is an umbrella concept encompassing a wide variety of non-numerical data collection and analysis techniques. Qualitative research involves looking at characteristics or qualities that cannot easily be quantified or reduced to numerical values. Qualitative research is therefore typically employed to examine the many nuances and the complex nature of a particular phenomenon, often with the purpose of describing and understanding it from the participants' point of view (Leedy & Ormond, 2010:95). With qualitative research, the researcher does not only want to establish what happens, but also how it happens, and more importantly, why it happens the way it does (Henning *et al.*, 2010:95).

A qualitative research approach is best suited to the current study, since the research question (see 1.1) requires an in-depth understanding of the complex multi-faceted planning and integration process of OOH advertising media as part of an overall IMC plan. This type of inquiry is largely an investigative process, where the researcher gradually makes sense of a social phenomenon by contrasting, comparing, replicating, cataloguing and classifying the data.

It entails the researcher's immersion in the everyday life of the setting chosen for the study. The researcher enters the participants' world, and through on-going interaction seeks the participants' perspectives and meanings on the object of study. A qualitative inquiry investigates a social human problem, where the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting and builds a whole and complex representation of the phenomena being studied (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2009:28).

In this study a qualitative research approach was used to explore how specialists plan and integrate OOH advertising media as part of overall IMC plan, as well as the reasons behind the decisions related to the campaign. This has resulted in well-grounded, thick descriptions and insightful explanations of OOH advertising media planning and integration in the local South African context.

In qualitative research the researcher is the primary research instrument, and therefore the ontology and epistemology of the researcher plays a crucial role in the data collection, analysis and interpretation of the results (Stake, 2010:36). Therefore, in this study the researcher relied on her knowledge and understanding of the field, gained by studying the relevant literature and by experience, as well as on her interpretive perceptions and judgement throughout the data collection, analysis and interpretation of the results – to reveal the multiple perspectives of the specialists in South Africa on the planning and integration of OOH advertising media.

Since understanding how OOH advertising media are planned and integrated by specialists was the purpose of this study, the researcher as the human instrument could verify her understanding by communicating with the participants, analysing and processing the information collected immediately, clarifying and checking with respondents for accuracy and by further exploring any unexpected responses.

5.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is used to guide the process of collecting and analysing the data on of study. Yin (2003:21) describes the research design as the logic that links the data collected and the conclusions drawn from the initial question of the study. Denzin and Lincoln (2005:25) emphasise the outcome of the overall research design, as “a strategy of inquiry that comprises a bundle of skills, assumptions, and practices that the researcher employs, as he or she moves from the paradigm to the empirical world. Strategies of inquiry put paradigms of interpretation into motion”. Consequently designing qualitative studies is quite different from designing quantitative studies; and this can be rather complex.

The choice of research design is dependent on the research question and objectives, the extent of the existing literature, the amount of time and resources available, and the philosophical foundations that are appropriate for the study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009:136). According to Yin (2003:5), three key issues should be considered when determining which research design to follow in a study: Firstly, the type of research question; secondly, the extent of control required over

the behavioural events; and thirdly, the degree of focus on contemporary events, as opposed to past events. Since the research question in the present study requires current information of South African practices and only limited past information of these practices that exists, the research design selected for the present study is qualitative content analysis, following an exploratory inductive approach (Mouton, 2001:166).

5.4.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is classified in two main types of research design, namely: quantitative content analysis (which is often used in media studies) and qualitative content analysis. Within these two design types there are different approaches, which involve different kinds of reasoning (deductive or inductive) and different analytical processes.

5.4.1.1 Quantitative content analysis

A wide range of definitions of content analysis suggested by a number of experts emphasise the quantitative element thereof. For example, Berelson (in Cooper & Schindler, 2006:498) describes content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. This definition focuses on the counting of the basic quantitative obvious or manifested message aspects, such as words or attributes of a message; and it makes no provision for the analysis of the latent content.

Neuendorf (2002:10) suggests a six-part definition of content analysis as a summarising, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method, including attention to objectivity/intersubjectivity, apriori design, reliability, validity, generalisability, replicability, and hypothesis testing. It is not limited to the type of messages that may be analysed, nor to the types of constructs that might be measured. This implies that a major goal of this type of content analysis is to summarise the data by producing counts of key categories and measuring the number of variables.

In this sense, content analysis is quantitative, and the end-result of this process is neither a gestalt nor an overall impression; nor is it a fully detailed description of the message or message set. However, it also reveals that content analysis can be applied to a wider variety of data, and it can measure constructs on different levels. Examples of the wide variety of data to be analysed include documents, such as meeting notes and minutes, letters, memoranda, diaries, speeches, newspaper articles, timetables, notices, films, television programmes, photographs, advertisements, open-ended responses to survey questions, interviews, as well as direct observation (Harwood & Garry, 2003:480).

Riffe, Lacy and Fico (2005:25) also echo the quantitative nature in their definition of media content analysis, as the systemic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values using statistical methods, in order to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption. In an article by Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1278) content analysis is defined as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.

5.4.1.2 Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis can be approached, either deductively, by applying the elements of an existing theory to the text in a specific context (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1286), or inductively by deriving information from the text in a specific context and creating categories for theory building (Charmaz in Kelle, 2007:455).

Definitions by two experts in the field of content analysis represent the deductive and inductive approach, respectively. Mayring (2000:2) describes deductive qualitative content analysis as an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step-by-step models, without rash quantification. Patton (2002:453) defines inductive qualitative content analysis as qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that involves a volume of qualitative material, and then attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings. Both these definitions emphasise the integrated view of

speech or texts, and their specific contexts, when following a qualitative approach. In both these approaches, qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words or analysing objective manifested content from texts – to examine manifested or latent meanings in a particular text.

However, some alternative approaches to generating concepts or themes can also be followed. Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1279-1285) propose three different approaches to qualitative content analysis, based on the degree of involvement of inductive reasoning and the coding principles followed. With traditional inductive qualitative content analysis, the coding categories are derived directly or inductively from the raw data.

Another approach, termed directed content analysis by these authors, and which implies a deductive approach, is used to validate or extend a conceptual framework or theory. In the latter case, the initial coding starts with a theory or relevant research findings. Pre-determined codes are used to determine the manifestation of the concepts represented by these codes in the text (Kelle, 2007:455), and then during data analysis, the researcher is interested not only in whether, but also in how these codes manifest in the text.

5.4.1.3 Comparing quantitative and qualitative content analysis

In the current study, an inductive approach to qualitative content analysis was followed. It is therefore necessary to distinguish between this qualitative approach and quantitative content analysis.

A number of unique characteristics of quantitative and qualitative content analysis can be found in the literature. Firstly, quantitative content analysis typically follows a positivist deductive research approach, where the specific research questions to be addressed or the hypotheses to be tested are formulated based on an existing, relevant theory or previous empirical research before the collection and analysis of the data begin. Subsequently, these hypotheses or questions largely determine the design of the research methodology and the nature of the data to be collected. The

findings of the data analysis are then used to test these formulated hypotheses, and answer the specific research questions (Neuendorf, 2002:11).

By contrast, qualitative content analysis typically involves an inductive process to summarise the raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation. Inductive reasoning is used, whereby themes and categories emerge from the data through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison. So initial guiding of the research questions, based on the existing theory, tend to be open-ended, and to direct the research and the data collection process.

The purpose is not to formulate hypotheses before data collection and/or to test them against the analysis of the data. The initial questions posed during data collection will only guide the analysis in terms of the kind of information sought, but the evidence from the data will play a more significant role in shaping the analysis than do the initial questions. The text or raw data to be analysed play a slightly different role, so that the researcher reads and scrutinises the data carefully, to identify any emerging concepts, patterns and themes.

If some unexpected patterns or other concepts emerge that seem to be important aspects to be considered in the light of the research topic, the initial questions can be adapted, or some other questions added to pursue these new patterns or themes (White & Marsh, 2006:34; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009:2).

Secondly, a prior design is followed with quantitative content analysis, so that the coding scheme and rules are developed in advance, before the data are analysed. Thus exploratory work should be done before a final coding scheme is established to identify the issues and content appropriate for the analysis; and if any adjustments are made during the coding process, all the items already coded must be recoded. Thus, the coding scheme, in the case of human coding, or the coding protocol in the case of computer coding, should be pilot-tested and constructed in advance, before the content is analysed (Neuendorf, 2002:11).

With qualitative content analysis, the coding scheme is not developed before analysis; but it is rather developed in the process of close iterative reading to identify the relevant codes, categories and themes (White & Marsh, 2006:33).

Thirdly, the sampling techniques followed are also different. Quantitative content analysis usually requires that the data to be analysed are selected by using random or probability sampling, to allow for generalisation to a broader population. The selection of the specific data to be analysed should also be completed before the coding commences (Neuendorf, 2002:11). By contrast, samples for qualitative content analysis usually consist of purposively selected texts, which could provide rich information, and thus allow the answering of the research question being investigated.

The selection or collection of the data may continue throughout the research process (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009:2). Since the purpose with qualitative content analysis is not generaliseability, but rather to understand the meaning of a phenomenon in a specific context with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1278), probability sampling is not required. Purposive or snowball sampling is often used to answer the research questions being investigated (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009:3). The size of the sample is usually small because of the need for close reiterative analysis, in order to identify patterns and themes in the data or to characterise a phenomenon (White & Marsh, 2006:36).

Fourthly, the presentation and testing of the results and criteria used to evaluate the rigour of these approaches to content analysis also differ. With the quantitative approach, the results are numerical and are presented in tabular and graphic form, and may involve the application of a variety of descriptive, hypothesis testing, as well as inferential statistical analytical methods (White & Marsh, 2006:33; Neuendorf, 2002:53). Consequently, objective or statistical tests for validity and reliability are used as criteria to evaluate the rigour of the coding and analysis, such as criterion-content and construct-of-validity or inter-code reliability (Neuendorf, 2002:115).

The purpose of qualitative content analysis is essentially to summarise and reduce the mass of data obtained in terms of words, phrases, and themes – to help with the understanding and interpretation of that which is emerging. Several authors (Henning *et al.*, 2010:104; Merriam, 2009:175; Tesch, 1990:90; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009:3) proposed steps that can be used for data analysis during an inductive approach to content analysis. However, the reflexivity and flexibility that are core characteristics of qualitative research require a less rigorous process, which allows the researcher to make meaning of the phenomenon, together with the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:202).

The result of the qualitative content analysis is usually a composite picture of the phenomena being studied, that also incorporates the context, such as the target population and the situation being studied. The quality of a qualitative inquiry is enhanced by using techniques to increase the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the data collection and the analyses (White & Marsh, 2006:33).

5.4.1.4 Integrated approach to content analysis

Some authors prefer an integrated approach to content analysis, and suggest that it is not necessary to distinguish between these approaches. Harwood and Garry (2003:480) claim that this approach may be used in both qualitative, as well as quantitative phases of research, being “qualitative in the development stages of research, and quantitative where it is applied to determine the frequency of the phenomena of interest.”

Shoemaker and Reese (in MacNamara, 2005:4) view qualitative and quantitative content analysis as complementary. They argue that reducing large amounts of text to quantitative data does not provide a comprehensive view on meaning and context, since text may contain many other forms of emphasis besides sheer repetition. A similar view is held by Hsieh and Shannon (in Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009:2) who refer to “summative content analysis” as an alternative to coding, which can be used when the purpose is to explore the usage of the words or indicators in the text. In this case,

a more quantitative approach is followed initially by the counting of words or manifest content, and then the analysis is extended to include any latent meanings and themes.

Krippendorff (in White & Marsh, 2006:34) confirms this position and explains that the qualitative nature of content analysis focuses on the meaning of content; whereas, the quantitative aspect serves to make conclusions about the content in terms of the context in which it is used. He incorporates both approaches to content analysis in his text; and points out the similarities of both approaches: both sample the text, in the sense of selecting what is relevant; both the unitised or code text, in the sense of distinguishing words or propositions and using quotes or examples; both contextualise what they are reading in the light of what they know about the circumstances surrounding the text.

Content analysis is well-established research method (Mouton, 2001:166). Qualitative and quantitative content analyses have both been extensively used in a variety of fields, including topics related to the current study, such as marketing (Davis, Golicic, Boerstler, Choi & Oh, 2012), advertising (Kim, McMillan & Hwang, 2005; Lee & Callcott, 1994; Pauwels, 2005; Rosewarne, 2007; van Meurs & Aristoff, 2009) and media (Hays, Page & Buhalis, 2012; Macnamara, 2005).

The above discussion reveals that content analysis may be used with either qualitative or quantitative data; furthermore, it may be used in an inductive or deductive way. The inductive qualitative content analysis approach was used since the knowledge about the phenomenon being studied is limited and highly fragmented.

5.5 THE DATA COLLECTION

The data collection will be discussed in terms of the selection of participants, the methods used and the measuring instrument: which in this study is the interview guide.

5.5.1 THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

5.5.1.1 Sampling

Sampling is the process of systematically selecting that which will be examined during the course of a study. In quantitative inquiry, the predominant sampling strategy is probability sampling, which depends on the selection of a random and representative sample from the larger population. The purpose of probability sampling is the subsequent generalisation of the research findings to the population. By contrast, non-probability sampling is the dominant strategy in qualitative research, where the sample units are chosen purposively to provide detailed understanding of the area of study (Corbin & Straus, 2008:143; Onwuegbuzie & Leech; 2007:110).

Probability sampling techniques used for quantitative studies are rarely appropriate when conducting qualitative research, since the goal is not to obtain large, representative samples where the findings can be generalised to the larger populations. Non-probability sampling, which cannot be considered to be statistically representative of the total population, is more suitable for qualitative research. When using purposive sampling, cases or participants are selected, according to specific inclusion criteria relevant to the particular research question and purpose (Saunders *et al.*, 2009:210).

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to choose cases which can provide information on the issue that is being investigated. This is a non-probability sampling method, which means that the sample cannot be considered to be statistically representative of the total population (Saunders *et al.*, 2009:233). This implies that the selection of the sample is based on the judgement of the researcher, in the sense that the sample is composed of elements that contain the characteristics and attributes most relevant to the research topic.

Purposive sampling was applied in this study to select the participants who were specialists in the field in media-only agencies or advertising media-specialist-agencies. The understanding and judgement gained by the researcher during the

review of the literature was helpful in defining the selection criteria – to ensure that the sample represents specialists with exceptional expertise in OOH advertising media strategy in the whole range of media platforms. Based on the purpose of this study, the participants with specialist experience in OOH advertising media strategy were selected to offer in-depth insights into the overall strategy, and not just the tactical aspects of planning an OOH advertising media plan. The OOH advertising media specialists in these companies were carefully selected based on their extensive experience across the whole range of OOH advertising media platforms. The media managers at the specific agencies were briefed on the purpose of the study and were asked to suggest the most suitable people in their company to participate in the study.

The researcher also consulted with two directors at OOH media companies and members of the official OOH advertising media trade association, in order to obtain their input on the selection criteria, as well as the suitability of the companies and participants selected. Both these experts were of the opinion that the proposed sample does indeed represent the specialists in the field on the planning and integration of OOH advertising media from an industry perspective.

5.5.1.2 Target group

The goal of this study was to understand and to learn how OOH advertising media planning and integration are conducted by media planners in the industry in South Africa. Given this primary goal of the study, it was appropriate to target prominent media agencies responsible for planning OOH advertising media strategies for large advertisers in South Africa. These OOH advertising media-specialist agencies, as well as media-only agencies, were regarded as part of the target group, since both these types of organisations are media agencies, which assist advertisers and advertising agencies with media planning – by offering strategic media advice and tactical media planning and optimisation for a total plan.

These agencies employ media strategists, planners and buyers with specialised knowledge and experience in various media platforms. The main difference between the two types of agencies is that the OOH advertising media-specialist agencies only

deal with OOH advertising media, while media-only agencies do not specialise in only one type of media, but deal with the planning of a whole range of media types, such as television and radio, where OOH advertising media might be included (EACA, 2000:7).

At this stage, the number of OOH advertising media-specialist agencies in South Africa is limited to five, but they deal with the largest portion of OOH advertising media expenditure in South Africa. For this study, all five of these specialist agencies were approached, as well as two of the largest media-only agencies in South Africa. Only one of the smaller specialist agencies was unwilling to participate; and they maintained that they simply did not have time during the two periods that the researcher went to Cape Town to interview some of the other specialists. Two prominent media-only agencies with large OOH advertising media departments were also included in the sample.

Since the aim of an exploratory qualitative enquiry with an inductive approach is not to generalise to the larger population, but rather to get in-depth information of the situation within the specific context, a large sample size is not necessary. In a qualitative study that uses purposive sampling, the sample size is determined by the information that is needed. Therefore, even if a large sample has been selected, data collection is terminated when saturation is reached – that is, when no new information is forthcoming from the new sampled units. Redundancy is thus a primary criterion for determining the size of the sample (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 202).

Table 5.1 indicates the six cases of those media agencies who participated in the current study. All these media agencies serve large and relatively small clients, with several of them spending a considerable amount of money on OOH advertising media. Two of them – the Mediashop and Mediacom – are large media-only agencies with OOH advertising media departments, while the others – Posterscope, Outdoor exchange, Kinetics and Intouchoutdoor – are OOH advertising media-specialist agencies. Half of these agencies (Intouchoutdoor, Outdoor exchange and the Mediashop) are South African manager-owned, while the others are internationally owned or part of larger international media networks.

These agencies also have been nominated for prestigious awards, such as the Roger Garlick award for best use of OOH advertising media, the Media agency of the year and the Media agency network of the year. The media agencies included in the study handled some of the largest OOH advertising media spenders in South Africa, such as Vodacom, Standard Bank, Distell, Brandhouse and Unilever, as well as the largest overall above-the-line advertising spenders in South Africa. This was established by comparing their listed advertisers, as well as the brand names mentioned during the interview with the official list of top advertising (AC Nielson in OMD, 2011) and OOH advertising media spenders in South Africa (The Media Shop, 2011).

Table 5.1: Media companies included in the study

Name of company	International Ownership	Agency billings	Large clients
Specialist-OOH advertising media agencies			
Posterscope	Posterscope Worldwide	R300 million	Standard Bank, Adidas, Visa, Vodacom. Sony
Outdoor exchange	Independent	Not listed for SA	Kulula, Adidas, Cell C, Virgin active, Pantene, Shoprite
Kinetics	Global network and part of the WPP Group	Not listed for SA	Unilever, Nedbank en Brandhouse, Famous Brands, Schick, Michelin en IEC.
Intouchoutdoor	Independent	Not listed	Green Cross, Spar, Dixi Life, KFC
Media-only agencies with OOH advertising media department			
The Mediashop	IMP 50% & 50% local	R2.5- R3 Billion	Coke , Absa, SABC Coke Cola Eskom, Nestle
Mediacom	Grey Group Inc. (WPP 74.9%) Dr Bongani Khumalo (25.1%) Part of Group M	R1.6 billion ADEX based	FirstRand, Ford / Mazda, MTN Group, NuMetro, Procter & Gamble, VW & AUDI, Cadbury, Pfizer

Source: Maggs, 2009/2010, and participants interview of these companies

The profile of the specialists included in the study is illustrated in Table 5.1. Participants were selected, based on their strategic role in the planning of OOH advertising media for prominent international and local advertisers, as well as their level of experience within the media and advertising industry of South Africa. The participants' expertise was not only limited to outdoor advertising; but it was extended to the whole range of OOH advertising media platforms, including transit

advertising media, street and retail furniture advertising, as well as alternative OOH advertising media, such as digital media and ambient OOH advertising media.

To obtain the appropriate information, it was necessary to include experts or people with a certain level of experience in conducting OOH advertising media planning and strategies for leading advertisers in South Africa. Five of the ten participants interviewed were senior managers or directors of their respective companies, each with 15 years or more in this field, while the others were OOH advertising media strategists with at least seven years of specialist experience in OOH advertising media. Participants at managerial level, as well as media strategists, and not just general media specialists or mere OOH advertising media planners or buyers, were targeted.

Table 5 2: Profile of OOH advertising media specialists included in the study

Experience across OOH advertising media platforms	Level in agency		Years of Experience in Media industry		Gender	
	Strategist	Director/manager	7 -15 Years	15 Years +	Female	Male
x		x		x		x
x		x		x		x
x	x					x
x	x		x		x	
x		x	x		x	
x	x			x	x	
x	x		x		x	
x	x		x		x	
x		x		x	x	
x		x		x		x

Eight of these participants included were from leading OOH advertising media specialist agencies, while the other two were at senior management level at two of the largest media-only agencies in South Africa. Four of the respondents were male, while six were female. Four specialists were interviewed at their head office in Cape Town, and six in Johannesburg.

Those participants interviewed were responsible for the OOH advertising media strategy of several of the largest OOH advertising media advertisers in South Africa,

as well as globally. Amongst their clients were Coca Cola, Unilever, Brandhouse, Cadbury, Pantene, Pfizer, Vodacom, Cell C, MTN, Spar, Shoprite, KFC, ABSA, Standard Bank Nedbank, Visa, Sony, Virgin Active, Adidas, Green Cross, Kulula airlines, NuMetro and Eskom.

To summarise: for the present study, in-depth interviews were conducted with ten OOH advertising media specialists in six different media agencies. Eight of the specialists were from OOH advertising media-specialist agencies, and two were from leading media-only agencies. Of the ten specialists interviewed, six were at managerial or director level, while the remaining four were OOH advertising media strategists with at least seven years of relevant experience.

5.5.2 THE METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Several methods may be used to collect the evidence for research studies, including: analysis of documentation or archival records, interviews, direct observation and participant observation (Yin, 2003:83). The data collection method used for the current study was in-depth interviews with OOH advertising media specialists. Interviews can be classified according to their level of formality and structure. Saunders *et al.* (2009:320) distinguish between structured interviews (a quantitative data collection method), semi-structured interviews and in-depth interviews (both qualitative data collection methods).

Leedy and Ormond (2010:146) note that interviews in a qualitative study need to use open-ended questions, and are less structured, as opposed to the rigidity of structured interviewing, as used for quantitative research. Merriam (2009:90) opposes the use of highly structured interviews that rigidly adhere to predetermined questions in qualitative research, since they do not allow the researcher to access participants' perspectives and understandings of the world of the participants.

The nature of the in-depth interviews used for this qualitative study was exploratory, in order to facilitate an understanding of the OOH advertising media planning by specialists in South Africa. This had to be explored within the context of the total IMC

campaign, the marketing plan and the overall strategy of the advertisers. In-depth interviews with specialists allowed the researcher to examine their process of planning, as well as the reasons behind the decisions made.

It was also possible to probe for answers and the meaning of concepts, as well as the trends and perceptions in the media industry. Another benefit was that critical issues, that influence the OOH advertising media planning process, could be revealed, which – due to the limited amount of information published on the topic – are not reflected in the literature. The flexibility embedded in these types of interviews, which allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand was beneficial in eliciting new ideas on the topic.

The establishing of personal contact was important for this study, due to the length and depth of the information required, as well as the confidential nature thereof. It is unlikely that anyone would have been able to design a questionnaire that adequately covers the large number of complex issues in the process. However, in-depth interviews allowed the researcher sufficient time to collect rich and detailed data. All prior meetings, contacts to arrange the interviews and to establish an on-going relationship with the role-players involved, as well as the conducting of the interviews, were done by the researcher herself.

5.5.2.1 Approaching the specialists for permission to conduct interviews

Each of the selected participants was phoned by the researcher to explain the purpose of the study, and to ensure them of the confidentiality of the information provided. The participants were asked for a convenient time for a first meeting. In most cases, the participants were personally met at least two weeks before the actual interview, during which they were introduced to the researcher and informed in regard to the expected length of the interviews. In one case a prior meeting was not possible – due the participant being overseas, but the person agreed to be briefed telephonically and via email.

The media and advertising industry is known to be demanding, with pressing deadlines and limited time available. So, the researcher had to arrange a time and

date most suitable to interview the participants. An agenda on the topics to be addressed was also emailed to the participants a week in advance. This was done to ensure that the researcher, as well as the participants, was at ease, and prepared for the interview, as well as to build rapport and relationship before the data collection began.

The prior meeting and the proper briefing allowed the researcher to focus only on the actual interview during the follow-up meeting. Already knowing the setting and having met the participants contributed to the relationship of trust that needs to be created during such in-depth interviews (Yin, 2011:118).

5.5.3 INTERVIEW GUIDE USED FOR THE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In-depth interviews in qualitative research imply a discussion between the researcher and the participant, using an interview guide or interview schedule with several open-ended questions to provide the topics that need to be discussed. The order of the topics is flexible, as long as all topics are covered during the interview. Therefore, this kind of interview is generally considered “unstructured”, as opposed to the highly structured questionnaire and process used in quantitative interviewing.

Merriam (2009:103) suggests that an interview guide should contain three different types of questions: several specific questions to be asked of all the participants; some open-ended questions that may apply only to certain situations, but which should be clarified with probing questions; and then additional areas or issues to be explored that the researcher did not anticipate initially. These additional areas were not included as specific questions, but that had been introduced by participants during previous interviews.

Patton (2002:296) explains that an interview guide provides topics of subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject. The interview guide directs the administration and implementation of the interview process – to ensure consistency across the interviews; and thus, to increase the reliability of the findings. Skilled

interviewers are guided by the natural flow of information, rather than by constantly referring back to the questions prepared in the interview guide; they just occasionally check whether all the topics or themes required are being addressed.

In the current study, the interview guide used gave the researcher more confidence, and as she gained experience from conducting the interviews, she became increasingly skilled to probe for more information, and she became gradually more sensitive to the flow of the conversation. The in-depth interviews with OOH advertising media specialists were conducted by using a basic guiding framework or interview guide, to ensure that all the issues considered crucial to this study were covered (See Appendix A for the detailed interview guide).

The interview guide for the study consisted of the following main phases:

- *Starting the interview*

After greeting and some informal conversation, the purpose of the interview was explained briefly again; informed consent was confirmed by explaining that the data and the identity of the respondent were confidential; and agreement to be interviewed was verified. Permission to record the conversation was also requested.

- *Opening question*

The starting question in an interview should invite the interviewee to simply tell the story of his/her experience of whatever the research is about. The researcher started the interview with the broad topic of experience in the OOH advertising media industry, and not with any direct or probing question. This question was asked to put the participants at ease and to build rapport with the respondents; and it provided some background to the respondents' knowledge and experience in the media industry.

- *Questions on general issues and accompanying probing questions*

The general questions on the respondents' own views and procedure when planning and implementing OOH advertising media campaigns were asked first. After each of these questions, specific interview questions were posed – to discover their ideas on

the aspects of OOH advertising media planning and integration part of an overall campaign and strategy.

The questions for the interview guide were developed from the issues identified and discussed in the literature review. The interview guide was presented to two experienced people in the media industry (not included in the sample), as well as to a qualitative research expert to review the content, structure and wording. Some minor adjustments had to be made to two questions – based on their recommendations (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Changes made to interview guide

Question number	Wording before and after change	Comment
2	<p>What information is communicated in a typical brief? How do you use this information when planning an OOH advertising media campaign as part of an overall campaign?</p> <p>What information is communicated in a typical <u>OOH advertising media brief</u>? How do you use this information when planning an OOH advertising media campaign as part of an overall campaign?</p>	<p>The word OOH advertising media was added to be specific and to distinguish it from other briefs such as creative or execution briefs</p>
7	<p>What role do you play in the creative strategy for an OOH advertising media campaign? Can you offer some advice on how to develop an effective creative for OOH advertising media that ties in with the larger campaign?</p> <p>What role do you play in the creative strategy for an OOH advertising media campaign? Can you offer some <u>practical</u> advice on how to develop an effective creative for OOH advertising media that ties in with the larger campaign?</p>	<p>The word practical was added to obtain practical or general advice based on specialist experience as oppose to specific graphic or creative design principles applied by creative specialists</p>

The major topics remained the same for all the interviews, but the order of the questions and the probes varied, in order to suit the organisational context or the flow of conversation. The in-depth interviews for this study had their own context and situations that directed exactly how they were to be conducted, but general practices pertaining to data quality were followed.

The following guidelines when using in-depth interviews (Leedy & Ormond, 2010:149; Saunders *et al.*, 2009:326; Yin, 2011:135-139) were taken into account when conducting the interviews:

- *Using an interview guide:* An interview guide with all the open-ended questions, based on the research question, as well as potential probing questions was compiled in advance, to ensure that all the issues were addressed during all the interviews. This conversational guide represented the topics or concepts that needed to be discussed, and not the actual exact verbalisation of questions to all the participants.
- *Ensure that interviewees are appropriately selected to be able to provide the relevant information:* The position and experience of the participants were confirmed before making appointments for the interviews. For the purpose of the current study, only experienced OOH advertising media strategists and managers were included; and no general media planners or OOH advertising media sales people were included. This was also explained to the directors that were requested to nominate the participants in their agency.
- *Find a suitable location:* The researcher asked in advance whether the office or boardroom of the media agency was suitable and available for the specific interviews. In only two cases did the participants suggest alternative locations. The researcher agreed, since these locations were neutral and quiet.
- *Establish and maintain rapport:* The interview was started with small talk; and then the participant was asked to tell the story of his/her experience in the industry. Although the qualitative interviews were sometimes quite informal, the interviewer made sure that all the critical issues, as listed in the interview framework, were discussed.
- *Be neutral and non-directive:* The interviewer attempted not to lead participants by her comments or permit her attitudes to be heard; and the responses were digitally recorded and then transcribed. The goal was to let the participants vocalise their own priorities as part of their own way of describing how they plan the media they are going to use. The researcher aimed to use as few as possible of her own words in probes and follow-up questions, in order to encourage the participants to expand on their original answers. When it happened that the sequence of the phases and the topics discussed differed

from the interview guide, the participants were given the opportunity to follow their own sequence, because this also revealed a central part of their perception on the planning and integration of OOH advertising media in an IMC strategy.

- *Avoid interviewer bias:* This refers to the possibility that the characteristics or manner of the interviewer could bias the participants. To counter this potential bias, the researcher focused on acting in a neutral and unbiased manner, while facilitating the interviews. The interviewer did not voice her own opinions in the discussion, and refrained from commenting in a manner that could be experienced by any of the participants as indicating her personal preferences or opinions.
- *Avoid response bias:* This refers to when interviewees respond in a manner that tends to portray them in a socially acceptable manner, or in response to interviewer bias. This is more common when sensitive issues are being dealt with. Some of the information discussed was rather sensitive or confidential, such as the relationships between other parties, their client's strategy, and the proprietary tools used by them. The researcher properly briefed the respondents personally, as well as via an email from her supervisor, explaining to them that the study was for academic purposes only, and that the information would be treated with the necessary confidentiality. This was done to reduce any potential response bias.
- *Analysing when interviewing:* During the data collection period, the transcriptions of the interviews were analysed, to enable any decisions to be made relating to what and how to probe for more detail during further interviews.

The trustworthiness or validity of the qualitative data can be assessed by the care taken and practices employed during the data collection and analysis procedures (see 5.7). During the data collection, this is demonstrated by the number and length of the interviews, the suitability and breadth of the sample included – based on the purpose of the study, the types of questions asked, the level of transcription detail, the procedures followed to ensure transcript accuracy, and the resultant number of pages of interview transcripts (Tracy, 2010:841).

The duration of the actual in-depth interviews for this study ranged between just less than two hours to almost three hours, as seen in Table 5.4. The number of the verbatim transcribed pages per participant was between 15 and 30 pages. The length of the transcriptions varied, due to the flexible nature of the in-depth interviews, and the extent to which the participants were willing to demonstrate the software planning tools used, and to elaborate on practical examples and the campaigns of their clients.

These techniques, the length and depth of the interviews, as well as the level and experience of the participants, resulted in an information-rich discussion on the whole OOH advertising media planning process, illustrated by several practical examples from the South African industry, as offered by the participants.

Table 5.4: Duration of and type of interviews with OOH advertising media specialists

Participant number	Duration of interviews		Number of transcribe page
	Hours	Minutes	
1	1	45	18
2	2	20	26
3	1	50	18
4	2	20	30
5	2	20	30
6	1	45	15
7	2	30	22
8	2	25	22
9	2	35	30
10	2	55	26

5.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The purpose of qualitative data analysis is essentially to deconstruct the mass of data contained in the transcriptions of the interviews, and to reconstruct it in a different way, while understanding, interpreting and making meaning of the participants' views and experiences. The data must firstly be fragmented by the researcher, who becomes aware and observes the relevant bits and pieces to be coded. Then, after careful reflection, it is clustered or grouped into themes or topics to form meaningful units.

As stated earlier (see 5.5.3) analysis in qualitative research does not only happen when the data collection process has been completed; but it is a continuous on-going process. This process is not simply following a number of successive steps, but it is non-linear and on-going with the data collection, processing, and analysis taking place in an inter-related manner (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:99).

Qualitative data analysis involves what is commonly termed as coding, taking raw data and raising them to a conceptual level. It is important to realise that data analysis is more than just a paraphrasing or simply attaching a keyword or code to text segments manually or by means of a computer program. To analyse the transcriptions of interviews requires interaction from the researcher with the data. This is done by employing analytical techniques, such as asking questions about the data, making constant comparisons between concepts and codes, exploring possible meanings of words, phrases and sentences, and looking for negative cases that stand out, or that do not fit into a pattern (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:73).

The reporting of results for qualitative data is different when compared with that for quantitative data. Delpont and Fouché (2010:350) emphasise that reporting on qualitative research is more complicated than reporting on quantitative research, because it is traditionally much more flexible, less structured and often longer and more descriptive. The elements and content of qualitative reporting should contribute to the richness of the report.

Theoretical generalisations and data are not dealt with as separate entities, as is the case when dealing with quantitative data analysis. Provisional conclusion-drawing may already start from the beginning, when commencing the data collection, when deciding what the concepts mean, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions. However, final conclusions may not appear until the data collection has been completed (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11).

In qualitative research and for this study, the analyses and reporting are closely intertwined, so the assessment thereof could not be done independently. Tracy (2010:85) proposes that researchers could create reports that “invite transferability

by gathering direct testimony, providing rich description, and writing accessibly and invitationally”. Rich complexity or detailed abundance and integration of analysis procedures and reporting is one of the ways of enhancing the credibility in qualitative research, in contrast to quantitative research that is more likely to be appreciated for its precision.

The comprehensive literature review, the careful selection of those participants with relevant and extensive experience, as well as the time spent with these participants, allowed for thick descriptions, so that the readers could understand the context and read the actual words of the participants. The verbatim quotes that are used as evidence enable the reader to assess the similarity between the study and the context of the application, as reported by the researcher.

5.6.1 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

With qualitative content analysis, the purpose is to fracture the data and to rearrange them into categories that facilitate the comparison of data within and between these categories, and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts. The aim is not to produce frequencies of variables, as in quantitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is one of the accepted analytical methods in exploratory qualitative content analysis that follows an inductive approach.

It is an empirical, methodologically systematic analysis of texts within their context of communication, following qualitative content analytical rules and step-by-step models, without quantification (Mayring, 2000:3). Qualitative content analysis can be applied to all the recorded communications for example, the transcripts of interviews/discourses, protocols of observation, video tapes, and written documents.

Qualitative content analysis is more than just data collection, or a tool for reducing, condensing and grouping content; but it is used in interpretive research and offers a way in which reality can be accessed or rationalised (Henning *et al.*, 2010:206). The integration of context is essential to the interpretation and analysis of the material for qualitative content analysis with the emphasis on understanding processes, as they

occur in their context – not just simple or superficial analysis, and the reporting of data collection (Henning *et al.*, 2010:7).

In this study the use of qualitative content analysis, allows for the understanding of the usually complex context of OOH advertising media planning from which the text is derived from. Applying a holistic and comprehensive, but also systematic and rule-based approach, is ideally suited for this study, which aims to understand the complex contemporary phenomenon of planning and integrating different OOH advertising media platforms.

Figure 5.1 is a schematic illustration of the qualitative content analysis process followed in this study.

The following steps (adapted from Henning *et al.*, 2010:104) were followed, based on the qualitative content analysis procedures described above.

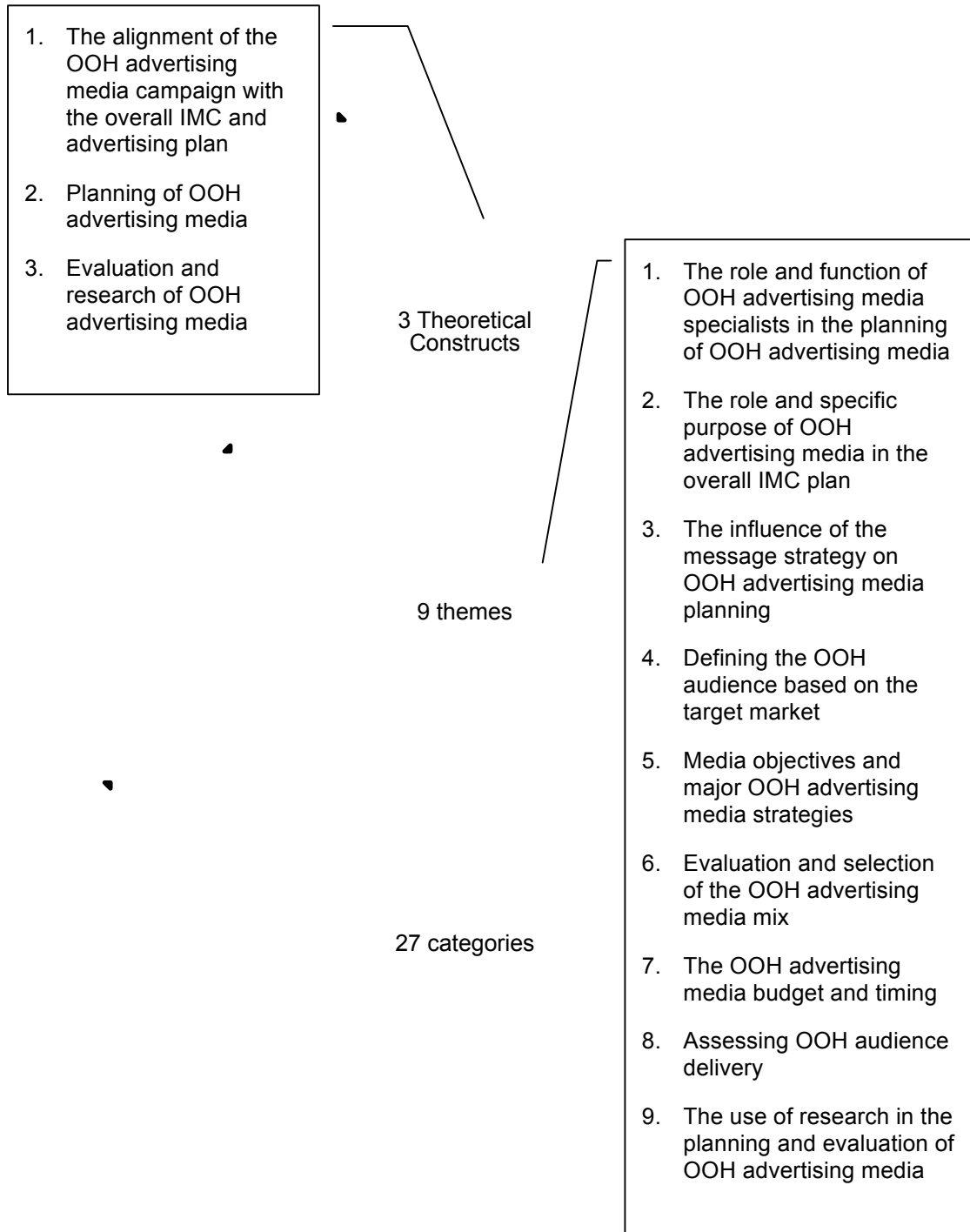
- *Step 1: Preparation of the data*

The interviews with the ten specialists were recorded digitally and transcribed verbatim. The observations during the interview (for instance background noises, sounds, pauses, and other audible conduct) were not transcribed, because this was not necessary for the kind of analysis used. All transcriptions were checked several times, while listening to the recording of the interview to ensure accuracy. Once the recorded data had been transcribed, sorted and typed, they were read and re-read several times – while listening to them several times to get to know the data. Thereafter, each of the transcribed interviews – also called primary documents – was imported into ATLAS.ti, (software that is used during qualitative data analysis to assist with the organisation of the text data).

- *Step 2: Peer check of a sample of the transcribed interviews*

The coding system was tested by applying it to three of the transcribed interviews by the researcher and the supervisor. The difference in the coding was discussed; and some of the codes had to be adjusted. Where necessary transcriptions were then re-coded by the researcher.

Figure 5.1: Schematic illustration of the thematic data analysis process



Raw data - transcribed interviews with specialists

- *Step 3: Code all the text*

When sufficient consistency with the coding system had been achieved, this was used to code the rest of the interviews. As new codes emerged, the coding system had to be adjusted or refined, and the transcribed interviews had to be read again, based on the latest structure.

- *Step 4: Categorising/clustering the codes*

The major benefit from this inductive approach is that it allows research findings, usually in the form of a model or theory that reflects the basic structure of the data emerging from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the raw data. Following the advice of Merriam (2009:187), that the fewer the number of categories, the greater the level of abstraction, the researcher reduced the number of original codes by comparing and contrasting all the codes to find similarities. Codes with clear connections were clustered and assigned descriptive labels, resulting in 27 clusters of codes, also referred as categories for the purpose of this study.

- *Step 5: Identifying themes*

The researcher examined the 27 code clusters to develop 9 themes that form part of the three theoretical constructs that were used as a foundation to describe the results.

- *Step 6: Link themes to existing theory*

The themes were linked to larger theoretical constructs found in the literature (See Figure 5.1). A construct is created by the grouping of specific concepts used to express the specific issue or reality under study (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:43). The abstract nature of concepts create problems in a research setting due to the different characteristics that people attach to these concepts, often despite numerous discussions in the literature, e.g. the concept “personality”. Therefore it is necessary that the researcher defines the meaning of the concept that is used. In this study the constructs are created by the grouping of the nine themes which represent the “constructed meaning” derived from the OOH specialists’ views and practices. The term theoretical construct is used, since these constructs are linked to the literature. Each of these constructs comprise of concepts or themes.

The inductive data analysis process used for this study transcended the basic descriptive level and aimed to develop a framework based on the major themes found. This was done, as suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008:106), going from the raw data, thinking about the raw data, delineating themes and then exploring the relation between the various concepts, and linking them all together into a theoretical whole, and then explaining the themes, and how are they related.

Also, following Stake's (2010:50-56) advice to be sceptical when interpreting data, while examining both the bigger picture (the total OOH advertising media planning and integration process and the relation between the variables) and the smaller picture (the categories and individual participants), the contextual background (the media agencies' organisational structure, clients and position in the market) could be appreciated. However, the focus of the analysis was guided by the purpose of the research, namely: to explore the activities, process and principles of planning and integrating OOH advertising media, as part of an overall campaign.

Techniques used to facilitate this integration process included returning to the raw data frequently, re-reading of the transcriptions frequently, in order to make overall sense and to understand the total process of OOH advertising media planning. Creating visual networks was also valuable when conceptualising the findings. This assisted the researcher in being more objective, and in dealing with concepts, themes, and thinking critically about the relationship, rather than getting fixated on codes and fragments.

The visual networks evolved and were discussed with the supervisor, before presenting the final networks at a point where the conceptualising was coherent and logical. The literature reviewed on the theoretical framework was used to position the findings of the study within the larger body of existing knowledge, and to interpret the findings.

5.6.2 DATA DISPLAYED IN REPORTING THE QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

The data display is on a higher level in finding meaning, to provide an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits the drawing of conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11). There is more than one acceptable way to present qualitative results. A display can be in narrative (descriptive format or text), or in a non-narrative format (tables, figures, diagrams, chart, matrix); alternatively, both narrative and visual displays can be used. Narrative text with direct quotes is still the most frequent form of display used when reporting on qualitative studies. Descriptions form the foundation for the qualitative data analysis, while the verbatim text provides the evidence for the interpretation of the findings.

Yin (2011: 235) identifies three options for presenting the data in narrative form, to display the data when reporting on the findings. Firstly, combining quoted extracts with selected paragraphs of descriptions by the researcher. Secondly, using lengthier presentations with longer quoted dialogue, covering multiple paragraphs for more in-depth coverage of the respondents own words. Thirdly, by devoting a whole chapter discussing one participant to focus on his/her views and words, rather than on descriptions by the researcher.

Merriam (2009:227) notes that a crucial aspect of qualitative analysis is a rich, thick description of the setting; and the participants in the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings, with adequate evidence were presented in the form of verbatim quotes from the participants' interviews, field notes and documents. When reporting and interpreting the results in this study, selected text, as well as longer paragraphs were included, thereby allowing readers to examine the original data collected and analysed, to understand the findings of the analysis in context, and to evaluate the authenticity, credibility or face validity of the conclusions reached by the researcher.

Recently, qualitative research has been presented in more creative and non-narrative formats. Yin (2011) identifies three major modes for displaying qualitative data: tables, lists and graphic representations. Miles and Huberman (1994:11) argued that there are better ways of displaying data than extended text and field

notes that overload human capabilities for processing and making sense of data. In order to draw conclusions from large amounts of qualitative data, these should rather be displayed properly in the form of tables, charts, networks and other graphical formats, as well as other such techniques to facilitate the process of analysis. In this study, both narrative and visual displays in the form of tables, figures and networks were used to report the findings.

Computer-aided text analysis also helps when dealing with large amounts of unstructured textual material, which can cause serious data management problems. These programs vary in their complexity and sophistication, but their common purpose is to assist researchers in organising, managing, and coding qualitative data in a more efficient manner (Merriam, 2009:194, Henning *et al.*, 2010: 129). Although computer-assisted qualitative data analysis systems (CAQDAS) are not capable of comprehending or discerning the meaning of words or constructs, they can help in the ordering and structuring of tasks or creating visual displays.

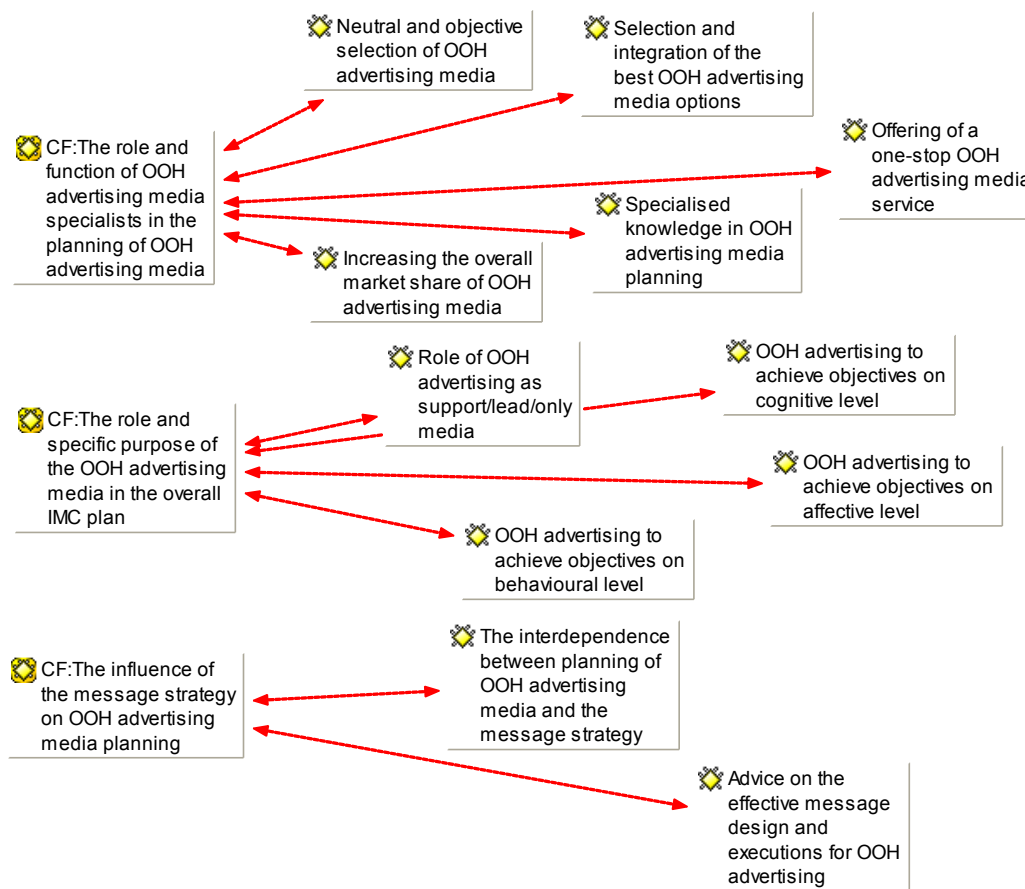
This software can help to create order out of large amounts of data, but it cannot do the analysis for the researcher (Weitzman, in Henning *et al.*, 2010: 137). When using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis systems, such as ATLAS.ti, it is important to realise that these programs cannot think. The thinking, analysis and conceptualisation must be done by the researcher himself/herself (Dey, 2005:57).

For this study, ATLAS.ti was used on a textual level for selecting specific segments in the transcribed interviews, and to code as well on a theory-building level, by facilitating connections between the codes to develop a higher order of classification, referred to as themes. The use of this software allowed narrative formats with visual displays of the qualitative data to enhance the understanding when reporting on the findings.

The qualitative content analysis of the themes found in the overall process of OOH advertising media planning and integration was displayed visually in the form of conceptual networks or diagrams – to illustrate the hierarchical relationship between the themes and the categories/clusters of codes.

These networks were then used to conceptualise and illustrate the categories, themes and theoretical constructs. A total of three networks were used as the basis for proposing the framework for planning OOH advertising media, as part of an overall marketing communication campaign. In the figure, one of these conceptual networks for the first theoretical constructs (the alignment of the OOH advertising media campaign with the overall IMC plan), the three themes (marked CF for code family in the centre of the sketch) and the related eleven clusters/categories are illustrated.

Figure 5.2: Example of a conceptual network used to illustrate the interpretation categories, themes and codes



Themes

Clusters/categories

5.7 EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

Patton (2002:66) points out that when evaluating the quality of a qualitative inquiry, there are no absolute or definite characteristics, but rather strategic ideals that provide a direction and a framework for developing specific designs and concrete data collection and analysis tactics. Yin (2011:19-21) explains that all qualitative inquiries should aim to reach credible conclusions – by doing trustworthy and credible research, despite the variance in overall research strategy, methodology, data collection or choices made.

Based on these authors, three specific objectives can be identified when building trustworthiness and credibility, namely: transparency, methodology and adherence to evidence. Transparency means that research procedures should be described clearly and in a detailed way, and then documented, to be accessible for review by others. Methodology requires the following of an orderly set of research procedures: conducting rigorous fieldwork, avoiding unexplained bias, and the bringing of a sense of completeness – by checking the procedures followed, the data collected and the conclusions drawn. Adherence to evidence means those conclusions drawn are based on the data that have been collected and accurately analysed.

Caelli, Ray and Mill (2003:9) note that evaluating generic qualitative studies is even more complex than evaluating studies within established qualitative approaches grounded within a particular methodology, because there is very little published on how to conduct proper generic qualitative studies. They suggest specific requirements to be considered in the evaluation of generic qualitative studies.

Firstly, identifying the researchers' analytical lens (paradigm) through which the data are examined means that the assumptions and positions that led to the research question should be examined and explained by the researcher – to ensure that the design approach and methodologies are properly aligned. The research paradigm followed in this study reflects the principles of the interpretivist paradigm, as described earlier (see section 5.2).

Secondly, clearly distinguishing the research method (tools, techniques or procedures) used to gather the evidence and research methodology, the theoretical framework that has been used for guiding the researcher of the study. For this study, qualitative content analysis was the research design, in-depth interviews with specialists was used to collect the data collection (see section 5.5), and the qualitative content analysis was used, as reported (see section 5.6). The theoretical framework was the literature review, as discussed in Chapters two, three and four.

Thirdly, applying a research approach that is philosophically and methodologically aligned with the research questions and design, and one that clearly articulates this choice. The last requirement is discussed in this chapter in detail.

The following sections describe key quality issues in evaluating qualitative studies, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985:289); and they explain how they were addressed in the study. These are: credibility, dependability, transferability and authenticity.

5.7.1 CREDIBILITY OR INTERNAL VALIDITY

Credibility is also referred to as internal validity, and it examines whether the findings and the conclusion are trustworthy; and whether they can be seen as credible by the research participants and other researchers (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 277-280). Credibility refers to the extent to which the researcher gains access to the participants' knowledge and experience and; and more specifically in qualitative studies, it refers to the consistency between what the researcher has observed and the theoretical ideas they have developed.

The credibility of the study has been enhanced in the following ways:

- Sufficient understanding and thorough review of the current literature to conceptualise and frame the findings.
- Appropriate well-recognised research methods were applied to collect the primary data.
- The use of an interview guide with probing questions and listening techniques, when conducting the in-depth interviews with the specialists.
- A conscious effort to meet the participants in advance, when they were most comfortable, and when it was convenient to share their knowledge. This assisted in minimising the participants' reluctance to share; and thereby, it increased access to their knowledge and opinions.
- Non-intrusive inductive content analysis was used to identify the initial codes and themes emerging from the interview transcripts.
- Using ATLAS.ti facilitated the transparent processes for coding and drawing conclusions from the raw data.
- Debriefing sessions between the researcher and her supervisor were employed to increase the credibility of the research by reducing the bias of any single researcher.

5.7.2 DEPENDABILITY OR CONSISTENCY

This domain is also referred to as consistency, or as an alternative to external reliability, which means the degree to which a study can be replicated by others. However, in qualitative research, repeating a study done by others will never yield quite the same results, because the different researcher and participants would make other interpretations possible. Positivists' notion of reliability assumes that an unchanging universe in which the inquiry has been done could logically be replicated. This assumption of an unchanging social world is in contrast to the qualitative interpretive assumption that participants construct their world and its meaning.

Lincoln and Guba (1985:365) conceptualise reliability in qualitative research as dependability or consistency, and suggest that rather than demanding replication of

the same results by outsiders, the actual concern should be whether the conclusion is consistent with the data collected. So, dependability in qualitative research deals with whether the conclusion of the study depends on the subjects and the conditions of the inquiry, rather than on the inquirers.

This implies that the research process in the study is consistent and reasonably stable over time, and across different researchers and methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994:277), although the outcomes could vary to some extent.

The following technique was applied to ensure the dependability and consistency of this study:

- *Audit trail*: An accurate and detailed account was drawn up on how the study was approached and conducted, including how the data were collected and analysed.

5.7.3 TRANSFERABILITY OR EXTERNAL VALIDITY

Transferability, as an alternative to external validity, may be defined as the degree to which the findings from a research study can be generalised to all relevant contexts (Miles & Huberman, 1994:277; Saunders *et al.*, 2009:592,). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:225), the burden of the proof for generalisation for qualitative studies “lies within the original investigator rather than with the person seeking to make an application elsewhere. The original investigator cannot know the sites to which transferability is sought, but the appliers can and do. The investigator needs to provide sufficient descriptive data to make transferability possible”.

This means that other researchers can recognise similarities in the descriptions of the participants and the context to their own situation; and thus, either does a similar inductive investigation, or else deductively applies the elements in the framework to their own situation.

The transferability of the study was enhanced in the following ways:

- The theoretical framework of the study was discussed in detail, to indicate that the constructs used as questions during the data collection were consistent with the theoretical background.
- Detailed descriptions of the research design and methodology were made to allow the study to be repeated.
- The sampling was described and justified in detail, including an explanation of the inclusion criteria used.
- Clarity, in terms of how the data were processed, was presented.
- A detailed description of the analytical methods applied, how they were used, and the validation of the results by peer checking and by returning to the original transcripts, was presented.
- By providing detailed descriptions of the conceptualisation and interpretation of the results.

5.7.4 AUTHENTICITY OR CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

Authenticity refers to establishing the “truth” – by the discovery of the “hidden voices” of participants (Raply, 2007:25). This implies that the methods of data collection and analysis allow for the meaning of the experiences, as understood by the participants to become clear.

In this study, authenticity was achieved by the following:

- By meeting the participants in advance and ensuring confidentiality, a safe environment was created in which the participants could share their experiences and opinions freely.
- The in-depth interview in the form of a discussion and probing questions facilitated the expression and clarification of the participants’ original ideas.
- Applying open coding during analysis enabled the researcher to attend to detail in the text.

Miles and Huberman (1994:277) emphasise the idea of striving for shared values when conducting qualitative research. They advocated that the pragmatic value of the

research or the potential benefits of the study to the participants should constitute an important aim when evaluating qualitative research. The lack of published research and a general understanding of the strategic planning of the whole range of OOH advertising media in South Africa, and how it could be used effectively, as part of an IMC campaign, by South African practitioners constituted the most important drivers for this study.

The current study is the first qualitative academic study on the planning and integration of the whole range of OOH advertising media platforms in South Africa. The outcome of this study can be used by media planners, -strategists and academics, as insights and a guiding framework, when planning an OOH advertising media strategy.

5.8 RESEARCH ETHICS

Research ethics relates “to the questions about how we formulate and clarify our research topic, design our research and gain access, collect data, process and store our data, analyse our data, write up our research findings in a moral and responsible way (Saunders *et al.*, 2009:178).

The following ethical issues were considered during this study:

- *Negotiating access:* Participants in the study were requested telephonically or via email for an appointment to be interviewed. The participants were properly briefed in advance on the nature of the interview and the duration of the interview. All participants were provided with an informed consent form and interview guide (See Appendices A & B).
- *Ethical considerations:* Formal approval of the this study was obtained in January 2011 from the Research Ethic Committee of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences of the University of Pretoria. Given that the study involved adults’ consent, it could be obtained directly from the participants (see Appendix B).
- *Data collection:* The researcher ensured that the data collection process was accurate and comprehensive. The promises of confidentiality and anonymity have been kept, for example, when further exploring the ideas from previous interviews or other strategic documents of another media agency. The

researcher then attempted to steer the discussion in that direction without disclosing the source. The in-depth interviews were arranged at a convenient time and place with each participant, and the appointments were confirmed via e-mail in advance, and again telephonically the day before. The participants in the in-depth interviewing were informed that they have the right to withdraw at any time during the interview, and were not pressurised for responses. The researcher also ensured them that the interview would end at the scheduled time, and requested extra follow-up appointments, only when these were needed.

- *Data processing and storing.* When the data were processed and stored, the names of the participants were kept confidential, by assigning a number to each participant. To ensure confidentiality, as promised to the participants, only the supervisor had access to the transcribed interviews, and no other parties were privy thereto. The media industry is a highly competitive industry and to address the participants' concerns about their competitive advantage being jeopardised the transcribed interviews were not be made publically available.
- *Data analysis and reporting.* The researcher maintained her research integrity by not being selective in what to report, and by ensuring that the identities of the individual participants interviewed were kept confidential, and by maintaining her objectivity, when conducting the data analysis and the interpretation thereof.

5.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed and justified the research design employed in this research study, namely: an inductive approach to qualitative content analysis. It has explained the data collection process, which involves how purposive sampling was used to select ten OOH advertising media specialists within media-only and OOH advertising media-specialist agencies, and how in-depth interviews were then conducted with these participants. The data analysis was done by applying qualitative content analysis; and this was discussed in detail. This chapter has further justified the interpretation and reporting procedures followed to conceptualise and present the qualitative results. The chapter ends with the outlining of how

appropriate qualitative research consideration was given to maximising reliability and validity, as well as how the requirements for research ethics were adhered to.

The following chapter will discuss the results and the interpretation of the data collected.