

Article

Archival Research Method Analysis

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A B S T R A C T

An archive is an institution of historical records, documents and known as a memory institute. An archive preserves and makes accessibility of original primary sources of materials including journals, letters, unpublished documents, published documents, newspaper clippings, speeches and radio or television broadcasts, etc. It is helpful for all kinds of disciplines researchers to be able to analyse an archive by using different research methods. The study is about archival methods what archival materials are and how to analyse them. The paper discusses archival research method analysis and how it serves as a memory institute to the scholars and readers.

Keywords: Archive, Archive Research, Research Method Analysis

Introduction

Research plays a significant role in the development and growth of general well-being in any field. Research helps in building theories and models as well as explain and describes the context through which it can be practice and operates. Research encourages critical inquiry, analysis, and evaluation of the kinds of literature, theories and practices of the field and its development over time. The paper characterizes the contemporary archival research and explores the emerging methods and techniques being employed.¹ The archive is an institution where all types of information are preserved. Archives collect sources such as manuscripts, records, electronic records, documents including published and unpublished, audio and video materials, objects, artifacts preserved by a library, historical society, institutions and other materials as well. Different types of researchers use archives primary resources to find and interpret primary resources of the different information fields. Archival research includes primary sources available in archives, special collections library, another repository as well.² The archival research method is a method of collecting data or records that are already available in the archives. Archival methods involve the study of historical sources, the sources which are created at a particular time in the past and providing access to the readers of the available resources which might have available to the

private individual, organizations and at the events. Archival methods are employed by scholars even in non-historical investigations of archival materials and use to enhance other research approaches through survey methods and field methods. The archival method can also be used on analysis of web pages, emails and electronic databases.³

Methodology

In the paper, studies were made by reviewing the related kinds of literature on archive research method analysis. Through the review of literature, the different archive research methods used by different organisational research were recognized. Recent articles were reviewed to highlights the basic principles that were significant and included practical discussion and research strategies that involved in conducting archival research analysis in an organisation.

Objectives

The objective of the study is:

- To know the sources of archives
- To find out the different archives research method
- To identify the use of archives materials in different organizational research

The Contributions of Archival Methods

In the discussion, Gilliland, McKemish¹ examines the key factor which has led to the development of the existing

research infrastructure. Archival research methods promote the meticulous application of research design and methods and provide sources for teaching research methods for professional and research careers. Weber emphasizes that the management of modern office is dependent on the source or draft and scribes of all sorts preserved in a written document.⁴ Giddens⁵ features written documents are associated with the administrative power. Written documents are invented to make as proof of the time and space which can be approved, count and survey for original invention. Covaleski and Dirsmith⁶ explain archival materials are the undeniable original documents to examine the historical information, available to learn the past incidents and measure the study of contemporary organization. There is a need to investigate the sources of the archival materials to maintain their authenticity. Zald⁷ archival work gives an original record in defining the key questions, defining base evidence, support debates on familiar forms and methods. Piore and Sable⁸ demonstrate the ideas, methods, or social arrangements that can be easily understood by exploring the roots of origins. Archives acts as the key historical branching points and path of dependencies. Braudal⁹ highlights that historical studies make an easy analysis of organizational change over time that captures important institutional processes. Baron¹⁰ examines the archival records are also not always transparent and accurate as it offers contradictory or partial evidence of and explanations of the events. Therefore, recognition of the essential and residual features of archival materials is the central methodological concern, the basis for the major decisions about the design and analysis. The skilful of the scholar's abilities to master the ambiguity is a distinctive feature of excellent research in this tradition.

Method of Archival Research

A different method of approaches can be recognized in an archival study in organizational research. The kind of approach recognized is historiographic approach. Historiography is defined as the study of the history of historical writings. The study of traditional historical work made its way in organizational research through the mid of 1970s and early 1980s. Until then the study of archival materials to study organization was comparatively rare.¹¹

Historiographic research can be classified into two types:

- Institutional school historian
- Business historian

In the institutional school, the scholars used historical materials and study the emergence of distinct different institutional strategies. Selznick¹² evaluated the history of the TVA and Clark¹³ examine the histories of the individual colleges to understand the origin of the different distinct institutional policies.

In the second type, it includes the work of business historians. Chandler¹⁴ used archival materials to evaluate the origins of modern business practices. There are more historians and organization theorists who have archival materials to discover the origins and character of class conflicts and control in the workplace.¹⁵

The distinguishing character of historiographic research was its rich details records of organizational life, depicting what were essentially ethnographic studies of organizations structured through the medium of archival materials.

In the mid-1970 new tradition of archival research based on ecological analysis established a base. Ecological research led to a new methodological shift in archival methodological research. New ecological research piloted in the place of the traditional archival historical materials in which small amounts of information assembled from the history of many organisations were organised to create a story of changing organisational environment and population. Stinchcombe¹⁶ suggests there is a shift from the study of the organization towards an analysis of historically embedded classes of organization. The shift opened a new novel approach to archival research. As compared to the historiographic approach, the ecological approach is far more formal in its orientation. When the ecological research streams got professional momentum, it led to the overall acceptance of the use of archival materials in organization science and increased the reliance on the archival method. The ecological theoretical tradition begins to grow with the increasing publications of research scholars. At Times, researchers while finding an answer for the ecological traditions returns to traditional historiographic methods. Langton¹⁷ gave an example of using the in-depth historical case to answer the question about the ecological change. GR.C and Hannan¹⁸ provide a thorough review of archival materials commonly used in ecological research. It includes encyclopaedic compilation, industry directories, proprietary databases, lists of prominent firms, government registries, census government and survey data.

DiMaggio¹⁹ explored the struggles among organization form in the field of art museums by using traditional historiographic methods.

A new archival approach has emerged in organization science over the last decade. Like the ecological approach, this new archivist is immersed in the character and methods of formal social science. The new archivists tend to share key sensibilities with the historiographic approach. New archival research is heterogenous research as compared to the other archival research. The research comes from different theoretical traditions and pursues different empirical agendas. It partakes common vocabulary research techniques and goals that together consist of a new set of principles for archival method.²⁰

The simple level of analysis among the three research approaches. Historiographic research usually analysis the archival materials of a few organizations. In Ecological research, it uses information from many organizations and the new archival research used both types of historiographic and ecological research design.²⁰

Kinds of Archival Materials

When designing a study using archival materials, some methodological questions arise.

- How to select archival materials for analysis
- How to analyse the selected archives materials

It is difficult to give a clear answer to the given terms as already noted there are a great diversity of methodological approaches that are associated with the archival research. Various types of archival material might be employed in the different organizational research. There are many kinds of archival documents and records as there are many types of organizational talks. Some common classifications of organizational talk: who is it, what happened, what they want, what they do, what is ahead, what are the other organizations, what they do and on. This type of talk is generated through the routine of organizational data production.²¹

The best archival materials contain classification statements with distinctions between categories of things. The classification is usually powerful because they usually link understanding together with actions.²²

Conclusion

An archive is an institution or organization that collects and preserves the records of artifacts, individual information, government departmental documents and organizations. In the paper different archival materials are identified and the different types of archive research are discussed. The key questions were answered what archival materials are and how they are analysed. Three different archival traditions were identified the historiographic research, ecological research and the emerging new archival research, discussed how to vary the terms. It is also discussed that all kind of disciplines research can be able to analyse archival materials by using different research methods.

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