ACCESSING SECONDARY DATA, A LITERATURE REVIEW

Kalu, Alexandra Ogbonna Udu  
Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences  
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike Abia State, Nigeria.  
Corresponding Email: alexkalujournals@gmail.com

Unachukwu, Larry Chukwumeka  
Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel College of Management Sciences  
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike Abia State, Nigeria.  
Email: Chukwumeka.unachukwu@yahoo.com

Ibiam, Oti  
Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences  
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike Abia State, Nigeria.  
Email: Prince.ibiam@gmail.com

Introduction

Marketing research is a critical part of marketing decision making, it helps in improving management decision making by providing relevant, accurate, and timely information. Every decision poses unique needs for information, and relevant strategies can be developed based on information gathered through marketing research in action. Too often, marketing research is considered narrowly as the gathering and analyzing of data for someone else to use (Kotler & Kevin, 2012). However, firms can actually achieve and sustain a competitive advantage through the creative use of market information generated by marketing research. Hence, marketing research is defined as information input to decisions, not simply the evaluation of decisions that have been made. Market research alone, however, does not guarantee success; the intelligent use of market research is the key to business achievement. A competitive edge is more the result of how information is used rather than who does or does not have the information (Paurav, 2008). American Marketing Association (2005) opine that marketing research is the function that links the consumer, customer and public to the marketer through information – information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues; designs the method for collecting information; manages and implements the data-collection process; analyzes the results; and communicates the findings and their implications.

Anyanwau (2013), opine that marketing research is the systematic and objective gathering of data relevant to the solution of identified problems, analyzing and converting the data into information designed to assist decision makers to make informed marketing decisions. The data sources are many and varied but can be managed under primary and secondary sources. Primary data refer to firsthand raw data which are yet to be subjected to any meaningful interpretation. They are essentially custom-made since they are collected for the problem at hand. Primary data can be sourced through exploratory, descriptive and causal research designs. Secondary data are historical data which were previously collected and assembled for some research problem or opportunity situation other than the current situation. Such data can be sourced internally and/or externally depending on the objective of the research.

Marketing research aims to take some of the risk out of marketing decisions by providing information that can form part or the entire basis of decision-making. It is applicable to all aspects of marketing-mix decisions and should be an integral part of the process of formulating marketing strategy. Marketing research can help in a variety of studies and makes use of both primary and secondary data sources. It can be conducted either in-house by a firm’s own staff or by outside marketing research companies that specialize in marketing research activities. Outside research companies, or agencies, offer a wide range of services, ranging from off-the-peg studies to tailor-made studies to meet the needs of individual clients. As is the case with many other services involving obtaining information from firms and members of the public, ethical considerations are an important issue (Boslaugh, 2007). In a rapidly changing environment the need to come up with new
ideas is also extremely important, and priority needs to be given to introducing creativity into marketing research. Secondary data has already been collected, analyzed and made available from sources other than you (White, 2010). Collecting and analyzing primary data can be expensive and time consuming so where possible the use of secondary data is important.

The technique of acquiring secondary data sources is not unique to the statistics field. It evidently has multidisciplinary appeal, with extremely diverse academic fields drawing on the information included in secondary sources (Daas and Beukenhorst, 2008). All methods used belong to the academic discipline known as secondary research (Golden, 1976), which involves using pre-existing data for a purpose different from that for which they were originally collected. In general, three different secondary research strategies can be discerned (‘t Hart, Boeije & Hox, 2005): content analysis, secondary analysis and systematic review. The focus in content analysis is on the content of various forms of human communication. Frequently used sources include newspapers, books, TV images, websites and paintings. A problem with content analysis is how to satisfactorily categorize and code what is often a large volume of unstructured data. Secondary analysis is about using quantitative data that were previously collected by other people for a different purpose. The general methods of secondary analysis differ very little from those used for primary data sources (Hair, Robert & David, 2003).

Technological advances have led to vast amounts of data that has been collected, compiled, and archived, and that is now easily accessible for research. As a result, utilizing existing data for research is becoming more prevalent and therefore secondary data analysis. While secondary analysis is flexible and can be utilized in several ways, it is also an empirical exercise and a systematic method with procedural and evaluative steps, just as in collecting and evaluating primary data (Proctor & Jamieson, 2012). In a time where vast amounts of data are being collected and archived by researchers all over the world, the practicality of utilizing existing data for research is becoming more prevalent (Andrews, Higgins, Andrews, Lalor, 2012; Schutt, 2011; Smith, 2008; Smith, Ayanian, Covinsky & Landon, 2011). Secondary data analysis is analysis of data that was collected by someone else for another primary purpose. The utilization of this existing data provides a viable option for researchers who may have limited time and resources.

Overview of secondary data

Secondary data are the data collected by a party not related to the research study but collected these data for some other purpose and at different time in the past. If the researcher uses these data then these become secondary data for the current users (Kotler & Kevin, 2012). These may be available in written, typed or in electronic forms. A variety of secondary information sources is available to the researcher gathering data on an industry, potential product applications and the market place. Secondary data is also used to gain initial insight into the research problem. Secondary data is classified in terms of its source – either internal or external. Internal, or in-house data, is secondary information acquired within the organization where research is being carried out. External secondary data is obtained from outside sources.

Purpose of secondary data

• Extracting the relevant information from other sources, previous studies
• Fact Findings: Descriptive information to support research
• Model Building: specifying relationship between two or more variables
• Data Mining: Exploring data through computer. Using computer technology to go through volumes of data to discover trends about an organization’s sales customers and products. It is primarily used
• Identifying the relevant sources: To avoid plagiarism

Assessing the Secondary Data

When doing a secondary analysis, an assessment must be made regarding the quality of the dataset available and whether the secondary dataset has the potential to answer the questions of the secondary research. Assessment should increase the potential of collecting data that provides ‘appropriate depth’ and ‘pertinent detail’ (Hinds, Vogel & Clarke, 1997) or, as Charmaz (2006: 18) states, ‘data that is suitable and sufficient’ in relation to the substantive area of interest. We understand this to mean that there needs to be enough being said in the secondary transcripts about the topic of interest so that it would be reasonable to assume that the secondary research questions can be answered. How much detail there is
in the secondary data will determine to a large extent the degree to which new knowledge may be elicited during a secondary analysis.

Whilst some authors have re-used a complete secondary dataset for their secondary analysis, it is more usual that some form of ‘sorting’ of data takes place (Heaton, 2004). Sorting may be applied for different reasons: separating quantitative data from qualitative data (Clayton, et al., 1999), sorting interview data from observational data (West and Oldfather, 1995), sorting to focus on one type of data (Szabo and Strang, 1997), sorting to identify a subsample of the primary participant population (Kearney et al., 1994) or so that analysis can be selectively limited to specific themes or topics (Gallo and Knafl, 1998). This latter point was the case for the secondary analysis reported in this paper.

**Process of Secondary Data Analysis**

In conducting research, the area of investigation and the research questions determine the method that the researcher follows. The research method consists of how the researcher collects, analyzes, and interprets the data in the study (Creswell, 2009; Malhotra, 2004). Secondary analysis is a systematic method with procedural and evaluative steps, yet there is a lack of literature to define a specific process, therefore this paper proposes a process that begins with the development of the research questions, then the identification of the dataset, and thorough evaluation the dataset.

**The nature of secondary sources of information**

Secondary data is data which has been collected by individuals or agencies for purposes other than those of our particular research study. For example, if a government department has conducted a survey of, say, family food expenditures, and then a food manufacturer might use this data in the organization’s evaluations of the total potential market for a new product. Similarly, statistics prepared by a ministry on agricultural production will prove useful to a whole host of people and organizations, including those marketing agricultural supplies (Kurtz, 2008).

No marketing research study should be undertaken without a prior search of secondary sources (also termed desk research). There are several grounds for making such a bold statement:

- Secondary data may be available which is entirely appropriate and wholly adequate to draw conclusions and answer the question or solve the problem. Sometimes primary data collection simply is not necessary.
- It is far cheaper to collect secondary data than to obtain primary data. For the same level of research budget a thorough examination of secondary sources can yield a great deal more information than can be had through a primary data collection exercise.
- The time involved in searching secondary sources is much less than that needed to complete primary data collection.
- Secondary sources of information can yield more accurate data than that obtained through primary research. This is not always true but where a government or international agency has undertaken a large scale survey, or even a census, this is likely to yield far more accurate results than custom designed and executed surveys when these are based on relatively small sample sizes.
- It should not be forgotten that secondary data can play a substantial role in the exploratory phase of the research when the task at hand is to define the research problem and to generate hypotheses. The assembly and analysis of secondary data almost invariably improves the researcher’s understanding of the marketing problem, the various lines of inquiry that could or should be followed and the alternative courses of action which might be pursued.
- Secondary sources help define the population. Secondary data can be extremely useful both in defining the population and in structuring the sample to be taken. For instance, government statistics on a country's agriculture will help decide how to stratify a sample and, once sample estimates have been calculated, these can be used to project those estimates to the population.

**Secondary Sources of Marketing Information**
The dearth of the most basic economic data is a handicap for researchers and planners working in developing economies such as Nigeria. In any economy, the most elaborate collection and publication of economic and business data is carried out by government bodies (Nwokoye, 2000). In the more advanced economies such as in North America and Western Europe, the researcher has access to a wealth of data from industry, trade associations, business and journal publications and private research enterprises that often sell their data for a fee. But in Nigeria the government is virtually the only source of data, and the timeliness and coverage of such data are often sorely lacking. As our economy develops, data availability and dependability should improve.

Using Secondary Data Sources for Domestic Marketing Research

Secondary data are data that were collected by persons or agencies for purposes other than solving the problem at hand (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 2001). They are one of the cheapest and easiest means of access to information. Hence, the first thing a researcher should do is search for secondary data available on the topic. The amount of secondary data available is overwhelming, and researchers have to locate and utilize the data that are relevant to their research. Most search procedures follow a distinctive pattern, which begins with the most available and least costly sources. Almost all information systems initially are based on routinely collected internal data, and expand through the inclusion of data from published and standardized sources.

Secondary data can be used by researchers in many ways.

1) Secondary data may actually provide enough information to resolve the problem being investigated.
2) Secondary data can be a valuable source of new ideas that can be explored later through primary research.
3) Examining available secondary data is a prerequisite to collecting primary data. It helps to define the problem and formulate hypotheses about its solution.
4) Secondary data is of use in the collection of primary data. Examining the methodology and techniques employed by other investigators in similar studies may be useful in planning the present one.
5) Secondary data also helps to define the population, select the sample in primary information collection, and define the parameters of primary research.
6) Secondary data can also serve as a reference base against which to compare the validity or accuracy of primary data. It may also be of value in establishing classifications that are compatible with past studies so that trends may be more readily analyzed.

The most significant benefits secondary data offer a researcher are savings in cost and time. Secondary data research involves just spending a few days in the library extracting the data and reporting them. This should involve very little time, effort, and money compared to primary research. Even if the data are bought from another source, it will turn out to be cheaper than collecting primary data, because the cost of data collection is shared by all those using the data.

A company’s internal records, accounting and control systems, provide the most basic data on marketing inputs and the resulting outcomes (Aaker, et al., 2001). The principal virtues of these data are ready availability, reasonable accessibility on a continuing basis, and relevance to the organization’s situation. Data on inputs—marketing effort expended—can range from budgets and schedules of expenditures to salespeople’s call reports describing the number of calls per day, who was visited, problems and applications discussed, and the results of the visit.

Using Secondary Data Sources for International Marketing Research

Secondary data is the key source of information for conducting international marketing research. This is in part due to their ready availability, the high cost of collecting primary data versus the relatively low cost of secondary data, and the usefulness of secondary data in assessing whether specific problems need to be investigated, and if so, how. Further, secondary data sources are particularly valuable in assessing opportunities in countries with which management has little familiarity, and in product markets at an early stage of market development (Nwokoye, 2015).

A wide variety of secondary data sources are available for international marketing research. These range from sources that provide general economic, social, and demographic data for almost all countries in the world, to sources that focus on specific industries worldwide. A host of sources of macroeconomic data are to be found, ranging widely in the number of countries or regions covered. Many of these are based on or derived from United Nations and World Bank data. The Business
International, Euromonitor, and Worldcasts divisions of Predicates also publish annual information on macroeconomic variables. The preceding macroeconomic data sources, with the exception of Euromonitor, relate to the general business environment. They therefore do not provide much indication as to market potential for specific industries. A number of sources of industry specific data are available. They are United Nations Yearbooks, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) annual report, Publications of National Bureau of Statistics publications of the U.S. Department of Commerce, The Economist, and National Statistical Bulletin (NBS).

Numerous other sources specific to individual countries or product markets are also to be found. The U.S. Department of Commerce, for example, publishes International Marketing Handbook, which provides profiles and special information about doing business in various countries. Information regarding regulations, customs, distribution channels, transportation, advertising and marketing research, credit, taxation, guidance for business travelers abroad, and so forth, are compiled in their "Overseas Business Reports." Governments or other bodies frequently publish national year books or statistical data books. Various private sources also publish regional and country annual report.

Two major problems are associated with secondary data in international marketing research: the accuracy of the data and the comparability of data obtained from different countries. Different sources often report different values for the same macroeconomic factor, such as gross national product, per-capita income, or the number of television sets in use. This casts some doubt on the accuracy of the data (Proctor & Jamieson, 2012). This may be due to different definitions followed for each of those statistics in different countries. The accuracy of data also varies from one country to another. Data from highly industrialized nations are likely to have a higher level of accuracy than data from developing countries, because of the difference in the sophistication of the procedures adopted. The level of literacy in a country also plays a role in the accuracy of the macroeconomic data collected in that country.

Business statistics and income data vary from country to country because different countries have different tax structures and different levels of taxation. Hence, it may not be useful to compare these statistics across countries. Population censuses may not only be inaccurate, they also may vary in frequency and the year in which they were collected. Although in United States they are collected once every 10 years, in Bolivia there was a 25-year gap between two censuses, while in Nigeria it is done on an interval of 10 years. So most population figures are based on estimates of growth that may not be accurate and comparable. Measurement units are not necessarily equivalent from country to country. For example, in Germany the expense incurred on buying a television would be classified as entertainment expense, whereas in the United States it would be classified as furniture expense. Secondary data are particularly useful in evaluating country or market environments, whether in making initial market-entry decisions or in attempting to assess future trends and developments. They thus form an integral form of the international marketing research process. More specifically, three major uses of secondary data are in:

1. Selecting countries or markets that merit in-depth investigation
2. Making an initial estimate of demand potential in a given country or a set of countries
3. Monitoring environmental changes

Secondary data can be used systematically to screen market potential, risks, and likely costs of operating in different countries throughout the world. Two types of generalized procedures are used. The first procedure classifies countries on two dimensions: the degree of demographic and economic mobility, and the country's domestic stability and cohesion. The second procedure calculates multiple factor indices for different countries (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). For example, Business International publishes information each year on three indices showing (1) market growth, (2) market intensity, and (3) market size, for countries in Western and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Australia. Customized models, which are geared to specific company objectives and industry characteristic, can also be developed using secondary data.
Sources of secondary data

Official Statistics

Official statistics are statistics collected by governments and their various agencies, bureaus, and departments. These statistics can be useful to researchers because they are an easily obtainable and comprehensive source of information that usually covers long periods of time. However, because official statistics are often “characterized by unreliability, data gaps, over-aggregation, inaccuracies, mutual inconsistencies, and lack of timely reporting” (Gill 1993), it is important to critically analyze official statistics for accuracy and validity. There are several reasons why these problems exist:

1) The scale of official surveys generally requires large numbers of enumerators (interviewers) and, in order to reach those numbers enumerators contracted are often under-skilled;
2) The size of the survey area and research team usually prohibits adequate supervision of enumerators and the research process; and
3) Resource limitations (human and technical) often prevent timely and accurate reporting of results.

Technical Reports

Technical reports are accounts of work done on research projects. They are written to provide research results to colleagues, research institutions, governments, and other interested researchers. A report may emanate from completed research or on-going research projects.

Scholarly Journals

Scholarly journals generally contain reports of original research or experimentation written by experts in specific fields. Articles in scholarly journals usually undergo a peer review where other experts in the same field review the content of the article for accuracy, originality, and relevance.

Literature Review Articles

Literature review articles assemble and review original research dealing with a specific topic. Reviews are usually written by experts in the field and may be the first written overview of a topic area. Review articles discuss and list all the relevant publications from which the information is derived.

Trade Journals

Trade journals contain articles that discuss practical information concerning various fields. These journals provide people in these fields with information pertaining to that field or trade.

Reference Books

Reference books provide secondary source material. In many cases, specific facts or a summary of a topic is all that is included. Handbooks, manuals, encyclopedias, and dictionaries are considered reference books (University of Cincinnati Library 1996; Pritchard and Scott, 1996).

Evaluating the quality of your information sources

One of the advantages of secondary data review and analysis is that individuals with limited research training or technical expertise can be trained to conduct this type of analysis. Key to the process, however, is the ability to judge the quality of the data or information that has been gathered. The following tips will help you assess the quality of the data.

Determine the Original Purpose of the Data Collection

Consider the purpose of the data or publication. Is it a government document or statistic, data collected for corporate and/or marketing purposes, or the output of a source whose business is to publish secondary data (e.g., research institutions). Knowing the purpose of data collection will help to evaluate the quality of the data and discern the potential level of bias (Novak, 1996).

Attempt to Ascertain the Credentials of the Source(s) or Author(s) of the Information

What are the author’s or source’s credentials -- educational background, past works/writings, or experience -- in this area? For example, the following sources are generally considered reliable sources of data and information: research reports documenting findings from agricultural research published by the FAO or IFAD; socioeconomic data reported by the World Bank; and survey health data reported in USAID’s Demographic Health Surveys. Does it include a methods section and are the methods sound? Does the article have a section that discusses the methods used to conduct the study? If it does not, you can assume that it is a popular audience publication and should look for additional supporting information or data. If the research methods are discussed, review them to ascertain the quality of the study. If you are not a research methods expert, have someone else in your County Office review the methods section with you.

What’s the Date of Publication?

When was the source published? Is the source current or out-of-date? Topic areas of continuing or rapid development, such as the sciences, demand more current information.
Who is the Intended Audience?

Is the publication aimed at a specialized or a general audience? Is the source too elementary -- aimed at the general public?

What is the Coverage of the Report or Document?

Does the work update other sources, substantiate other materials/reports that you have read, or add new information to the topic area?

Is it a Primary or Secondary Source?

Primary sources are the raw material of the research process, they represent the records of research or events as first described. Secondary sources are based on primary sources. These sources analyze, describe, and synthesize the primary or original source. If the source is secondary, does it accurately relate information from primary sources?

Importantly, Is the Document or Report Well-Referenced?

When data and/or figures are given, are they followed by a footnote, endnote -- which provides a full reference for the information at the end of the page or document - or the name and date of the source (e.g., Burke 1997)? Without proper reference to the source of the information, it is impossible to judge the quality and validity of the information reported.

Strengths and limitations of secondary data analysis for marketing research

The major advantages associated with secondary analysis are the cost effectiveness and convenience it provides (Smith, 2008). Since someone else has already collected the data, the researcher does not have to devote financial resources to the collection of data. When good secondary data is available, researchers can gain access to and utilize high quality larger datasets, such as those collected by funded studies or agencies that involve larger samples and contain substantial breadth. The larger samples are more representative of the target population and allow for greater validity and more generalizable findings (Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2011). Access to this type of data presents opportunities for all researchers, even the novice or unfunded researcher, therefore equalizing opportunities and building capacity for empirical research.

The use of existing data sets can accelerate the pace of research because some of the most time consuming steps of a typical research project, such as measurement development and data collection are eliminated (Doolan & Froelicher, 2009). In marketing research areas, such as information and technology that are constantly changing, utilizing existing data allows projects to be completed and findings to be produced much faster, and therefore the development and contribution of new knowledge occurs in a timely manner before they are considered dated by the field. Additionally, in the area of information policy, utilizing existing data can allow the researcher to answer important time-sensitive policy related questions quicker (Magee, Lee, Giulian & Munro, 2006). Secondary data analysis provides many opportunities for furthering marketing research through replication, re-analysis and re-interpretation of existing research. It provides researchers with opportunities to engage in work to test new ideas, theories, frameworks, and models of research design.

Yet there are unique methodological considerations when utilizing existing data to investigate new research questions and generate new knowledge. The most recognized limitation to the secondary data analysis method approach is that the data were collected for some other purpose (Boslaugh, 2007). Since the data were not collected to answer the specific information that the researcher would like to have may not have been collected; or data may not have been collected in the geographic region of interest, in the years the researcher would have chosen, or on the specific population that is the focus of interest (Boslaugh, 2007; Doolan & Froelicher, 2009).

In this particular project the researcher avoided some common pitfalls often associated with secondary analysis by participating in the primary research design plan and then ensuring a match between her research questions and the existing data through the previously described process. Yet, a significant limitation of this research was that the school identifiers collected in the primary study was not available to the researcher due to confidentiality reasons. The school identifiers
connect to the participants; therefore school identifiers were removed from the dataset, in order to ensure all participants remain anonymous in accordance with the original consent agreement. Therefore, subjects cannot be contacted for follow-up questions and additional data cannot be collected.

While this lack of opportunity for follow-up or the collection of additional data from the participants has proven to be a limitation in furthering this research, it is important that secondary data analysis abide by the consent conditions of the original study (Heaton, 2008). A second major limitation of using secondary data is that the secondary researcher did not participate in the data collection process and does not know exactly how it was conducted. Therefore, the secondary researcher does not know how well it was done and if the data are affected by problems such as low response rate or respondent misunderstanding of specific survey questions.

Hence the researcher has to find this information through other means such as documentation of the data collection procedures, technical reports, and publications (Boslaugh, 2007; Kiecolt & Nathan, 1985). In this research the researcher was at a disadvantage because she did not participate in the execution of the data collection process. In order to address these issues the researcher utilized documentation from the original study, information from published findings, and consultations with the original primary researchers and statistician. Ensuring a match between the research question and the existing data and following a process, as proposed, for careful reflective examination and critical evaluation of the data, can avoid most limitations of secondary data analysis. However, these advantages and disadvantages are summarized below.

Advantages of secondary data are following:

- The primary advantage of secondary data is that it is cheaper and faster to access.
- It provides a way to access the work of the best scholars all over the world.
- Secondary data gives a frame of mind to the researcher that in which direction he/she should go for the specific research.
- Fourthly secondary data save time, efforts and money and add to the value of the research study.

Following are the disadvantages of secondary data:

- The data collected by the third party may not be a reliable party so the reliability and accuracy of data go down.
- Data collected in one location may not be suitable for the other one due variable environmental factor.
- With the passage of time the data becomes obsolete and very old.
- Secondary data collected can distort the results of the research. For using secondary data a special care is required to amend or modify for use.
- Secondary data can also raise issues of authenticity and copyright.

**Marketing Research and Decision-Making**

There are elements of uncertainty and risk attached to all business decisions and the main difficulty is how to reduce the risk involved in the choices that are made. Common sense suggests that the availability of good information reduces the risk. After all, having perfect information all the time would make the job of exercising choice much easier since there would be no risk in making marketing decisions. Correct answers to such questions as how much to spend on advertising and what message should be contained in the advertising would always be known. The first step in the decision-making process is the identification of needed information. Incorrect specification of requirements will provide only useless information, so it is necessary to ensure that the specification is correct. Poor or misleading information not only costs time and money but also generates confusion, chaos and badly informed decisions (Heaton, 2008, Johnston, 2012; Smith, 2008). One must determine what information is needed to make a particular decision. Next, consideration has to be given to whether the information can be obtained within a reasonable time and at a reasonable cost, and whether one can afford to spend both the time and the money to obtain it. Information used in the right way can be a powerful aid to marketing. A competitive advantage can be achieved with the help of accurate, relevant information since it helps marketers make better decisions. Inaccurate, irrelevant information is both misleading and dangerous in the extreme.
Conclusion

Secondary data analysis offers methodological benefits and can contribute to marketing research through generating new knowledge. The overall goal of this method is the same as that of others, to contribute to scientific knowledge through offering an alternate perspective; it only differs in its reliance on existing data. Marketing researchers should take advantage of the high quality secondary data that are available and consider the potential value in gaining knowledge and giving insight into a broad range of marketing issues through utilizing secondary data analysis method. Yet, successful secondary analysis of data requires a systematic process that acknowledges challenges of utilizing existing data and addresses the distinct characteristics of secondary data availability. The process of assessing secondary data in marketing research provides a systematic process that includes steps to undertake in order to avoid possible limitations. In a time where the large amounts of data being collected, compiled, and archived by researchers all over the world are now more easily accessible, the time has definitely come for secondary data analysis as a viable method for marketing research.

Marketing research cannot guarantee success. Marketing research at best can improve the odds of making a correct decision. It provides a ray of certainty in the uncertain marketplace if the managers follow the marketing research process through the various phases of marketing decision making within the organization. And as such secondary data should be relied upon since basically all available data are collected by professional in the field and can objectively help in providing solutions to the identified problems.

Limitation/Suggestion for Further Studies

The major limitation for this study is that it did not give room for any empirical data to be collected and tested. Hence, future studies are encouraged to collect primary or secondary data that will be analyzed with statistical tools.

References

