

Cognitive Interview as an Effective Method in Cross-Cultural Research

Urmi N. Biswas* and Jatin Patel*

Abstract

Cross-cultural research is a scientific method of comparative research which focuses on systematic comparisons that compares culture and explicitly aims to answer questions about the incidence, distributions, and causes of cultural variation and complex problems across a wide domain. Incidentally, most of the cross-cultural researches are being conducted usually with the same set of questionnaire and being administered in two different cultures and making statistical comparisons of the two data sets. However, very few cross cultural research takes into account the cultural invariance which is important in understanding the cultural difference. Social realities are construed in the socio cultural context of the individuals and thus the same concept may be cognitively represented differently and responded differently by individuals from two different cultures. The present paper tries to emphasize the importance of cognitive interviews as a method in making cross-cultural comparative research and deliberates on the detailed procedure of cognitive interview. Cognitive interviewing is a technique used to provide insight into learners' perceptions in which individuals are invited to verbalize thoughts and feelings as they examine information. The objectives of the present research are to explore how organizational values are presented and perceived in different organizational sectors and to examine and compare value patterns and their impact between organization and culture context. The results of 20 cognitive interviews done on 5 managers each from the from sectors namely, Organizational Justice, Gender Equality, Work Family Balance and Corporate Social Responsibility, have been consolidated and interpreted to demonstrate how cognitive interview can capture the different understanding of the concepts can lead to different response styles that would evoke from respondents.

Key Words: Cognitive interview, Cross-cultural research.