Chapter 4

Verbal and Pictorial Representations of Beverage Consumption Patterns: The Wall of Pictures Protocol

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4.1. INTRODUCTION

Regarding marketing communications, we are used to the dictum: “a picture says more than a thousand words”. However, when it comes to market research—and especially consumer research—at least the majority of researchers seem to overlook the basic wisdom offered in this saying. Of course, several groups of researchers have already suggested that pictures or images should be used within consumer research, most notably in the context of pleading for appreciation of more qualitative consumer research falling back on, for instance, an interpretative approach and/or projective techniques, etc (Basil, 2011; Boddy, 2007; Catteral & Ibbotson, 2000; Churchill & Iacobucci, 2004; Donoghue, 2000; Gordon & Langmaid, 1988; Hofstede, Van Hoof, Wahlenberg & De Jong, 2007; Will, Eadie & MacAskill, 1996).

Particularly when doing research in a complex intercultural context and raising questions about principally emotionally engaged behavioural consumption patterns, like those in the area of food and beverages, we should indeed try to make use of proper qualitative approaches. The arguments for this are quite convincing. For instance, participants can express themselves without the requirement that they put their feelings into words first; they can provide their initial opinions intuitively (Hofstede et al., 2007). Moreover, participants seem to like creative and unconventional research approaches (Van Riel, 1992; Van Riel, Stroeker & Maathuis, 1998; Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000), and therefore may feel more open to taking part in such research. However, following the basic guideline of “mixed research” (Creswell, Plano, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003; Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003; Molina-Azorin, 2011) we believe that a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research might be the best approach.

Against this background, the purpose of this chapter is to incorporate visual as well as verbal representations and correlate them with quantitative measures nor-
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