Research Methods for Business Students

Chapter 1

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Learning points

- Be able to outline the purpose and distinct focus of management research
- Be able to place your research project on a basic-applied research continuum according to its purpose and context
- Understand the stages you will need to complete and revisit as part of your research process
- Have an overview of this book’s purpose and structure
- Be aware of some of the ways you can use this book
1.1 the aims of this book

- To undertake a research project
- A guide to the research process
- For the necessary knowledge and skills to perform a research
  - Thinking of a research topic → Writing project report
  - The most frequently used techniques for analyzing different types of data, but you should choose the most suitable one.
1.1 the aims of this book

- What in this book – research methods
  - Questionnaire
  - Observation
  - Interviews
  - Statistical and non-statistical techniques
1.1 the aims of this book

- What in this book – research methods
  - Questionnaire
  - Observation
  - Interviews
  - Statistical and non-statistical techniques
1.2 The nature of research

- Define research as something that people undertake in order to find out things in a **systematic** way and **find out things**.
  - Systematic
    - the research is based on logical relationships and not just beliefs.
  - To find out things
    - a multiplicity of possible purposes for your research, might including describing, explaining, understanding, criticizing and analyzing.
1.3 Nature of business and management research

- Easterby-Smith et.al (2002): three things combine to make business and management a distinctive focus for research.
  - The way in which managers and researchers draw on knowledge developed by other disciplines.
  - The fact that managers tend to be powerful and busy people. Therefore, they are unlikely to allow research access unless they can see personal or commercial advantages.
  - The requirement for the research to have some practical consequence. This means it either needs to contain the potential for taking some form of action or needs to take account of the practical consequences of the findings.
1.3 Nature of business and management research

- Explore the status of management research
- Using knowledge from a range of disciplines enables management research to gain new insights that cannot be obtained through all of these disciplines separately.
- To develop ideas and to relate them to practice.
1.3 Nature of business and management research

- Business and management research not only needs to provide findings and that advance knowledge and understanding, it also needs to address business issues and practical managerial problems.
- The purpose and the context of your research project can differ considerably, since business issues and solving managerial problems are quite different.
1.3 Nature of business and management research

- All business and management research projects can be placed on a continuum.
  
  ➢ See figure 1.1 in page 5.
1.4 The research process

- Formulating and clarifying a topic
- Reviewing the literature
- Choosing a strategy
- Collecting data
- Analyzing data
- Writing up
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- The purpose
  - To help you to undertake research
  - Early on in your research project you will need to be clear about what you are doing, why you are doing it, and the associated implications of what you are seeking to do.
  - To ensure that you can show how your ideas relate to research that has already been undertaken in your topic area and that you have a clear approach and strategy for collecting and analyzing your data.
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- The structure of each chapter
  - See figure 1.2 in page 7
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- **Outline of each chapter**
  - Chapter 2: Written to assist you in the generation of ideas, which will help you to choose a suitable research topic, and offers advice on what makes a good research topic.
  - Chapter 3: What a critical review needs to include and the range of primary, secondary and tertiary literature sources available.
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- **Outline of each chapter**
  - Chapter 2: Written to assist you in the generation of ideas, which will help you to choose a suitable research topic, and offers advice on what makes a good research topic.
  - Chapter 3: What a critical review needs to include and the range of primary, secondary and tertiary literature sources available.
  - Chapter 4: Examines different ways of approaching research.
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- Outline of each chapter
  - Chapter 5: Explores issues related to gaining access and to research ethics.
  - Chapter 6: Explain a range of the probability and non-probability sampling techniques available for use in your research.
  - Chapter 7: Introduces the variety of data that are likely to be available and suggests data are discussed, and a range of techniques for locating these data, including using the Internet.
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- Outline of each chapter
  - Chapter 8: Concerned with collecting primary data through observation, examined two types of observation: participant observation and structured observation.
  - Chapter 9: concerned with collecting primary data, this time using semi-structured and in-depth interviews. The appropriateness of using these interviews in relation to your research strategy is discussed.
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- Outline of each chapter
  - Chapter 10: Introduces you to the use of both self-administered and interviewer-administered questionnaires, and explores their advantages and disadvantages.
  - Chapter 11: Outlines and illustrates the main issues that you need to consider when preparing data for quantitative analysis and when analyzing these data by computer.
1.5 The purpose and structure of this book

- Outline of each chapter
  - Chapter 12: Outlines and discusses the main approaches available to you and analyze data qualitatively.
  - Chapter 13: Helps you with the structure, content and style of your final project report and any associated oral presentations.
1.6 Summary

- Business and management research involves undertaking systematic research to find out things. It is transdisciplinary, and should engage with both theory and practice.
- All business and management research projects can be placed on a basic-applied continuum according to their purpose and context.
1.6 Summary

- Wherever your research project lies on this continuum, you should undertake your research with rigour. To do this you will need to pay careful attention to the entire research process.
- Research is represented as a multi-stage process; however, this process is rarely straightforward and will involve both reflecting on and revising stages already undertaken and forward planning.
The End

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THANK YOU!

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