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Entry 1: Positionality and Individuality

When I was first asked in class ‘what does positionality mean’, there was no clear picture in my mind. With a single click on Google, I can get thousands of explanations for *positionality* in seconds. By doing and analysing in-classroom activities and reading literature, I found that positionality is quite often related to ethnography, feminist theory, power, insider/outsider etc. Therefore, I began to explore the meaning of this word more in depth.

Positionality is the wider historical, political, economic, religious, social and intellectual con-texts of a person that affect both interpersonal relations and qualitative research processes (Merriam et al. 2001). A researcher’s positionality is not just who he/she is, but how he/she is perceived by other people and the implications of that perception.

To better understand this concept, one might first figure out what individuality is. From Mercier’s perspective (1918), it is difficult to clearly define what is meant by an individual. Individuality resides, not in things themselves, but in the way we contemplate them. Carmichael (1919) argued that originality is the crux of individuality. By putting Mercier’s classification of individual alongside Carmichael’s standpoint, individuality is an essential part of successful individual, as well as great institutions and nations. It emphasizes being yourself and remaining true to yourself.

Since everyone transfers something of himself into his perception of the matter, the observer cannot put himself away however fully preconceptions and prejudices are laid aside. It is impossible to completely abandon one’s past experience and the inertia of his previous way of looking at things when come to the study of any class of phenomena or range of ideas (Carmichael, 1919).

Positionality represents a space in which objectivism and subjectivism meet. As Freire suggests, the two exist a 'dialectic relationship'. (Freire, 2000). It is determined by where one stands in relation to 'the other' (Merriam et al. 2001). Hence, how to reduce the influence of the inertia of preconception while carrying individuality and maintaining the uniqueness of self becomes the reason why positionality is important in research and draws attention on the insider-outsider debate which seeks to freeze positionalities in place, and assumes that being an 'insider' or 'outsider' is a fixed attribute (Beverley, 1999). This binary 'ignores the dynamism of positionalities in time and through space' (Beverley, 1999: 340). My view is in agreement with Teye (2012) that positionality is dynamic, fluid, changeable and adaptable, which therefore allows one to constantly consider all the moving parts.

Since 'one's position within the social world influences the way in which you see it', positionality can affect research outcomes and interpretations (Temple and Young, 2004). To establish better research preparation and enhance the integrity of the study, McCorkel & Myers (2003) recommend a strategy that involves "a recognition and analysis of how the researcher's positionality facilitates specific forms of understanding and impedes others". Gawlewicz (2014) and McDowell (1992) have argued that in order to provide those who are not a part of the study yet are engaging with the research with an understanding of the researcher's perspective(s), researchers must discuss their position in relation to the research foci, later known as positionality statement or reflexivity.

In conclusion, it is important to maintain one's individuality while paying attention to positionality in the research. "If the theory does not include 'me', it needs to change" (Maher & Tetreault, 2001). By discovering ourselves deeper and broader in relation with others, we at the same time developed the ability of how to learn from others, to hear from diverse voice.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

Positionality (what, where, who)

<https://www.dictionary.com/e/gender-sexuality/positionality/>

Positionality in Qual Research

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9wVgU9Ppk8>

Positionality Statements

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpclVzGYhVs>

Just Tell Me What I Need To Know: Reflexivity and Positionality Statements

<https://www.marvettelacy.com/blog/just-tell-me-what-i-need-to-know-reflexivity-and-positionality-statements>

What is Your Researcher Positionality?

<https://decolonizingresearch.wordpress.com/2016/02/25/what-is-your-researcher-positionality/>

Writing Strategies: What's Your Positionality?

<https://weingartenlrc.wordpress.com/2017/01/09/research-writing-whats-your-positionality/>

Positionality: Reflecting on the Research Process

<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1026&context=tqr>

TEDxHISD -- Marina Finley - The importance of "Individuality"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUnz_8vPOnI

Individuality Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TtyhFbklUE>

Discovering Your Divine Individuality | Julie Crockett

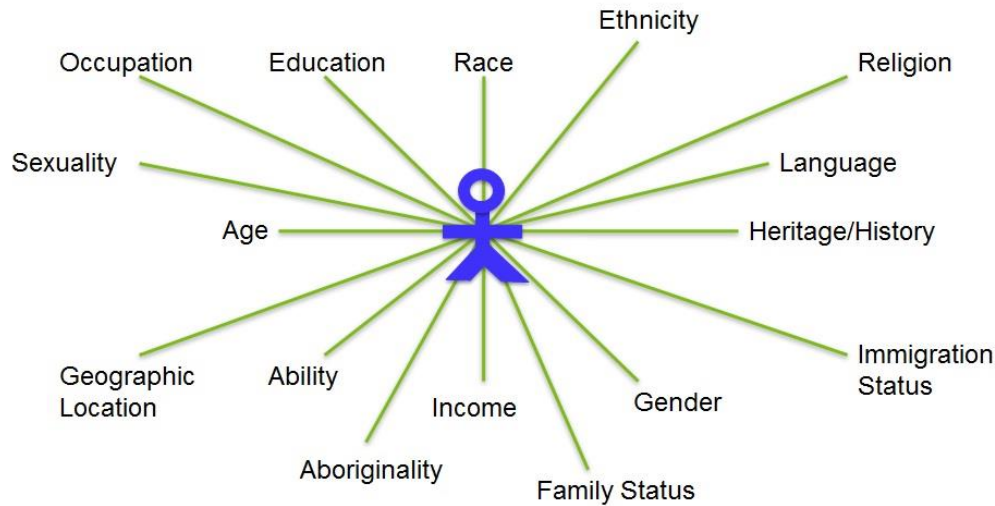
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ujAcP282jY&t=891s>

Be who you are – Individuality

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lo95cld2TbQ>

Appendix 3

1. Where does positionality come from?

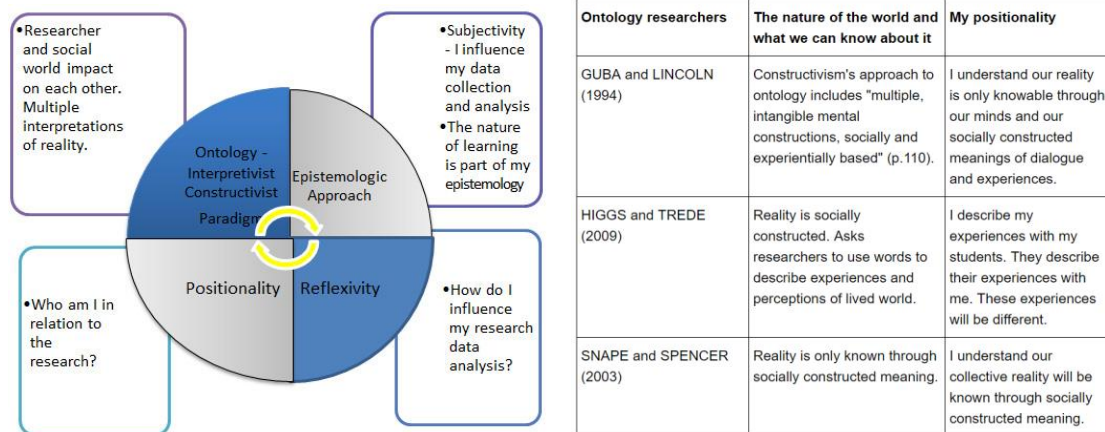


Source: What Does positionality Mean? | Gender & Sexuality by Dictionary.com. Available at:

<https://www.dictionary.com/e/gender-sexuality/positionality/>

(Accessed: 24 March 2019).

2. Positionality, reflexivity, ontology and epistemology



Source: ©2017 Pitard

Epiistemology researchers	How we can know about reality	My positionality
BERGER (2013)	Researchers need to carefully self-monitor the impact of their biases, beliefs and experiences through practice of reflexivity.	I must emphasise reflexivity as a process rather than a single action.
COHEN and CRABTREE (2006)	Researchers' values are intrinsic, findings emerge through dialogue.	Truth is negotiated through dialogue.
DERVIN (2003)	Context is a process. Attention must be given to change over time, to emergent and fluid patterns.	I turn the research lens back on myself to understand the process.
HIGGS (2001)	Reality is constructed Inter-subjectively through Interpretivism.	I assume I, as the researcher, and the social world created through interacting with students impact on, and influence one another
LINCOLN and GUBA (1985)	Impossible to separate cause from effect as all entities are in a state of simultaneous shaping.	The process will stimulate our simultaneous shaping.
PENG and NISBETT (1999)	The dialectical process allows a community with different cultural backgrounds to come to an understanding of their social world.	Our different cultural backgrounds can bring change to both parties in a dialogue depending on the interaction and the context.
PICKARD (2007)	Interpretivism seeks to understand the entire context both micro and macro.	I seek meaning in the actions of individuals and the group.
SNAPE and SPENCER (2003)	An Interpretivist/constructivist research paradigm assumes the researcher and the social world impact on each other and findings are inevitably influenced by the researcher's perspective and values.	I cannot separate myself from what I know. My research will be influenced by what I know.
RUSSELL and KELLY (2002)	Acknowledge transient nature of reality while being mindful of the interpersonal relationships that ultimately shape and define our experience.	My values and perspectives will influence my relationships with my students and vice versa.
	Reflexivity also allows researchers to become aware of what inhibits their seeing or knowing.	I must be aware of my assumptions to allow for deeper analysis to illuminate what is not being seen.
WATT (2007)	Use of reflexivity is deemed essential because researcher is primary instrument of data collection.	Autoethnography centres me as the researcher in the story so reflexivity is essential.

Source: ©2017 Pitard

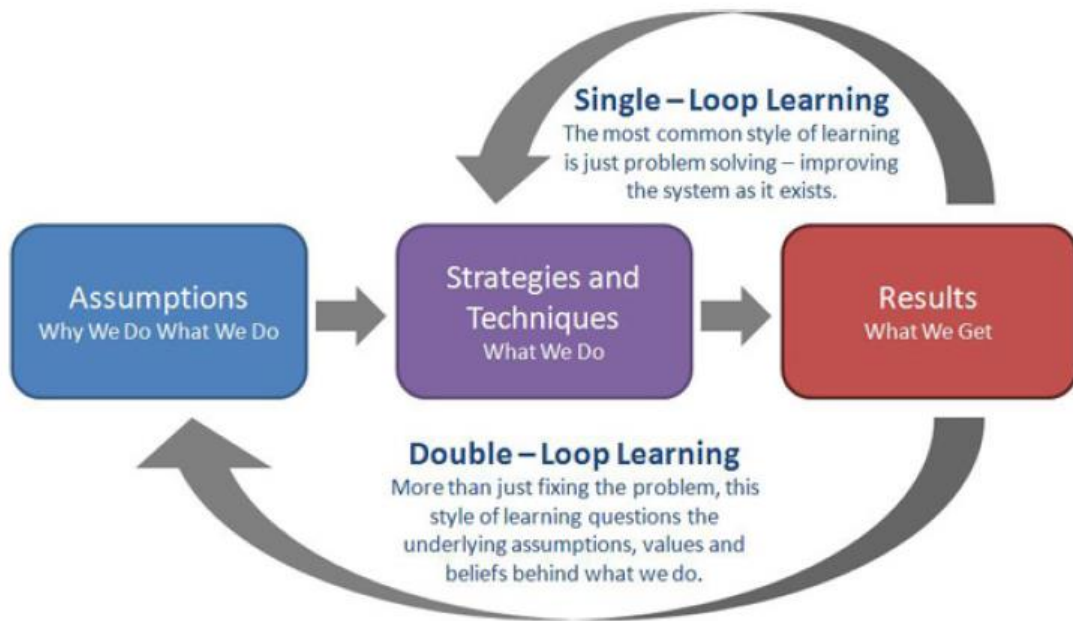
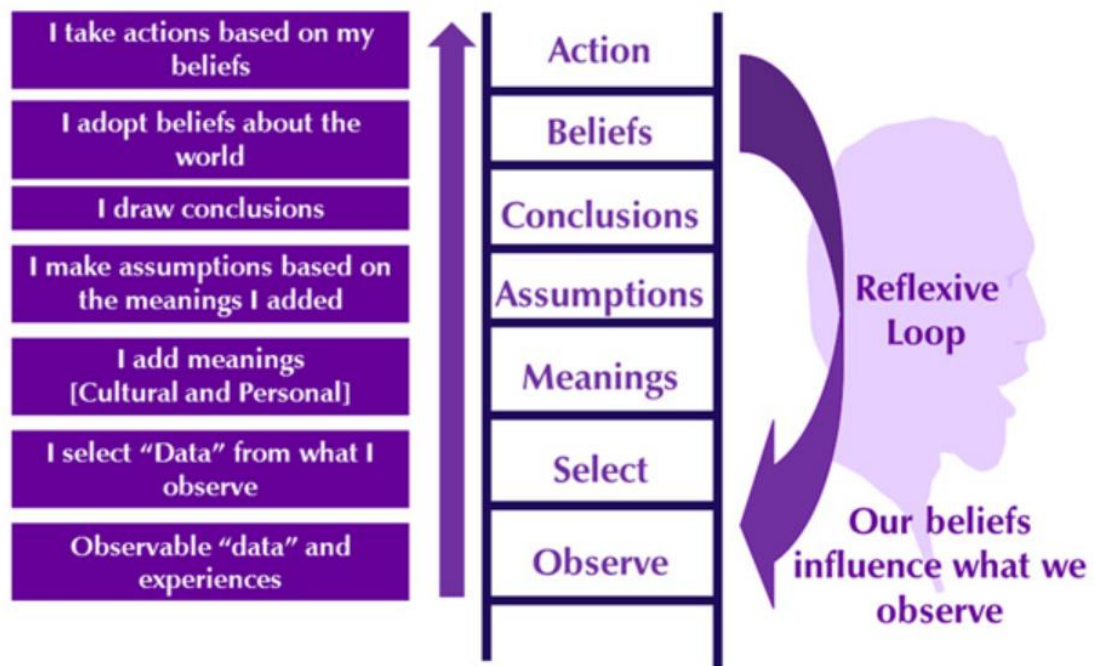


Figure 2: A model of ARGYRIS' and SCHON's "double loop learning" (BRYANT, 2009, n.p.). [20]



Source: ©2017 Pitard

Definitions:

Identity

1. who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others.
2. an equation (= mathematical statement) that is true for every value given to a variable (= number that can change)
3. the distinguishing character or personality of an individual
4. In psychology, identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expressions that make a person (self-identity) or group (particular social category or social group).[citation needed] Categorizing identity can be positive or destructive. A psychological identity relates to self-image (one's mental model of oneself), self-esteem, and individuality. Psychologists most commonly use the term "identity" to describe personal identity, or the idiosyncratic things that make a person unique. Sociologists, however, often use the term to describe social identity, or the collection of group memberships that define the individual.
5. The fact of being who or what a person or thing is.—Oxford Dictionary
6. (1) the reputation, characteristics, etc. of person or organization that makes the public think about them in a particular way.
(2) who a person is, or information that proves who a person is, for example, their name and date of birth. —Cambridge English Dictionary
7. the relation established by psychological identification——Merriam-Webster
8. Identity (philosophy), also called sameness, is whatever makes an entity definable and recognizable
9. Identity (social science), individuality, personal identity, social identity, and cultural identity in psychology, sociology, and philosophy
10. the reputation, characteristics, etc. of a person or organization that makes the public think about them in a particular way: Companies often spend a fortune on branding in their attempts to communicate their identity.

11. who a person is, or information that proves who a person is, for example, their name and date of birth: When applying for a driver license or identification card, you must provide proof of your identity. confirm/prove your identity You may be asked to confirm your identity by phone.
12. An “identity” refer to either (a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once). - James D. Fearon(1999)

Individuality

1. the quality or character of a particular person or thing that distinguishes them from others of the same kind, especially when strongly marked.
2. separate existence.
3. The individuality of a person or thing consists of the qualities that make them different from other people or things. —Harper Collins Publishers
4. (1) the sum of the characteristics or qualities that set one person or thing apart from others; individual character
(2) personal identity; personality
5. The quality that makes a person different from other people:—Cambridge University Press
6. Individuality is the state or quality of being an individual; particularly of being a person separate from other people and possessing their own needs or goals, rights and responsibilities.—Wikipedia

Individualism

1. Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual.
2. Individualism, political and social philosophy that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual. Although the concept of an individual may seem straightforward, there are many ways of understanding it, both in theory

and in practice. The term individualism itself, and its equivalents in other languages, dates—like socialism and other isms—from the 19th century.

3. the idea that freedom of thought and action for each person is the most important quality of a society, rather than shared effort and responsibility
4. the quality of being different or original
5. social studies the idea that each person should think and act independently rather than depending on others.
6. The concept of individualism is rooted in historical contexts where people's personal differences were dismissed or even punished by the ruling body.
7. the habit or principle of being independent and self-reliant.

"a culture that celebrates individualism and wealth"

synonyms: independence, self-direction, self-reliance, freethinking, free thought, originality; More

8. a social theory favoring freedom of action for individuals over collective or state control.

"encouragement has been given to individualism, free enterprise, and the pursuit of profit"

9. Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual. Individualists promote the exercise of one's goals and desires and so value independence and self-reliance and advocate that interests of the individual should achieve precedence over the state or a social group, while opposing external interference upon one's own interests by society or institutions such as the government. Individualism is often defined in contrast to totalitarianism, collectivism, and more corporate social forms.
10. The belief that the rights and freedom of individual people are the most important rights in a society

11. The idea that freedom of thought and action for each person is the most important quality of a society, rather than shared effort and responsibility.
12. The habit or principle of being independent and self-reliant. –Oxford Living Dictionaries

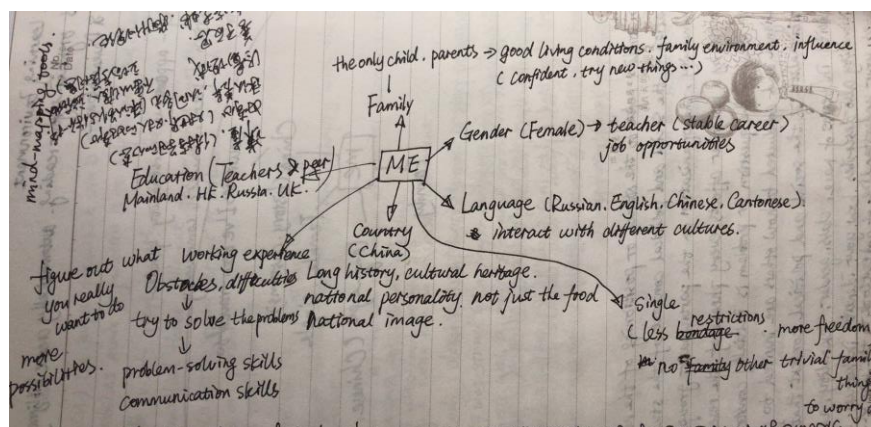
Positionality

1. The fact or quality of having a position in relation to other things.
2. Sociology. The occupation or adoption of a particular position in relation to others, usually with reference to issues of culture, ethnicity, or gender.
3. Positionality is the practice of a researcher delineating his or her own position in relation to the study, with the implication that this position may influence aspect of the study, such as the data collected or the way in which it is interpreted.

Appendix 4

1. Classroom discussion- Who am I?

The first class usually begins with a self-introduction. But this time it was not just a one-minute introduction, we spent the entire afternoon getting to know ourselves. By introducing who we are to other peers and dig out the reasons and factors that influenced us and shaped us, we recognised not only about ourselves, but also about other peers. It is only when we know ourselves well enough can we find out the research field and method suitable for ourselves, and remind ourselves of our positionality in the entire research process, anticipate the various possible impacts due to our own positionality, and try to avoid or minimise the negative impacts of these biases on the research.



Who I am	
3 most important factors	key ton skills
1. Family	① multilingual
2. Education	② paper-cutting art
3. Social connection	③ teaching skills
What I have lived for	④ get along with myself
Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind...	⑤ make friends feel warm inside
— Bertrand Russell	⑥ creative thing thinking to someone
	⑦ stylist (just for myself)
	⑧ find good restaurants
	⑨ know your play use strength
	Independent unbiased research
positionality	
Collins Dictionary	
your position or point of view in relation to the thing you are evaluating.	

2. Group discussion- What makes people different

We were divided into groups of three and discussed the possible factors that make people different from each other, such as gender, culture, family, nationality, religions, customs, etc, and each group member has to pick 4 key factors that appear the most important to him/her. Later, each of us shared a memorable individual experience and explained the reason why it has significant impact on ourselves.

3. Group discussion- What is your positionality

We were given to topics and were asked to think about our positionality in the research.

(1) An investigation of the shopping habits of high earning women.

(2) A review of the marketing strategies of mobile phone companies.

It was interesting to find out that due to the different positionality of each person, the focus of each research topic is also different, and the perspectives and research methods used are different.

Entry 2: Reading and evaluating literature and information sources

There is an old saying in ancient Chinese 'Reading enriches the mind.' People read for different purposes and in different ways. For researchers, reading is not just for recreational or aesthetic purposes. Although it may be a time-consuming and frustrating process, it is the fundamental step in carrying out a research project, and it runs throughout the entire research process. By reading literatures, one might not only get considerable information about the research topic, avoid duplication, enhance and examine the existing body of knowledge, renew and broaden one's knowledge, but also learn more about various kinds of research methods and how to apply those methods in practice. Additionally, one might change his/her mind since reading might broaden his/her perspective and give new ideas for conducting a totally different research (Cottrell 2006, Saunders et al. 2016, Sekaran 2003, Kumar 2014).

In order to provide reasonable justification for one's work, researchers must read, and read widely (McQueen & Knussen, 2002). As Cottrell (2006) mentioned, there are plenty of sources that researchers can use. Novice researchers seem to be overwhelmed when facing with tons of sources. In addition to traditional resources such as libraries, journals, textbooks, newspapers, etc., internet brings a huge amount of information, which also imposes a huge burden on researchers. They might encounter with problems concerning the volume of literature, the variety of literature, lack of boundaries, and conflicting arguments, etc.(Cottrell, 2006). Thus, what, where, to whom, and especially how to read become extremely important.

Reading for research is far more than understand the literal meaning and simply accept what the author said. It requires active engagement (Northedge, 2007). By reading between the lines, critically detaching one's thoughts from feelings,

and keeping ask why, one could learn about more than the subject, but the methods applied in it. A useful checklist provided by Harvard College Library (2013) helps its students practise effective reading (Saunders et al, 2016). The whole reading process is like choosing a good partner to start a research journey, you should read with conscious and cautious. That is to say, reading is not a passive process, to make it more effective and efficient, one should read actively and critically.

Reading is an interactive activity rather than a one-way input. Brunan W.K (1989) defines reading as a two-way interaction in which information is exchange between the reader and the author. For general reading, strategies like skimming, scanning, skipping, sampling, and taking notes can be quite useful. Critical reading, however, requires researchers develop their own thoughts, pay much attention closely on certain parts of the literature and ask a set of questions by weighing up ideas and arguments. Wallace and Wray (2011) advocate to use critical questions for better critical reading. As an engaged reader, this process involves reflection and reaction (Northedge, 2007).

“In the modern world, people increasingly need skills of evaluating and managing information, in both their personal and working lives.” (HEFCE, 2004) It is not only to master purely technical web-searching and filing skills, but also to know how to access to different information sources, be able to ‘weigh up the academic credibility of what you find’ and make appropriate use of it (Northedge, 2007, 224). Distinguish ‘good’ and ‘bad’ information from undreamt number of sources can be challenging. Northedge introduced the PROMPT checklist (The Open University Library, 2001b), which includes six criteria: presentation, relevance, objectivity, method, provenance, and timeliness. Always keep in mind that do not afraid of seeking for help and try different ways of reading and

evaluating information to find your own style.

Appendix 1

Blaxter, L., 2010. *How to research*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Cotrell, S., 2005. *Critical thinking skills: Developing effective analysis and argument*.

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Cottrell, S. and Cottrell, S., 2001. *Teaching study skills and supporting learning*.

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Appendix 3

Critical thinking as a process

Critical thinking is a complex process of deliberation which involves a wide range of skills and attitudes. It includes:

- *identifying other people's positions, arguments and conclusions;*
- *evaluating the evidence for alternative points of view;*
- *weighing up opposing arguments and evidence fairly;*
- *being able to read between the lines, seeing behind surfaces, and identifying false or unfair assumptions;*
- *recognising techniques used to make certain positions more appealing than others, such as false logic and persuasive devices;*
- *reflecting on issues in a structured way, bringing logic and insight to bear;*
- *drawing conclusions about whether arguments are valid and justifiable, based on good evidence and sensible assumptions;*
- *presenting a point of view in a structured, clear, well-reasoned way that convinces others.*

Perseverance, accuracy and precision

Critical thinking involves accuracy and precision and this can require dedication to finding the right answer. It includes:

- *Attention to detail:* taking the time to note small clues that throw greater light on the overall issue.
- *Identifying trends and patterns:* this may be through careful mapping of information, analysis of data, or identifying repetition and similarity.
- *Repetition:* going back over the same ground several times to check that nothing has been missed.
- *Taking different perspectives:* looking at the same information from several points of view.
- *Objectivity:* putting your own likes, beliefs and interests to one side with the aim of gaining the most accurate outcome or a deeper understanding.
- *Considering implications and distant consequences.* What appears to be a good idea in the short term, for example, might have long-term effects that are less desirable.

Critical analysis of other people's reasons can involve:

- identifying their reasons and conclusions;
- analysing how they select, combine and order reasons to construct a line of reasoning;
- evaluating whether their reasons support the conclusions they draw;
- evaluating whether their reasons are well-founded, based on good evidence;
- identifying flaws in their reasoning.

Benefits of critical thinking skills

Good critical thinking skills bring numerous benefits such as:

- improved attention and observation
- more focused reading
- improved ability to identify the key points in a text or other message rather than becoming distracted by less important material
- improved ability to respond to the appropriate points in a message
- knowledge of how to get your own point across more easily
- skills of analysis that you can choose to apply in a variety of situations.

Source: ©2005 Cottrell

Primary and secondary source materials

Most types of evidence can be divided into one of two categories:

- primary sources: the 'raw material' for the subject, such as data and documents;
- secondary sources: materials such as books and articles based on, or written about, primary sources.

Primary source materials

Primary source materials are those that originate from the time and place of the events being investigated. Primary sources can include:

- contemporary letters, documents, prints, painting and photographs;
- newspapers, books and materials published at that time;
- TV, film and video footage from the time;
- recordings of radio broadcasts;
- remaining body parts, sources of DNA, finger prints and footprints;
- artefacts such as tools, pottery, furniture;
- testimonies of witnesses;
- the raw data from experiments;
- autobiographies;
- material on the internet if the internet or materials on it are the focus of the study;
- individual responses to surveys and questionnaires.

Secondary sources

Secondary sources are any materials written or produced about the event, usually some time later. These include:

- books, articles, web pages, documentaries about an event, person or item;
- interviews with people reporting what they heard from witnesses;
- biographies;
- articles in magazines;
- papers and reports using the results of surveys, questionnaires and experiments.

Crossing between categories

Whether something is a primary source depends on how far it was part of the events at the time. Secondary sources in one circumstance may be primary sources in another. For example, a biography is normally a secondary source, but may reproduce copies of original letters that are primary sources. The biography of a prime minister is a secondary source of information about the political leader but could be a primary source about the life of the author. Magazine articles written in the 1950s were secondary sources when published, but are primary sources for present-day research into life in the 1950s.

Activity: primary sources

What are the main primary sources for your subject?

Questions to consider

When deciding whether a text is worth reading, consider:

- Has it been recommended by a source you trust, such as your tutor or a reputable journal or a review in a quality newspaper?
- Is there a clear line of reasoning, with supporting evidence?
- Does it include a detailed list of references, or a bibliography, indicating thorough research?
- Does it provide clear references to its sources of information, so that other people could check these? If not, this may not be a suitable text for use in academic contexts.
- Does it use source materials that look reputable, such as journals and relevant books, rather than the popular press?

Doing a literature search means:

- finding out what has been written on the subject (secondary sources);
- collating a list of the sources that are potentially relevant for your subject;
- paring down the list, selecting sources for initial investigation to check for relevance;
- browsing selected items to help you select the most useful sources;
- selecting the most relevant sources for more detailed investigation.

● *Over-focused reading*: the reading is too slow, focusing excessively on individual words and sections of the text. Although close reading is a necessary part of critical reading, it is also important to interpret specific details in the wider context of the argument and the theoretical perspective.

● *Insufficient focus*: the reading is too superficial, taking in the big picture but lacking a sense of how the main theories and arguments are supported by specific details and evidence.

● *Insufficient attention to the exact wording*: missing out essential words such as 'not', or not following the exact sequence closely

● *Failing to draw out correctly the implications of what is stated*.

It follows that, in order to interpret texts accurately, it helps to vary the focus of attention when reading, alternating between:

- the big picture and the fine detail;
- a consideration of the exact words and unstated implications and assumptions.

Basic questioning of the evidence

Critical thinking is a questioning process. When evaluating evidence, ask such questions as:

- How do we know this is true?
- How reliable is this source?
- Are the examples given truly representative of the whole area?
- Does this match what I already know?
- Does this contradict other evidence?
- What motive might this person have for saying this?
- What are we not being told?
- Are any other explanations possible?
- Do the reasons support the conclusion?
- Is the author's line of reasoning well substantiated by the evidence?

Check

When evaluating an argument, check:

- Is the evidence relevant to the topic?
- Is it needed to substantiate the reasoning?
- Does it make a difference to the conclusion?
- If so, does it support it or contradict it?
- Is the evidence needed to substantiate interim conclusions?

When selecting sources, ask:

- Did this contribute a major theoretical perspective to the discipline?
- Has this changed thinking in the subject, or made a significant contribution to the questions debated in the discipline?
- Does this provide a contribution to the path of research evidence that leads up to my own project? If so, how? Is this a direct or an indirect link? Is it a key contribution that needs to be discussed or a lesser contribution requiring a passing reference?
- Does this source challenge what was said before or provide an alternative way of thinking about the issue?
- Does it use research methods that are novel or that I could use for my project?

Source: ©2005 Cottrell

Preparing for critical reading

It is not usually easy to make sense of any information taken out of context. When reading new material, some basic preparation can help you to:

- see how the main argument fits together;
- better remember the overall argument;
- better comprehend specific pieces of information;
- recognise how reasons and evidence contribute to the main argument.

The following sections offer suggestions on actions you can take to orientate yourself to a text, in order to facilitate critical reading.

Books

Preliminary skim

First, skim through the book to get a feel for what it contains. Glancing through as you flick the pages a few times, or scanning each page quickly in turn, can give you an initial impression of what the book is about and where relevant information may be located.



Scan the introduction

Check whether the introduction indicates the author's position or refers to the overall argument. Such information can direct you to the most relevant chapters and help you to make sense of detailed information presented in these.

Scan the final chapter

Look at any conclusions drawn at the end of the book. Check whether the final chapter sums up the argument, reasoning and evidence. If so, this

is invaluable for keeping track of the line of reasoning when reading about the more detailed evidence in other chapters.

Scan beginnings and ends of chapters

Scan the introductions and final sections of relevant chapters: these are likely to orientate your thinking to the material in the chapter.

Articles

- Browse the abstract to see if the article looks relevant.
- If it does, read the abstract slowly, to identify the main argument.
- If the article is about a research project, the research hypotheses sum up what the author is trying to prove. The results will tell you what they found. The discussion indicates what the author considers to be significant about the research and its findings.
- Use the abstract to locate the most relevant information for you. Decide whether you need to know more about the methods used, the results, the discussion of the results, or the recommendations, depending on your purpose.

Find the argument

Once you have worked quickly to locate where the information is in general terms, apply the critical thinking methods covered in earlier chapters in order to identify the arguments:

- Identify the author's position: what does the text want you to do, think, accept or believe?
- Look for sets of reasons that are used to support conclusions.

Once you have located the argument, you are likely to need to read more slowly and carefully, applying further critical thinking strategies.

Concise critical notes: Analysing argument

Names of author(s)/source			
Title of book/programme			
Web-site address		Date downloaded	
Date and/or time		Edition	
Publisher/channel		Place published	
Volume of journal		Issue	
Author's position/ theoretical position?			
Essential background information			
Overall argument or hypothesis			
Conclusion			
Supporting reasons	1	5	
	2	6	
	3	7	
	4	8	
Strengths of the line of reasoning and supporting evidence			
Flaws in the argument and gaps or other weaknesses in the argument and supporting evidence			

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Palgrave Macmillan Ltd

Critical reading and note-making

Source: ©2005 Cottrell

Concise critical notes: Books

Names of author(s)	
Full title of book	
Author of chapter	
Chapter title	
Year published	Edition
Publisher	Place published
Theoretical position or type of theory?	
Essential background information	
Key arguments	
Reasons and evidence to support the arguments	
Strengths of the arguments	
Weaknesses in the arguments	
Comparison or contrast with other sources	

Critical Thinking Skills

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Source: ©2005 Cottrell

Concise critical notes: Articles and papers

Names of author(s)		
Full title of article		
Full title of journal		
Year published	Month	
Volume number	Issue number	
Hypotheses: What is the paper setting out to prove? Are research hypotheses supported?		
What is the theoretical position underlying the research? Type of theory?		
What is the key literature used as background to the article or paper?		
Which research methods are used?		
What kind of sample is used?		
Key results		
Key conclusions or recommendations		
Strengths of the research: • How does it advance our understanding of the subject or how to research it? • Are there appropriate hypotheses, methods to test the hypotheses, sample sizes or types, controls for variables, recommendations? • Consideration of ethics?		
Weaknesses of the research: • In what ways is it limited? When and where would it not apply? • What are the flaws in the research, in the hypotheses, research design and methods, sample size and type, conclusions drawn on the basis of the results?		

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Critical reading and note-making

Source: ©2005 Cottrell

TABLE 2.2 Pros and cons of systematic reviews

Pros	Cons
Involving collection from a broad range of sources that might cross over into other disciplinary areas related to management and business	Limiting creativity and intuition
Aiding interdisciplinarity through highlighting cross-disciplinary themes	Overlooking important 'grey' literature, e.g. reports
Increasing transparency of the review	Being restricted by the accessibility of sources
Increasing replicability of the review	Requiring keyword search strings to be identifiable
Being 'systematic' and so offering a sense of rigour	Failing to reach older 'scanned' texts
Aiding the process of synthesis through the increased scope possible	Relying on databases that support 'keyword' search
	Relying on the quality of the abstract (often limited to 100 words)

SOURCE: THORPE ET AL., 2005

SOURCE: THORPE ET AL., 2005

Source: ©2005 Thorpe et al.

TABLE 2.5 Summary record

Author & year	Research question/ topic/ problem & main findings	Argument	Design: theory, concepts & method	Key references	Why relevant/ problematic	Comments

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM HART, 2005

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM HART, 2005

Source: ©2005 Thorpe et al.

The following questions can help to create a useful summary record:

- What is the main topic of the study?
- What are the key findings?
- How is the research justified?
- Why is this important for my literature review?
- What is the main unit of analysis (individual, firm etc.)?
- What is the analytical approach of the author(s)?
- How was the topic researched (methodology, data, sampling etc.)?
- What main concepts and theories were used?
- What is the scope of the study?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of this research?
- Do I find it convincing? Why?
- How did this piece impact on subsequent research (citations, responses etc.)?

Source: ©2005 Thorpe et al.

TABLE 2.6 Example of an evaluation sheet

Author/year	Definitions of creativity & Innovation	Factors affecting creativity Identified	Main findings

NOTE: ALIGNMENT WITH STUDY CONTEXT AND APPROACH

NOTE: ALIGNMENT WITH STUDY CONTEXT AND APPROACH

Source: 2015 Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson

TABLE 2.7 Checklist for literature reviews

Topic, aim and scope are clearly identified
Relevance or significance of the topic are indicated
Context of the topic is established
A clear understanding of the relevant terms and concepts is shown
The review includes appropriate material and states why the material was selected
Key resources and landmark studies are covered
The review includes up-to-date material
Existing research is summarized and critically evaluated
The relationship between theory and empirical research is addressed; main methodologies are identified
Existing research is synthesized in a way that opens up a new perspective
The reviewer shows a reflexive approach when detailing the analysis undertaken for the review
Appropriate quotations and examples are used to justify the main arguments
The review meets expected standards of academic writing (references, spelling etc.)

Source: 2015 Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson

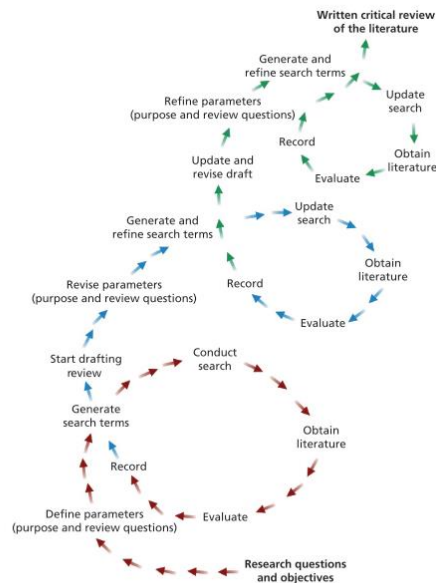


Figure 3.1 The literature review process

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 3.1 Checklist

Annotating your critical reading. Advice on how to read in a 'thinking-intensive' way

- ✓ First of all, throw away the highlighter in favour of a pen or pencil. Highlighting can actually distract from the business of learning and dilute your comprehension. It only seems like an active reading strategy; in actual fact, it can lull you into a dangerous passivity.
- ✓ Mark up the margins of your text with words: ideas that occur to you, notes about things that seem important to you, reminders of how issues in a text may connect with your research questions and objectives. If you are reading a PDF copy on screen, use the 'sticky notes' feature of Adobe Reader®. This kind of interaction keeps you conscious of the

reason you are reading. Throughout your research these annotations will be useful memory triggers.

- ✓ Develop your own symbol system: asterisk a key idea, for example, or use an exclamation point for the surprising, absurd, bizarre etc. Like your margin words, your hieroglyphs can help you reconstruct the important observations that you made at an earlier time. And they will be indispensable when you return to a text later in the term, in search of a particular passage that you may want to include in your project report.
- ✓ Get in the habit of hearing yourself ask questions – 'what does this mean?'; 'why is he or she drawing that conclusion?' Write the questions down (in your margins, at the beginning or end of the reading, in a notebook, or elsewhere). They are reminders of the unfinished business you still have with a text: to come to terms with on your own, once you've had a chance to digest the material further, or have done further reading.



Box 3.2 Checklist

Evaluating the content of your critical literature review

- ✓ Have you ensured that the literature covered relates clearly to your research question and objectives?

- ✓ Have you covered the most relevant and significant theories of recognised experts in the area?
- ✓ Have you covered the most relevant and significant literature or at least a representative sample?
- ✓ Have you included up-to-date relevant literature?
- ✓ Have you referenced all the literature used in the format prescribed in the assessment criteria?

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 3.4 Checklist

Evaluating whether your literature review is critical

- ✓ Have you contextualised your own research showing how your research question relates to previous research reviewed, acknowledging seminal work?
- ✓ Have you assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the previous research reviewed?
- ✓ Have you been objective in your discussion and assessment of other people's research?
- ✓ Have you included references to research that is counter to, as well as supports, your own opinions?
- ✓ Have you distinguished clearly between facts and opinions?
- ✓ Have you made reasoned judgements about the value and relevance of others' research to your own?
- ✓ Have you justified clearly your own ideas?
- ✓ Have you highlighted those areas where new research (yours!) is needed to provide fresh insights and taken these into account in your arguments? In particular:
 - where there are inconsistencies in current knowledge and understanding?
 - where there are omissions or bias in published research?
 - where research findings need to be tested further?
 - where evidence is lacking, inconclusive, contradictory or limited?
- ✓ Have you justified your arguments by accurately referencing published research?

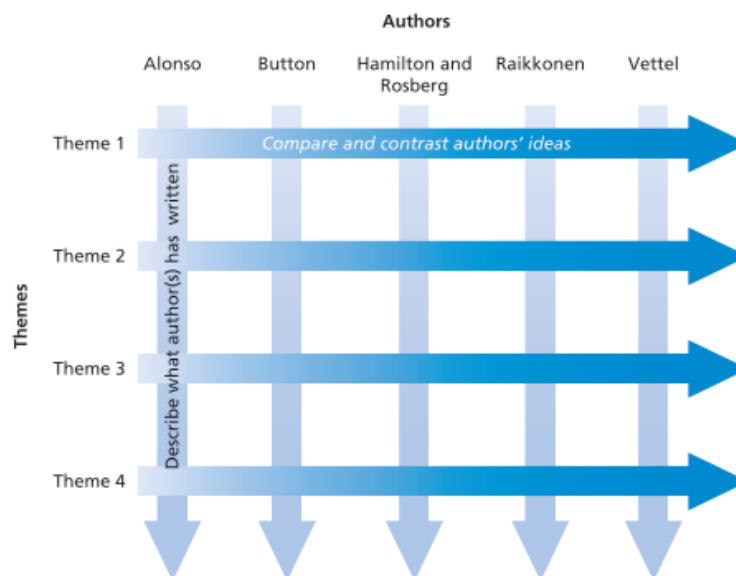


Figure 3.2 Literature review structure



Box 3.5 Checklist

Evaluating the structure of your literature review

- ✓ Does your literature review have a clear title, which describes the focus of your research rather than just saying 'literature review'?
- ✓ Have you explained precisely how you searched the literature, and the criteria used to select those studies included?
- ✓ Does your review start at a more general level before narrowing down?
- ✓ Is your literature review organised thematically around the ideas contained in the research being reviewed rather than the researchers?
- ✓ Are your arguments coherent and cohesive – do your ideas link in a way that will be logical to your reader?
- ✓ Have you used subheadings within the literature review to help guide your reader?
- ✓ Does the way you have structured your literature review draw your reader's attention to those issues that are the focus of your research, in particular your objectives?
- ✓ Does your literature review lead your reader into subsequent sections of your project report?

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

- 1 Why am I reading this? (The authors argue that this is where the review question is particularly valuable. It acts as a focusing device and ensures that you stick to the purpose of the reading and do not get sidetracked too much by the author's agenda.)
- 2 What is the author trying to do in writing this? (The answer to this may assist you in deciding how valuable the writing may be for your purposes.)
- 3 What is the writer saying that is relevant to what I want to find out?
- 4 How convincing is what the author is saying? (In particular, is the argument based on a conclusion which is justified by the evidence?)
- 5 What use can I make of the reading?

Source: ©2011 Wallace and Wray

Table 3.4 Selected online search tools and their coverage

Name	Internet address	Comment
General search engines		
Bing	www.bing.com	Access to billions of web pages, can link to Facebook
Google	www.google.com	Access to billions of web pages
Google UK	www.google.co.uk	Country-based Google – optimised to show country results
Specialised search engines		
Google Scholar	www.scholar.google.com	Searches scholarly literature allowing you to locate the complete document
UK government	www.gov.uk	Searches central and local government websites and government agencies
Information gateways		
Biz/Ed	www.bized.co.uk	Information service, links economics and business students and teachers and information providers
Publishers' catalogues homepage	www.lights.ca/publisher/	Searchable links to major publishers' websites, listed alphabetically by country
Subject directories		
About.com	www.about.com	Organised by subjects, offers numerous guides
ipl2	www.ipl.org	High-quality site only providing 'information you can trust'
Yahoo!	http://dir.yahoo.com/	Organised by subject, particularly useful for popular and commercial topics

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 3.14 Checklist

Evaluating the relevance, value and sufficiency of literature to your research

Relevance

- ✓ How recent is the item?
- ✓ Is the item likely to have been superseded?
- ✓ Are the research questions or objectives sufficiently close to your own to make it relevant to your own research (in other words, does the item meet your relevance criteria for inclusion)?
- ✓ Is the context sufficiently different to make it marginal to your research question(s) and objectives (in other words, is the item excluded by your relevance criteria)?
- ✓ Have you seen references to this item (or its author) in other items that were useful?
- ✓ Does the item support or contradict your arguments? For either it will probably be worth reading!

Value

- ✓ Has the item been subject to a reviewing process prior to publication?

- ✓ Does the item appear to be biased? For example, does it use an illogical argument, emotionally toned words or appear to choose only those cases that support the point being made? Even if it is, it may still be relevant to your critical review!
- ✓ What are the methodological omissions within the work (e.g. sample selection, data collection, data analysis)? Even if there are many it still may be of relevance!
- ✓ Is the precision sufficient? Even if it is imprecise it may be the only item you can find and so still of relevance!
- ✓ Does the item provide guidance for future research?

Sufficiency

- ✓ As I read new items, do I recognise the authors and the ideas from other items I have already read?
- ✓ Have I read the work by those acknowledged by others as key researchers in my research area?
- ✓ Can I critically discuss the academic context of my research with confidence?
- ✓ Have I read sufficient items to satisfy the assessment criteria for my project report?

Sources: Authors' experience; Bell and Waters (2014); Colquitt (2013); Fisher (2010); Jankowicz (2005); McNeill (2005)

Table 3.5 Bibliographic details required

Journal	Book	Chapter in an edited book
• Author(s) – family name, first name, initials • Year of publication (in parentheses) • Title of article • Title of journal (italicised) • Volume • Part/issue • Page numbers (preceded by 'p'. for page or 'pp'. for pages)	• Author(s) – family name, first name initials • Year of publication (in parentheses) • Title and subtitle of book (italicised) • Edition (unless first) • Place of publication • Publisher	• Author(s) – family name, first name initials • Year of publication (in parentheses) • Title of chapter • Author(s) of book – family name, first name initials • Title and subtitle of book (italicised) • Edition (unless first) • Place of publication • Publisher • Page numbers of chapter (preceded by 'pp'. for pages)

Table 3.6 Supplementary information

Information	Reason
ISBN	The identifier for any book, and useful if the book has to be requested on inter-library loan
DOI	The digital object identifier is both permanent and unique, meaning an electronic document can be found more easily
Class number (e.g. Dewey decimal)	Useful to locate books in your university's library and as a pointer to finding other books on the same subject
Quotations	Always note useful quotations in full and with the page number of the quote; if possible also take a photocopy or save entire document as a PDF file
Where it was found	Noting where you found the item is useful, especially if it is not in your university library and you could only take notes
The search engine, database, encyclopaedia, bibliography or other resource used to locate it	Useful to help identify possible resources for follow-up searches
Evaluative comments	Your personal notes on the value of the item to your research in relation to your relevance and value criteria
When the item was consulted	Especially important for items found via the Internet as these may disappear without trace
Filename	Useful if you have saved the document as a PDF file

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

Am I a smart reader?

(adapted from Cottrell, 2017)

Do I know exactly what I'm looking for?

Have I considered what questions I'm trying to answer?

Have I considered what information I need?

Using reading lists selectively

Have I looked at the recommended reading list?

Do I know what I need to read?

Examine sources for suitability

Have I considered each source?

Have I considered:

- Whether it's on the reading list?
- Whether it's up to date or fairly recent?
- Whether it looks readable and manageable?
- Whether it has the information I want?

Select relevant parts of the book

Do I browse the book quickly?

Do I use the contents page, the index, the headings and the sub-headings for guidance?

Do I identify which parts of which chapters I need, and put markers in these?

Select relevant parts of the page

Do I read the chapter headings?

Do I read any sub-headings?

Do I read the first sentence of each paragraph (which should introduce the topic or idea)?

Do I look at any diagrams, graphs, or charts?

Do I read any summaries or conclusions?

Use photocopies / scans / print outs

Do I make photocopies of important pages?

Do I file electronic files?

Do I use marker pens to highlight important words and phrases (only)?

Do I jot down ideas and thoughts in the margins?

Do I make notes about the points I highlighted, to help me remember them?

Chart the main ideas

Do I map out ideas so that I can see how everything fits together?

Practice second guessing

Do I keep trying to anticipate what is coming next, or what the conclusions will be?

Read interactively

Do I think about what I'm reading?

Do I question what I'm reading? Do I look for answers to my questions?

Do I make notes of the important points, and ideas triggered by what I read?

Do I challenge the assumptions of the writer, logic of the arguments, & validity of the conclusions?

Vary reading speed and method

Do I keep changing pace, according to the needs of the text?

Do I scan rapidly for specific information?

Do I read quickly to get the general sense of a passage, and then read difficult parts more slowly?

Use markers

Do I label a corner of my own texts with a keyword summary?

Do I insert labelled bookmarks so that I can find details easily, and need fewer notes?

Do I give star ratings to valuable pages, making them easier to find later?

Maintain your attention

Do I take in what I read?

Do I make sure I'm doing so, by:

- Summing up each section?
- Taking regular breaks?
- Reading interactively?

Source: ©2017 Adapted from Cottrell

Box 4.1 Ten reasons for reading for research

- 1 It will give you ideas.
- 2 You need to understand what other researchers have done in your area.
- 3 To broaden your perspectives and set your work in context.
- 4 Direct personal experience can never be enough.
- 5 To legitimate your arguments.
- 6 It may cause you to change your mind.
- 7 Writers (and you will be one) need readers.
- 8 So that you can effectively criticize what others have done.
- 9 To learn more about research methods and their application in practice.
- 10 In order to spot areas which have not been researched.

Box 4.10 What is a critical reading?

- one that goes beyond mere description by offering opinions, and making a personal response, to what has been written;
- one that relates different writings to each other, indicating their differences and contradictions, and highlighting what they are lacking;
- one that does not take what is written at face value;
- one that strives to be explicit about the values and theories which inform and colour reading and writing;
- one that views research writing as a contested terrain, within which alternative views and positions may be taken up;
- one that shows an awareness of the power relations involved in research, and of where writers are coming from;
- one that uses a particular language (authors assert, argue, state, conclude or contend), may be carefully qualified, and may use an impersonal voice.

Box 4.11 Nine reasons for reading about method

- 1 You are going to be using one or more research techniques or methods in your project work, so it is as well that you understand as much as possible about them and their use.
- 2 You may need to evaluate a number of possible alternative approaches and techniques before deciding which ones you are going to use.
- 3 If you are likely to engage in a series of research projects, you will need to develop your understanding of the broad range of research methods used in your disciplinary or subject area.
- 4 In doing so, you will be developing your knowledge of research practices, and will be better able to reflect upon your own practice.
- 5 It will help you to justify what you are doing, or proposing to do, and why.
- 6 It will allow you to see research for what it is, a social process with its own varying conventions and changing practices, rather than as an artificial and objective set of procedures.
- 7 Your methods may be of more interest to you than the subject of the research.
- 8 You may need, or be expected to, write a methodological section or chapter in your research report or dissertation.
- 9 Simply to expand your knowledge.

Box 4.13 What to put in your records

Partington, D. (ed.)
Essential Skills for Management Research
London, Sage, 2002.

Organized in three parts: philosophy and research (philosophical underpinnings, ethical considerations); research processes (theory development, successful writing, acknowledging the individual); approaches and techniques (research design, ethnographic approaches, grounded theory, case studies, cognitive mapping, repertory grids, laddering, action research).

Stake, R.

Qualitative Case Studies

pp. 443–66 in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*.

Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage, 3rd edn, 2005.

This chapter reviews, with examples, theory and practice of case study research.

Mullins, G. and Kiley, M.

'It's a PhD, not a Nobel Prize': how experienced examiners assess research theses.

Studies in Higher Education, 2002, 27 (4): 369–86.

Using a sample of 30 experienced Australian examiners, reports on the processes they go through in assessing PhDs.

Winter, G.

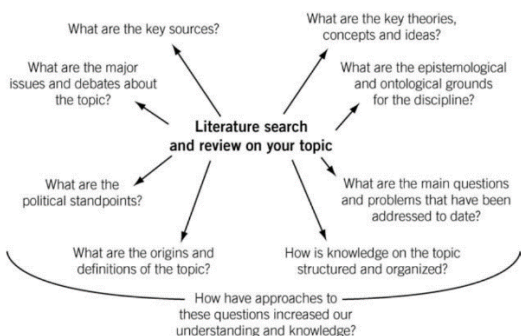
A Comparative Discussion of the Notion of 'Validity' in Qualitative and Quantitative Research.

The Qualitative Report, 4 (3, 4), March 2000.

(Available: <http://www.nova.edu/ssw/QR/QR3-4/winter.html>)

This article explores issues surrounding the use of validity in social research. It begins by exploring 'validity' in quantitative and qualitative approaches, and proceeds to examine the various claims to 'validity' made by researchers. The article concludes by suggesting that an understanding of the nature of 'truth' is central to the ways in which 'validity' is theorized.

Box 4.14 Some of the questions a literature review can answer



(Source: Hart 1998: 14)

Box 4.16 Doing a literature review

- Ask your supervisor, manager, colleagues or fellow students for advice as to what is expected. If you are researching in an academic context, there may be quite precise expectations.
- Look at previous examples of literature reviews in your area of research. They may have been completed by former students or researchers in your institution, or published in books or journals. Many articles include at least a brief literature review. While you may take account of such previous reviews, try not to slavishly follow their structuring or argument. Read the sources referred to yourself wherever possible, rather than relying on others' interpretations.
- Make sure you include what are thought of as the key texts in your field, and that you locate this work within the broader traditions of your discipline, sub-discipline or subject area.
- If your work is going to be examined, and you are aware of the examiners' identities and/or their preferences, it is sensible to address these in your review. Examiners are human beings too. Refer to some of your examiners' work, demonstrate that you have read it, and do not be unduly critical.
- Structure your review in sections to reflect different approaches, interpretations, schools of thought or areas of the subject.
- Your review should both summarize what others have done and thought in the subject area, and indicate your own response to their work and conclusions. Be critical – just because a work is published, even if by one of the key thinkers in your field, this does not mean that it is the last word – but not destructively so.

Source: ©2010 Blaxter

Box 4.18 Use and abuse of references

You should use references to:

- justify and support your arguments
- allow you to make comparisons with other research
- express matters better than you could have done so
- demonstrate your familiarity with your field of research

You should not use references to:

- impress your readers with the scope of your reading
- litter your writing with names and quotations
- replace the need for you to express your own thoughts
- mis-represent their authors.

Box 4.2 Reading at different stages and for different purposes

Stages:

- at the beginning of your research, in order to check what other research has been done, to focus your ideas, shape your hypotheses and explore the context for your project;
- during your research, to keep you interested and up to date with developments, to help you better understand the methods you are using and the field you are researching, and as a source of data;
- after your research, to see what impact your own work has had and to help you develop ideas for further research projects.

Purposes:

- accounts of research on similar topics to your own;
- accounts of research methods being applied in ways which are similar to your own plans;
- accounts of the context relating to your project;
- to protect against duplication and enrich your arguments.

Box 4.3 Eight stages for finding what you need to read

- 1 Take advice from available sources: your supervisor, manager, fellow researchers or students.
- 2 Locate books, journals or other materials that appear relevant by asking advice, browsing around, or using a library catalogue or Internet search engine (see the following two sections on **Using libraries** and **Using the Internet** for further advice). You will find that keyword searches can be particularly useful.
- 3 Once you have identified relevant shelf or Internet locations, look at other materials there which are relevant to your topic.
- 4 Once you have identified relevant journals – in print or online – look through recent issues to find the most up-to-date writing on your topic.
- 5 Read outwards from your original sources by following up interesting looking references.
- 6 Identify key texts by noting those that are referred to again and again. Make sure that you read the most popular or relevant of these. Seek out the latest editions.
- 7 As you develop a feeling for the literature relevant to your field, try and ensure that you have some understanding, and have done some reading within, its different areas.
- 8 Use the time and resources you have available to do as much pertinent reading as possible.

Source: ©2010 Blaxter

Box 4.5 Key sites for social science researchers

Examples of Internet Gateways:

<http://sosig.ac.uk/>

The Social Science Information Gateway (SOSIG) provides access to key sites. Coverage includes anthropology, business and management, economics, education, environmental sciences, European studies, geography, government policy, law, philosophy, politics, psychology, research tools and methods, social welfare, sociology, statistics, women's studies.

<http://www.hero.ac.uk>

The Higher Education and Research Opportunities in the United Kingdom (HERO) gateway provides key information resources on the UK education sector.

<http://bbc.co.uk>

Provides access to information on business, history, science and society, and many other topics.

Examples of specific sites for reports of research, bibliographic databases, research databases, and choosing and using software:

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk>

This is the site for the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the key funding body for social science research and postgraduate studentships in the UK. Offers a fully searchable database of research it has funded.

<http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>

Also funded by the ESRC, this Data Archive is based at the University of Essex and houses the largest collection of accessible computer-readable data in the social sciences and humanities in the UK. The archive can provide data to help in Masters and PhD research, especially for those working in the fields of economics, statistics, politics, sociology, accountancy, business studies, public health, welfare and history. It offers links to a range of other relevant information resources.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/qualidata/>

Also funded by the ESRC and housed at the University of Essex, this is an archive of qualitative research data, mainly arising from ESRC funded projects. One of the aims of the site is to encourage the secondary use of archived qualitative data. It offers links to a range of other relevant information sources.

<http://caqdas.soc.surrey.ac.uk/>

This is the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software site, again set up by the ESRC. Its aims are to disseminate information needed to choose and use a range of software programs that have been designed to assist with qualitative data analysis.

<http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk>

Another ESRC-funded site, aimed at researchers and postgraduates, offering support in qualitative data analysis.

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>

The home of official UK statistics on retail sales, the public sector, inflation, population, employment and many other themes.

<http://www.bl.uk/>

This is the British Library site, including information on millions of books, periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, maps, music scores and photographs.

Examples of search engines

<http://www.ask.co.uk>

<http://www.google.com>

<http://www.google.com>

<http://search.yahoo.com>

Examples of metasearch engines

<http://www.allonesearch.com/>

All-in-One houses hundreds of the Internet's search engines, databases, indexes and directories in a single site.

<http://www.metacrawler.com>

Examples of directories

<http://www.ipl.org/ref/>

The Internet Public Library offers directories and research facilities for academics.

Web training

<http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/>

The RDN Virtual Training Suite aims to improve Internet information literacy and IT skills. It offers a set of free 'teach yourself' tutorials in a growing number of social science subject areas for students, lecturers and researchers who want to find out what the Internet can offer.

<http://tramss.data-archive.ac.uk/>

This is the web site of the Teaching Resources and Materials for Social Scientists (TRAMSS). Its target audience is MA and research students in quantitative social science research.

Box 4.7 Getting to the gist: some hints and tips

- Note down the author(s), title, publisher and date of the book, report or article. Keep this record, and any notes on the content, safely.
- Look for an introduction, concluding chapter, abstract or executive summary. If there is one, read it quickly, scanning the contents. If the book or report has a cover, publishers' blurbs may also be useful.
- If it is a book or report, look for the contents page. Identify any chapters which you think may be of particular relevance and focus on them, again starting from the introduction and/or conclusion. You can find your way through a chapter or section by using the sub-headings.
- If it is a book or report, look for an index. If there are specific points you are interested in (people, institutions, events, etc.), you should be able to locate from the index where they are discussed in the text.
- In the text itself, key points will often be highlighted, or in the first or last paragraphs. Similarly, the first and last sentences of paragraphs are often used to indicate and summarize their contents.

Box 4.8 SQ3R and SQ4R: strategies for reading

SQ3R

The SQ3R reading method is a structured approach to reading that can be very helpful for learning or revision.

- *Survey.* Scan the material you want to learn to get a picture of the overall argument or the area covered by the book or article you are reading.
- *Question.* Ask questions of the text. Turn any headings or subheadings into questions, and then try to answer them in your own words.
- *Read.* Go through the text in the light of the question you have asked, and take notes at your own pace and in your own words.
- *Recall.* Close the book and try to remember what you have read. Try to write down what you remember in your own words. Only by testing your recall will you know how successful your learning has been.
- *Review.* Later, go back over all your notes to make sure you don't forget and to see how what you have learned relates to the course as a whole, your other reading and what you still need to do.

(Hay et al. 2002: 29)

SQ4R

- 1 Survey and Question
- 2 Read to Answer Questions
- 3 Recite and Write Answers and Summaries
- 4 Review

Advantages and disadvantages:

SQ4R is designed to help you focus on learning what is important to you . . . You learn to organise and structure your studying. You state your goals as questions, seek answers, achieve your goals and move on. You focus on grasping the key concepts . . . It is difficult to change old study habits . . . It takes more energy to ask questions and develop summaries than it does to let your eyes passively read printed pages.

(Walter and Siebert 1993: 89–96)

Source: ©2010 Blaxter

Appendix 4

1. Self-estimate reading speed

I found two 500 words texts, one is a BBC news, and another is a chapter from Saunders et al. (2016), and started timing them as I read. I actually read twice, the first time I tried to use some reading skills such as scanning and skimming, the second time I did not use any of these skills but read through every word in the text. Through the comparison of reading effect and speed between these two times, I found that using certain reading skills can help me grasp the general idea of the article in a relatively short time.

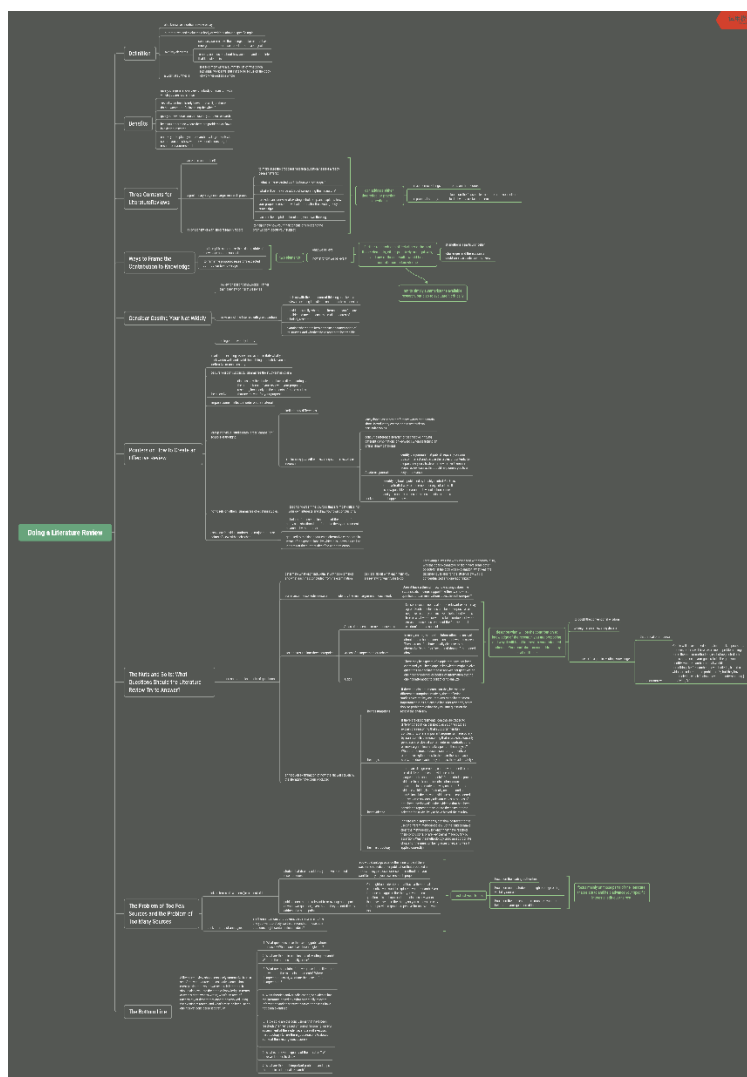
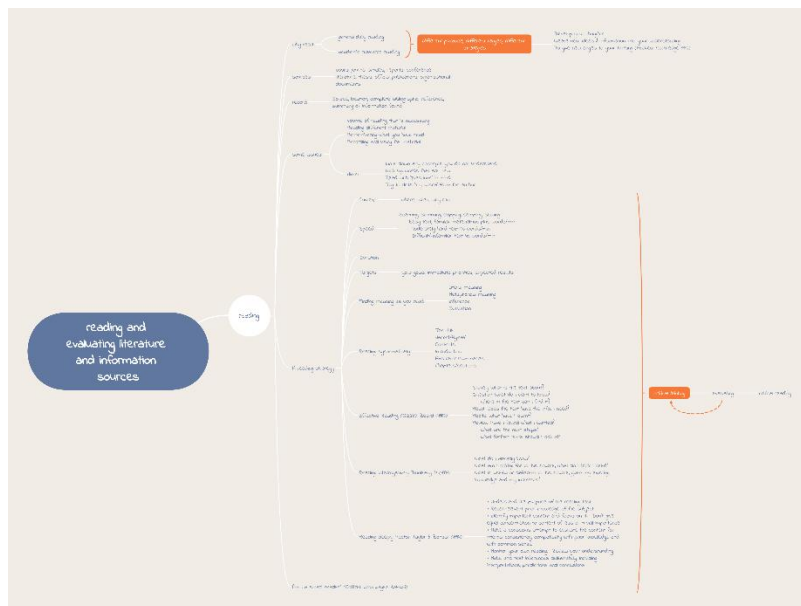
2. Develop a critical evaluation consciousness

We were asked to find a paper related to our own research area and make a critical evaluation of the paper, from the methodology it applied to the data collection it showed, and the analysis procedures as well as the final conclusion. I implied the checklist and suggestions from Saunders et al. (2016) and Cottrell (2005) to the evaluation procedures and it also made me to think about my own research. How should I critically review the literature and how can I ensure and prove that every step of my research is credible.

3. Develop reading skills and critical evaluation consciousness

By completing the exercises in the book using some relevant skills and taking a systematic note, I developed my critical thinking ability. I started reviewing literature critically by asking 'Is the sample population appropriate? Whether the structure of this article is reasonable? Whether the logic is clear? Whether the analysis process is rigorous? Whether there are contradictions?' I also started using mind map to make my thoughts clearer and more organised.

4. Mind mapping when reading the literature



Entry 3: The contribution of research to knowledge and organisational development

When talking about the contribution of research, it is not surprising that people often blurt out names like Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, or Adam Smith, etc. Indeed, as researchers, they have made great contributions to the progress of mankind. These contributions will be long remembered and preserved as evidence of human social development and scientific progress. This brings me to think about some questions: What is the purpose of research? What is research contribution? What are the criteria for research contributions? Who will benefit from the research outcomes?

Considering that doing research is a rigorous, tedious and arduous work, why do researchers still devote themselves to it? The difference between research and common sense is that research is done systematically by using specific methods to achieve certain goals, that is, to find a better 'truth'. The purposes of research are multiple, and the contribution of research could be multidirectional, multi-layered and multidimensional. It is quite important for any research to have an intended contribution. (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2010)

By doing research, not only do researchers benefit from the whole research process, but human knowledge, social organisations and individuals also benefit from different levels. Corley and Gioia (2011) synthesise 'originality' and 'utility' as two key dimensions of theoretical contribution, each of which can be divided into two subcategories. Specifically, originality dimension is divided into revelatory and incremental subcategories, while utility dimension is categorised into practical and scientific usefulness. From my perspective, this 2x2 matrix reflects the scope of research contribution.

Ghauri and Grønhaug (2010) argue that even some self-explanatory common sense and beliefs may turn out to be wrong. Knowledge is defined as 'justified true belief' (Pritchard, 2014) and can be classified in multiple aspects (Naegel, 1961). The contribution of research to knowledge should be 'value-added'. "99% of the discoveries are made by 1% of the scientists." (Julius Axelrod, 1912-2004). Researchers can be a lone genius and create a whole new body of knowledge, which served as a fundamental basis for future discoveries. Another important aspect of research contribution to knowledge is to add new dimension to the already existing knowledge. "If I have seen a little further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." (Newton, 1642–1727). Many discoveries do not come about in isolation. In sum, new theories, concepts and beliefs can be established to explain and predict problems, misbeliefs can be corrected, old knowledge can be updated and extended. Doing research advance the development of knowledge and move the field's thinking forward. New connections can be built between previous and current concepts, and the practical implications of these connections can be justified through research process (Corley and Gioia, 2011).

It is undeniable that contributions not only provide new insight to knowledge, but also deemed to have some certain purposes, namely, utility. From the organisational perspective, theories and concepts developed by research can be quite beneficial. On one hand, theoretical contribution can draw practical impact. By implementing scientific knowledge developed in the academy into practice, organisations can turn 'why knowledge' into 'how to' knowledge outside academia, and gain relevant (socially useful) new insights to solve problems (Saunders et al. 2016). On the other hand, although theories can explain and predict, they may also have limitations. Organisations, as practitioners, verify theories by applying them in real context, and so as to promote the development and progress of knowledge. Hence, a virtuous cycle

can be created.

Fundamentally, the contribution of research can be interdisciplinary, complementary and dynamic. As researchers, we should 'do more than just mention the contribution, articulate and defend it' (Bergh, 2003).

Appendix 1

Bergh, D. D., 2003. From the Editors: Thinking Strategically about Contribution, *Academy of Management*, 46(2), pp. 135–138.

Corley, K.G. and Gioia, D.A., 2011. Building theory about theory building: what constitutes a theoretical contribution?. *Academy of management review*, 36(1), pp.12-32.

Easterby-Smith, M., 1997. Disciplines of organizational learning: contributions and critiques. *Human relations*, 50(9), pp.1085-1113.

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Ghuri, P.N. and Grønhaug, K., 2010. Research methods in business studies (4. utg.). *Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall*.

Grossman, J.H., Reid, P.P. and Morgan, R.P., 2001. Contributions of academic research to industrial performance in five industry sectors. *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, 26(1-2), pp.143-152.

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- Ward, S., 1978. Contributions of socialization theory to consumer behavior research. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 21(4), pp.501-514.
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Appendix 2

Research Contribution Guideline

http://unitec.roms.intuto.com/App_Themes/Unitec/docs/ResearchContributionTypeGuide2017.pdf

What Constitutes a “Good Contribution” to the Literature (Body of Knowledge)?

https://fyics.ifas.ufl.edu/swisher/6800_18_ELRN/What_Constitutes_Good_Contribution.pdf

Purpose of Research

<https://explorable.com/purpose-of-research>

Types of the Contributions in a Research Paper

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/types-contributions-research-paper-ali-asgari>

Contribution Statement Instructions

<http://www.ejcr.org/contribution-statement.htm>

Research Contributions and Its Significance

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.592.9858&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Adam Savage TedEd

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8UFGu2M2gM>

How To Develop Your Theoretical Contribution

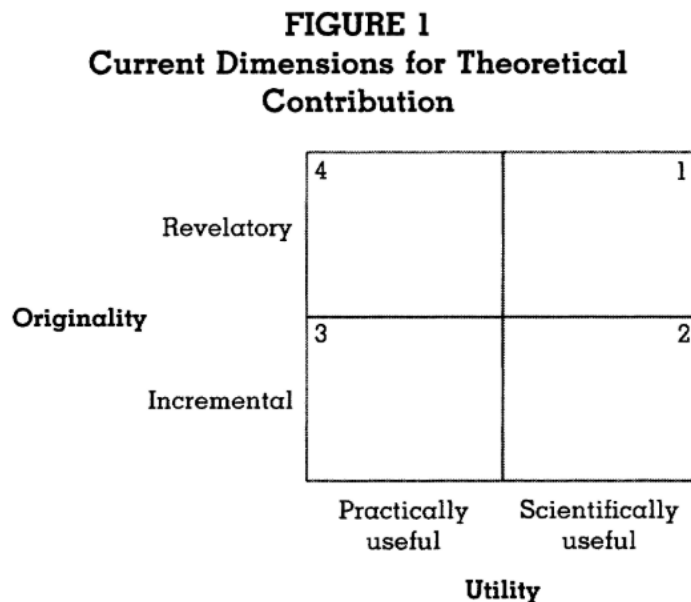
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJMKoip0_a4

Value and Contribution of the Research

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUJy9niX0ME>

Appendix 3

1. Current dimension for theoretical contribution



Source: ©2011, Corley and Gioia

2. What makes a theoretical contribution



Box 2.12 Focus on management research

What makes a theoretical contribution?

Corley and Gioia's (2011) study found that the **theoretical contribution of management research can be measured along two dimensions**. One of these relates to what they call the **'originality'** of the contribution. This they divide into a contribution that is either **'incremental' or 'revelatory'**. An incremental theoretical contribution is one that adds to or builds on a theory, perhaps by applying it in a new context. A revelatory theoretical contribution is more profound, offering a new theory to make sense of a problem or explain a phenomenon. The other dimension relates to what they call the **'utility' or 'usefulness'** of a contribution. This they divide into a contribution that has **'scientific usefulness' or 'practical usefulness'**. A scientifically useful contribution is one that emphasises methodological rigour and usefulness to an academic audience. A practically useful

contribution emphasises organisational application and usefulness to organisational practitioners.

However, while theoretical contributions on the first dimension are likely to be exclusively either 'incremental' or 'revelatory' (it's unlikely that a contribution could be both!), this does not have to be the case on the second dimension. Corley and Gioia focus much of their article on discussing how to achieve research that is capable of being both academically and practically useful. They refer to designing research that has scope to be theoretically relevant to both academics and organisational practitioners. They consider ways in which this type of theoretical contribution may be achieved. This includes a continuing emphasis on examining the links between theoretical abstractions and practice implications. In interpreting their results, researchers also need to go beyond narrow generalisations and look for insights that can inform organisational practice. In a similar way, when developing theory, researchers need to look not only at the validity of their theories but also their usefulness and applicability. Researchers also need to exercise some foresight when choosing their research topics so they pursue research that has and will have relevance to the problems and issues faced by organisations and organisational practitioners.

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

3. Grand, middle-range and substantive theories

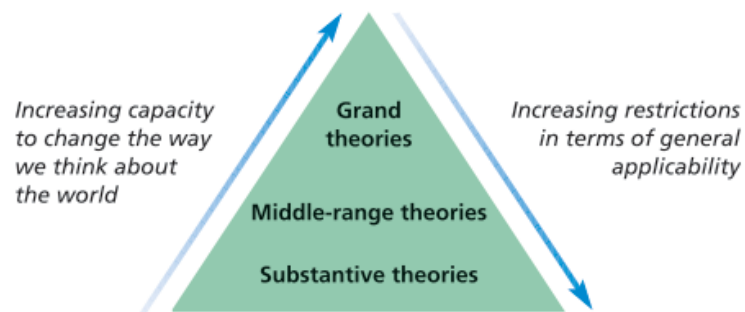
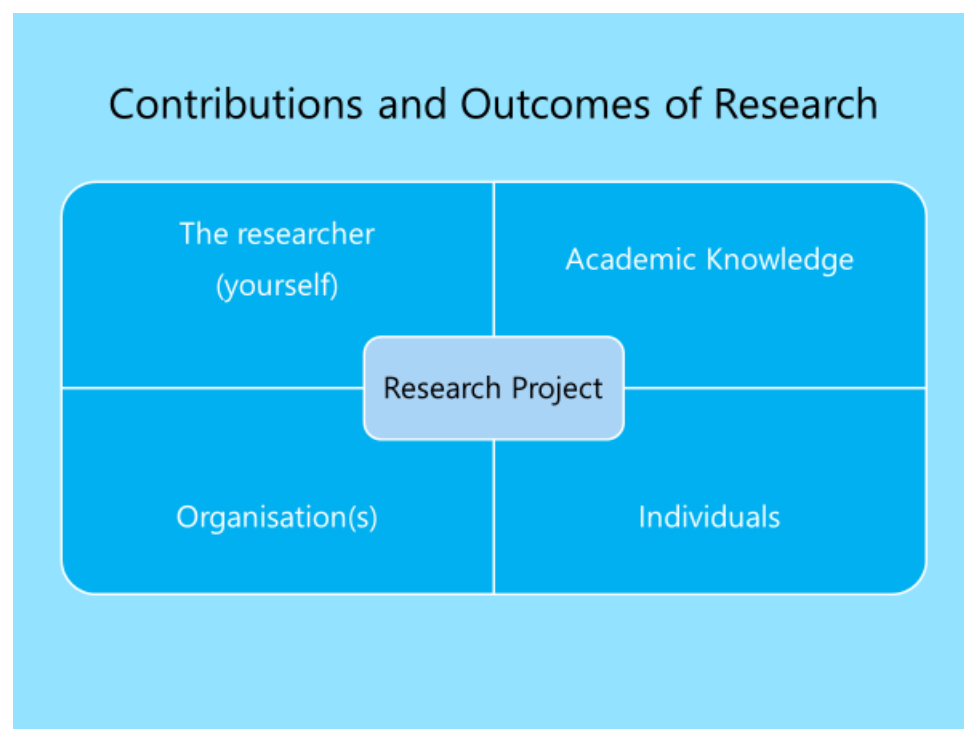


Figure 2.1 Grand, middle-range and substantive theories

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

4. Contributions and outcomes of research



Source: ©Lecture by Professor Jill Venus

Appendix 4

1. Classroom discussion

(a) What kind of contribution a research can make?

(b) Discuss the contribution of a doctoral thesis

Critically review the contributions made by a published piece of research (or PhD/DBA thesis)

We were asked to find a doctoral thesis and try to find out the contributions and outcomes in it after reading the thesis. What I found was a PhD dissertation 'Understanding Chinese and Western cultures: an exploration of the academic working environment in internationalised higher education'. By using the framework given by Professor Jill, I tried to extract the research outcomes and contributions from the academic knowledge and organisational perspectives. The author made a comparison analysis of Chinese Guanxi, Mianzi and Harmony principle and Hofstede's cultural dimension theory. The article points out that it is not enough to analyse Chinese culture simply by applying western cultural dimension theory and puts forward the application in practical organization practice.

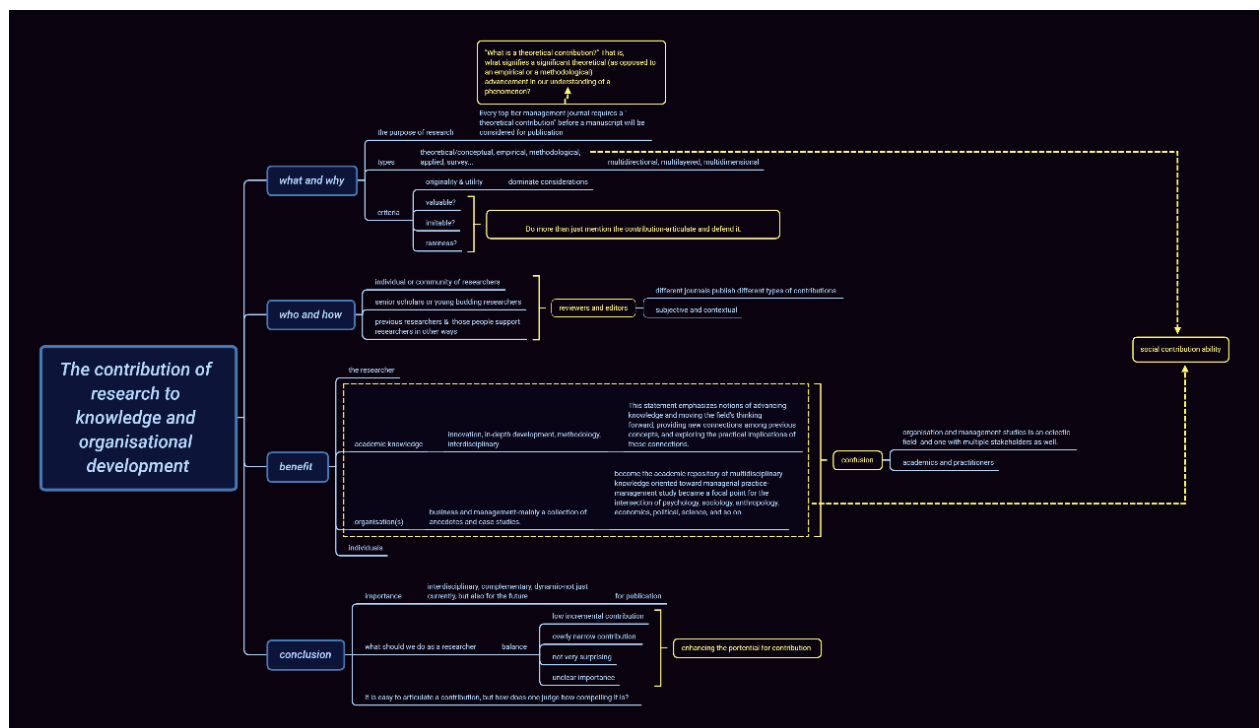
(c) Discuss the expected contribution of our own research topics by answering the question 'consider the types of contribution that your research topic could make'

We were asked to discuss in groups and with other groups about the possible contributions and outcomes of our own research topics. My research topic is related to culture comparison and the Confucius Institute. By combining my own positionality, I analysed possible contributions of research in four aspects: for myself, it is closely related to my future academic research field, I can gain an in-depth understanding of the research field, improve my research skills in different ways and improve academic competence and it would be quite

helpful for my future career development. By reviewing the literature, I can develop my reading and critical thinking skills, broaden additional knowledge. Moreover, it can build up my confidence, adjust the way I do things and behave. At the data collecting stage, I might meet and interact with others, it is a great opportunity to network and build academic connection. For the academic knowledge aspect, although there are many researches on the management of Confucius institutes, most of them focus on the case analysis of Confucius institutes in a certain country or region, or the organizational behaviour of Confucius institutes from the perspectives of performance management and human resource management. What I would study can fill the knowledge gap. By comparing the management modes of Confucius institutes in three countries and regions from the perspective of cultural differences, I try to find out the influence of different cultures on knowledge transfer and give corresponding suggestions. As for the organisation, in my research, it is the Confucius Institute itself, through the analysis of the regional and cultural differences and its impact on the organisational management and knowledge transfer, and give relevant solution and suggestion, the Confucius institute could apply theory to practice, and try to promote the trial to other countries and regions, so as to improve the efficiency and quality of knowledge transfer, and at the same time enhance the understanding of different cultures, and support the sustainable development of the Confucius Institute. What I should note is the way I share my findings with the organisation. How to put the thesis into practice using an acceptable way is also an important point for me to consider. Finally, for individuals, that is instructors, volunteers, language learners, and those individuals who are interested in culture studying and Confucius institutes, this research might provide them a new perspective or another starting point for their future research.

2. Perspective for future study

When I was reviewing the literature related to the contribution and outcomes of research, I read several articles from the perspective of journal editors talking about how they evaluate and select papers to publish on relevant journals. It is interesting to find that just because an article is good does not necessarily mean it gets published. Different journals have different criteria and sometimes the selection of papers is subjective and contextual. I would like to read more relevant literature for future study.



3. Guest lecture by research PhD Mrs Xiao

Professor Jill invited Mrs Xiao as a research PhD to share her experience and contributions to academic knowledge along her research journey and communicate with us about research related issues.

Entry 4: Defining the research question

Doing research is like starting a journey. Unlike walking away on a whim with no direction, the research journey comes with certain purposes. Good preparation often makes the journey easier. From my perspective, research question is like a compass, which helps to clearly identify one's research area and purpose, and always reminds and keeps you stay on track throughout the journey, leading you to your final destination. McQueen and Knussen (2002) see research question as anchor that not only determine the nature of the research, but also reflect potential sub issues that might be involved.

Many scholars have mentioned the importance of research question (Mosavel et al. 2005, Brien and Desisto 2013, Andrews 2003, Ghauri et al. 1995, Saunders et al. 2016). Kumar (2014) makes a metaphor that research question is like the 'input' to a computer program. The quality of the input directly influences the output of the program. Research question is a key component of the research process, it continuously reminds the aim of the study and act as a foundation of research design, methods, data gathering and analysis, inquiry, and implication. Researchers might flounder if get the question wrong (McQueen and Knussen, 2002).

According to Burns & Grove (2011), research question should include elements such as relevant, feasible, focused, and ethical, among which researchability serves as the prominent characteristic. Richard Andrews (2003) defines the characteristics of research questions as inquisitorial and answerable. Nelson and Goffman (2006) state that good research questions are not only answerable, but 'can be answered in the affirmative or negative and still be worth studying'. Eleni, Prabhakar and Catherine L (2015) point out the criteria for a good research question should meet the 'FINER' standard, namely,

feasible, interesting, novel, ethical, relevant.

In general, how to formulate a high-quality, well-defined research question is often the first obstacle novice researchers face when trying to start a research project. As Saunders et al. (2016) and Eleni et al. (2015) suggested, researchers might first delimit a research area, then construct a research question based on that certain topic. One should first 'identify', then 'specify' (Yegidis and Weinbach, 1991). Asking questions is a good way to get hold of the research topic clearly (Ghauri et al., 1995). Kumar (2014) provides the source of research problem based on the four Ps: people, problems, programmes and phenomena. Since researchers have to select a specific issue from within their research area/topic to formulate their research question, when the preliminary research topic is generated through brainstorming, discussion, self-analysis, relevance trees, literature review and other methods, and the research topic is further optimized through methods such as the Delphi technique (Paraskevas and Saunders 2012), preliminary inquiry, and integrating ideas (Jankowicz 2005: 34–6), the research question can be defined on this basis (Saunders et al., 2016).

Research questions can be descriptive, exploratory, experimental, causal, observational, etc. It is important to note that researchers should try to avoid falling into the trap of endless questions. While Clough and Nutbrown (2012) advise to use the Russian doll principle, Andrews (2003) suggest that identify and always keep the main question in mind and think about its relationship with the contributory and subsidiary questions. Equally important, researchers need to consider the time and resources needed to solve the problem.

Since research questions can emerge either from a review of literature, an area of interest or brainstorming, or from the process of the research (Andrew 2003),

when researchers should formulate their research question becomes another issue worth discussing. Nutefall and Ryder (2010) argue that librarians and faculty play important roles in guiding students forming research questions. When it comes to the timing of research question, librarians suggested students to form research questions as early as possible, while faculty advocated it is not necessary to develop research questions at that early stage. I tend to agree with Andrews (2003) view that research questions are not static, it might be changed as a result of reading or empirical research. It is better to formulate a research question with one's interest and capability and based on certain amount of literature review early before you conduct the actual research process. Do not pick a question in rush or without preparation. 'Rome wasn't built in a day.' Give yourself time and space to think critically and carefully and remember we can properly adjust the research question with the deepening of research.

Appendix 1

Anastasiadis, E., Rajan, P. and Winchester, C.L., 2015. Framing a research question: The first and most vital step in planning research. *Journal of Clinical Urology*, 8(6), pp.409-411.

Andrews, R., 2003. *Research questions*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

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Van Iddekinge, C.H., Roth, P.L., Raymark, P.H. and Odle-Dusseau, H.N., 2012. The critical role of the research question, inclusion criteria, and transparency in meta-analyses of integrity test research: A reply to Harris et al.(2012) and Ones, Viswesvaran, and Schmidt (2012).

Yegidis, B.L. and Weinbach, R.W., 1991. *Instructor's Manual for Research Methods for Social Workers*. Longman..

Appendix 2

Formulation of research question – Stepwise approach

<http://www.jiaps.com/article.asp?issn=0971-9261;year=2019;volume=24;issue=1;spage=15;epage=20;aualast=Ratan>

Generating Good Research Questions

<https://opentextbc.ca/researchmethods/chapter/generating-good-research-questions/>

Developing research questions

<https://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments/understanding-the-assignment/developing-research-questions>

Formulating the research question

<http://www.socscidiss.bham.ac.uk/research-question.html>

What Makes A Good Qualitative Research Question?

<https://www.bl.uk/business-and-ip-centre/articles/what-makes-a-good-qualitative-research-question>

Writing a Good Research Question

<https://cirt.gcu.edu/research/developmentresources/tutorials/question>

Developing a Research Question

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWLYCYeCFak>

Appendix 3

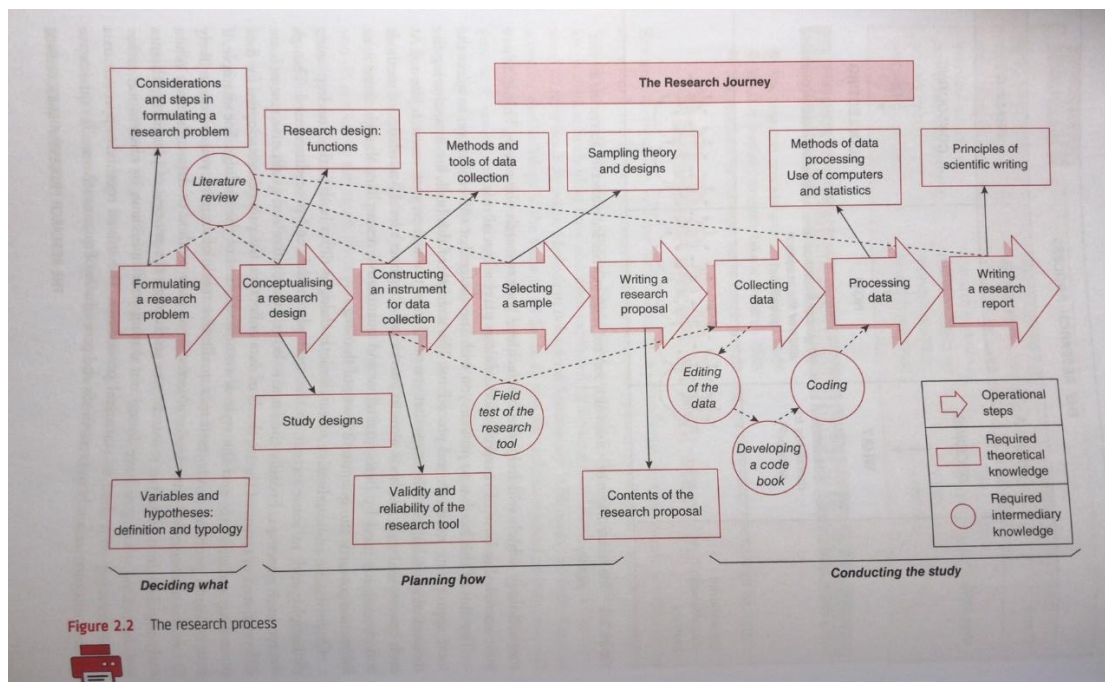
1. Aspects of a research problem

Table 4.1 Aspects of a research problem

Aspects of a study	Information about	Study of	Importance to the study
Study population	People	Individuals, organisations, groups, communities	They provide you with the required information or you collect information from or about them Information that you need to collect to find answers to your service research questions
Subject area	Problem	Issues and problems facing a group of people; description of situations, associations, needs, attitudes; population profiles; service delivery process etc.	
	Programme	Contents, services provided, administrative structure, services outcomes, consumer satisfaction, profile of consumers, profile of service providers, effectiveness, cost benefit, etc.	
	Phenomenon	Cause and effect, relationships, the study of a phenomenon itself, etc.	

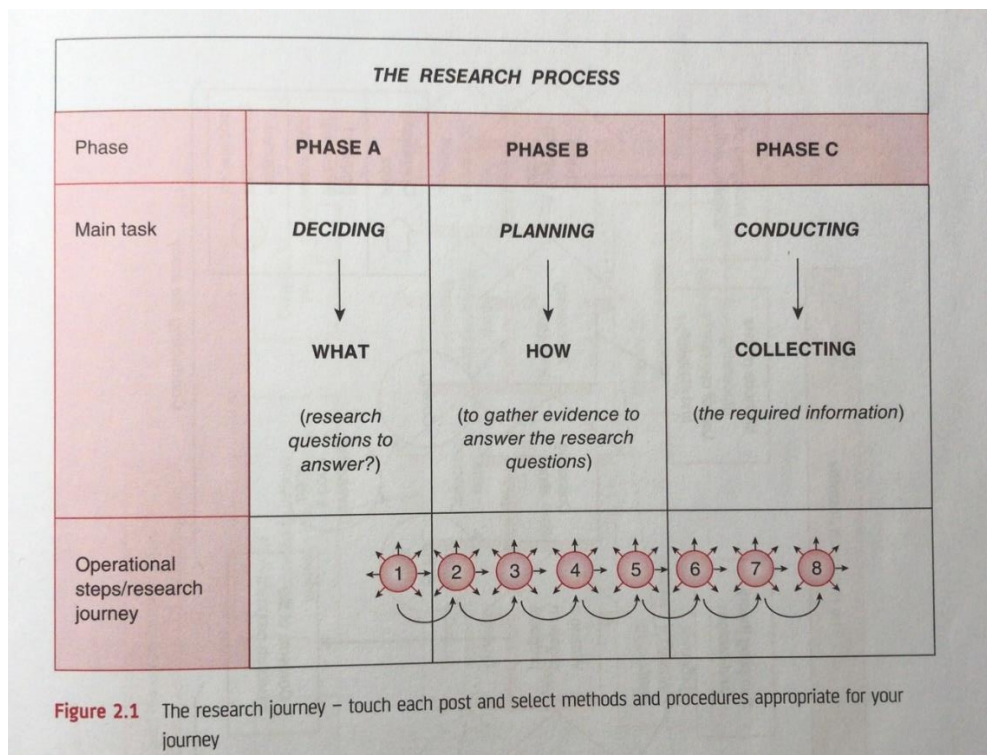
Source: ©2014, Kumar

2. The research Journey



Source: ©2014, Kumar

3. The research process



Source: ©2014, Kumar

4. Checklist for attributes of a good research topic



Box 2.2 Checklist

Attributes of a good research topic

Capability: is it feasible?

- ✓ Is the topic something with which you are really fascinated?
- ✓ Do you have, or can you develop within the project time frame, the necessary research skills to undertake the topic?

- ✓ Is the research topic achievable within the available time?
- ✓ Will the topic still be current when you finish your project?
- ✓ Is the topic achievable within the financial resources that are likely to be available?
- ✓ Are you reasonably certain of being able to gain access to data you are likely to require for this topic?

Appropriateness: is it worthwhile?

- ✓ Does the topic fit the specifications and meet the standards set by the examining institution?

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Generating and refining research ideas

- ✓ Does your topic contain issues that have a clear link to theory?
- ✓ Are you able to state your research question(s), aim and objectives clearly?
- ✓ Will your proposed research be able to provide fresh insights into this topic?
- ✓ Does your topic relate clearly to the idea you have been given (perhaps by an organisation)?
- ✓ Are the findings for this topic likely to be symmetrical: that is, of similar value whatever the outcome?
- ✓ Does the topic match your career goals?

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

5. Brainstorming stages

- 1 *Defining the problem.* This will focus on the sorts of ideas you are interested in – as precisely as possible. In the early stages of formulating a topic this may be as vague as, ‘I am interested in marketing but don’t know what to do for my research topic’.
- 2 *Asking for suggestions.* These will relate to the problem.
- 3 *Recording suggestions.* As you record these you will need to observe the following rules:
 - No suggestion should be criticised or evaluated in any way before all ideas have been considered.
 - All suggestions, however wild, should be recorded and considered.
 - As many suggestions as possible should be recorded.
- 4 *Reviewing suggestions.* You will seek to explore what is meant by each as you review these.
- 5 *Analysing suggestions.* Work through the list of ideas and decide which appeal to you most as research ideas and why.

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

6. Criteria to devise useful research objectives

Table 2.4 Criteria to devise useful research objectives

Criterion	Purpose
Transparency (What does it mean?)	The meaning of the research objective is clear and unambiguous
Specificity (What I am going to do?)	The purpose of the research objective is clear and easily understood, as are the actions required to fulfil it
Relevance (Why I am going to do this?)	The research objective’s link to the research question and wider research project is clear
Interconnectivity (How will it help to complete the research project?)	Taken together as a set, the research objectives illustrate the steps in the research process from its start to its conclusion, without leaving any gaps. In this way, the research objectives form a coherent whole
Answerability (Will this be possible?) (Where shall I obtain data?)	The intended outcome of the research objective is achievable. Where this relates to data, the nature of the data required will be clear or at least implied
Measurability (When will it be done?)	The intended product of the research objective will be evident when it has been achieved

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

7. The Delphi technique

- 1 to brief the members of the group about the initial research idea (they can make notes if they wish);
- 2 to, at the end of the briefing, encourage group members to seek clarification and more information as appropriate;
- 3 to ask each member of the group, including the originator of the research idea, to generate independently up to three alternative research ideas based on the initial idea (they can also be asked to provide a justification for their specific ideas);
- 4 to collect the research ideas in an unedited and non-attributable form and to distribute them to all members of the group to reflect on;

- 5 to encourage group members to comment on each research idea, including giving reasons for their opinions;
- 6 a second cycle of steps 2 to 5 to encourage further refinements or new options in light of what others have said during the first cycle;
- 7 subsequent cycles of the process until an outcome is reached. This may be a consensus around a particular research idea. It may occur when saturation occurs – no further ideas are forthcoming. It may also occur when participants become tired and less productive. In practice, three cycles of this technique are likely to produce an effective outcome.

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

8. More frequently used techniques for generating and refining research ideas

Table 2.1 More frequently used techniques for generating and refining research ideas

Rational thinking	Creative thinking
Examining your own strengths and interests	Keeping a notebook of your ideas
Examining staff research interests	Exploring personal preferences using past projects
Looking at past project titles	Exploring relevance to business using the literature
Discussion	Relevance trees
Searching existing literature	Brainstorming
Scanning the media	

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

9. Exploring personal preferences using past projects

For each project that you like, note down your first thoughts in response to each of the following questions:

- 1 What do you like in general about the project?
- 2 Why do you like the project?
- 3 Which ideas in the project appeal to you?

For each project that you do not like, note down your first thoughts in response to each of the following questions:

- 1 What do you dislike in general about the project?
- 2 Why do you dislike the project?
- 3 Which ideas in the project do not appeal to you?

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

10. Examples of research ideas and resulting general focus research questions

Table 2.2 Examples of research ideas and resulting general focus research questions

Research idea	Research question
Media campaign following product recalls	How effective is a media campaign designed to increase consumer trust in [company name] following a series of product recalls?
Graduate recruitment via the Internet	To what extent and in what type of context is Internet-based recruitment and selection of graduates effective and why?
Supermarket coupons as a promotional device	In what ways do the issue of coupons at supermarket checkouts affect buyer behaviour?
Challenger banks and small businesses	How has the emergence of challenger banks impacted upon small businesses' financing and why?

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

Quotations:

1. Characteristics and Components of Research Questions

The research question must be relevant, feasible, focused, and ethical (Burns & Grove, 2011). The most distinguishing aspect of a research question is its researchability: It must be clear with an implied approach to test it, meaning the question must include variables of interest and a specific population. The question also suggests the type of research study—descriptive, correlational, or experimental—that would best answer the question (Fawcett & Garity, 2009).

2. The reason why framing a research question is important in planning research

Firstly, formulating a research question requires a systematic exploration of the different components of a research project and will ultimately help you consolidate your hypothesis, aims and objectives and the optimal methodology to employ. Secondly, the research question will feed into the title of the project – providing a snapshot research summary, which will enable readers to determine immediately whether a study is applicable to their area of interest. Thirdly, having a well thought out, concise but

descriptive research question is a vital step in gaining necessary research funding to conduct one's study. In summary, a well-conceived research question provides a framework for conducting an achievable, focused and clinically relevant research study. (Eleni, Prabhakar and Catherine L, 2015: 409)

3. Examples of common mistakes:

- Some questions are too vague, and/or too broad
- Some may be too narrow for general research (although they may be interesting as single-subject studies intended to influence local changes)
- Some are diffuse and not well-focused
- Some questions aren't easily measurable as stated
- Others may be measurable but not valuable to test
- Still others are driven by the strong desire to prove something is right or wrong (Nelson and Goffman, 2006: 15)

Appendix 4

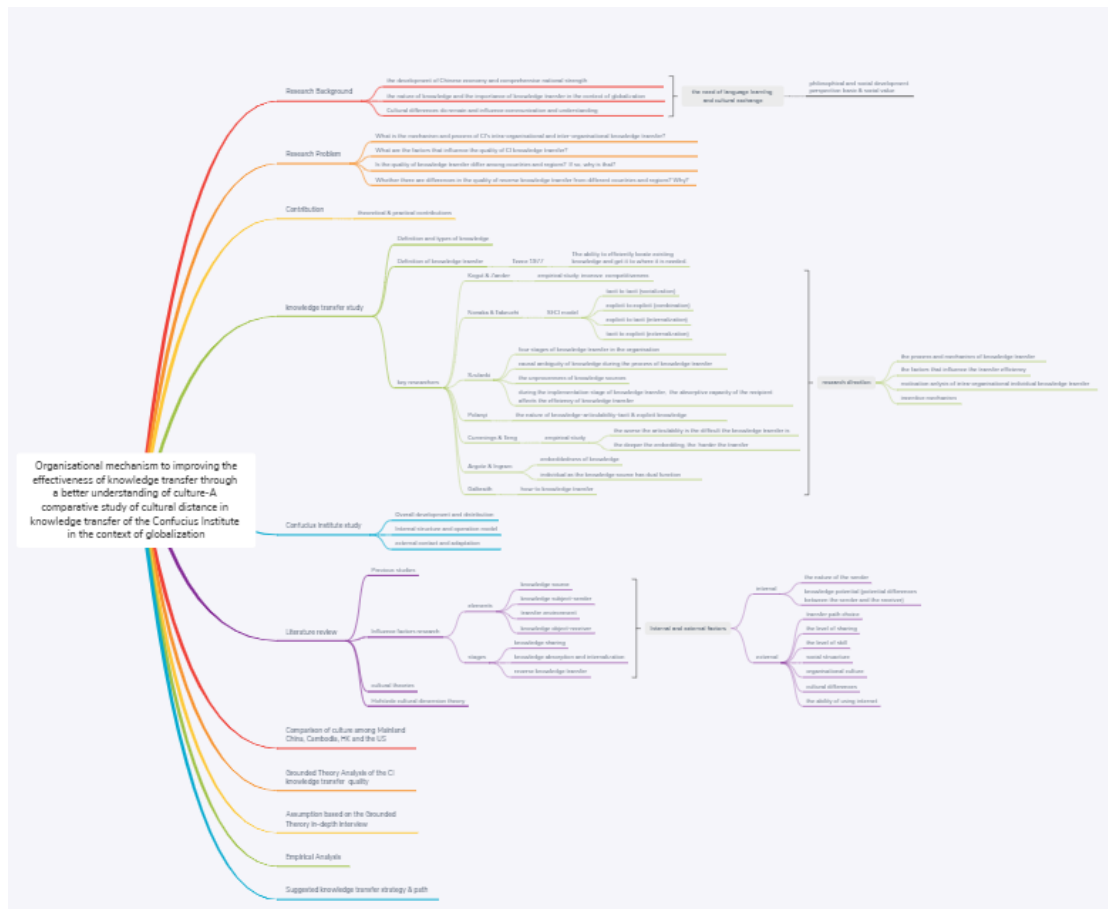
1. Group discussion- using Delphi method to define the research question

We were divided into groups of four, each of us have to write down our research topics and explain the reason why we choose this topic and what is the main problem this research would solve. By questioning other peers' research topics and in-depth explaining and defining every word of my own research topic, I deepened my thinking and saw the problems in the current conception. By taking the suggestions of other peers I narrowed down my topic and refined my research question.

2. Self-examine, justify and refine the research question

After reviewing the literature, I understood that in order to define the research question, I have to first choose a research area and form a research topic. As McQueen and Knussen (2002) suggest, we can try to find a research idea from 'contemporary issues, personal observations/theories, academic interests, journal articles, staff expertise, and access to subject groups'. Thinking about my positionality and combining my educational and professional background with business and management discipline, I, at first, choose the topic 'Comparison analysis of international NGO management mechanism' and formed my research question as 'Is there a cultural difference influence on the management of international NGOs?' After using the Delphi method with other peers, I narrowed down and slightly changed my topic to 'Comparison analysis of the British Council and the Confucius Institute's management mode'. I knew that a research question is not just a simple 'yes or no' question, it not only reflects the core issue of the entire research, but also has to be focused and not too broad. As Aslam and Emmanuel (2010) state, a good research question shares the same characteristics such as feasible, novel, ethical, relevant, and interesting. This time my research question was 'To what extent is the impact of culture influences the management mechanism of the two institutions as non-profit

organisations'. Later, I further refined my research topic and listed a series of subsidiary questions after proposing a major research question.



Entry 5: Philosophical frameworks for research

When talking about philosophy, some people may think it is a mysterious and abstract concept, or difficult to explain in a few words, or even think that philosophy is far away from our everyday life. The word 'philosophy' originated from the Greek word which means 'love of wisdom' (Wikipedia). Philosophy is more than a subject, it is an activity of the human mind and exists everywhere. Ward (2014) terms philosophy as 'the activity of working out the right way of thinking about things'. Although there are so many things people would take for granted by common sense, philosophy provides us with the right way to think, improves people's ability to think, and enables us to step back and ask what, why and how things are so that we can find a way out for ourselves in any situation we face, rather than feeling lost.

The reason why philosophy is inevitable and plays a fundamental role in any research is that a rigorous, credible, and valid research should be reliable in every aspect. As Senge (1990) pointed out the 'iceberg nature' of things, so does the structure of research. Every choice at each stage of the research you made, from the selection of methods and strategies to data collection and analysis procedures, and to the conclusion, is the visible tip of the iceberg. Why these choices are made, and how they are justified to be 'the right way of thinking about things' is below the waterline and remained invisible, that is where research philosophy is. Saunders et al. (2016) term research philosophy as 'a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge'. It is the outer layer of the research onion and requires researchers to focus on reflexivity, clearly figure out one's own beliefs and assumptions and be aware of their possible impact.

Generally, there are three basic philosophical assumptions: ontology, epistemology, and axiology (Saunders et al. 2016, Burrell and Morgan 1979, Guba 1990, Denzin and Lincoln 2000, Ritchie and Lewis 2003). From Rene Descartes's argument to Putnam's (1981) 'brain in a vat' hypothesis, from the Chinese traditional allusions of 'Chuang Tzu's butterfly dream' to the popular American TV series 'Westworld' and movies 'The Matrix' and 'Inception', people are all exploring what is reality and what is true. Ontology explores the origin of the world, concerns about the nature of reality and answers questions of 'what is real?'. Epistemology explores the nature, origin, and scope of knowledge, concerns about how to discover knowledge and create new knowledge, and answers questions about 'what is true? How do we know that is true?'. Axiology deals with the nature of value, closely tied with ethics and aesthetics. It answers questions like 'what is worth? What is valuable? What is good?'. These three assumptions work together and form a philosophical framework that underpins and systematically guide the research practice (Ruona and Lynham, 2004).

While Niglas (2010) views research philosophies as a multidimensional continuum with two opposite extremes: objectivism and subjectivism, Burrell and Morgan (1979) divide it into another two extremes from the ideological dimension: regulation and radical change, and further develop a 2x2 matrix that shows four different paradigms for organisational analysis by combining the objective-subjective continuum and the regulation-radical change continuum together (Burrell and Morgan, 1982). Consequently, different combinations of dimensions might form different research paradigms. Many scholars have classified and discussed the research philosophy. Saunders et al. (2016) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) introduced several major philosophies that guide researchers view the world and conduct research differently, namely, positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism. However, they are not completely separate and totally different from each other. There is no

best or worst philosophy, altogether they form the fundamental layer of the research onion and influence the way of theory development (deduction, induction, abduction, or a combination approach) with their own unique characteristics based on the ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions.

It is worth noting that many research students do not have a clear concept and understanding of the research philosophy, they are often confused about the classification of philosophy, and often combine their own beliefs with a certain research approach. They tend to have no fixed philosophical stance and sometimes just follow the exact philosophical framework of their supervisor (Mkansi and Acheampong, 2012). As for research paradigm proponents, it is necessary to continue to develop paradigms and frameworks to help student researchers understand how research is conducted. And it is important for research students to spend time to realise their own positionality and reflexive figure out their own beliefs and assumptions and the impact it brings to each stage of the research.

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Appendix 2

'An introduction to philosophy' MOOC

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/zhexue-daolun/home/welcome>

Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology and Methods in Research Simplified

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCOsY5kRs8>

Epistemology, Ontology, and Axiology in Research

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhdZOsBps5o>

Axiology

<https://research-methodology.net/research-philosophy/axiology-2/>

'The brain in a VAT' Argument

<https://www.iep.utm.edu/brainvat/>

The butterfly Dream

<https://www.philosophy-foundation.org/enquiries/view/the-butterfly-dream>

The analysis of knowledge

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/knowledge-analysis/>

Epistemology

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology/>

Epistemology in Chinese philosophy

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/chinese-epistemology/>

Value theory

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-theory/>

The Philosophy of Social Science

<https://www.iep.utm.edu/soc-sci/>

Philosophical frameworks in the social sciences

<https://understandingsociety.blogspot.com/2009/03/philosophical-frameworks-in-social.html>

Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper: Theoretical Framework

<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/theoreticalframework>

Philosophical framework

https://russell.wiki.otago.ac.nz/index.php/Philosophical_Framework

Appendix 3

1. The research onion

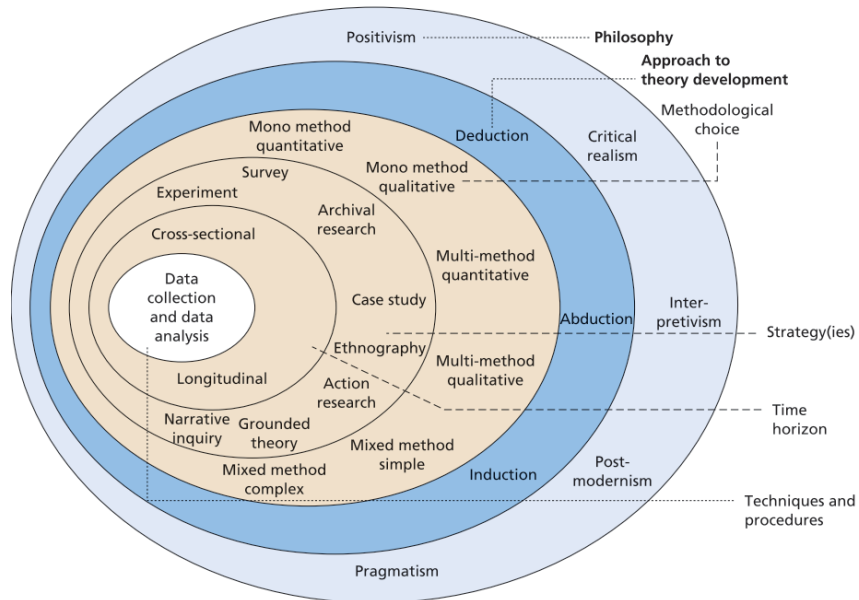
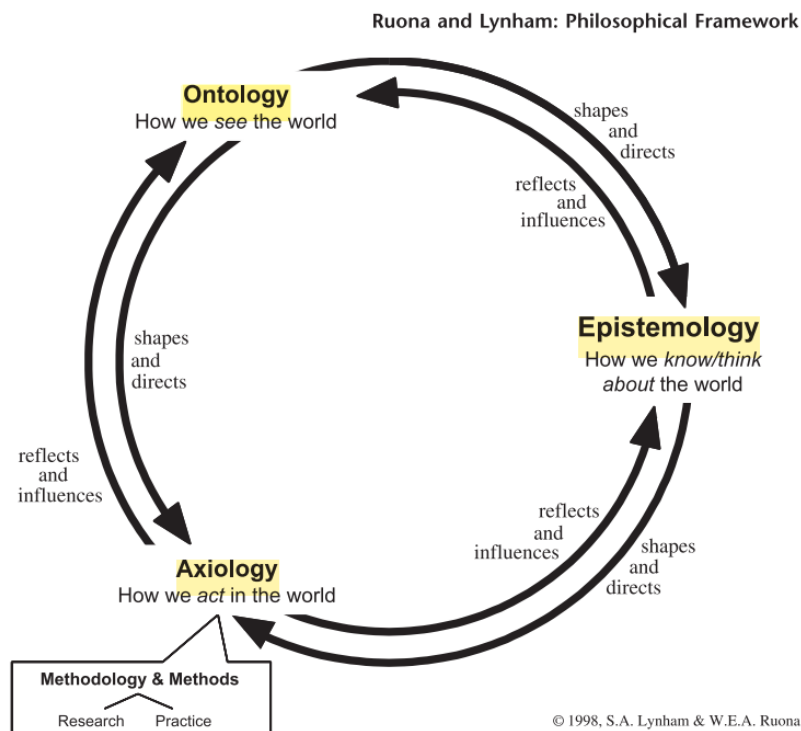


Figure 4.1 The research 'onion'

Source: © 2015 Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

2. Philosophical framework



© 1998, S.A. Lynham & W.E.A. Ruona

Figure 1 A philosophical framework for thought and practice

Source: ©1998, S.A. Lynham & W.E.A.Ruona

3. Research paradigm

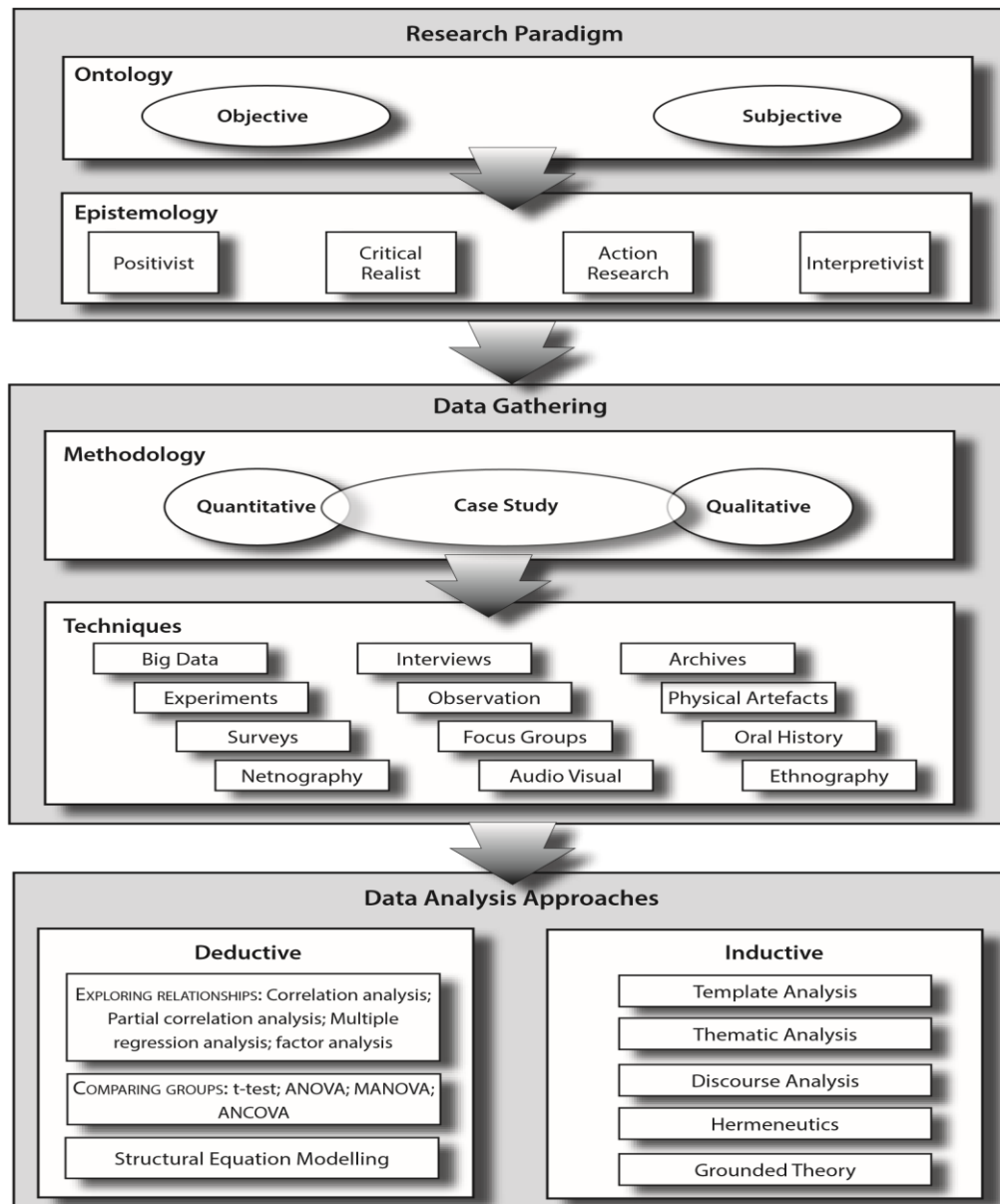


Figure 4.1: Methods Map

Source: O’Gorman, K., MacIntosh, R. (2015) Research Methods for Business & Management A guide to writing your dissertation. THE GLOBAL MANAGEMENT SERIES Goodfellow Publishers Ltd Second edition.

[http://www.researchgate.net/publication/281236523 Mapping Research Methods](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/281236523_Mapping_Research_Methods)

4. Some commonly used terms. Adapted from O’Gorman (2008)

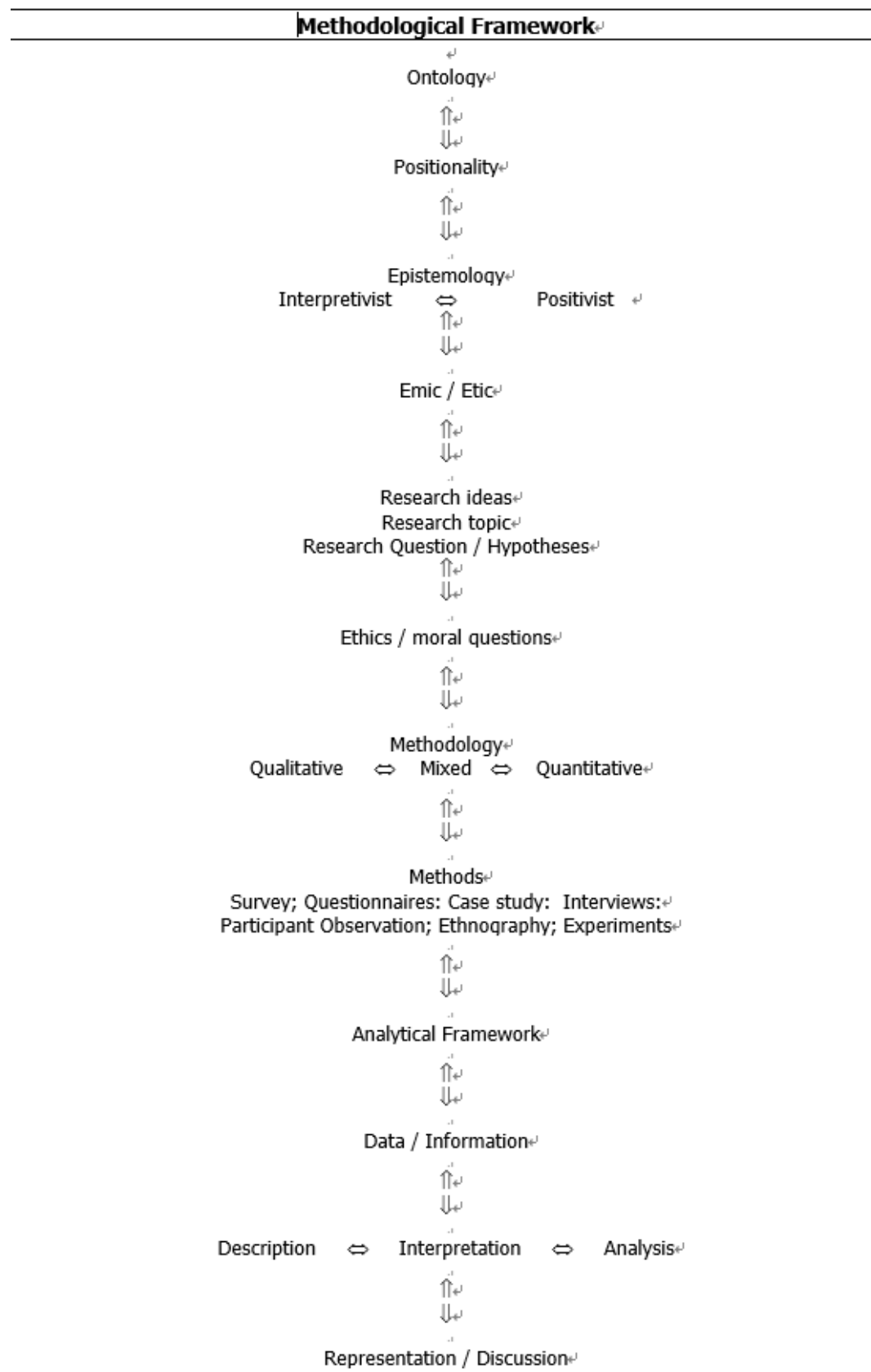
Table 4.1: Some commonly used terms. Adapted from O’Gorman (2008)

Term	Meaning
Axiology	The branch of philosophy dealing with values, as those of ethics, aesthetics, or religion.
Deduction	<i>a priori</i> argument: deriving a proof or using evidence to test a hypotheses.
Epistemology	The branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity. • The study of knowledge • Theories of what constitutes knowledge and understanding of phenomena • How we explain ourselves as knowers, how we arrive at our beliefs
Induction	<i>a posteriori</i> argument, deriving knowledge from empirical investigation.
Metaphysics	The branch of philosophy concerned with the ultimate nature of existence.
Ontology	The branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of being and of reality.
Methodology	The study and application of methods.
Paradigm	Theoretical framework, within which research is conducted.
Philosophy	The academic discipline concerned with making explicit the nature and significance of ordinary and scientific beliefs, and with investigating the intelligibility of concepts by means of rational argument concerning their presuppositions, implications, and interrelationships; in particular, the rational investigation of the nature and structure of reality (metaphysics), the resources and limits of knowledge (epistemology), the principles and import of moral judgment (ethics), and the relationship between language and reality (semantics).
Reflexivity	Critical self-awareness and examination of beliefs and knowledge-claims. • Need for conscious, reflexive thinking about our own thinking, and critique our pre-understandings, and their effect on our research
Rhetoric	The art or study of using language effectively and persuasively. • In particular the style of speaking or writing, especially the language of a particular subject as used in the dissertation process

Source: O’Gorman, K., MacIntosh, R. (2015) Research Methods for Business & Management A guide to writing your dissertation. THE GLOBAL MANAGEMENT SERIES Goodfellow Publishers Ltd Second edition.

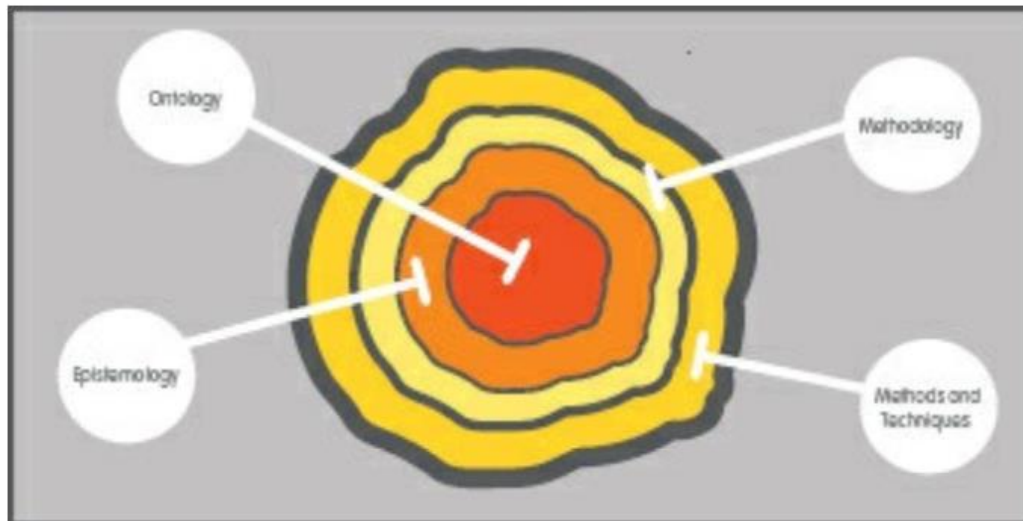
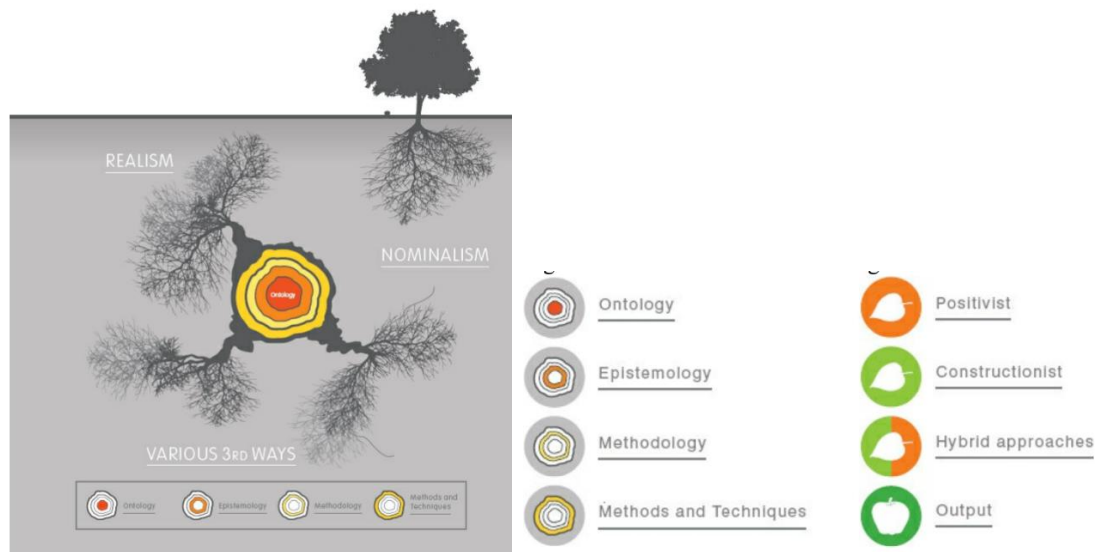
http://www.researchgate.net/publication/281236523_Mapping_Research_Methods

5. Methodological framework



Source: From Professor Jill Venus's Lecture

6. Ontology, epistemology, methodology



Source: ©2015 Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson

7. Philosophical assumptions as a multidimensional set of continua

Table 4.1 Philosophical assumptions as a multidimensional set of continua

Assumption type	Questions	Continua with two sets of extremes		
		Objectivism	⇔	Subjectivism
Ontology	• What is the nature of reality?	Real	⇔	Nominal/decided by convention
	• What is the world like?	External	⇔	Socially constructed
	• For example:	One true reality (universalism)	⇔	Multiple realities (relativism)
	– What are organisations like?	Granular (things)	⇔	Flowing (processes)
	– What is it like being in organisations?	Order	⇔	Chaos
	– What is it like being a manager or being managed?			
Epistemology	• How can we know what we know?	Adopt assumptions of the natural scientist	⇔	Adopt the assumptions of the arts and humanities
	• What is considered acceptable knowledge?	Facts	⇔	Opinions
	• What constitutes good-quality data?	Numbers	⇔	Narratives
	• What kinds of contribution to knowledge can be made?	Observable phenomena	⇔	Attributed meanings
		Law-like generalisations	⇔	Individuals and contexts, specifics
Axiology	• What is the role of values in research? How should we treat our own values when we do research?	Value-free	⇔	Value-bound
	• How should we deal with the values of research participants?	Detachment	⇔	Integral and reflexive

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

8. The regulation-radical change dimension

Table 4.2 The regulation–radical change dimension

The regulation perspective . . .	⇔	The radical change perspective . . .
. . . <i>advocates the status quo</i>	⇔	. . . <i>advocates radical change</i>
. . . <i>looks for order</i>	⇔	. . . <i>looks for conflict</i>
. . . <i>looks for consensus</i>	⇔	. . . <i>questions domination</i>
. . . <i>looks for integration and cohesion</i>	⇔	. . . <i>looks for contradiction</i>
. . . <i>seeks solidarity</i>	⇔	. . . <i>seeks emancipation</i>
. . . <i>sees the satisfaction of needs</i>	⇔	. . . <i>sees deprivation</i>
. . . <i>sees the actual</i>	⇔	. . . <i>sees the potential</i>

Source: developed from Burrell and Morgan (1979)

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill, developed from Burrell and Morgan (1979)

9. Comparison of five research philosophies in business and management research

Table 4.3 Comparison of five research philosophies in business and management research

Ontology (nature of reality or being)	Epistemology (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	Axiology (role of values)	Typical methods
Positivism			
Real, external, independent One true reality (universalism) Granular (things) Ordered	Scientific method Observable and measurable facts Law-like generalisations Numbers Causal explanation and prediction as contribution	Value-free research Researcher is detached, neutral and independent of what is researched Researcher maintains objective stance	Typically deductive, highly structured, large samples, measurement, typically quantitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be analysed
Critical realism			
Stratified/layered (the empirical, the actual and the real) External, independent Intransient Objective structures Causal mechanisms	Epistemological relativism Knowledge historically situated and transient Facts are social constructions Historical causal explanation as contribution	Value-laden research Researcher acknowledges bias by world views, cultural experience and upbringing Researcher tries to minimise bias and errors Researcher is as objective as possible	Retroductive, in-depth historically situated analysis of pre-existing structures and emerging agency. Range of methods and data types to fit subject matter
Interpretivism			
Complex, rich Socially constructed through culture and language Multiple meanings, interpretations, realities Flux of processes, experiences, practices	Theories and concepts too simplistic Focus on narratives, stories, perceptions and interpretations New understandings and worldviews as contribution	Value-bound research Researchers are part of what is researched, subjective Researcher interpretations key to contribution Researcher reflexive	Typically inductive. Small samples, in-depth investigations, qualitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be interpreted
Ontology (nature of reality or being)	Epistemology (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	Axiology (role of values)	Typical methods
Postmodernism			
Nominal Complex, rich Socially constructed through power relations Some meanings, interpretations, realities are dominated and silenced by others Flux of processes, experiences, practices	What counts as 'truth' and 'knowledge' is decided by dominant ideologies Focus on absences, silences and oppressed/repressed meanings, interpretations and voices Exposure of power relations and challenge of dominant views as contribution	Value-constituted research Researcher and research embedded in power relations Some research narratives are repressed and silenced at the expense of others Researcher radically reflexive	Typically deconstructive – reading texts and realities against themselves In-depth investigations of anomalies, silences and absences Range of data types, typically qualitative methods of analysis
Pragmatism			
Complex, rich, external 'Reality' is the practical consequences of ideas Flux of processes, experiences and practices	Practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts 'True' theories and knowledge are those that enable successful action Focus on problems, practices and relevance Problem solving and informed future practice as contribution	Value-driven research Research initiated and sustained by researcher's doubts and beliefs Researcher reflexive	Following research problem and research question Range of methods: mixed, multiple, qualitative, quantitative, action research Emphasis on practical solutions and outcomes

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

10. Deduction, induction and abduction: from reason to research

Table 4.4 Deduction, induction and abduction: from reason to research

	Deduction	Induction	Abduction
Logic	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In an abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
Generalisability	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
Use of data	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
Theory	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification; incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build new theory or modify existing theory

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

11. Developing your research philosophy: a reflexive process

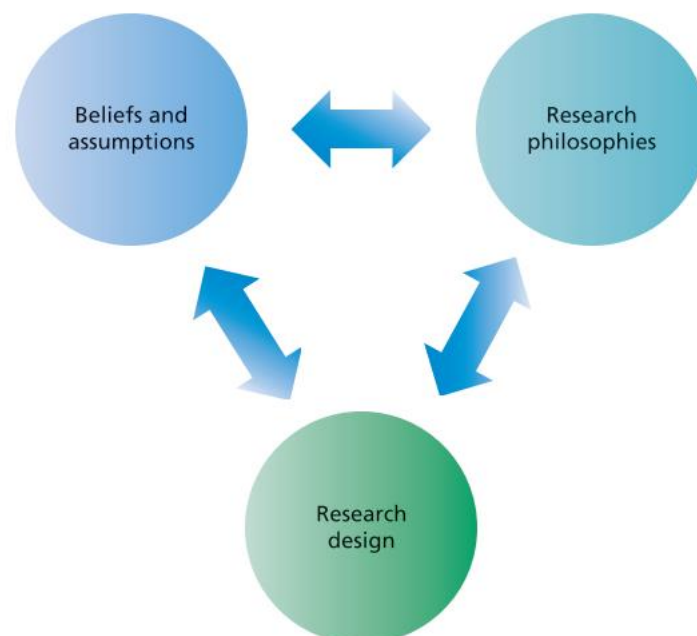


Figure 4.2 Developing your research philosophy: a reflexive process

Source: © Alexandra Bristow and Mark Saunders 2015

Source: ©2015 Alexandra Bristow and Mark Saunders

12. Four paradigms for organisational analysis

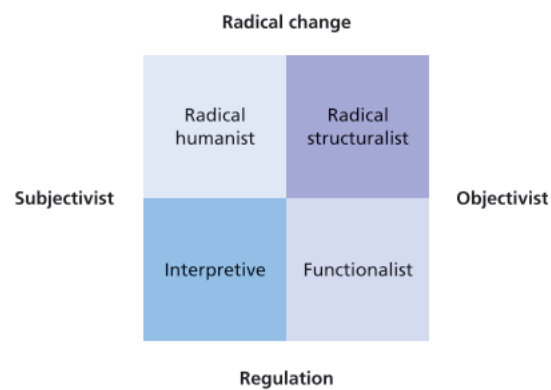


Figure 4.3 Four paradigms for organisational analysis

Source: Developed from Burrell and Morgan (1982) *Social Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*.
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Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill, developed from Burrell and Morgan (1982)

13. Critical realist stratified ontology

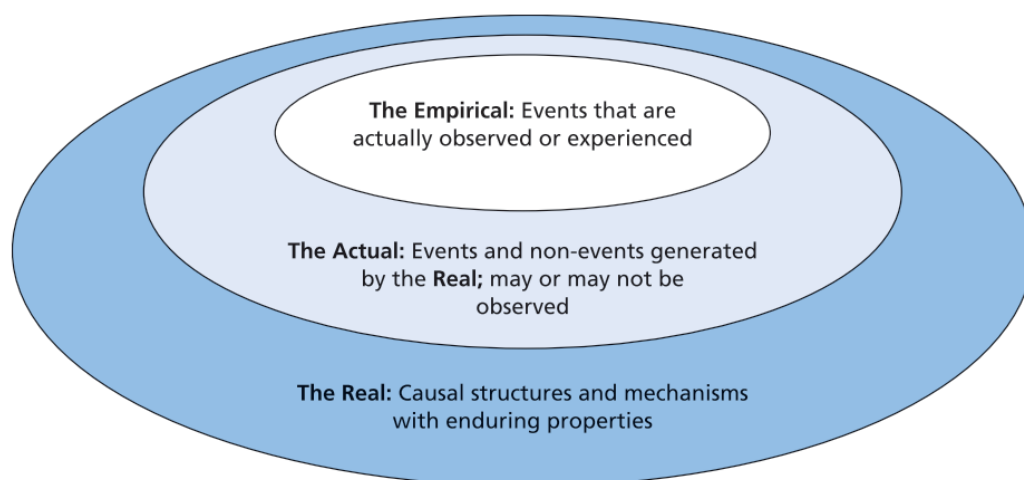
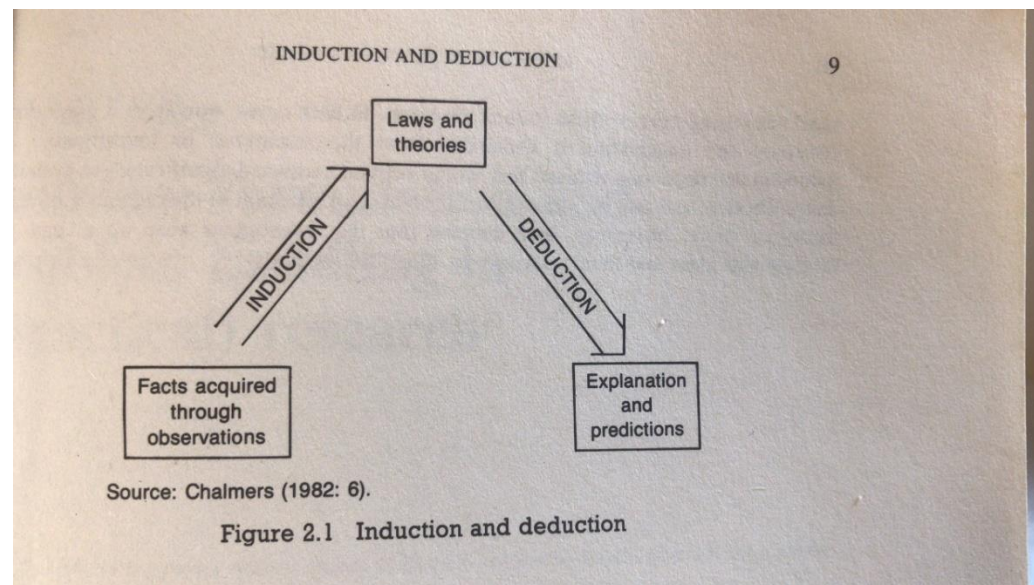


Figure 4.4 Critical realist stratified ontology

Source: Developed from Bhaskar (1978)

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill, developed from Bhaskar (1978)

14. Induction and diduction



Source: ©1982 Chalmers

15. Differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches

Table 1: Differences between Quantitative and Qualitative Research Approaches

Orientation	Quantitative Approach	Qualitative Approach
Paradigm/Worldview (assumption about world)	Positivism/Realism	Interpretivism/Idealism
Research Purpose (rationale)	Numerical description Causal explanation Prediction	Subjective description Empathetic understanding Exploration
Ontology (nature of reality)		
Epistemology (theory of knowledge)	Dualist/Objectivist	Subjectivist
Methodology (aims of scientific investigation)	Experimental/Manipulative	Hermeneutical/Dialectical
Research Methods (techniques and tools)	Empirical examination Measurement Hypothesis testing Randomization Blinding Structured protocols Questionnaires	Ethnographies Case studies Narrative research Interviews Focus group discussion Observations Field notes Recordings & Filming
Scientific Method (role of theory)	Deductive approach, testing of theory	Inductive approach, generation of theory
Nature of Data	Variables	Words, images, categories
Instruments	Structured and Validated-data collection instruments	In-depth interviews, participant observation, field notes, and open- ended questions
Data Analysis	Identify statistical relationships among variables	Use descriptive data, search for patterns, themes ad holistic features and appreciate variations
Results	Generalizable findings	Particularistic findings; provision of insider viewpoint
Final Report	Formal statistical report with: • Correlations • Comparisons of means • Reporting of statistical significance of findings	Informal narrative report

Source: ©2015 Antiwi and Hamza

16. The subjective-objective debate within social science

Table 1 Network of Basic Assumptions Characterizing The Subjective—Objective Debate within Social Science						
	Subjectivist Approaches to Social Science				Objectivist Approaches to Social Science	
	←-----→					
Core Ontological Assumptions	reality as a projection of human imagination	reality as a social construction	reality as a realm of symbolic discourse	reality as a contextual field of information	reality as a concrete process	reality as a concrete structure
Assumptions About Human Nature	man as pure spirit, consciousness, being	man as a social constructor; the symbol creator	man as an actor; the symbol user	man as an information processor	man as an adaptor	man as a responder
Basic Epistemological Stance	to obtain phenomenological insight, revelation	to understand how social reality is created	to understand patterns of symbolic discourse	to map contexts	to study systems, process, change	to construct a positivist science
Some Favored Metaphors	transcendental	language game, accomplishment, text	theater, culture	cybernetic	organism	machine
Research Methods	exploration of pure subjectivity	hermeneutics	symbolic analysis	contextual analysis of Gestalten	historical analysis	lab experiments, surveys

Source: ©1980 Morgan & Smircich

17. Philosophical debates for mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative approach

Table 1: Philosophical debates for: Mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative approach

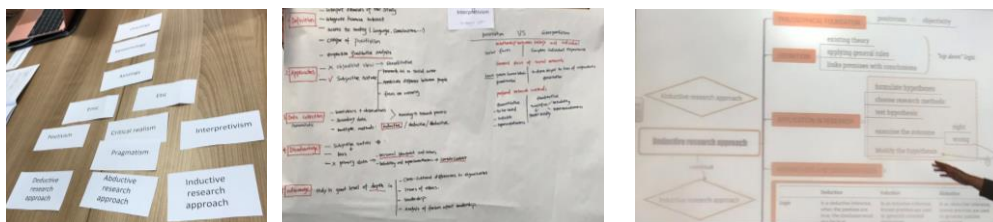
Philosophical debates for: Mixed methods, Qualitative and Quantitative approach	
Research approaches	Philosophical debates for the approaches
Mixed Methods	Mixed method is believed to be rooted in pragmatism (Denscombe, 2007; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004); but Barrett (2010) asserts the opposite and considers critical realism to be the theoretical foundation of mixed method research.
Qualitative approach	Guba and Lincoln (1994) identified four paradigms that compete in qualitative research, namely; positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism. However, other scholars (McNabb, 2008; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) assert that interpretive and critical paradigms are central to qualitative approach. A detailed analysis of these debates is fully discussed amongst other scholars (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).
Quantitative approach	Scholars (Polit and Beck, 2008; Steen and Roberts, 2011) assert that positivist and naturalist are philosophies for quantitative approach. Furthermore, Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009) add post-positivism, social constructionism, and critical realism as other philosophical stances.
Qualitative vs. Quantitative approach	The debates stretch further from which different philosophies is best for a single research approach (i.e. pragmatism against critical realism for mixed methods); to whether a particular philosophy is for qualitative or quantitative approach (i.e. positivism for qualitative vis-à-vis quantitative). This is best demonstrated in research findings by amongst other scholars (Bryman, 1984; Becker, 1996).

Source: ©2012 Mkansi and Acheampong

Appendix 4

1. Self-learned the online MOOC 'An Introduction to Philosophy' offered by the University of Edinburgh.
2. Classroom discussion- 'The definition of ontology, epistemology, axiology, research framework'
3. Classroom discussion- 'Five major philosophies'

We were divided into groups of four, each group were given several main research philosophical terminologies. We were expected to discuss and arrange these terms into an appropriate structure to show the relationships and hierarchies between them. After that, each of the group members got one term and have to clearly explain the term in a 2 minutes' presentation.



4. Classroom discussion- 'Research Philosophies-Personal Review'

We were given a checklist of issues in research philosophy, each of the group members have to answer the questions in the checklist exactly related to our own research topics. Other peers listened and discussed and put forward their own opinions and suggestions.

1. Define ontology, epistemology and axiology, and explain their relevance to business research?..
In your group define and discuss these and provide examples..
2. Reflect on your own epistemological, ontological and axiological stance?.. (Individual response)..
3. Do you understand the main research paradigms that are significant for business research?..
4. In your group can you explain the relevance for business research of philosophical positions such as positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism?..
5. In your group reflect on and articulate your own philosophical position in relation to your research?..
6. In your group distinguish between deductive, inductive, and abductive approaches to theory development?..

5. By rethinking my positionality and by answering those questions on the checklist, I started to recognise and justify my research topic deeper. Why do I choose this study? Why do I think this study was worth doing? Does the research methodology I choose appropriate and make sense? What is my positionality and how does my beliefs and perceptions affect my research?

Entry 6: Types of research and research design

Think about it, when you go to the shopping mall, will you be attracted by those beautifully designed products? If the answer is 'yes', we might say that good design really matters. It is the same with research design. Just by looking at some research method textbooks we could find plenty of explanations and discussions on research design. Research design, as Saunders et al. (2016) term, is 'the general plan of how you will go about answering your research question(s).' When you have formulated your research question, it is time to take action to find the answer. Some might act at once without thinking and planning, only to find it is a waste of time and achieve nothing. Those who are wise and efficient would give themselves the time to think carefully and plan in detail: what is the nature of the research? What data should I collect? Why are these data important? What method(s) should I use? How should I sort out and analyse the obtained data? What kind of obstacles I might encounter at each stage of the research? What ethical issues need to be addressed? This is all part of the research design, including the time and cost of the research.

Kumar (2014), McQueen and Knussen (2002) point out the purpose and main functions of a research design. 'All roads lead to Rome', usually there is more than one route to the destination. By asking is there a better choice or solution, a good research design helps you to choose a better way to reach your final goal. It enables you to think about the problems you may encounter and the appropriate methods to solve them. It reminds you of the quality of the research and ensures every step you take through the research process is carefully considered, including reliability, validity, bias, ethical issues etc. The importance of a research design is that it reduces and minimises the chance things going wrong (Saunders et al. 2016, Kumar 2014)

In order to conduct a systematic, creditable, and ethical research, you need to make a series of decisions (Saunders et al. 2016). Keeping the 'research onion' (Saunders et al. 2015) in mind is quite helpful for research design. The process of designing a research is like peeling every layer of the onion. Each layer of the research onion is interconnected and coherent. Each decision you made progresses through the layer to the next layer. Before you design the research, it is important and necessary to bear your research philosophy in mind and clarify your research purpose (Babbie, 2010). Although different books have different criteria regarding to the types of research, basically, it can be divided into types like exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and evaluation research. When you have a clear idea of your research purpose or the type of your research, you make the next decision of methodological choice, whether to use qualitative method or quantitative method, or a multi or mixed method. After this, it is the choice of specific strategy that fits your research, such as experiment, survey, archival research, case study, ethnography, action research, grounded theory, narrative inquiry etc. (Saunders et al. 2016). What also needs to be considered is the time horizon. Your research question determines whether it is a cross-sectional or a longitudinal research. When it comes to the core of the research onion, how to gain access to the data you need and how to prove the reliability and validity of your data as well as your analysis of the data is the key concern that involves different techniques and procedures. In addition to the vital role of ethics, researcher's own positionality should also be included into the scope of research design.

I quite agree with Raimond (1993: 128), stating when designing a research, 'stand back from your research [design] and take a critical, objective view of it, as though you were a detached observer'. The whole design process provides you a detailed and in-depth understanding of your own research. Before going through a rigorous scrutiny, you should check and verify every part of your

research to make it logical, tenable and creditable.

Appendix 1

Azham Md. Ali & Hamidah Yusof, 2011. Quality in Qualitative Studies: The Case of Validity, Reliability and Generalizability. *Issues in Social and Environmental Accounting*, 5(1), pp.25–64.

Babbie, E.R., 2010. *The practice of social research* 12th ed., Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Pub. Co.

Babbie, E. R. (2010) *The Practice of Social Research*. twelfth. WADSWORTH CENGAGE Learning. doi: 10.2307/2062956.

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Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C., 2010. Putting the Human Back in “Human Research Methodology”: The Researcher in Mixed Methods Research. Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 4(4), pp.271–277.

Teddlie, C. & Tashakkori, A., 2006. A General Typology of Research Designs Featuring Mixed Methods1. Research in the Schools, 13(1), pp.12–28.

Appendix 2

Research Design

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329935154_RESEARCH_DESIGN

What is research design

<https://www.nyu.edu/classes/bkg/methods/005847ch1.pdf>

Research Designs

<https://explorable.com/research-designs>

Types of Research Design

<http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/researchdesigns>

The purpose of research and research strategies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2v9Xh2iQV8>

Research design Lecture by Lisa Campbell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VoLWmE-vbl>

Research Design: a simple approach

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_a7lnMfjWgg

Research Design and Research Types

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY9j_t570LY

Appendix 3

1. The research onion

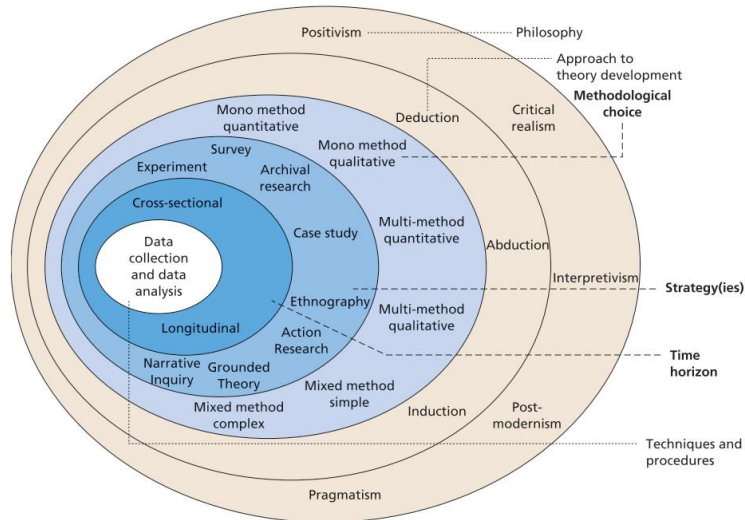


Figure 5.1 The research onion
Source: © 2015 Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

2. Methodological choice

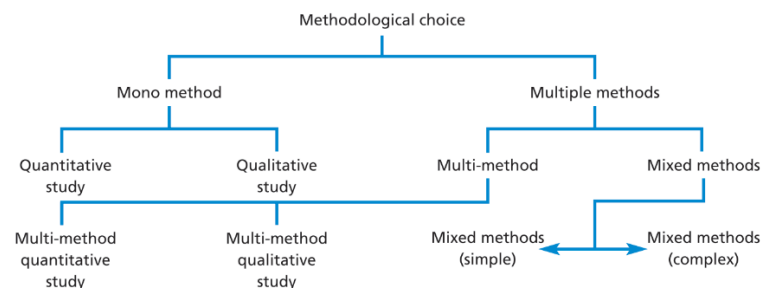


Figure 5.2 Methodological choice

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

3. Mixed methods research designs

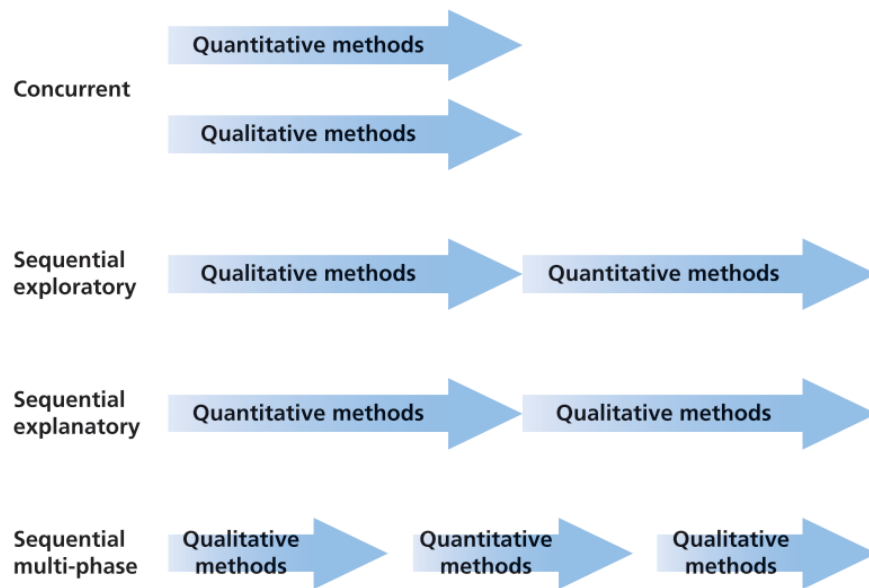


Figure 5.3 Mixed methods research designs

Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

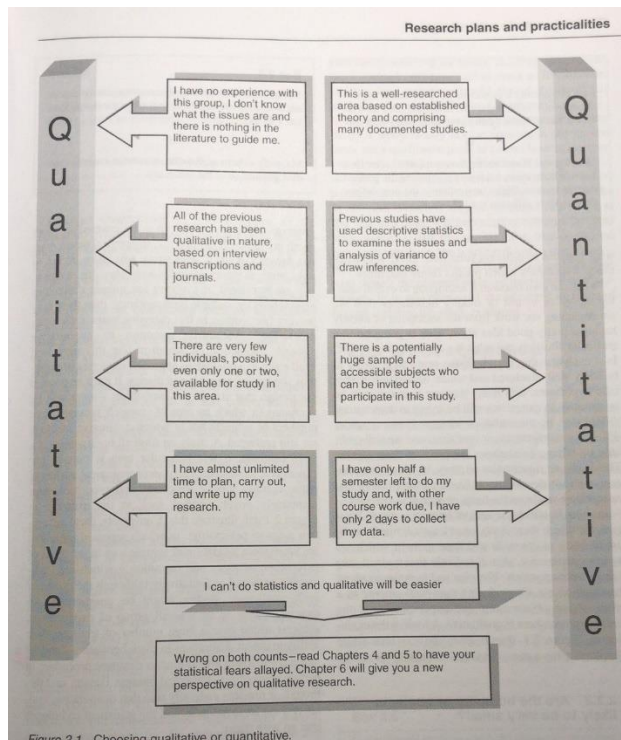
4. Types of variable

Table 5.2 Types of variable

Variable	Meaning
Independent (IV)	Variable that is being manipulated or changed to measure its impact on a dependent variable
Dependent (DV)	Variable that may change in response to changes in other variables; observed outcome or result from manipulation of another variable
Mediating (MV)	A variable located between the independent and dependent variables, which explains the relationship between them (IV → MV → DV)
Moderator	A new variable that is introduced which will affect the nature of the relationship between the IV and DV
Control	Additional observable and measurable variables that need to be kept constant to avoid them influencing the effect of the IV on the DV
Confounding	Extraneous but difficult to observe or measure variables that can potentially undermine the inferences drawn between the IV and DV. Need to be considered when discussing results, to avoid spurious conclusions

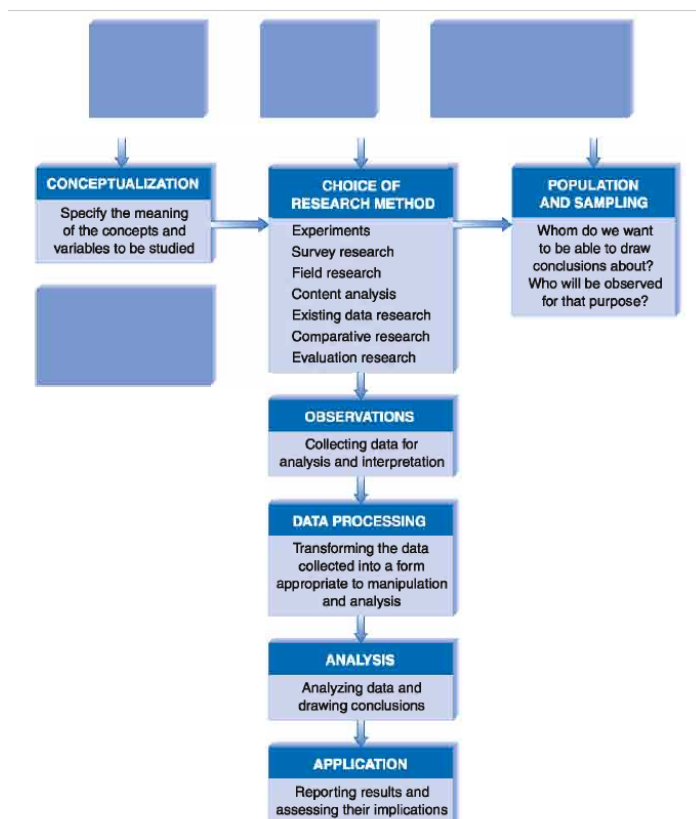
Source: ©2016 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill

5. Choosing qualitative or quantitative



Source: ©2002 McQueen and Knussen

6. Process of research design

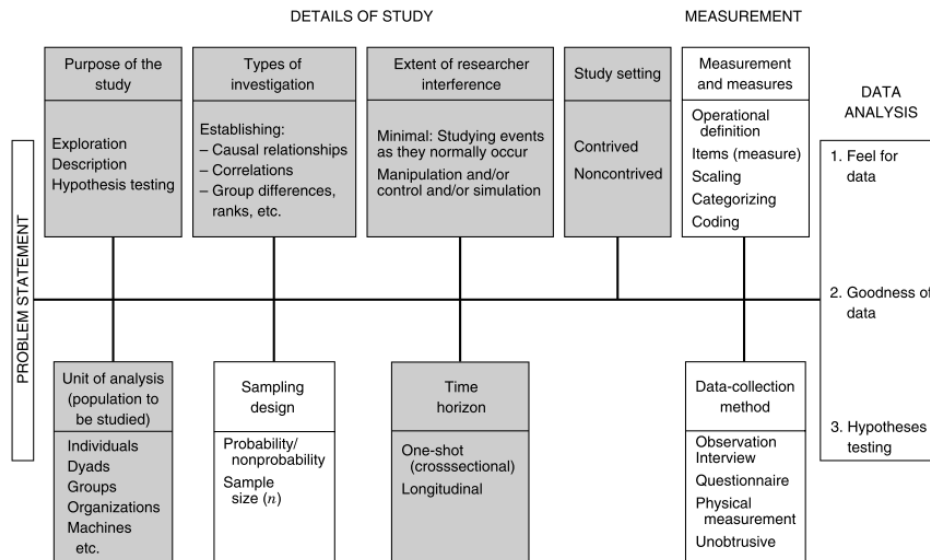


Source: ©2010 Babbie

7. The research design

Figure 6.2

The research design.

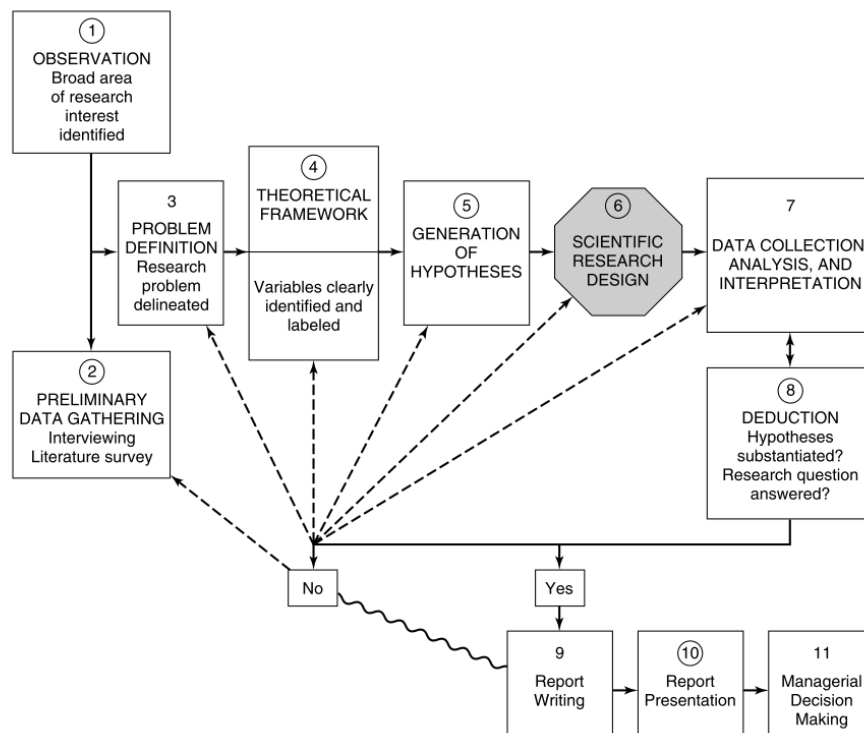


Source: ©2000 Sekaran

8. The research process

Figure 6.1

The research process.



Source: ©2000 Sekaran

Quotation (Definition of research design):

1. Research design: the formal plan of a research study in which all the elements necessary to test a hypothesis are identified and detailed. Such elements include independent and dependent variables, extraneous elements and controls, relevant experimental manipulations and significance levels to be applied. Sometimes abbreviated to merely 'design'. (McQueen and Knussen, 2002: 68)
2. The research design is the overall plan for relating the conceptual research problem to relevant-and doable-empirical research.(Ghauri, Grønhaug and Kristianslund, 1995: 26)
3. A research design is the road map that you decide to follow during your research journey to find answers to your research questions as validly, objectively, accurately and economically as possible. It is a procedural-cum-operational plan that details what and how different methods and procedures to be applied during the research process.(Kumar, 2014: 122)
4. A research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems. The plan is the complete scheme or programme of the research. It includes an outline of what the investigator will do from the hypotheses and their operational implications to the final analysis of data. (Kerlinger, 1986: 279)
5. A traditional research design is a blueprint or detailed for how a research study is to be completed-operationalizing variables so they can be measured, selecting a sample of interest to study, collecting data to be used as a basis for testing hypotheses, and analysing the results. (Thyer 1993: 94)
6. A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. (Selltiz et al. 1962: 50)

Explanation of terms (McQueen and Knussen, 2002):

1. Between-subject design: a design in which comparisons on some outcome variable are made between different groups of subjects.
2. Cross-sectional design: refers to research in which simultaneous observations are made on different subjects.
3. Independent groups design: as between-subjects design.
4. Mixed design: an experimental design that incorporates both between-and within-subjects elements.
5. Repeated measures design: a type of experimental design in which a series of observations are repeated on the same subjects within a single experiment or study. See also 'within-subjects design'.
6. Single blind design: an experimental design in which subjects are unaware of the particular experimental condition they are participating in-control or experimental. The term 'single' is appropriate since only one element of the experimental relationship (the subjects) is blind to the precise nature of the manipulation. See also 'double blind control'.
7. Within-subjects design: an experimental design in which the same subjects are tested on some outcome measure at different times, or under different conditions.
8. Control group: a group that receives no treatment in an experiment, usually to provide a basis for comparison with an experimental group on some outcome measure.
9. Case study: research involving the detailed analysis of a single unit of interest-this could be an individual, a family group or an organisation-where the focus of the research is the unit itself.
10. Correlation: a relationship between two variables, assumed to be connected in some meaningful way. Specifically, if one variable changes, the other, correlated variable will also change in some systematic manner.
11. Longitudinal: research in which repetitive observations are made on a

sample of the same subjects over a lengthy period of time.

Appendix 4

1. Classroom Discussion- reliability & validity

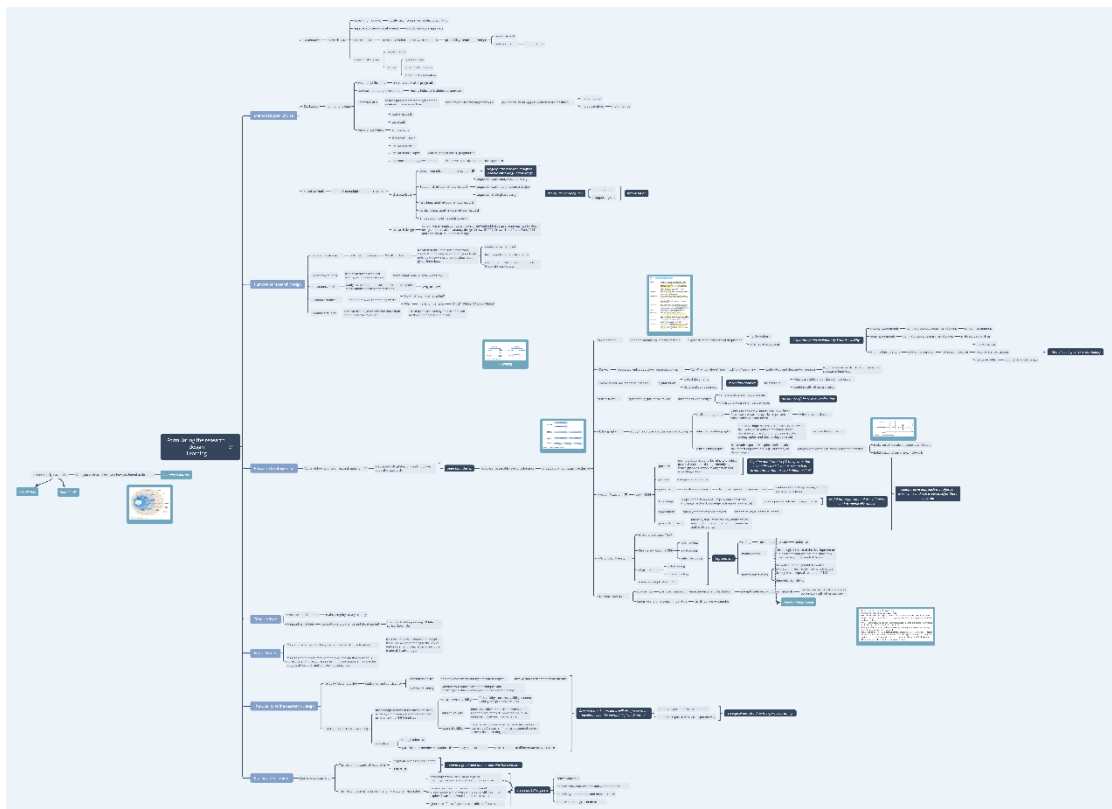
We were divided into two groups to figure out the definitions of 'reliability' and 'validity' respectively. Our group focused on 'validity'. By reviewing the literature given by Professor Jill and searching online using some reading and evaluating methods, each of the group member got the definition of 'validity'. In the group discuss process, each member presented what he/she found. When we put together all the definitions we got in hand, we tried to find the similarity and differences among them and sorted out the most relevant and useful information. In order to understand validity better, examples were given, such as the picture of darts illustrating the relationship between reliability and validity; the relationship between gambling and drinking survey; the alarm clock which rings at 7:00am every morning, but is set to ring at 6:30 am, etc. We also talked about the importance of validity in the whole process of the research. When we came to talk about the types of validity, each member's categories were slightly different due to the different literature we read and the information we selected from different sources. The difficult part in the discussion is related to the measurement of validity in qualitative research. Since we were expected to explain the implication of validity in our own research topics, we then worked individually on the analysis of our own topics. There was no time for us to discuss one by one in the group before we presented respectively in front of the class.

For me, this kind of activity is quite useful. I not only learned the knowledge related to the module, but also gained something beyond that. In fact, by forming a group of six peers, we were in a kind of connection and teamwork played an important role. How to effectively collect and analyse information on the given topic in a limited time is very important. Although we distributed tasks for each member, it was until Professor Jill came to our group to check the process of our discussion that we realised we did not set a time limit for each session, spending too much time reviewing the literature individually and did not communicate and follow up each one's progress. In the presentation session, we listened to other peers talking about reliability, which also made me reflect on our group and my self's performance in the discussion.

The most struggling part for me was the process of constantly reviewing and adjusting my research topic. Again, this is closely related to my positionality and individuality. As a Chinese student, I am used to being told and taught

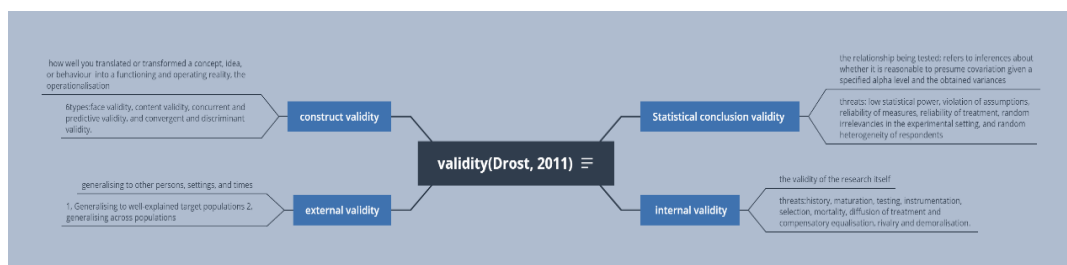
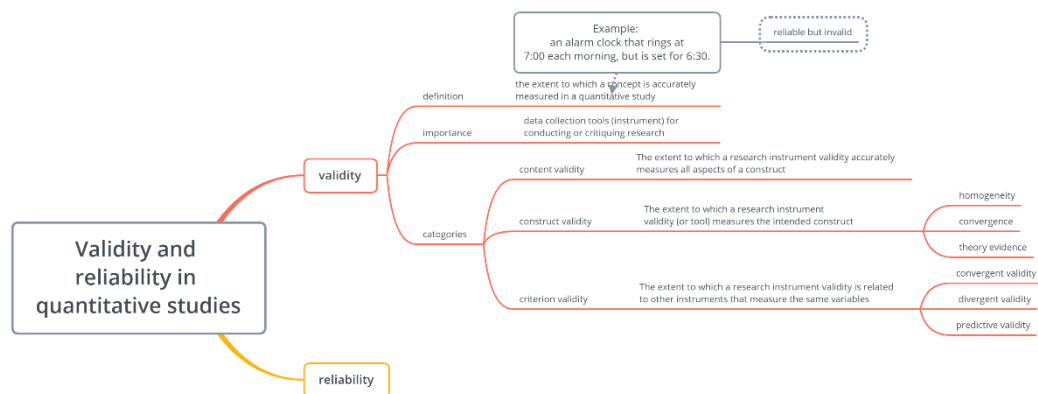
something, and thus lack of critical thinking and self-analysis. At the beginning of the preparation session of individual presentation, I felt anxious and panic because I expected the professor to tell me what to do. However, by thinking and keep asking myself questions with 'what', 'why', 'how', I forced and pushed myself to go out of my comfort zone and really focused on justifying the validity of my research. It is my research journey. Only when I take every step, participate in every stage, and constantly think about and adjust it, can I gain the knowledge and practical experiences, it seems like a transforming process from a student who passively accept knowledge to a researcher that think actively and create something. When I reflected what I went through, although a little bit tough, I really felt I have made some progress.

2. Use mind map to extract the main ideas of the paper and build my critical thinking framework



By reading Saunders et al. (2016) and making the mind map to clarify my thoughts and build the framework of the article, I have developed a sense of using critical thinking to evaluate and learn when reading every literature.

3. Classroom discussion- validity and reliability



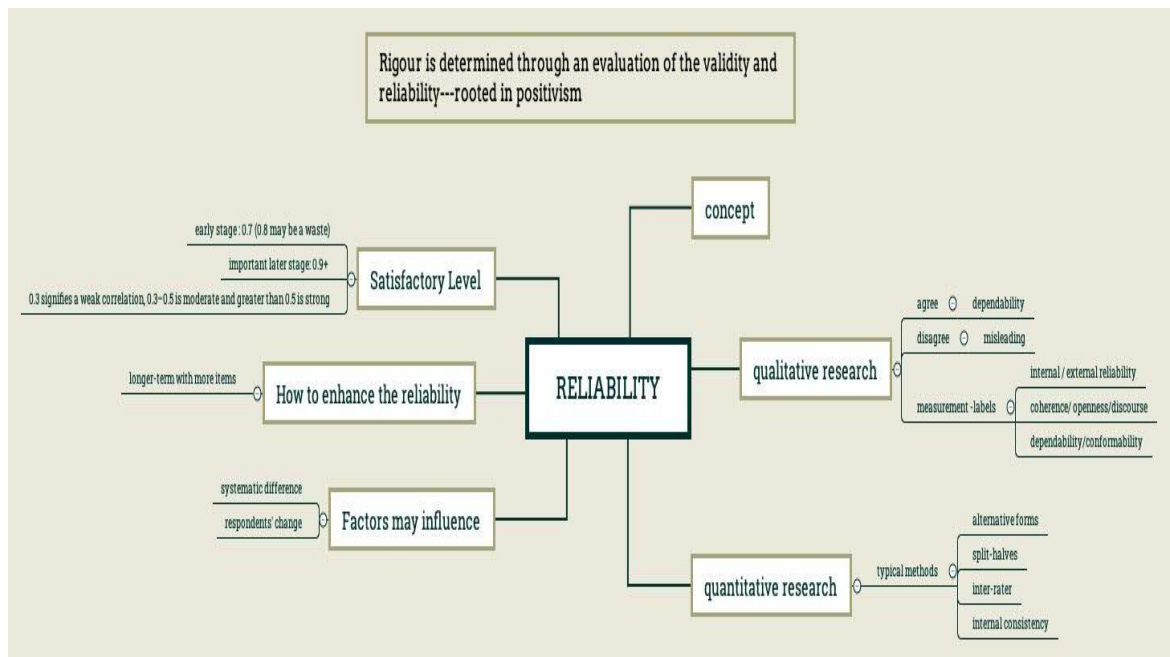
Multiple definitions of Validity

• Dictionary definitions:

1. the quality of being logically or factually sound; soundness or cogency.
2. the state of being legally or officially binding or acceptable.

● Journal definitions:

1. Internal validity: addresses the reasons for the outcomes of the study, and helps to reduce other, often unanticipated, reasons for these outcomes. Three approaches to assessing internal validity are content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity (Eby 1993, Punch 1998).
2. External validity: addressed the ability to apply with confidence the findings of the study to other people and other situations, and ensures that the 'conditions under which the study is carried out are representative of the situations and time to which the results are to apply' (Black 1999).



4. Lecture by Dr. Antje Cockrill

**BMDM7001 Identity and Approches to
Applied Business Research**

WEEK

Swansea Business School
Dr Antje Cockrill, Associate Professor

Dr. Antje Cockrill gave us a lecture about research design and different types of methods used in qualitative and quantitative research. It was very interesting and vivid to listen to her lecture with many practical cases in daily research activity. She also made me think about my own research topic, how do I plan to design my research and what should I pay attention to when choosing research methods.

Entry 7: Research ethics and integrity

When talking about ethics, it seems like a very big and abstract concept. It may be easier to understand through examples that have appeared in real life. In addition to the famous Milgram experiment on obedience to authority figures (Stanley Milgram, 1963), there is also a widely discussed Golden Rice experiment (Tang et al. 2012) in China. Both experiments are carefully designed but raise some issues that worth thinking about: what is ethics? Is there a conflict between science and ethics in the research field? Do both natural science and social research require special code of practice?

In our society, one's freedom is somehow constrained by certain rules of behaviour. Kumar (2014) terms ethics in social research as 'the moral values of professional conduct that are considered desirable for good professional practice' (392: 370). As Steneck (2006) points out, research behaviours are roughly categorised into three aspects: 'deliberate misconduct, commonly defined as fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism (FFP); questionable research practices (QRP); and responsible conduct of research (RCR)' (53-74: 53). He further states that research behaviour can be measured from two different perspectives: research ethics (RE) that guided by moral principles and research integrity (RI), which is measured based on professional standards. In order to achieve RCR, every stakeholder involved in the research should abide by the code of practice.

Kumar (2014) notes that while there are certain common code of practice, different nations, cultures and professions have their own principles, which may change over time. Any behaviour in research that does not comply with these norms will be considered unethical. The code of ethics provides a series of basic standards and principles for researchers to bear in mind when conduct

their work ethically, even before the research design and data collection stage. As Saunders et al. (2016) point out, researches involve human participants and personal data are examined by the research ethics committee. However, the approval of research proposal does not mean one can stop considering ethical issues, rather, it is the starting point for researchers to put all the related rules into ethical practice.

For novice researchers, understanding what unethical behaviour is and knowing how to use appropriate strategies to minimise and avoid any impact on any stakeholders in the research should be highly valued. When conducting a research, it is quite important to protect and respect the participants taking part, such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of personal information and related data, anonymity, participants' privacy, do no harm to participants, both mentally and physically. Researchers should avoid bias and prevent asking leading questions or giving induced suggestions, arrangement and adjustment. Moreover, informing the source of data and analysis methods to the academia and research community, and informing the readers about the limitations, negative findings, and unexpected problems are also essential components of the research ethics and integrity code of practice. Regarding to the sponsoring organisation, any imposition or acceptance of tailored findings controlled by the funding organisation is considered unethical (Kumar, 2014).

What should also be taken into consideration is the researchers' safety, which turns out to be the most often overlooked principle. It is worth noting that with the continuous development of society, more and more researches involve the participation of technology. In business and management research, the protection of privacy and confidential information, the awareness of misinformation distribution, and the timeliness and honesty in the data

collection process become particularly important (Sekaran, 2000).

From the institutional dimension, creating a good research environment and making the professional standards clear, accurate and effective, and at the same time emphasising, nurturing and teaching student researchers the importance and implications of research ethics and integrity are what universities, research institutions and professional societies should strive to do.

Appendix 1

Borrett, D.S., Sampson, H. and Cavoukian, A., 2017. Research ethics by design: A collaborative research design proposal. *Research ethics*, 13(2), pp.84-91.

Dickson-Swift, V., James, E.L., Kippen, S. and Liamputtong, P., 2008. Risk to researchers in qualitative research on sensitive topics: Issues and strategies. *Qualitative Health Research*, 18(1), pp.133-144.

DuBois, J.M. and Dueker, J.M., 2009. Teaching and assessing the responsible conduct of research: A Delphi consensus panel report. *The journal of research administration*, 40(1), p.49.

Finch, J., 1993. *'It's great to have someone to talk to': Ethics and politics of interviewing women*. Open University Press.

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Appendix 2

UWTSD Research Integrity & Ethics

<https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/>

Statement of Ethical Practice of the British Sociological Association

<http://www.britisoc.org.uk/about/ethic.htm>

Ethical Standards of the American Sociological Association

<http://www.asanet.org/members/ecostand.html>

The Code of Conduct for Psychologists

<http://www.bps.org.uk/about/ruled5.cfm>

Difference Between Ethics and Integrity

<https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-ethics-and-vs-integrity/>

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/>

Research Ethics

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/researchethics>

Trust in research -- the ethics of knowledge production | Garry Gray |

TEDxVictoria

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSV4VZ8gdUQ>

The ethics of exploiting psychological research in video games: Johnny Soraker
at TEDxTwenteU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unVzwxmyeqs>

Appendix 3



Box 6.12 Checklist

Assessing risk in research

- ✓ Is your proposed research likely to harm the well-being of those participating?
 - ✓ Will others be harmed by the process or outcomes of your proposed research?
 - ✓ How may this harm occur and what characteristics may make this more likely?
 - ✓ How likely it is that harm might result?
 - ✓ How severe would be any resulting harm?
 - ✓ Which features or what aspects of your research may cause harm?
 - ✓ How intrusive is your proposed research method or methods?
 - ✓ How sensitive are your proposed questions, observations, searches or requests for data?
 - ✓ Can you justify your choice of research method or methods and tactics; in particular, can you explain why alternatives that involve fewer potential risks cannot be used?
 - ✓ Where anticipated risk cannot be reduced any further during the design of the research
- and ethical review is favourable, how will the implementation of your research seek to avoid the occurrence of risk in practice, or at the very least to seek to minimise it?
- ✓ Does the information you provided to intended participants to facilitate informed consent also allow them to contact you to discuss potential concerns? How have you facilitated this while maintaining your own privacy (e.g. using a university email address, not your personal email or home address)?
 - ✓ How will you commence a data collection activity to allow potential concerns to be raised first? How will you make yourself aware of themes that may be sensitive for particular participants?
 - ✓ How will you reinforce the voluntary nature of participation to allow participants not to answer a particular question, set of questions, or to decline any request for data?
 - ✓ Other potential risks are likely to be evident within the context of your particular research project. What might these be and how will you manage them?

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 6.13 Checklist

Assessing your research in relation to not pressurising individuals to participate

- ✓ Have you ensured that participants have not been coerced into participating?
- ✓ Have you made sure that no inducements (e.g. financial payments), other than reimbursement for travel expenses or in some cases time, are offered?
 - ✓ Have you checked that the risks involved in participation are likely to be acceptable to those participating?
 - ✓ Are participants free to withdraw from your study at any time and have you informed them of this?

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 6.15 Checklist

Requirements for an information sheet

Organisational 'gatekeepers' (discussed earlier in Section 6.4) and intended participants need to be informed about the following aspects of the research. This information can be drawn together in a participant information sheet.

About the nature of the research

- ✓ What is its purpose?
- ✓ Who is or will be undertaking it?
- ✓ Is it being funded or sponsored – if so, by whom and why?
- ✓ Who is being asked to participate – i.e. broad details about the sampling frame, sample determination and size?
- ✓ How far has the research project progressed?

About the requirements of taking part

- ✓ What type of data will be required from those who agree to take part?
- ✓ How will these data be collected (e.g. interview, observation or questionnaire)?
- ✓ How much time will be required, and on how many occasions?
- ✓ What are the target dates to undertake the research and for participation?

About the implications of taking part and the rights of those taking part

- ✓ Recognition that participation is voluntary.
- ✓ Recognition that those taking part have the right to decline to answer a question or set

of questions; or to be observed in particular circumstances.

- ✓ Recognition that those taking part have control over the right to record any of their responses where a voice recorder is used.
- ✓ Recognition that those taking part may withdraw at any time.
- ✓ What will be the consequences of participating – possible risks, depending on the nature of the approach and purpose and expected benefits?
- ✓ What assurances will be provided about anonymity and data confidentiality?

About the use of the data collected and the way in which it will be reported

- ✓ Who will have access to the data collected?
- ✓ How will the results of the research project be disseminated?
- ✓ How will assurances about anonymity and confidentiality be observed at this stage?
- ✓ What will happen to the data collected after the project is completed?
- ✓ Where data are to be destroyed, what is the date by which this will happen?
- ✓ Where data are to be preserved, where and how will these be stored securely, who might be given access to them, and what safeguards will be established to ensure the continuing future confidentiality of these data and anonymity of those taking part?

Whom to contact to raise any concerns and questions about the research

- ✓ Have you established how you will provide those taking part with a person to contact about the research, including name, work address, email and contact phone number?

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 6.17 Checklist

Personal safety when collecting primary data

- ✓ Plan your meeting with a person in a busy public place or office where other people work nearby if at all possible
- ✓ Carefully consider the location you are travelling to and your travel plans: what risks might you encounter; note your route and carry a map; consider whether you will use public transport, a reputable taxi firm or a private car (if you use a private car is there a safe place to leave it)
- ✓ Carry sufficient money to cover your expenses and any unexpected ones; in some cities where you have a local transport travel card make sure it has sufficient credit
- ✓ Carry a mobile phone and make sure it is switched on
- ✓ Make a mental note of a safe way to leave the building or place where you meet
- ✓ Make a telephone call to a friend before a particular meeting to tell them who you are meeting, where and how long you expect the meeting to last; call them again to tell them you have left and about your subsequent meeting plans and/or travel arrangements
- ✓ Set up a system where you contact someone each day with a full list of whom you are meeting, where and at what times;
- ✓ In a meeting be aware of the use of body language, appearance, cultural norms, social distance and the gender dynamics of interactions
- ✓ The considerable majority of meetings are helpful and non-threatening but in very rare cases someone may become aggressive or angry: be aware of any changes in behaviour; consider what questions you are asking and how you are asking them; remain calm; where necessary be assertive but not aggressive; if necessary end the meeting politely and leave quickly
- ✓ Carry a screech alarm in case of an emergency
- ✓ Be careful not to tell anyone if you are alone in a workplace
- ✓ Always consider your safety and any risks to yourself, and avoid situations that might be difficult or dangerous

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 6.18 Focus on student research

Inadvertently revealing participants' identities

Over the years we have been fortunate to read a large number of student research projects. The following examples, drawn from some of these, highlight how easy it is to inadvertently reveal the identities of research participants when presenting your findings:

- reporting a comment made by a female accounts manager when in fact there is only one such person;
- referring to a comment made by a member of the sales team, when only one salesperson would have had access to the information referred to in the comment;
- reporting data and comments related to a small section of staff, where you state the name or job title of the one person interviewed from that section elsewhere in your research report;
- referring to an 'anonymous' organisation by name on the copy of the questionnaire placed in an appendix;
- attributing comments to named employees;
- thanking those who participated in the research by name;
- using pseudonyms where the initials of the pseudonym are the same as those of the actual person interviewed, or where the name is similar, e.g. using Tim Jennings for Tom Jenkins;
- including a photograph of the interview site or interviewee in your project report.

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill



Box 6.19 Checklist

To help anticipate and deal with ethical issues

- ✓ Attempt to recognise potential ethical issues that will affect your proposed research.
- ✓ Utilise your university's code on research ethics to guide the design and conduct of your research.
- ✓ Anticipate ethical issues at the design stage of your research and discuss how you will seek to control these in your research proposal.
- ✓ Seek informed consent through the use of openness and honesty, rather than using deception.
- ✓ Do not exaggerate the likely benefits of your research for participating organisations or individuals.
- ✓ Respect others' rights to privacy at all stages of your research project.
- ✓ Maintain integrity and quality in relation to the processes you use to collect data.
- ✓ Recognise that more intrusive approaches to research will be associated with greater scope for ethical issues to arise, and seek to avoid the particular problems related to interviews and observation.
- ✓ Avoid referring to data gained from a particular participant when talking to others, where this would allow the individual to be identified with potentially harmful consequences to that person.
- ✓ Only consider covert research where reactivity is likely to be a significant issue and a covert presence is practical. However, other ethical aspects of your research should still be respected when using this approach and where possible debriefing should occur after the collection of data.
- ✓ Maintain your objectivity during the stages of analysing and reporting your research.
- ✓ Maintain the assurances that you gave to participating organisations with regard to confidentiality of the data obtained and their organisational anonymity.
- ✓ Recognise that use of the Internet may raise particular ethical issues and dilemmas. Anticipate these in relation to your project to determine how you will conduct your Internet-mediated research ethically. You should be able to justify your approach to those who review and assess it.
- ✓ Where you use Internet-mediated research, seek informed consent and agreement from those taking part; maintain confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants, unless they expressly wish to be acknowledged; consider issues related to copyright of Internet sources.
- ✓ Avoid using the Internet or email to share data with others taking part.
- ✓ Protect those involved by taking great care to ensure their anonymity in relation to anything that you refer to in your project report unless you have their explicit permission to do otherwise.
- ✓ Consider how the collective interests of those involved may be adversely affected by the nature of the data that you are proposing to collect, and alter the nature of your research question and objectives where this possibility is likely. Alternatively, declare this possibility to those whom you wish to participate in your proposed research.
- ✓ Consider how you will use secondary data in order to protect the identities of those who contributed to its collection or who are named within it.
- ✓ Unless necessary, base your research on genuinely anonymised data. Where it is necessary to process personal data, ensure that you comply carefully with all current data protection legal requirements.

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

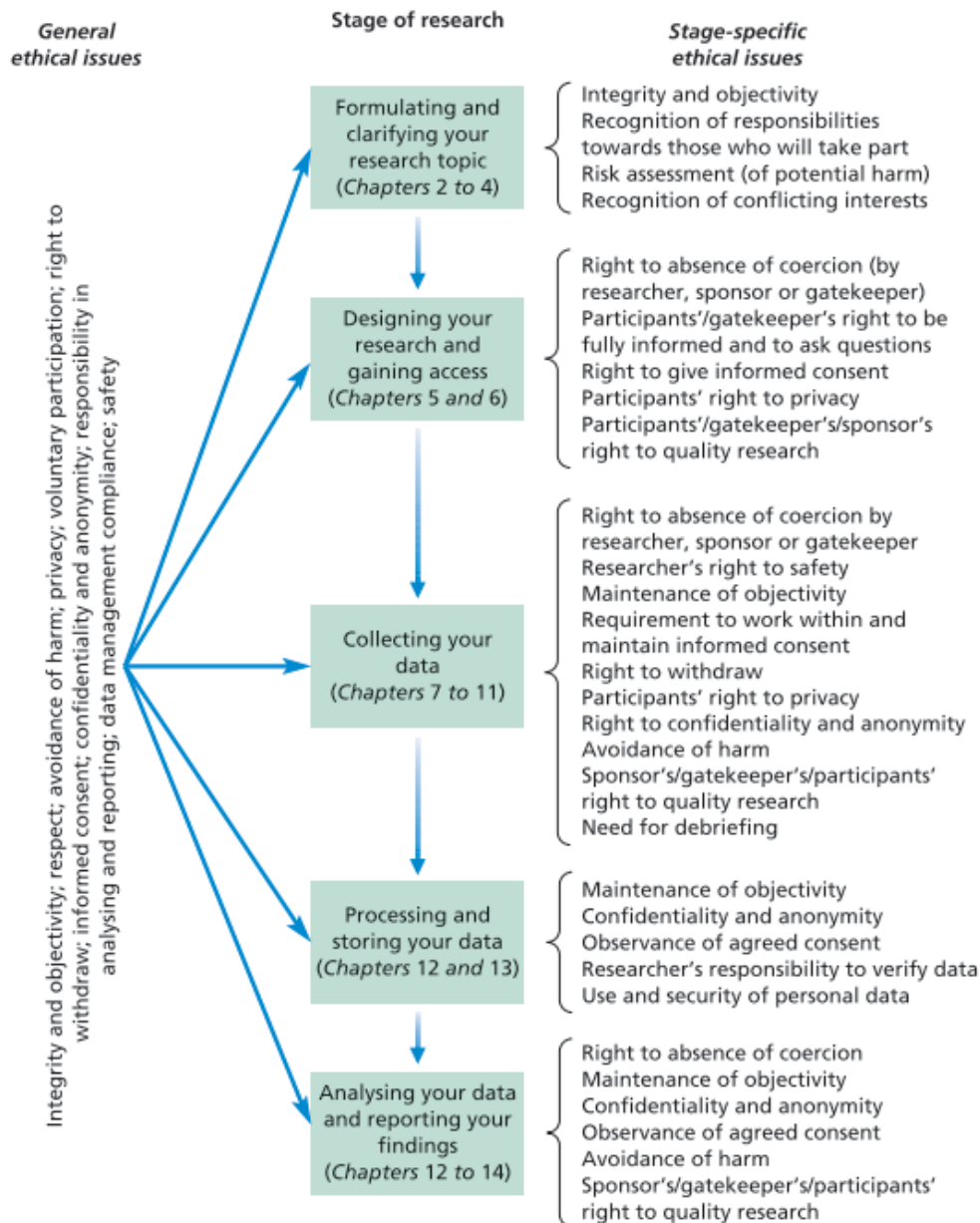


Figure 6.1 Ethical issues at different stages of research

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

Table 6.2 Internet addresses for ethical codes, guidelines and statements of research practice

Name	Internet address
Academy of Management's Code of Ethics	http://www.aomonline.org/governanceandethics/aomrevisedcodeofethics.pdf
Academy of Social Sciences' Generic Ethical Principles	https://acss.org.uk/developing-generic-ethics-principles-social-science/
American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct	http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/principles.pdf
Association of Business Schools' Ethics Guide	http://www.associationofbusinessschools.org/sites/default/files/2010_ethics_guide_agm_version.pdf
British Academy of Management's Code of Ethics and Best Practice	https://www.bam.ac.uk/sites/bam.ac.uk/files/The%20British%20Academy%20of%20Management%27s%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20and%20Best%20Practice%20for%20Members.pdf
British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct	http://www.bps.org.uk/system/files/documents/code_of_ethics_and_conduct.pdf
British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice	http://www.britisoc.co.uk/media/27107/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf
Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Framework for Research Ethics (FRE)	http://www.esrc.ac.uk/_images/framework-for-research-ethics-09-12_tcm8-4586.pdf
European Union's Respect Code of Practice for Socio-Economic Research (The Respect Project)	http://www.respectproject.org/code/respect_code.pdf
European Science Foundation's The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity	http://www.esf.org/fileadmin/Public_documents/Publications/Code_Conduct_ResearchIntegrity.pdf
Market Research Society's Code of Conduct	http://www.mrs.org.uk/pdf/code_of_conduct.pdf
Researcher Development Initiative's Research Ethics Guidebook	www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk
Social Research Association's Ethical Guidelines	http://the-sra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ethics03.pdf
UK Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills' Universal Ethical Code for Scientists	http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/goscience/docs/u/universal-ethical-code-scientists.pdf
UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research	http://www.ukrio.org/publications/code-of-practice-for-research/
Universities UK's The Concordat to Support Research Integrity	http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/highereducation/Pages/Theconcordattosupportresearchintegrity.aspx#.UzFfB854B0p

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

Table 6.3 Ethical principles and the ethical rationale for and development of each principle

Ethical principle	Ethical rationale for and development of this principle
Integrity and objectivity of the researcher	The quality of research depends in part on the integrity and objectivity of the researcher. This means acting openly, being truthful and promoting accuracy. Conversely it also means avoiding deception, dishonesty, misrepresentation (of data and findings etc.), partiality, reckless commitments or disingenuous promises. Where appropriate, any conflict of interest or commercial association should be declared
Respect for others	A researcher's position is based on the development of trust and respect. The conduct of research entails social responsibility and obligations to those who participate in or are affected by it. The rights of all persons should be recognised and their dignity respected
Avoidance of harm (non-maleficence)	Any harm to participants must be avoided. Harm may occur through risks to emotional well-being, mental or physical health, or social or group cohesion. It may take a number of forms including embarrassment, stress, discomfort, pain or conflict. It may be caused by using a research method in an intrusive or zealous way that involves mental or social pressure causing anxiety or stress. It may also be caused by violating assurances about confidentiality and anonymity, or through harassment or discrimination

(continued)

Table 6.3 (Continued)

Ethical principle	Ethical rationale for and development of this principle
Privacy of those taking part	Privacy is a key principle that links to or underpins several other principles considered here. Respect for others, the avoidance of harm, the voluntary nature of participation, informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and maintaining anonymity, responsibility in the analysis of data and reporting of findings, and compliance in the management of data are all linked to or motivated by the principle of ensuring the privacy of those taking part
Voluntary nature of participation and right to withdraw	The right not to participate in a research project is unchallengeable. This is accompanied by the right not to be harassed to participate. It is also unacceptable to attempt to extend the scope of participation beyond that freely given. Those taking part continue to exercise the right to determine how they will participate in the data collection process, including rights: not to answer any question, or set of questions; not to provide any data requested; to modify the nature of their consent; to withdraw from participation and possibly to withdraw data they have provided
Informed consent of those taking part	The principle of informed consent involves researchers providing sufficient information and assurances about taking part to allow individuals to understand the implications of participation and to reach a fully informed, considered and freely given decision about whether or not to do so, without the exercise of any pressure or coercion. This leads to the right of those taking part to expect the researcher to abide by the extent of the consent given and not to find that the researcher wishes to prolong the duration of an interview or observation, or to widen the scope of the research without first seeking and obtaining permission, or to commit any subsequent breach of the consent given
Ensuring confidentiality of data and maintenance of anonymity of those taking part	Research is designed to answer 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where', 'how' and 'why' questions, not to focus on those who provide the data to answer these. Individuals and organisations should therefore remain anonymous and the data they provide should be processed to make it non-attributable, unless there is an explicit agreement to attribute comments. Harm may result from unauthorised attribution or identification. Reliability of data is also likely to be enhanced where confidentiality and anonymity are assured. This principle leads to the right to expect assurances about anonymity and confidentiality to be observed strictly
Responsibility in the analysis of data and reporting of findings	Assurances about privacy, anonymity and confidentiality must be upheld when analysing and reporting data. Primary data should not be made up or altered and results should not be falsified. Findings should be reported fully and accurately, irrespective of whether they contradict expected outcomes. The same conditions apply to secondary data, the source or sources of which should also be clearly acknowledged. Analyses and the interpretations that follow from these should be checked carefully and corrections made to ensure the accuracy of the research report and any other outcome
Ethical principle	Ethical rationale for and development of this principle
Compliance in the management of data	Research is likely to involve the collection of personal data. Many governments have passed legislation to regulate the processing of personal data. There is therefore a statutory requirement to comply with such legislation. In the European Union, European Directive 95/46/CE has led member states to pass data protection legislation. Other laws may exist in particular countries relating to the processing, security and possible sharing of data. It will therefore be essential for researchers to understand and comply with the legal restrictions and regulations that relate to the management of research data within the country or countries within which they conduct research
Ensuring the safety of the researcher	The safety of researchers is a very important consideration when planning and conducting a research project. The Social Research Association's Code of Practice for the Safety of Social Researchers identifies possible risks from social interactions including 'risk of physical threat or abuse; risk of psychological trauma . . . ; risk of being in a compromising situation . . . ; increased exposure to risks of everyday life' (Social Research Association 2001: 1). Research design therefore needs to consider risks to researchers as well as to participants

Notes and Sources: The ethical codes and guidelines listed in Table 6.2 were helpful in informing the contents of this table. Table 6.3 seeks to synthesise key points from many different approaches to writing ethical principles. It should not be interpreted as providing completely comprehensive guidance. You are advised to consult the code of ethics defined as being appropriate for your research project. References to legislation in Table 6.3 and elsewhere provide only general indications and should not be interpreted as providing legal advice, or the existence of such types of law in all countries.

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

Table 6.4 Internet addresses for ethical guidelines for the conduct of online research

Name	Internet address
Association of Internet Researchers	
Ess, C. and AoIR ethics working committee (2002)	http://aoir.org/reports/ethics.pdf
Markham, A., Buchanan, E. and AoIR Ethics Working Committee (2012) Ethical Decision-Making and Internet Research	http://aoir.org/reports/ethics2.pdf
British Psychological Society	
Ethics Guidelines for Internet-mediated Research	http://www.bps.org.uk/publications/policy-and-guidelines/research-guidelines-policy-documents/research-guidelines-poli

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

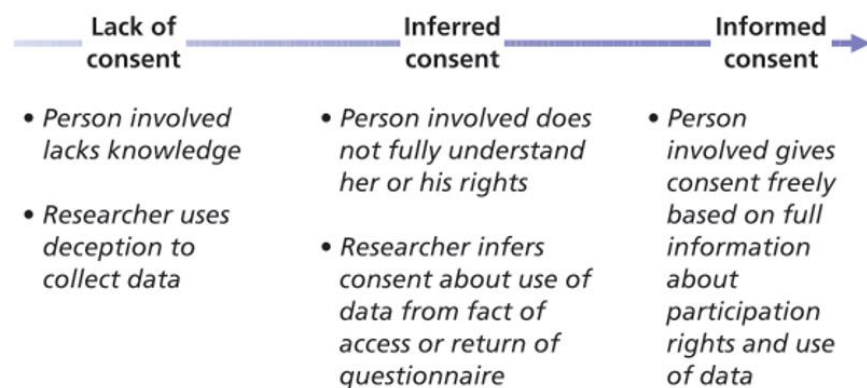


Figure 6.2 The nature of consent

Source: ©2016 Saunders and Thornhill

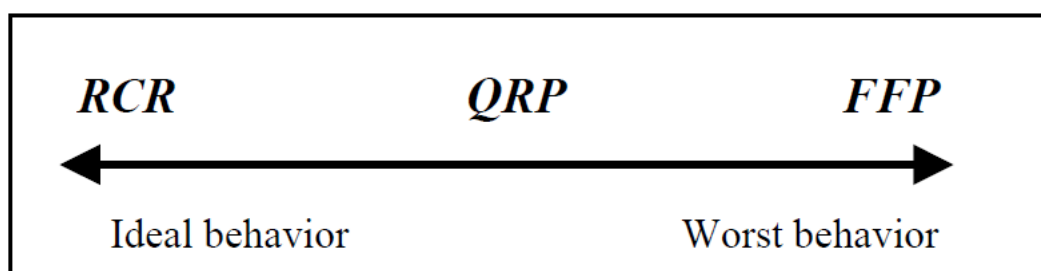


Fig. 1. Current framework for Defining Research Behaviors

Source: ©2006 Steneck

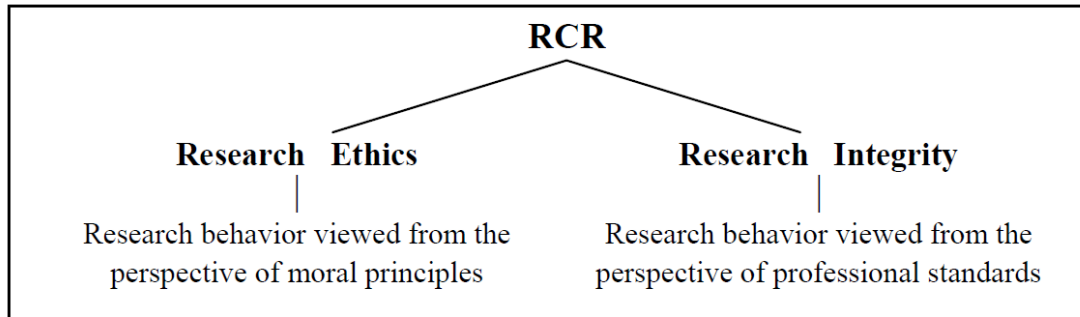


Fig. 2. Research ethics vs. research integrity

Source: ©2006 Steneck

Personal data must be:

- 1 processed fairly and lawfully;
- 2 obtained for specified, explicit and lawful purposes and not processed further in a manner incompatible with those purposes;
- 3 adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which they are processed;
- 4 accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- 5 kept (in a form that allows identification of data subjects) for no longer than is necessary;
- 6 processed in accordance with the rights granted to data subjects by the Act;
- 7 kept securely;
- 8 not transferred to a country outside the European Economic Area unless it ensures an adequate level of protection in relation to the rights of data subjects.

Source: Act, D.P., 1998. Data protection act. *London Station Off.*

Quotations:

1. Article 2 of Directive 95/46/EC: Personal data are defined as data that relate to a living person which allow that individual to be identified, perhaps in combination with other information known to the controller of the data.
2. Informed consent: the agreement of a subject to participate in research, based on a full understanding of the aims of a study, and of their own rights in respect of confidentiality and ethical treatment. (McQueen and Knussen, 2002:100)
3. Norms: measures of typical or normal performance, expressions of attitude or ratings on particular tests, usually measured in terms of mean scores and measures of spread for specific subsections of the population, though sometimes presented as a proportion or percentage of a sample producing particular scores. (McQueen and Knussen, 2002:100)
4. Ethical: in accordance with principles of conduct that are considered correct, especially those of a given profession or group. (Collins Dictionary, 1979: 502)
5. Bias: a deliberate attempt either to conceal or highlight something that you found in your research or to use deliberately a procedure or method that you know is not appropriate but will provide information that you are looking for because you have a vested interest in it. (Kumar, 2014: 364)
6. Ethics: the moral values of professional conduct that are considered desirable for good professional practice. (Kumar, 2014: 370)
7. Informed consent: implies that respondents are made adequately and accurately aware of the type of information you want from them. Why the information is being sought, what purpose it will be put to, how they are expected to participate in the study, and how it will directly or indirectly affect them. It is important that the consent should also be voluntary and without pressure of any kind. The consent given by respondents after being adequately and accurately made aware of or informed about all aspects of

a study is called informed consent. (Kumar, 2014: 373)

8. Observer's bias: is when, as an observer, you purposely do not accurately report what you observe because of your own vested interest. It is both illegal and unethical. (Kumar, 2014: 376)
9. research ethics (RE) and can be defined as the critical study of the moral problems associated with or that arise in the course of pursuing research. The latter falls under what the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) has called "research on research integrity" (RRI), where research integrity (RI) is defined as possessing and steadfastly adhering to professional standards, as outlined by professional organizations, research institutions and, when relevant, the government and public. (Steneck, 2006, 53-74: 56)
10. Saunders et al. define RE as 'the standards of behaviour that guide your conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it'. (Saunders and Thornhill, 2016: 239)
11. RI is 'possessing and steadfastly adhering to professional standards, as outlined by professional organizations, research institutions and, when relevant, the government and public'. (Steneck, 2006, 53-74: 56)

Appendix 4

1. Classroom Discussion

We were divided into four groups talking about ethical issues in research. Each group got several key words related to ethical principles. What our group got were 'consent', 'informed consent', 'withdrawal' and 'debrief'.



This activity brings a lot of advantages:

- (a) Improve the ability of teamwork and cultivate the sense of cooperation;
- (b) Improve presentation skills by presenting in front of the peers and listening to others' presentation;
- (c) Make me to think about the topic on a deeper and broader level. From individual critical reading and evaluating the information to group discussion that looks at and solves problems from more perspectives, to classroom presentations that requires me to answer the questions and accept the suggestions from the audience, this process, to some extent, forced me to read, think, articulate and react to a certain topic effectively in a limited time, which helped me a lot.

2. Classroom discussion- what are the most four important elements for you

We were asked to read the UWTSD Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice and choose four key elements that appear the most important to our own research topics and explain why they are important. I picked honesty, care & respect, informed consent and professional Bodies.

3. Classroom discussion- personal bias

We discussed nine different biases that have vital influences on the research. Each of us talked about the possible implications of those biases related to our own research topic. This activity made me to reflexive think about my

personal bias and remind me to minimise the bias when conduct a research.

4. In-class free discussion

When talking about ethics and integrity in the class, we talked about some key elements of the ethics and integrity code of practice, such as care and respect, anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary etc., and how to ensure the reliability and validity of the research. We discussed the existing fact that in some countries, more attention is paid to the number of articles published than to the thesis itself developed in the research. It seems to be an ethical dilemma for many current researchers whether to blindly pursue the number of papers published, or to focus on the research itself, focusing on improving the quality of a single paper. Besides, as qualitative research involves more human interaction, we also discussed the validity of quantitative and qualitative research. The discussion continued even after the class when we backed home.

5. Further discussion about research ethics and integrity

(a) Grandmother of performance art- Marina Abramović

(b) Milgram experiment

(c) Golden Rice experiment