

RMM EXERCISE: Hypothesis Framing

The following table is often used to frame specific hypotheses relevant to a question which defines the research objective.

Use this table to frame hypotheses appropriate to the research question allocated to your group:

Ontology		Epistemology	
Data types	Data Sources [Sampling]	Data-gathering methods	Techniques
What are the Variables? (Dependent and Independent)	Who / what are the data sources?	How will I obtain the data? How will I test the data?	How will I apply the data-gathering methods?
Are data values (mainly) qualitative or quantitative?	What are the units of measurement?	What forms of analysis will I apply to the data? Are the samples of data valid and sound?	Is my sample normal? What is its 'profile'?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- A. The market for digital music has changed rapidly in the past decade owing to the development of technologies which support downloading music files onto portable devices. Is there a marketing strategy that would enable recorded music retailers to retain their share of sales of recorded music (tapes, CD's, etc.)?
- B. Globalisation of services has lead to the outsourcing of customer support services (in the financial and banking services sector) to the developing economies of the Asian sub-continent. What are the benefits and limitations for Europe-based companies of outsourcing financial and banking customer support overseas?
- C. The popularity of "Social Networking Sites" (SNS) like 'FaceBook,', 'Twitter', Bebo, MySpace, etc. has lead to some employers seeking access to personal information about prospective employees (job-candidates) via SNS sites. Should use of this information obtained from SNS sites be permitted in decision-making about HR job recruitment and selection?
- D. In many European countries, the rise in life expectancy (people living longer) has lead many private sector pension providers to close final-salary pension schemes for employees, in favour of average earning schemes. Governments in Europe have proposed changes in the mandatory retirement age, raising the age at which employers are obliged to retire employees. In countries of high unemployment, what changes to pension arrangements are justifiable?
- E. "Brand Elasticity" refers to the ability of a 'brand name' to be extended successfully to products other than those for which it became well known by consumers. Company X sells an established branded product in the IT hardware sector. How can it determine whether its brand is sufficiently elastic to compete in the IT software services sector?

Each group is allocated one of the research questions A – E above.

Using the table above, frame hypotheses and specify methods with which to test those hypotheses in order to formulate a research project which could provide evidence to support your hypothetical answers to the question allocated.