

UWTSD MBA (Nov 2018 intake)
SBMA7133 Managerial Economics

(2-2)

Writing A Research Paper

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20 January 2019; 2:30 pm to 6:00 pm

Lecture Agenda

- Overview of Research Methodology
- Research Process
- Case study Research
- Guidance for Writing an Integrative Case Study Report

Overview of Research Methodology

The scientific method

It refers to the entire cycle of induction, deduction and Verification

- **Induction:** A process of reasoning from particular observations to general conclusions.
- **Deduction:** A process of reasoning from general assumptions or statements to particular conclusions.
- **Verification:** To verify the conclusions by returning to the original facts and seeing whether the occurrences and predictions are correct.

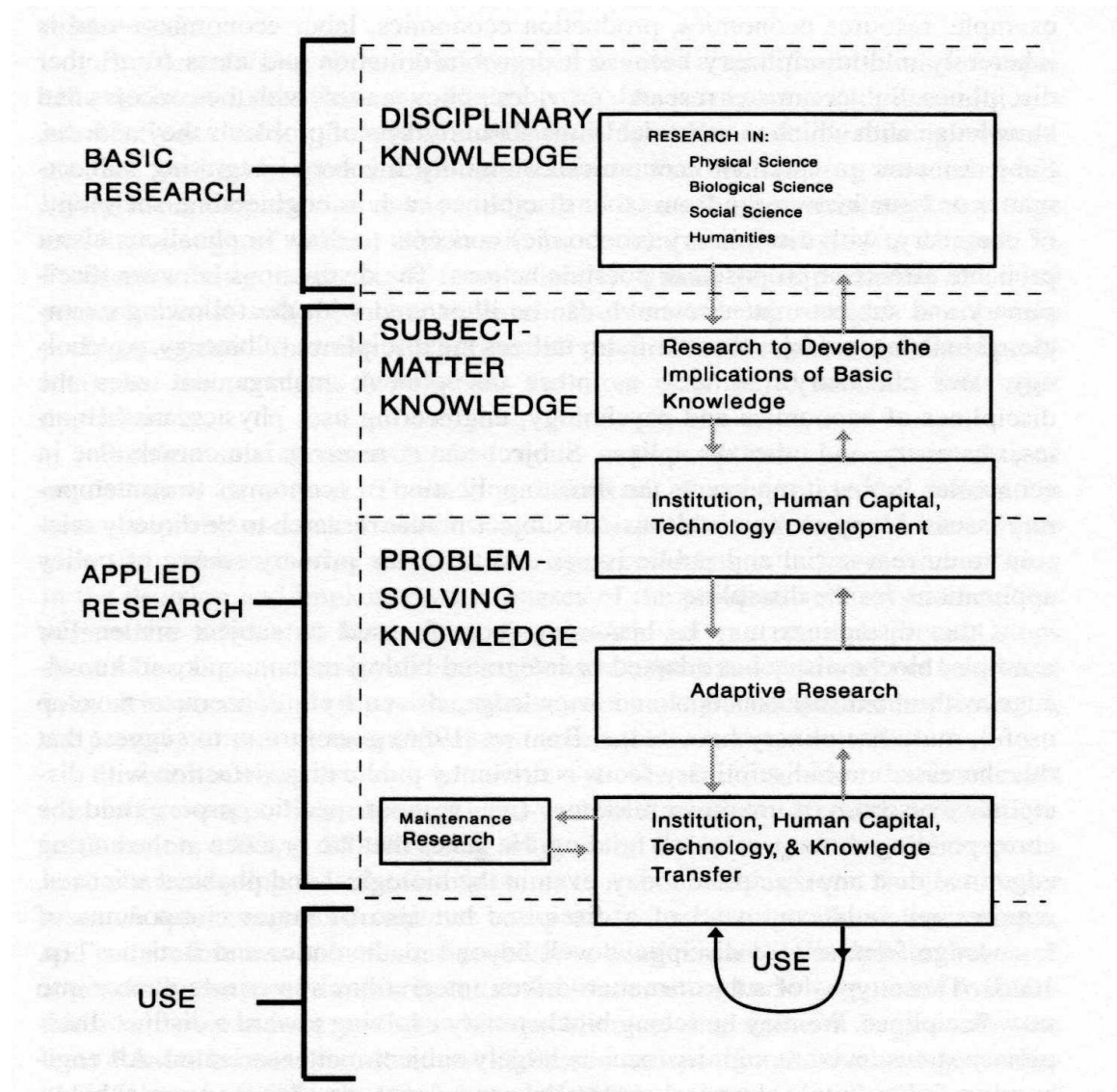
Why Do Research?

- Summarizing what is known in a field
- Contributing to knowledge on a topic
- Solving a problem/puzzle
- Weighing in on a debate

Four types of purposes for research

- Exploratory—finding out what is happening, seeking new insights and generating ideas and hypotheses for new research.
- Descriptive—portraying a situation or phenomenon.
- Explanatory—seeking an explanation of a situation or a problem, mostly but not necessary in the form of a causal relationship.¹
- Improving—trying to improve a certain aspect of the studied phenomenon

Types of business research



(1) Research is not an accidental discovery

Because:

- an accidental discovery may occur in structured research process
- it usually takes the form of a phenomenon not previously noticed
- it may lead to a structured research process to verify or understand the observation

(2) Research is not data collection

Because:

- data collection is only an intermediate step to gain reliable knowledge
- collecting reliable data is part of the research process

(3) Research is not searching out published research results in libraries or the Internet

Because:

- information search is only an important early step of research
- the research process always includes synthesis and analysis
- but, just reviewing of literature is not research

Research is...

1. Searching for explanation of events, phenomena, relationships and causes
 - What, how and why things occur
 - Are there interactions?
2. A process
 - Planned and managed – to make the information generated credible
 - The process is creative
 - It is **circular** – always leads to more questions

It is worth noting that:

- All well designed and conducted research has potential application.
- Failure to see applications can be due to:
 - Users not trained or experienced in the specialized methods of economic research and reasoning
 - Researchers often do not provide adequate interpretations and guidance on applications of the research
- Researchers are responsible to help users understand research implications

Research Process

From
Questions to
Answers



The
Research
Process

Research = Stating a question & seeking its answer

Evaluating a question and answer previously considered by others;

Meta-study: a systematic method that takes data from a number of independent studies and integrates them using statistical analysis; and/or

Discovering new knowledge – knowledge is the interpretation of facts (data).

Research Questions

1. What question(s) are you asking in this research?

For example: What has happened? What has been done? Why people did it? Why they did not do it? How did they do it?

2. Why are the question(s) important?

Convince us that

- a. no one has yet answered them satisfactorily; and
- b. answering these questions is important for understanding the real world and/or formulating policy.

3. What answers do you expect to find (hypotheses)?

Suggest at least two alternative answers: in other words, if only one answer is possible, there is no point doing the research!

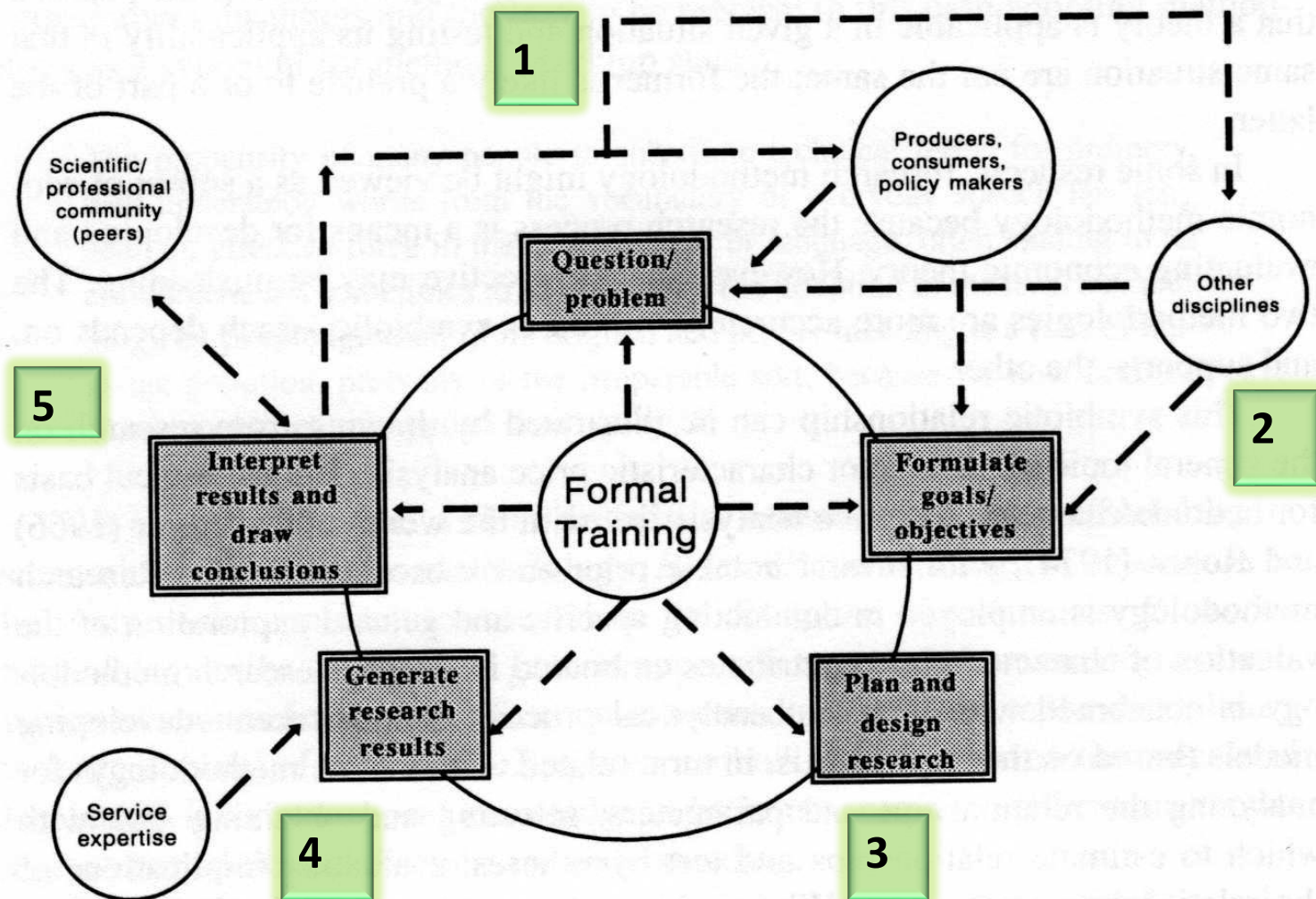
Finding a Research Question

- Start with a general area of interest & refine to a research question.
- What interests you?
 - Personal experience, topics from classes, current events
- Would this interest others?
- What have others done?
 - Extend it, or do it in a different setting.

A Generic Research Process

1. Choosing a research topic, main research issues and questions
2. Conceptualization: literature review, research framework/model/theory (optional)
3. Choice of Research Methodology
4. Data Collection:
 - a. Primary data – Census or sample survey (optional)
 - b. Secondary data – Official and/or other publicly available data
5. Data Processing and Analysis (optional)
6. Summary of results
7. Application: discussion & implications

The process of business research



Case Study Research

Overview of research methodology characteristics

Methodology	Primary objective	Primary data	Design
Survey	Descriptive	Quantitative	Fixed
Case study	Exploratory	Qualitative	Flexible
Experiment	Explanatory	Quantitative	Fixed
Action research	Improving	Qualitative	Flexible

Main difference between the case study and the experiment:

Case study	Survey
1. Real life context	1. Manipulated
2. It draws conclusions on the basis of a “qualitative” analysis (“visual inspection”) of scores from one single instance (single case study) or from a small number of instances (comparative case study)	2. It draws conclusions on the basis of a quantitative (statistical) analysis of data from a population with a large number of instances (sample observation)

Nature of case studies

A case study is a study in which (a) one case (single case study) or a small number of cases (comparative case study) in their real life context are selected, and (b) scores obtained from these cases are analyzed in a qualitative manner. (Dul and Hak, 2007; p.4)

Case analysis not only allows students to determine the relevant facts but also help learners to develop problem-solving skills and collaborative skills that will be needed in their future professional lives.

A broad spectrum of types of case study research including:

1. Practice-oriented case studies
2. Theory-oriented case studies
 - a. theory-building case studies; and
 - b. theory-testing case studies.

Case Study Research Process

1. Case study design: objectives are defined and the case study is planned. (The overall objective is a statement of what is expected to be achieved in the case study.)
2. Preparation for data collection: procedures and protocols for data collection are defined. (A case study protocol defines the detailed procedures for collection and analysis of the raw data, sometimes called field procedures)
3. Collecting evidence: execution with data collection on the studied case.
4. Analysis of collected data.
5. Reporting.

Case Study Design and Planning

A plan for a case study should at least contain the following elements :

- Objective—what to achieve?
- The case—what is studied?
- Theory—frame of reference
- Research questions—what to know?
- Methods—how to collect data?
- Selection strategy—where to seek data?

Three level of data collection

- First degree: Direct methods means that the researcher is in direct contact with the subjects and collect data in real time. This is the case with, for example interviews, focus groups, Delphi surveys (Dalkey and Helmer 1963), and observations with “think aloud protocols”.
- Second degree: Indirect methods where the researcher directly collects raw data without actually interacting with the subjects during the data collection.
- Third degree: Independent analysis of work artifacts where already available and sometimes compiled data is used. This is for example the case when documents such as requirements specifications and failure reports from an organization are analyzed or when data from organizational databases such as time accounting is analyzed.



Overview of interviews

	Unstructured	Semi-structured	Fully structured
Typical focus	How individuals qualitatively experience the phenomenon	How individuals qualitatively and quantitatively experience the phenomenon	Researcher seeks to find relations between constructs
Interview questions	Interview guide with areas to focus on	Mix of open and closed questions	Closed questions
Objective	Exploratory	Descriptive and explanatory	Descriptive and explanatory

Quality Evaluation

- Quality of relevant theories and concepts applied
- Depth and comprehensiveness of analysis
- Quality of discussion and conclusion (for college-based project)
- Quality of recommendations or findings (for in-company project)
- Coherence of thoughts and ideas in the report
- Quality of report presentation, oral and written

The integrative case study assignment

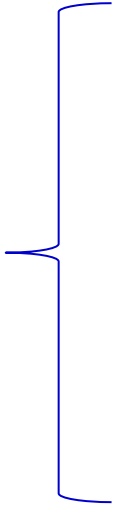
Integrative case study

- An integrative Case Study (ICS) refer a real-life organizational case study to assess, analyze and address the issues the business is facing.
- This assignment requires students **to integrate** all the knowledge and analytical skills learnt in the course into a real-life organizational case study.
- Using a real-life organization students will review the strategic position of the entity and conclude with specific strategic recommendations for the future.

Aim of the integrative case study (ICS) assignment

- Case Study provides the opportunity to relate the theoretical content of a course to the practicalities of the real business world.
- Often, key decisions have to be made logically, objectively and in a timely manner using developed analytical skills to identify and solve problems. This assignment helps to develop the experience to make such decisions.

Steps in conducting
an integrative case
study



Step 1, students will develop an awareness of the problems at hand by making practical observations and analyses.

Step 2, students will formulate problem-solving strategies.

Integrative case study report format guideline

- Use Harvard formatting throughout your paper. For details, please see
<https://www.wales.ac.uk/en/OnlineLibrary/StudySkills/ReferenceStyles.aspx>
<https://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>
https://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/files/Harvard_referencing_201718.pdf
- The report should be typed on A4 size sheet of paper using Microsoft Word in 12-point type Times New Roman font with at least 2 centimetre space at each edge, and pages numbered.

- Except using single line spacing for graphs, tables, footnotes, and the reference list, please use **1.5-line spacing** for all material in the manuscript.
- Please ensure the figures and the tables are placed above or below the relevant text in the manuscript, and the corresponding caption should be placed directly **above the figure or table**.
- Section headings should be numbered **in Arabic numerals** (1, 2, 3, etc.) while sub-section headings should follow the double numeration system (1.1, 1.2, etc.). All headings are to be left-aligned and in bold and should appear on their own separate line.
- **Abbreviations** should be fully spelled out in parentheses the first time that they are used in the text.
- Please try to use your own words and ideas based on research rather than **copy and paste** other's words from the internet.

The assignment submission should include:

Title:

Price Discrimination Strategy by (add a Hong Kong company name here): an integrative Study.

Cover Page

- Include programme name, Module name, Case Study Title, Student Names and ID number, Date of Submission

Case Synopsis

- It contains a brief highlight of the key issues or problems that will be described in the case study.
- It should convince readers why this case study is worth reading.

1. Introduction

- Provide a current situation analysis and pertinent background of the case study.

2. Case study design and planning

- The plan for the case study is expected to contain objective (what to achieve?), the case (what is studied), the Theory (frame of reference), research questions (what to know?), methods (how to collect data? where to seek data? How to analyze the data collected?)

3. Analysis and discussion

- Provide argumentation to support your opinion.
- Collecting evidence/statistics.
- Apply the knowledge and analytical skills learnt in the course to justify your arguments.
- You should design sub-section headings under this section.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

- Synthesize the research findings in order to arrive at a concise and meaningful conclusion,
- Make recommendations relating to the problems that you have investigated.

References

- Source business journals, periodicals, and textual references as well as any online research.
- Make sure you support your ideas with facts and figures.
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- An alphabetical CITATION LIST using Harvard referencing style.

Appendices (If any)

- All charts, financials, visuals, and other related items can be placed here and referenced in the report.
- If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc.

Common examples of price discrimination

- Senior citizen and student discounts (in any context);
- Sales involving face-to-face negotiations (like car purchases);
- Airplane tickets;
- Store loyalty/discount cards;
- Coupons and online coupon codes; and college tuition.
- Private hospitals Doctor consultation fees of charged in different time slots
- Cruise ship fares
- Private Universities in the States

Thank You
for
Your Attention!