Introduction:

What is Research?
Class Website

• www.vivaafrika.net
Story??
Mercedes-Benz Biome Concept
Objectives of the Course

• to ensure that students acquire practical research skills for business and academic research;

• to help students understand principles of research; and

• to enable students to link the research process with theories of their specialist areas.
Course Textbooks - Recommended


*Sedco Publishing, Ghana*
Assessment

• Term Paper - 40%
• Class Quiz - 10%
• Group Work - 10%
• Participation - 10%
• Exam - 30%
Why Do Research

Understanding research
Steps in Research | Purpose of Research
Types of Research
Chapter 1

Neuman, W.L. (2011) Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 2/3 E, Pearson Education
What is Research?

• Research is an investigation into a particular topic or social/business phenomena.
What is Research?

• This said, one will argue that every investigation on a topic of interest is research.

• NO! That is not true.
What is Research?

Research is an **ORGANIZED** and **SYSTEMATIC** way of **FINDING ANSWERS** to **QUESTIONS**.

1. **SYSTEMATIC** because there is a definite set of scientific procedures and principles which the researcher will **NEED** to follow in order to get reliable and accurate results.

2. **ORGANIZED** because there is a structure or method for doing research. The research process has a number of steps to guide the researcher.

Adapted From Henrichsen, Smith, & Baker (1997)
What is Research?

Research is an **ORGANIZED** and **SYSTEMATIC** way of **FINDING ANSWERS** to **QUESTIONS**.

3. **FINDING ANSWERS** because every research seeks to answer a question or a number of questions. Sometimes the answer is no, but it is still an answer.

4. **QUESTIONS** are central to research. If there is no question, then how do we begin the research. Research is focused on relevant, useful, and important questions. Without a question, research has no focus, drive, or purpose.

Adapted From Henrichsen, Smith, & Baker (1997)
So Why Do We Do Research?

Create/develop something new

Cause something particular to happen

Make-sense-of what is happening

Explain what is happening/verify

Predict what will happen`
So Why Do We Do Research?

Discover/explore

Describe/Understand

Explain and Predict or Create Social Phenomena

Research is partly a process of discovery and partly a process of knowledge creation.
Absence of Research

- Authority
- Tradition
- Common Sense
- Media Distortion
- Personal Experience

common sources of knowledge, perception and conclusion
## Absence of Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative Explanation to Social Research</th>
<th>Example Issue: In the division of household tasks by gender, why do women tend to do the laundry?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Experts say that as children, females are taught to make, select, mend, and clean clothing as part of a female focus on physical appearance and on caring for children or others in a family. Women do the laundry based on their childhood preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>Women have done the laundry for centuries, so it is a continuation of what has happened for a long time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Common Sense**
- Men just are not as concerned about clothing as much as women, so it only makes sense that women do the laundry more often.

**Media Myth**
- Television commercials show women often doing laundry and enjoying it, so they do laundry because they think it’s fun.

**Personal Experience**
- My mother and the mothers of all my friends did the laundry. My female friends did it for their boyfriends, but never the other way around. It just feels natural for the woman to do it.

Who Needs Research?

• Research feeds into
  – Future research
  – Practice
  – Policy

Research is needed by researchers, practitioners and policy makers. In these broad categories, there are a number of stakeholders including organizations, communities, government and non-governmental institutions and society in general.

“And so what?” meaning what can we do with your findings and what are its implications?
The Research Process

Research process is the step by step process of creating and carrying out a research project.

The Research Process

1. Selecting a Topic – Research Topic
2. Determining the Problem (Preliminary Literature Review) – Research Problem
4. Determining the Hypotheses (Prelim. Literature Review) – Research Hypotheses
5. Determining the Objectives – Research Objectives
6. Determining the Question – Research Question
7. Detailed Review of Literature – Literature Review
8. Determining Research Framework – Research Framework (including hypotheses)
9. Designing the Research – Research Design
10. Collecting Data – Research Data Collection
11. Analyzing and Interpreting Data – Research Analysis and Conclusion
12. Informing Others – Research Write Up and Publishing
Phases of The Research Process

• **Phase 1:** Identify a social or business phenomenon to be studied;

• **Phase 2:** Determine the right question to ask;

• **Phase 3:** Design a research to find answers;

• **Phase 4:** Inform others about the answers to the question or new knowledge.
Research Process vs Research Design

• Not the Same
• The researcher’s plan on how to implement the research in practice is known as the research design.
• The research design describes how, when and where data are to be collected and how the data will be analyzed.
• Research Design is the subset of the Research Process
Research Process vs Research Design

- Research Topic
- Research Problem
- Research Question
- Research Design
Research Activities are Often Iterative

• Flexibility of revisiting previous activities to revise their focus

• Rarely linear; it is more realistically cyclical
TYPES OF RESEARCH

- Application of the Research [Whom - Recipient]
- Purpose or Objectives of the Research [Why]
Application/Use of Research

- Basic/Pure research
  - The scientific community
  - Focus is on the rigour of the process

- Applied research
  - Policy or Practice
  - Focus is on the outcome/implications of results
  - Evaluation research
    - Assess the effectiveness
  - Social Impact Assessment

### Basic and Applied Social Research Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Applied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Research is intrinsically satisfying and judgments are by other</td>
<td>1. Research is part of a job and is judged by sponsors who are outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sociologists.</td>
<td>the discipline of sociology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research problems and subjects are selected with a great deal of</td>
<td>2. Research problems are “narrowly constrained” to the demands of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freedom.</td>
<td>employers or sponsors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Research is judged by absolute norms of scientific rigor, and the</td>
<td>3. The rigor and standards of scholarship depend on the uses of results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest standards of scholarship are sought.</td>
<td>Research can be “quick and dirty” or may match high scientific standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The primary concern is with the internal logic and rigor of</td>
<td>4. The primary concern is with the ability to generalize findings to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research design.</td>
<td>areas of interest to sponsors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The driving goal is to contribute to basic, theoretical knowledge.</td>
<td>5. The driving goal is to have practical payoffs or uses for results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Success comes when results appear in a scholarly journal and</td>
<td>6. Success comes when results are used by sponsors in decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have an impact on others in the scientific community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose of the Research

– To explore (Exploratory research)

– To describe (Descriptive research)

– To explain (Explanatory research)
Purpose of the Research

– To explore (Exploratory research)

Exploratory research seeks to explore an area where little is known or little research has been done either in the context (research site) or on the research topic in that particular context (topic and context)

Purpose of the Research

– To describe (descriptive research)

Descriptive research seeks to systematically describe a phenomenon or situation or problem. Usually asks the ‘what’ question.

For example, what are the attitudes of the community towards the community library or what are the living conditions in the farming communities in Ghana.

Purpose of the Research

– To explain (explanatory research)

Explanatory research seeks to understand and explain a phenomenon or situation or problem. Usually asks the questions ‘why’ and ‘how’ a particular phenomenon occurs or there exist a relationship between two or more factors of a phenomenon.

For example, why and how do firms achieve value amidst the reported fierce competition in the micro-finance industry?
Inquiry Procedure of the Research

1. The Research Paradigms or Philosophies
2. Approach of the Research
3. Time Dimension of the Research
Research Paradigms or Philosophies

A paradigm is “a set of beliefs, values and techniques which is shared by members of a scientific community, and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them” (Kuhn, 1970: 175)

Dominant Paradigms:
• Positivist, Interpretive/Constructivist, and Critical Paradigms
Approach of the Research

Quantitative:

to determine the extent of a problem or the existence of a relationship between aspects of a phenomenon by quantifying the variation. Methods include survey.

Qualitative:

to explore the meanings, attitudes, values, beliefs people associate with a phenomenon in order to establish a better understanding, rather than to test to support or disprove a relationship. Useful for describing social phenomena or the nature of the variation...
Methods include case study

Mixed-Methods:

Combines the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research
Approach of the Research

Quantitative:
For example, a researcher may ask, ‘to what extent have students adopted mobile phones?
HYPOTHESIS: Students who obtain Grade A never miss a class!

Qualitative:
For examples, a researcher may ask, ‘what is the working condition in the banking industry?
What are the perceptions of traditional medicines among nurses?

Mixed-Methods:
What are the type of primary schools in the city of Accra and the extent of their popularity in the city?
Time Dimension of Research

Time influences research in manner in which data is collected with respect to time. As a result, the number of different types of research, namely:

Cross-Sectional Study

Longitudinal Study
- Panel
- Cohort
- Time-series
Cross-sectional Study

A researcher collects information from a sample drawn from a population. The data you obtain is derived from a cross-section of the population at one point of time.
Longitudinal Study - Panel

a researcher can identify a **sample from the beginning** and **follow** the specific respondents over a **specified period of time** to **observe changes** in **specific respondents** and highlight the reasons why these respondents have changed.

**PANEL:** Observe the exact same people at two or more times.

Example: Age vs Volunteering
Same units over time

OUM (2010) Topic 9 Qualitative Research Methods, Course Hand out CMRM6103 Research Methodology/GM RM5103 Research Methods, AIT
Open University of Malaysia, Ghana
Neuman, W.L. (2011) Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 2/E, Pearson Education
Longitudinal Study - Cohort

Although the **population remains the same**, **different respondents** are sampled **each time**. The researcher’s aim here is to see if there are changes in perceptions or trends that occur in the study.

**COHORT**: Observe people who shared an experience at two or more times.

Example: 1967 birth cohorts vs racism

---

OUM (2010) Topic 9 Qualitative Research Methods, Course Hand out CMRM6103 Research Methodology/GMRM5103 Research Methods, AIT Open University of Malaysia, Ghana

Neuman, W.L. (2011) Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 2/E, Pearson Education
Longitudinal Study – Time Series

A study in which selected aspects (variables) of a phenomenon is studied at different points in time, often with a view to studying social trends. Eg: Trends in the levels of crime.

Example: characteristics of freshmen over time
Same variables studied over time

Structure of Long Essay

• Abstract
• Chapt. 1 – Introduction
• Chapt. 2 – Literature Review
• Chapt. 3 – Context of the Study
• Chapt. 4 – Research Methodology
• Chapt. 5 – Results and Discussion
• Chapt. 6 – Conclusion
References


Photo Illustrations from Getty Images – www.gettyimages.com