7th European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies

Regent's College, London, UK
19-20 June 2008

Edited by

Dr Ann Brown
Cass Business School, London, UK

Papers have been double-blind peer reviewed before final submission to the conference. Initially, paper abstracts were read and selected by the conference panel for submission as possible papers for the conference.

Many thanks to the reviewers who helped ensure the quality of the full papers.

Further copies of this book and previous year's proceedings can be purchased from http://academic-conferences.org/2-proceedings.htm

ISBN: 978-1-906638-03-0 cd

Published by Academic Publishing Limited
Reading
UK
44-118-972-4148
www.academic-publishing.org

ECRM 2008

Contents

Preface

The Seventh European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies is hosted by Regents College, London, UK in June this year. The Conference Chair is Dr Peter Sharp from Regents College and I am pleased to be Programme Chair.

The main aim of this Conference is to provide an occasion for individuals, working in the area of business and management research, to meet and discuss their experiences of using the varied and expanding range of research methods available to them.

The opening keynote address this year is by Jill Collis from Kingston University in the UK, who will be addressing the topic of "Business research: An opportunity and a challenge". In addition to a varied programme of research presentations Dan Remenyi from Trinity College Dublin will lead a Knowledge Café which will investigate "How to run a Research Department in a Global Economy: Research Methodology Implications". Peter Sharp will lead a panel discussion on the second day of the conference looking at "How should we plan, implement and publish research in Business and Management in the Global Economy"? Panelists include Professor Christopher May, University of Lancaster, UK; Professor Karel Williams, University of Manchester, UK and Justyn Trenner, CEO, ClientKnowledge, UK

Business research covers a wide field of topics from those dealing with relatively 'hard issues' such as logistics management to those that address the 'softer issues' such as organisational change (sharing many of the characteristics and problems of social science research). Hence the research methods that can and are used exhibit a diversity of philosophical and design approaches. Past conferences have sought to include papers on many of the relatively new methodologies that had been achieving a greater level of interest and application. This conference continues this trend. This is a dynamic field and one which affects all academics and others involved in research. This conference offers an opportunity to engage with contemporary thinking in business research and to join in the sometimes lively debates, inside and outside of the formal sessions.

With an initial submission of 62 abstracts, after the double blind, peer review process there are 36 papers published in these Conference Proceedings. These papers come from all parts of the globe including Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Malta, New Zealand, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. A selection of the best papers – those agreed by a panel of reviewers and the editor will be published in a conference edition of the EJBRM (Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods www.ejbrm.com). These will be chosen for their quality of writing and relevance to the Journal's objective of publishing papers that offer new insights or practical help into the application of research methods in business research.

I wish you a most interesting conference.

Ann Brown
a.p.brown@city.ac.uk
June 2008

Conference Executive:

Dr George Allan, University of Portsmouth, UK
Dr Joan Ballantine, Queens University Belfast , UK
Dr Frank Bannister, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
Dr Carole Brooke, University of Lincoln, UK
Dr Ann Brown, CASS Business School, London, UK
Dr David Douglas, Staffordshire University, UK
Dr Branka Krivokapic-Skoko, Charles Sturt University, Australia
Dr Maria Luca, Regent's College, London, UK
Professor Dan Remenyi, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
Dr Martin Rich, CASS Business School, London, UK
Dr Noemi Sadowska, Regent's College, UK
Dr Peter Sharp, Regent's College, London, UK
Dr Ibrahim Sirkeci, Regent's College, London, UK
Professor Ernesto Spinelli, Regent's College, London, UK

Conference Committee:

The conference programme committee consists of key people in the research methods community, both from the UK and overseas. The following people have confirmed their participation:

George Allan (University of Portsmouth, UK); Andrew Armitage (Anglia Ruskin University, UK); Marie Ashwin (University of Hertfordshire, UK); Gabriela Avram (University of Limerick, Ireland); Karin Axelsson (Linkoping University, Sweden); Joseph Azzopardi (University of Malta); Sue Balint (Westminster Business School, London, UK); Joan Ballantine (Queens University Belfast, UK); Lennart Bangens (Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden); Frank Bannister (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Edward Barratt (University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK); James Bartlett (University of South Carolina, USA); Andrew Basden (University of Salford, UK); Peter Bednar (University of Portsmouth, UK); Lau Bee-Theng (Swinburne University of Technology, Malaysia); Diane Benjamin (NHS, UK); Angela Benson (University of Brighton, UK); Egon Berghout (University of Groningen, The Netherlands); Frank Bezzina (University of Malta); Deborah Blackman, (University of Western Sydney, Australia); Milena Bobeva (University of Bournmouth, UK); Carole Brooke (University of Lincoln, UK); Ann Brown, (CASS Business School, UK); Cathal Brugha (University College Dublin, Ireland); Sven Carlsson (Lund University, Sweden); Jyoti Choudrie, (University of Hertfordshire, UK); Melissa Cole (Brunel University, UK); Aileen Corley (Liverpool John Moores University, UK); Baggy Cox (Imperial College London, UK); Ronald Crawford (University of Greenwich, UK); Marguerite Cronk (Harding University, USA); Deborah Dean (Warwick Business School, UK); Thomas Diefenbach (The Open University, UK); David Douglas (Staffordshire University, UK); Eileen Drew (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Stephen Drew (University of East Anglia, UK); Ken D'Silva (London South Bank University, UK); Jose Esteves (Instituto de Empresa, Spain); Jean-Noel Ezingeard (Kingston University, UK); Mahmoud Fakhra (College of Business Studies, Kuwait); Jason Ferdinand, (University of Liverpool, UK); Roger Gill (University of Strathclyde, UK); Goran Goldkuhl (Linkoping University, Sweden); Karuna Gomanee (Regent's College, UK); Roz Graham (University of Winchester, UK); Gillian Green (University of Bolton, UK); Mike Hart (University of Winchester, UK); Clive Holtham (CASS Business School, UK); Bob Hughes (University of Brighton, UK); Gordon Hunter (University of Lethbridge, Canada); Bev Jones (Wolverhampton Business School, UK); Patricia Joubert (University of Swaziland, Swaziland); Reinford Khumalo (North West University, South Africa); Cyril Kirwan (Cyril Kirwin Associates, Ireland); Ela Klecun (London School of Economics, UK); Karl Knox (Nottingham Trent University, UK); Branka Krivokapic-Skoko (Charles Sturt University, Australia); Denise Leahy (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Ann Marie Logue (Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Ireland); Sam Lubbe (University of South Africa, South Africa); Maria Luca (Regent's College, London, UK); Sandy MacDonald (University College Northampton, UK); Bob Macklin (Charles Sturt University, Australia); Marie Macklin (Charles Sturt University, Australia); Tom Macnamara (London South Bank University, UK); Pete Mann (University of Manchester, UK); Garance Marechal (University of Liverpool, UK); Maria do Rosário O. Martins (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal); Rachel McLean (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK); Maggie McPherson (University of Leeds, UK); Ian Michael (Zayed University, United Arab Emirates); Kersti Nogeste (RMIT UNiversiity, Melbourne, Australia); Miguel Nunes (Sheffield University, UK); Teemu Paavola (Helsinki University of Technology, Finland); Carole Page (Massey University, New Zealand); Steve Page (University College Chester, UK); Joan Pastor-Collado (Technical University of Catalunya, Spain); Ganesh Prabhu (Indian Institute of Management at Bangalore, India); Furqan Qamar (Jamia Millisa Islamia Central University, India); Sarah Quinton (Oxford Brookes University, UK); Nasrin Rahmati (Monash University, Australia); Diana Rajendran (Swinburne University of Technology, Australia); Theo Renkema (The Netherlands); Martin Rich (CASS Business School, UK); Kristina Risom (Aarhus School of Business, Denmark); Bob Ritchie (Lancashire Business School, UK); Juan Rodon Mòdol (Universitat Ramón Llull, Spain); Noemi Sadowska (Regent's College, UK); Mark Saunders (Oxford Brookes University, UK); Susan Sayce (Bournemouth University, UK); Christine Schweighart (University of Warwick, UK); Junaid Shaikh (Curtin University, Malaysia); Mohini Singh (RMIT University, Australia); Ibrahim Sirkeci (European Business School London, UK); Teresa Smallbone (Oxford Brookes University, UK); Alan Southern (University of Liverpool Management School, UK); Ernesto Spinelli (Regent's College, London, UK); Annika Tidstrom (Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Finland); Kerstin Thomson (Stockholm University, Sweden); Claudine Toffolon (University of Lemans, France); Maryann Valiuis (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Ana Vasconcelos (University of Sheffeild, UK); Kevin Voges, (University of Canterbury, New Zealand); David Wainwright (University of Northumbria, UK); Teresa Waring (University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, UK); Christine Welch (University of Portsmouth, UK); Leslie Willcocks (London School of Economics, UK); Roy Williams (University of Portsmouth, UK); Diana Wilson (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Michael Wood (University of Portsmouth, UK); Brent Work (UK); Les Worrall (Wolverhampton Business School, UK).

Biographies of Conference Chairs, Programme Chair and Keynote Speaker

Conference Chair

Dr Peter Sharp is a doctor in Knowledge Management (KM) and information systems (IS) development strategy, and manages the postgraduate Research, Dissertation and Business Skills Programmes at Regent's Business School London. He is a Senior Lecturer and MA Programme Manager who is experienced in a full range of activities including development, validation and implementation of MA programmes. He is also a PhD supervisor and is currently working in Regent's College Senate developing its research strategy. His current research interests are in the field of how to create effective knowledge centres in organisations and how action research can address organisational problems. Peter has an established record of international publications, has given presentations across the world and chaired streams at many conferences He is currently very active in his role as chair of the European Conference of Research Methodology in Business and Management Studies 2008 (ECRM 2008) and is on the editorial board of the Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management (EJKM). He is also a visiting lecturer and advisor to universities. He is a member of a range of relevant professional groups related to his roles and areas of interest. These include the City Information Group, UK Academy of Information Systems (UKAIS), the Law Society, and the British Academy of Management. He is also a fellow of the Higher Education.

Programme Chair

Dr Ann Brown is a Senior Lecturer in Information Management in the Faculty of Management at Cass Business School. She took an MSc (Operational Research) at LSE while working at the British Steel Corporation as an Operational Researcher. She obtained her doctorate from City University in 2005, based on her work into the problems and potential of Information Systems applications to create Business Value for organisations. She supports a number of IS academic conferences through her work as a member of conference committees. She is on the editorial panel for Information and Management

Keynote Speakers

Dr Jill Collis holds a BA (Honours) in Business Administration and a PhD in financial reporting by small, private companies. She specialises in teaching accounting to non-specialist students as well as research methods and has published a number of textbooks on both subjects. These include 'Business Accounting' and 'Business Research', which are the product of a transatlantic collaboration with Roger Hussey from the University of Windsor, Canada. Jill's teaching and writing, and her supervision of research students, reflect her experience as a mature student, which has given her considerable insight into the needs of both parties in the relationship. Her research focuses on the financial reporting needs of small and medium-sized unlisted companies and the impact of changes in the regulatory framework. Not surprisingly, her publications include studies for the accountancy profession: *The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales*; *The Professional Oversight Board of the Financial Reporting Council* and the government: *The Department of Trade and Industry*; and most recently, *the Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform*. Some of the research instruments developed for these studies have been used by the regulators in Denmark, Malaysia and Japan.

Jill regularly presents papers at the European Accounting Association's conferences. In 2007, her paper on the contribution of the UK and Denmark to the harmonisation of audit exemption was awarded a bursary from Ernst & Young to attend the International Accounting Section Conference of the American Accounting Association in Charleston, South Carolina. However, this was just a one-off. Jill's more regular contribution to international community is as a member of the working party set up by the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group and the Federation of European Accountants, which meets in Brussels. Their task is to respond to the latest proposals relating to the International Accounting Standard for unlisted companies and the simplification of accounting and auditing regulation for smaller entities in EU company law.

Biographies of contributing authors (in alphabetical order)

Emad Abu-Shanab earned his PhD in business administration, majoring in MIS area in 2005 from Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, USA. He is an instructor at the MIS department in Yarmouk University, where he teaches courses like operations research, e-commerce, e-government, introductory courses in MIS, Production information systems and legal issues of computing, for both bachelor and master degree). His research interests are in the area of technology acceptance, E-government, E-learning, GDSS, and strategic issues of information systems

Sam Agyeman teaches Organisational Behaviour and Analysis, Business Decision Making and Research Methods in the Business School of the University of Lincoln in the UK. Originally qualified in Biochemistry and Zoology, he also has qualifications in Management Studies, Social Studies, an MBA, an MEd, and is currently in the advanced stages of a research degree in the School of Education of the University of Sheffield, UK. Sam has taught on short courses in various countries, including Northern Ireland, Bulgaria, Oman and Hong Kong and, for an extended period of time, was a Visiting Lecturer at the Netherlands Institute of Transport and Tourism, in Breda, The Netherlands. Prior to his involvement in tertiary education in the UK, he briefly taught Chemistry and Physics at the secondary level in Ghana; and was a Community Development Officer in the UK Government's Care in the Community programme for people with a learning disability. Sam's research interests are in learning in higher education, the organisational experiences of Black people, and complexity theory.

Andrew Armitage is an Associate Lecturer at the Open University Business School in Business Research Methods and a full-time faculty memeber in the Ashcroft International Business School (AIBS) at Anglia Ruskin University. Andrew supervises postgraduate disserations and PhD students, and has had 90 master's dissertation completions and two completions at PhD level. He is currently supervising 7 PhD and 10 masters students. Andrew has taught research methods to postgraduate and doctoral students for 12 years and is chair of the AIBS Research Ethics Committee. He is is also an extrnal examiner for PhD's and a chair of examiners for PhD examinations.

Marie Ashwin is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Management, Leadership and Organisation within the Business School at the University of Hertfordshire. She has spent the last 16 years delivering research methods at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in universities around the world. Currently she is involved in developing a teaching programme with colleagues in the Ecole de Management de Normandie, in France

Christos Athanasoulis BA (Athens), MA (Lancaster), PhD (Aston-in-Birmingham) has a wide range of teaching interests and experience at undergraduate, Masters and DBA level. His research interests include critical management studies, qualitative research and the currency of post-modernism in the study of management.

Miguel Baptista Nunes, BSc, MSc; PhD, MBCS, FHEA, FIMIS is a Senior Lecturer in Information Management at the 5*A RAE Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield. In teaching terms, Miguel is actively interested in information systems modelling, design and development; database design and implementation; information systems project management. In research terms, Miguel is currently involved in a number of projects in the areas of instructional systems design; web based learning environments for active and distance learning; information systems, risk management and project management of information systems. He has more than 150 publications ininm these fields, including a recent book on action research in e-learning.

Peter Bednar is an Engineer and Senior Lecturer. Since 1997, he has been working as an academic. His research covers contextual analysis, organizational change and information systems development, and he has published several book chapters and many articles in these fields. He is currently a member of the Information Systems group in the School of Computing at the University of Portsmouth, UK and is also affiliated to the Department of Informatics at Lund University, Sweden.

Patrick Bradbery is a highly experienced manager, researcher and educator, with a broad range of skills gathered over a varied and extensive career in large and small business, university and TAFE. He is currently the Director of the Professional Development Unit in the Faculty of Business at Charles Sturt University. He has spent many years in business and management education, including eleven years as a Lecturer in Management at Charles Sturt University. His research interests are in the areas of learning, cognitive development and the learning organisation.

Elisa Chami-Castaldi obtained a 1st class BSc(Hons) degree in European Management Science from Swansea University. She spent a year of study on an Erasmus placement at the University of Pavia (Italy) within the Faculty of Economics. Since graduating, she was awarded a doctoral scholarship at Bradford University School of Management, where she has been pursuing her research topic and taking part in teaching and supervision activities. In her spare time, she is an ongoing member of the UK Erasmus Student Committee, and was appointed by the British Council as one of the UK's Bologna Experts.

Robert Culpepper is a Professor of Management at Stephen F. Ausin State University in Texas and is a native of Louisiana. He studied at Louisiana State University, the University of Alabama, and the University of Heidelberg, and lived in Heidelberg four years. Dr. Culpepper's research interests include turnover, multi-dimensional commitment, and with respect to research methodology - culture-related response bias. He has published more than twenty articles, including methodology-related papers in journals such as Educational and Psychological Measurement and the Journal of Occupational Psychology

Barbara Crump. Barbara's research involves evaluation of digital divide projects, the latest of which is the e-Rider technical support pilot project. Another area of research interest is the low numbers of women employed in computing industry that has resulted in three projects over the past decade. She continued this theme while at the University of Malaya in 2004. Barbara teaches information systems at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.

Linda Dawson is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University, Melbourne. She is also Director of the Mobile Health Research Group. She received her PhD in 2002 from Monash University where she has been teaching e-business, research methods and systems development units since 2000. Her research is often based on qualitative case studies or action research.

David Douglas is a member of Staffordshire University Business School where he holds various appointments within the University and the Business School's postgraduate activities. His particular areas of research interest situate within four related fields: 1. Research Methodology - interests in post-positivist and post-modernist approaches, critical and interpretive methodologies with particular interests in grounded theory, case study, and repertory grid analysis. 2. Decision Theory - particular interests in entrepreneurs' cognitive decision framing, management decision-making, naturalistic decision theory and human decision processes. 3. Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management - particular interests in actors' interfaces and behaviours. 4. David also has a professional-pedagogical interest in research supervision

Pete Dyer is currently reading for his Masters of Research degree at the University of Lincoln. He is also Project Coordinator for the Lincoln University Press' 'Occasional Working Paper Series' a student-led project. Pete's academic interests focus upon research methods, regulation and organisational behaviour.

José Esteves is professor and chair of Information Systems area at Instituto de Empresa, Madrid, Spain, since 2004. He is also chair of the Software AG- Alianza Sumaq research center in e-government. He received his Ph.D. in Information systems Universidad Politécnica de Catalunya (UPC), Barcelona, a Master and engineer degrees in Information systems from Universidade do Minho (UM), Portugal, and a Diploma in Business Administration from Instituto Superior de Tecnología Empresarial, Porto, Portugal. He is author of many articles about ERP systems published in international conferences, books and journals. His research interests focus on the implementation and use of enterprise systems, ERP, impact of information systems on organizations, user satisfaction, Benefits of information systems, e-government, knowledge management and its use at organizational level.

Svetla Georgieva obtained her BSc in Computer Systems and Technologies from the Technical University of Sofia, Bulgaria (2005) and her MSc in Computer Systems and Technologies, Technical University of Sofia, Bulgaria (2007). An important component of this MSc was the project which she obtained by research under the direction of Dr George Allan at the University of Portsmouth in the UK. The topic was Research and Analysis of Best Practices in IT Project Management. Svetla Georgieva worked as a Junior ASP.NET Developer at MAG Studio, Sofia, Bulgaria from 2005 to 2006. She then worked as anNET Web Developer at TyrusBlu Ltd., Sofia, Bulgaria from October 2006 to August 2007. She is currently an IT Project Manager at Lirex BS, Sofia, Bulgaria.

Daphne Hartney undergraduate academic background is in environmental and geographical science as well as sociology. Her most recent post-graduate qualification is a Masters degree in engineering management. She has seven years of work experience in environmental consulting, conservation program coordination and community-based natural resource management.

Alex Hiller is a Senior Lecturer at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University in the broad areas of services marketing and research methods. His research interests revolve around ethics in consumer behaviour and he has recently completed an MSc in Research Methods. He is currently undertaking a PhD, the focus of which centres around consumer perceptions of 'the moral contract' between the organisation and the customer.

Daire Hooper is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Business, Dublin Institute of Technology. Daire has a keen interest in quantitative research methodologies and is currently completing her doctoral dissertation within the area of services marketing. Using structural equation modelling, her dissertation examines the structural relations between environmental stimuli and internal and behavioural responses within a low involvement context.

Branka Krivokapic-Skoko is a Seniour Lecturer in Economics and Management at the School of Marketing and Management, Charles Sturt University, Bathurst. During last few years her research activities have focused on ethnic business communities, informal, ethnically-based business networks in agriculture, and generally multi-disciplinary perspectives on etrepreneurship. She also published in the area of mixed methodology and comparative method.

Bärbel Lauser is a part-time doctorial student at the Department of Strategic Management, Marketing and Tourism at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. She has several years of experience in business consulting and worked in the corporate development of a large organization. Her major research area is post merger integration and change management. She has teaching experience in the field of strategic management and process management.

John Mendy is at The University of Lincoln Business School. He is a full-time PhD student and a part-time lecturer in Human Resource Management and Research Methods. His current area of research interest is in the dynamics of organisational change management and culture issues. It is anticipated that over time, these research interests will revolve around communication forms that facilitate or hinder employee 'presence'-contributions during change interventions. Another emerging area of interest hinges upon the shifting nature of the boundary between what managers and employees are willing to contribute during times of uncertainty and stress.

Eriikka Paavilainen is a Ph.D. Student, funded by the Academy of Finland, in International Business at Turku School of Economics. Her research interests are in the field of International Business, focusing on international growth, entrepreneurship, SMEs, research methodology, case studies, longitudinal research, method triangulation, narratives, and process modeling.

Noel Pearse is a senior lecturer in the Rhodes Investec Business School of Rhodes University, where he is responsible for co-ordinating the research activities of the school and the MBA modules related to People Management. His research interests are in the areas of strategic human resource management, leadership, change management and organisation development.

Guo Chao Peng, BSc is currently a PhD student at the Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield. He held a 1st class degree in BSc Information Management and is the recipient of an ORS scholarship awarded by the University. He has published regularly in the filed and presented refereed papers at a number of International conferences in information systems and research methods.

Martin Rich initially worked in the information systems sector as a consultant and project manager, before joining Cass Business School as a lecturer. During his career at Cass he has taken responsibility for a series of innovative applications of technology to management learning, all of them underpinned by a thorough research foundation. His interests centre on applying the scholarship of teaching and learning to management education.

Peter Sharp is a doctor in Knowledge Management (KM) and information systems (IS) development strategy. He manages the postgraduate Research, Dissertation and Business Skills Programmes at Regent's Business School London. He is a Senior Lecturer and MA Programme Manager experienced in the development, validation and implementation of MA programmes. He is also a PhD supervisor. He pioneered a new KM method for organisations called MaKE [tm] which has been applied in a wide range of organisations. He is a member of a range of relevant professional groups and is currently interested in the field of how to create effective knowledge centres in organisations and how action research can address organisational problems.

Gisela Schulte Agyeman has been working with Kingston upon Hull, City Psychological Service since 2002. Her work involves consulting and advising on special educational needs of children (aged 0-19 years) in the city. She also teaches p/t for the University of Hull, Centre for Lifelong Learning and has been with them for 19 years. Subjects taught in this time include Human Development, Organisational Psychology, Research Methods and Mental Health as well as dissertation supervision. Gisela was a full time member at the University of Lincoln for 11 years, teaching German and then switching to teach Psychology in the Department of Applied Social Sciences and Social Work. Before joining the University of Lincoln, she taught in Further, Higher and Adult Education. Prior to this she worked in Social Services, Adult mental health care in the community.She is particularly interested in areas of research which involve representing the 'under-represented', having researched black and ethnic minority pupils' views and the voices of students with disabilities in HE, previously.

Jim Underwood is a senior lecturer in Information Systems at the University of Technology, Sydney and has been teaching and researching the social aspects of IS development for nearly 40 years. He was originally a mathematician and has worked for several IT consulting companies. His interests include the politics of information systems development, the dynamics of learning, and the meaning of knowledge and self in a virtual society, approached through the philosophical lenses of Foucault, Latour and Deleuze (amongst others).

Christine Welch is a Principal Lecturer in the Dept. Strategy & Business Systems at the University of Portsmouth, where she teaches Research Methods and Information Systems. Her research interests include critical systemic thinking, contextual analysis and organizational change, especially in relation to information systems. She has published several book chapters and articles in these fields. She is a member of the Board of the UK Systems Society and is convenor of its Southern Regional Centre based at Portsmouth.

Amin Wibowo is a PhD candidate at GSB Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia. He earned his Bachelor degree in Management (1993) from Faculty of Economics, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia, and MBA (1998) from Monash University, Australia. His research interest is in the area of corporate governance with a focus on internal corporate governance in a behavioural perspective. He is a member of Faculty of Economics, Gadjah Mada University.

Dynamic Systems Analysis: The Technology Acceptance Model

Emad Abu-Shanab
Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan

Abstract: As technology become more important and contributes to all aspects of our lives, research in the area of technology acceptance is concentrating more and more on users and their perceptions towards using the system. On the other hand, technology acceptance research concentrated on the *static* view of models, where variables are static in their influences and relationships. This view comes short in our changing environment as life is not static in most cases and approximating relationships within this domain towards a static view is not that accurate, thus dynamic analysis comes handy in describing and understanding the situations and the relationships between variables. The final condition in a relationship might not be as expected and if yes might not take the same path in all cases. *Dynamic analysis* existed in the literature since ages, but rarely been used in technology acceptance domain and even in behavioral models This conceptual paper describes an extensively researched model in the area of technology acceptance: the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Fred Davis (1989), where perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEoU) are hypothesized to be influencing usage (or behavioral intention). This work explores the TAM model from more than one tool in dynamic perspectives and does this analysis based on Melcher's guidelines in theory building standards (2006). The tools used in dynamic views are: feedback or interdependence loops, curvilinear relationships, and amplifying and deviation loops. Also, when analyzing the TAM, we need to redefine variables, and inspect the causality and interdependence concepts. Then, the paper analyzes the model based on prevailing theories in the dynamic analysis domain and contrasts that to the static view. The paper contrasted two situations and ended up with a third scenario that needs to be explored. Conclusions and future research are portrayed at the end of the paper.

Keywords: Dynamic systems, TAM, theory building, feedback loops, curvilinear relationships, deviation and amplifying loops

Advising Students Studying Sensitive Topics: Experiences and Challenges

Sam Agyeman
Lincoln Business School, University of Lincoln, UK

Abstract: Dissertation and theses supervisors find themselves, occasionally, faced with student research proposals that, although interesting in themselves may, nevertheless, involve the danger of encroaching on research participants' sensibilities. Institutional ethical guidelines notwithstanding, there would seem to be the need for sharing experience on researching sensitive topics that are ethical, safe and exciting. Research on issues concerning race and disability; research on sensitive issues in students' own organisations; research that risks unearthing suppressed and painful emotions and memories: these are among the many types of research that supervisors and research boards occasionally find themselves confronted with.

Drawing on personal experience and the experiences of students and colleagues, the paper examines possible approaches to navigating the potentially dangerous waters of student research that borders on the sensitive.

Keywords: Student research, sensitive topics, ethics, reflexivity

The Delphi Technique and Educating Entrepreneurs for the Future

Trevor Amos and Noel Pearse
Rhodes University, South Africa

Abstract: The creation of wealth is an important issue in any society, and entrepreneurship is regarded as an important catalyst in the creation of new wealth. This presents a challenge to develop entrepreneurship successfully. An important site for the development of entrepreneurship is higher education. The challenge however, is that there is a lack of a general understanding on how to educate students for entrepreneurship. In addition, current thought and practice on entrepreneurship education is historically biased, implying that graduates are essentially prepared for the past instead of for the future. From the perspective of higher education, the problem is how to develop current students to be entrepreneurial in the future. What is needed is to project into the future and then to develop an understanding of what should be taught as well as how it should be taught today.

A versatile research technique that can assist in achieving this objective is the Delphi technique, as it is used to conduct futures research or research into areas where knowledge is incomplete. The Delphi method is a type of group interview, using the collective opinion of knowledgeable experts. The technique makes use of several rounds of data collection and feedback to create a consensus of opinion.

Making use of the Delphi technique, research is being designed that will formulate expert-based strategic guidelines on entrepreneurial education within the South African higher education sector. The aim of this paper is to illustrate the research design considerations that arise in the use of the Delphi technique for this purpose and how they are addressed.

The main characteristics of the Delphi are presented and arguments for the use of the Delphi within a constructivist paradigm are discussed. Practical issues related to the design of the Delphi, panel-member selection, and the formulation of panel questions, are examined. In illustrating these design considerations, the paper demonstrates a pragmatic approach to research design as well as the importance of creating coherence between the research question, the research paradigm, the research method and its use, encouraging research practitioners to adopt a more systematic, deliberate and philosophically-based approach to research design.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Delphi technique, higher education, entrepreneurial education, innovation

Meditations on Self Practice: An Autobiographical Discourse

Andrew Armitage
Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK

Abstract This paper reports a personal journey of undertaking autobiographical research. This is an often underused approach in management disciplines, but it is one that has much to offer in terms of revealing new perspectives and realities of the research process that are not normally reported in the academic literature. Reporting research through personal accounts when searching for truth can be an emancipatory experience as it challenges the author to reflect critically upon his or her own professional practice in a manner that might not sit comfortably with their own perceived reality of what actually happened. For those who publish their research findings this can painful as it calls into question the veracity of any truth claims made.

Autobiographies attend carefully to context or setting and offer fresh perspectives on established truths. However to be accepted as scholarship, edited conversation or correspondence must not only have coherence and structure, but that it should provide argumentation and convincing evidence. As such, Interpretations made of the autobiography should not only reveal but also interrogate the relationship, contradictions, and the limits of the views presented by those who adopt this approach. Furthermore the psychological disposition of the researcher (as 'self') manifests itself in the tension between' others' and the 'self'' regarding how the researcher reveals themselves to the outside world. Therefore, this paper is presented in 'two movements'. The first is an autobiographical account of conducting research – a personal account of creating reality. The second is an autobiographical discourse where I interpret my journey. The conclusions posit the notion that the autobiography is a personal journey that commences with the 'self' findings its place in the world.

Keywords: Power, knowledge, the 'self'', postmodernism, existentialism

Undertaking a Structured Literature Review or Structuring a Literature Review: Tales from the Field

Andrew Armitage and Diane Keeble-Allen
Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK

Abstract A diversity of sources of literature encompassed by the management disciplines appears to result in a growing need for a systematic methodology to map the territory of management theory. As such, when scoping out a study, Structured Literature Review (SLR) can be considered as a means by which any critical, central literature might be considered. However, there is little guidance, or evidence, of this being undertaken for the purposes of small scale projects such as undergraduate or Masters' dissertations.

This paper reports four case studies of master's degree students following management programmes of undertaking a Structured Literature Review (SLR) and the issues and problems they had to encounter during their journey. The findings from the case studies suggest that in terms of time to complete and the volume of output required in terms of word count, Tranfield et al's (2003) approach to SLR's, whilst suited to doctoral level research is not appropriate generally when dealing with undergraduate and masters research projects. Therefore, this paper provides accounts of the experiences of four students who undertook a SLR for their undergraduate or master's degree dissertation. The paper identifies that these students had to deal with a new set of conceptual problems relating to this 'unorthodox' approach to a postgraduate research dissertation in coming to terms with new paradigms of enquiry that are not normally taught as part of a traditional research methods course. This was despite gaining a greater depth of insight into the subject area through a more rigorous and structured manner.

The paper presents alternative remedies by way of a Rapid Structured Literature Review (RSLR) model. This would appear to be more appropriate to the conducting of small scale literature based research projects when used with undergraduate and master's degree students than the SLR identified for other research activities.

Keywords: Systematic literature reviews, synthesis, rapid structured literature reviews

Let's Focus Here …

Marie Ashwin[1] and Alan Hirst[2]
[1]Business School, University of Hertfordshire, UK
[2]London South Bank University, UK

Abstract The use of focus groups has become more common across academia as a way of gaining insight into a range of issues, from a Dean's forum to garner views from student representatives within the quality process, to a data collection activity for a piece of undergraduate coursework. This paper discusses the innovative approach within the University of Hertfordshire Business School to introduce Level 2 students to the theoretical and practical aspects of running a focus group. Discussions amongst colleagues revealed concerns about how students might be better prepared to undertake a piece of live research with local companies as part of the Level 2 Marketing Planning and Practice module. It was concluded that by designing an innovative collaborative learning experience to deliver the theory and offer student the opportunity to take part in a focus group, the teaching team would be able to monitor the effect upon the student experience and assess its impact upon the work produced.

Designed as a two week element within the module it included a two hour introduction to the planning and development of a focus group, from identification of the appropriate theoretical base, through developing the schedule, running the event and finally doing something with the data collected. In this session the students were introduced to the subject matter, social networking on the Internet. The use of a television studio to record the focus group two days after the initial session was a key element of this exercise. The focus group comprised of students from within the module who volunteered to both run and participate in the session. Support for the event resulted in a number of additional observers who were able to record and feedback their views of what took place.

Other than setting the scene and giving the facilitator, note-taker and observers guidance sheets there was no other preparation. Using the resulting DVD in the second two hour session, which took place one week later, we were able to sustain the attention of the group during the session as the novelty of seeing their classmates on screen boosted their interest. They were encouraged to work through a short section of the DVD to produce a transcript and start annotating it. Realising that it took almost fifteen minutes to transcribe two minutes of film emphasised the amount of time they would need to commit to their assessment. As a mechanism for delivering specialist information on methodology within a second year module the teaching team concluded that the practical and participative nature of the delivery produced far greater recognition of the requirements for undertaking a focus group within a research project than a purely lecture-based delivery had in previous years. Student feedback revealed that their understanding and expectations of the task had been significantly impacted upon by the revelation that such qualitative research activities were not a 'soft option' to other more quantitative approaches.

Keywords Focus groups, exploratory research, qualitative data collection, collaborative learning

Teaching Research Methods to Greek MBA Students

Christos Athanasoulis
University of Piraeus, Greece

Abstract: Research Methods courses have gained popularity in the MBA programmes in the last years. What is discussed in this paper is the author's experience with delivering these courses to Greek MBA students, the problems encountered plus a "new" approach used with satisfactory results.

Keywords: Research methods, teaching, MBA, methodology, philosophy, conceptual frameworks

Inductive Approaches Using a Priori Coding in Information Systems Research: A Discussion

Miguel Baptista Nunes and Salim Hilal Al-Mamari
University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract: Inductive research is known to be highly time consuming, very intensive and require mature levels of reflexivity. Awareness of these constraints and requisites is of particular importance when advising PhD students in adopting this type of research approach, due to the very restrictive constraints posed by this type of research programme. This paper aims at discussing ways to focus and scaffold inductive research processes through the use of *a priori* theory. The paper intends to challenge the ongoing "reinventing the wheel" syndrome that results from unbiased open coding of social phenomena without taking into account established theory and previous studies. It also intends to challenge the assumption that a purist inductive process is adequate for tight time limited projects undertaken by inexperienced researchers. Finally, this paper aims at discussing ways to ensure shorter processes of inductive research and attaining theoretical saturation. This is extremely important to ensure continued credibility of inductive studies at PhD level in Information Systems.

Keywords: Inductive research, information systems, a priori coding, bias in inductive research

Beyond the Usual Suspects: Critically Informed Research

Peter Bednar[1 2] and Christine Welch
[1]Lund University, Sweden
[2]University of Portsmouth, UK

Abstract: All applications of research methods draw upon some underpinning philosophical framework. However, while in some paradigms this underpinning is made explicit, in others it tends not to be (Radnitzky, 1973; Nissen, 1984). Academic work is elaborated upon from within perspectives of many research paradigms. This has been presented in, for example, work by Burrell and Morgan (1979) and Radnitzky (1973). A number of researchers (e.g. Held, 1980; Honneth, 1991; Ngwenyama, 1991) have attempted to define and encapsulate the essence of 'critical research'. It has been suggested to encompass interpretation of social phenomena, and goes beyond this to examine underlying assumptions; it seeks for understandings that could support efforts to bring about beneficial change (Klein (2007). It has been further suggested that such work is characterised by: concern with substantive social issues (e.g. power, values); foundation in a cohesive socio-theoretical core; and a distinctive role in informing the work of others. Within this definition, critical researchers tend to fall into a number of distinct traditions of thought/practice. Reflecting on critically informed research, we can recognise distinctive traditions of thought/practice of critical research. Examples include: those influenced by the work of Habermas (1984) concern themselves with issues relating to emancipation of (other) people within society; Some thinkers e.g. those deriving from Foucault's (1975) discussion of external power relations, focus upon issues of self-emancipation; Others, e.g. those taking inspiration from work by Bourdieu (1984), highlight issues relating to social stratification and discriminatory practices in society. For instance, some concern themselves with issues relating to emancipation of (other) people within society. Some focus upon issues of self-emancipation. Others highlight issues relating to social stratification and discriminatory practices in society. Clearly there are other categories of critical research. In this paper, we wish to explore further two in particular. We introduce work by Gregory Bateson (1972) and Claudio Ciborra (2002) as complementary exemplars of critical systemic thinking. Critically-informed research from a *systemic* perspective involves a desire to explore the unique and to question assumptions – not only those of other people but also our own. As critically informed researchers of social phenomena, it is important that we specifically recognise the double hermeneutic involved, i.e. we are considering behaviour of people who are themselves consciously reflecting on their experiences, and whose sense-making processes are individually unique. In critical systemic perspectives, engagement with reflection and exploration gives rise to perception of emergence as a key feature.

Keywords: Critical systemic thinking, phenomenology, contextual dependency, philosophy as practice

Is Modernism v Postmodernism a Relevant Discussion?

Peter Bednar and Christine Welch
University of Portsmouth, UK

Abstract: As travellers, we are usually aware that a map is not the territory it represents. However, as researchers, inquiring into practice, are we always aware of the domain within which that practice is situated? Descriptions of practice sometimes suggest that this is not the case. For example, do engineers actually believe that the models they develop and use are reflections of some reality? It is likely that an engineer never actually follows his models when developing an artefact or process. Similarly, we can ask ourselves whether we believe that a chef actually cooks by following a recipe. Possibly, only someone who does not know how to cook would think so. These idealised are simply the basis for discussion/reflection and experimentation? It is sometimes the case, however, that *descriptions* of practice are produced based in a kind of rationality that suggests these misapprehensions are appropriate. In the context of research, can we say that postmodernism has any relevance? If, in the field of practice, only the uninitiated ever had illusions that the 'grand theories' of 'modernism' could be directly applicable, then informed research must recognize this also. To those with no illusions, such 'grand theories' were a basis for reflection and critique. Thus, to this extent we have always been 'modern' and still are. Rather than espousing a Postmodernist perspective, we might point to 'Hypermodernism' – a recognition that the 'grand theories' can only be used as metaphors, i.e. a basis for practical philosophy. By adopting such a stance, it is possible to avoid a false step of fighting 'straw men' and dismissing as worthless research which could be useful material for reflection and learning when juxtaposed with other perspectives on practice. Models and explanatory frameworks within which research has been conducted need not be rejected as 'modernist' if there is recognition of their useful role as metaphor. At the same time, we suggest a need for a critically-informed approach to research which sheds light upon taken-for-granted assumptions and naïve rationalities, illuminating metaphor and stimulating reflection.

Keywords: Models; practice; practical philosophy; metaphor

Crossing The Rubicon: From Quantitative Objectivism to Transcendental Phenomenology

Patrick Bradbery
Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, Australia

Abstract: This paper describes the search for meaning engaged by the author in his research on the learning organisation. The research was undertaken as part of his Doctor of Business Administration degree, which has a requirement that it make a contribution to professional practice. What began as a rather straightforward attempt to quantify qualitative research carried out by Bill Torbert and colleagues, transformed into a transcendental phenomenological investigation of the essence of the experiences of learning, development and the learning organisation. The journey was catalysed by the difficulty of making sense of the relationships among the three common components of a research paradigm – ontology, epistemology and methodology. In the course of this struggle, the conventional wisdom of parallel alignment of these three components was challenged. This challenge inspired the development of a three-dimensional model of research paradigms, which is described in this paper. Resolution of the paradigm dilemma in this way provided the foundation from which a transformation of the research project could be launched. It allowed recognition that the ontology of the learning organisation was far from settled, and there was a clear justification for “going back to the thing itself”. Furthermore, as investigation of the meaning of the learning organisation proceeded, the clearer did it become that underpinning concepts like learning and development were confused.

Encouraged by one of two supervisors, the Moustakas framework of transcendental phenomenology was applied to the three phenomena (learning, development and the learning organisation). This research eventually provided the basis for developing recommendations for enhancements to professional practice in management, education and research. However, as the research proceeded, there was an underlying unease on the part of the second supervisor. Although well-versed in qualitative research, his lack of familiarity with the Moustakas framework, combined with concern about the professional practice outcomes caused ongoing concern, finally resolved only by the positive responses of examiners. The successful application of transcendental phenomenology to the clarification of the essence of the learning organisation and its underpinning phenomena demonstrated in this study provides encouragement for a similar application in other organisational and management research contexts. The methodology provided new insights into the phenomena investigated. These new insights provide a “launching pad” for more meaningful research into the phenomena than was likely to occur prior to the investigation.

Keywords: Transcendental phenomenology; learning organisation; research paradigms; professional practice; professional doctorate; paradigm dilemma

Individualised Rating-Scale Procedure: A Means of Reducing Response Style Contamination in Survey Data?

Elisa Chami-Castaldi, Nina Reynolds and James Wallace
University of Bradford, UK

Abstract: Response style bias has been shown to seriously contaminate the substantive results drawn from survey data; particularly those conducted using cross-cultural samples. As a consequence, identification of response formats that suffer least from response style bias has been called for. Previous studies show that respondents' personal characteristics, such as age, education level and culture, are connected with response style manifestation.

Differences in the way respondents interpret and utilise researcher-defined fixed rating-scales (e.g. Likert formats), poses a problem for survey researchers. Techniques that are currently used to remove response bias from survey data are inadequate as they cannot accurately determine the level of contamination present and frequently blur true score variance. Inappropriate rating-scales can impact on the level of response style bias manifested, insofar as they may not represent respondents' cognitions. Rating-scale lengths that are too long present respondents with some response categories that are not 'meaningful', whereas rating-scales that are too short force respondents into compressing their cognitive rating-scales into the number of response categories provided (this can cause ERS contamination – extreme responding). We are therefore not able to guard against two respondents, who share the same cognitive position on a continuum, reporting their stance using different numbers on the rating-scale provided. This is especially problematic where a standard fixed rating-scale is used in cross-cultural surveys.

This paper details the development of the Individualised Rating-Scale Procedure (IRSP), a means of extracting a respondent's 'ideal' rating-scale length, and as such 'designing out' response bias, for use as the measurement instrument in a survey. Whilst the fundamental ideas for self-anchoring rating-scales have been posited in the literature, the IRSP was developed using a series of qualitative interviews with participants. Finally, we discuss how the IRSP's reliability and validity can be quantitatively assessed and compared to typical fixed researcher-defined rating-scales, such as the Likert format.

Keywords: Scale length, response styles, response bias, survey research, cross-cultural surveys, individualised rating-scale procedure

A Framework for Mixed Stakeholders and Mixed Methods

Barbara Crump and Keri Logan
Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand

Abstract: Balancing stakeholder expectations and requirements is frequently a challenge for the ethical researcher contracted to evaluate government-funded community projects. Invariably these projects involve people from diverse backgrounds with their own agenda and expectations for the project. This was the scenario for adopting a mixed-method evaluation of Wellington's Smart Newtown community computing project where free Internet access as well as some computer skills training were made available at the newly-established computing centres. The four-year, multiple stakeholder evaluation project involved qualitative and quantitative approaches, situated within a five-purpose conceptual framework of: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion. The framework provided a robust platform that ensured a systematic and thorough approach in both collection and analysis of data. In this paper we describe the application of each "purpose" of the framework to the different data sets that resulted in an objective, impartial evaluation which was subsequently used for deciding future directions of publicly-funded community computing centres.

Keywords Mixed method, evaluation, community computing, triangulation

Investigating the Use of Likert-Type, Variable-Response Items in Cross-Cultural Research: The Influence of Culture-Based Response Bias

Robert Culpepper[1], Liming Zhao[2] and Joseph Ballenger[1]
[1]Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches USA
[2]Lexmark, Inc., Lexington, USA

Abstract This study addressed a neglected but crucial methodological concern in all cross-national research employing survey methodology, culture-related response bias. Specifically, we focused on response biases thought to be in play when comparing survey results of American, Chinese, and South Korean respondents. Employing a sample of 203 American and Chinese managers employed by parent companies of Chinese joint ventures (JVs), we sought to determine which of two conflicting theoretical positions in the literature could be supported. One view holds that based on a cultural trait called Asian overconfidence, Chinese subjects tend to exhibit extreme response bias on Likert-type, variable-response items, e.g., they tend to choose "1"s and "7"s on a seven-point scale. The second theoretical position predicts that Chinese modesty norms will lead to a cautious, or midpoint, bias for Chinese survey respondents. These two positions have coexisted in the literature for some time, each making virtually no mention of the opposing view. We predicted that these seemingly incompatible views would both be supported, although contingent on the type of rating task employed in surveys.

We analyzed response patterns for the three types of performance measurement ratings employing MANOVA. Consistent with knowledge-related overconfidence theory, when respondents were tasked with rating performance criteria item stems according to factual observation - i.e., usage frequency of respective criteria - Chinese gave much more extreme responses than Americans. Theory also suggests that Chinese respondents revert to a sense of accepted folk wisdom for value judgments and do not fully consider pros and cons/counterevidence. Consistent with this view, Chinese assigned comparatively extreme responses on nomothetic rating tasks requiring respondents to assign a level of general importance to respective performance criteria. The third type of rating task, rating the JVs actual performance on respective items, was idiographic in nature. That is, in contrast to the first two types of rating tasks, ratings addressed a specific case and had no general or universal application. For these items, Chinese managers gave significantly more cautious or modest responses than did Americans. We explained how these findings help resolve contradictory theory and empirical inferences drawn in the literature. In addition, we reviewed previous work employing samples from historically Confucian cultures, with particular attention to the type of items used. The review indicated that taking differences in item type into account helps explain the counterintuitive divergence in previous findings related to response bias. Finally, a third analysis comparing Korean and MBA students showed the predicted divergence in survey response bias, based on item type.

Keywords: Likert, response bias, response style, culture

Active Exploration of Emerging Themes in Interpretive Case Study Research: The “Evolutionary Case” Approach

Linda Dawson
Monash University, Caulfield East, Australia

Abstract: The evolutionary case approach provides a framework for qualitative case study research in information systems (IS). It uses revelation, reinforcement, reflection and re-examination to explicitly explore emerging themes in interpretive case study research. The method is based on the progressive development of a theoretical model of the area under study grounded initially in the literature and then refined using sequential case studies grounded in practice. The method addresses the gap which often separates data from conclusions in qualitative case study research by documenting the “revealed” and “reinforced” changes in the theoretical model as it evolves from the empirical data. The paper provides an illustrative study of the use of models in object-oriented requirements engineering to demonstrate the use of the evolutionary case approach.

Keywords: Case study, action research, qualitative, object-oriented, requirements engineering

A Critical Examination of Mixing Methods for Developing Business and Management Theories

David Douglas
Business School ,Staffordshire University, UK

Abstract This paper contributes to the deficient stock of literature focusing on the mixing of research methods in business and management inquiries. This critical review has three sections. Firstly, the paper discusses the contemporary, and developing, nature of the mixed methods movement. Secondly, a discussion considers the mixing of methods, which brings together both qualitative and quantitative ontology, and arguably a connection with empirical reality, that seeks to enhance relevant and valid theory development. Finally, a critical review of measures of 'good theory' as mediating factors that assist in establishing of mixing methods 'worthiness' as theory building research strategy concludes the paper.

Keywords: Mixed methods, theory building, critical review

How to Protect the Fledgling Researcher Connected with Emergent Research and Learning Initiatives: What are the Ethical and Sensitivity Issues?

Peter Dyer
University of Lincoln, UK

Abstract: Any collaborative research study must account for ethical considerations. This paper will focus upon a recent research collaboration and consultation project involving the University of Lincoln, one of its research students and a local Lincolnshire voluntary sector organization regarding a new housing development. Encouraging "*research informed and engaged research*" is an increasingly popular method of teaching a range of research focused degrees. What ever the undoubted benefits to stakeholders, be they the university faculty, the research or organizational student, the commissioners or client and its key workers or the wider local community, there are potential pitfalls for all concerned. It is clear that issues and challenges arise with this form of arrangement. How does the university faculty maintain a degree of control, whilst at the same time encouraging this type of research prospect for the student, and ensure the student is shielded from unnecessary pressure to uphold the reputation of university and client alike. The paper will attempt to answer questions such as:

What tensions does this bring to the relationships; what are the ethical issues are there any conflicts of interests; what is the "*duty of care*" and "*risk assessment*" to both student and client; how can trust be developed and maintained with the client and finally how can these issues be addressed within the research design and process. The paper will assess whether this type of research collaboration is appropriate for a research student and how might safeguards be put in place to ensure the experience is a positive one.

Keywords: Ethical issues, research studies, client and stakeholder relationships, risk assessment

Using Visual Techniques In Research: The Case Of Correspondence Analysis

Jose Esteves and Victor Bohorquez
Instituto de Empresa, Madrid, Spain

Abstract:: The correspondence analysis technique is an increasingly popular research technique to gain insight into complex problems. Over the past few decades correspondence analysis has gained an international reputation as a powerful statistical tool for the graphical analysis of contingency tables. The aim of this paper is to present and discuss the use of this technique in order to improve the interpretation of findings in research studies. Based on the application of correspondence analysis technique in a research study that attempts to analyze the gender discourse in corporate blogs, we draw some lessons.

Keywords: Correspondence analysis, visual techniques, advantages, graphical displays

Project Management through a Grounded Theory Lens

Svetla Georgieva[1] and George Allan[2]
[1]Technical University of Sofia, Bulgaria
[2]University of Portsmouth, UK

Abstract: Grounded Theory is still regarded with skepticism as a research methodology by many academics.. This paper reports on the practical application of Grounded Theory to a recent investigation into *best practice* amongst European Project Managers and makes two contribution to knowledge: one is to the growing literature on the use of Grounded Theory as a research methodology; the second is in discovering more about the characteristics of *best practice* among European Project Managers. The contribution to the growing literature on using Grounded Theory shows the individual data analysis methods of Open-Coding, Constant Comparison and Theoretical Sampling in operation and can be seen producing the findings. A visual method of showing open-codes contributing to concepts and those concepts contributing to the emergence of categories makes it easier for researchers to see the power of the Grounded Theory Methodology in action. The use of diagrams promotes a special awareness of the findings. These findings are then operated on with the Grounded Theory method of Theoretical Coding and produce some deeply influential conclusions. The contribution to project management shows that *best practice* emerges as a complex mix of known factors such as managing stakeholders (including customers), managing the project work (as distinct from project management), communications, knowledge transfer and motivating together with the establishment of two new concept of ‘awareing’ (which encapsulates positive and negative awareness in one’s-self and others) and ‘responsibilising’ (which encapsulates the two-way activity of giving and taking responsibility. This research has already had a positive effect on commerce through the feedback of conclusions to those who participated.

Keywords: Grounded theory, GTM, open coding, theoretical coding, conceptualization, project management

Building Knowledge – Developing a Grounded Theory of Knowledge Management for Construction

Brian Graham and Ken Thomas
Waterford Institute of Technology, Republic of Ireland

Abstract: As part of an on-going doctoral study, a constructivist approach to grounded theory is being used to develop an integrated model of knowledge management (KM) for the leading Irish construction organisations. Using multiple data collection methods; employees in a number of these organisations have participated, from recent graduates through to senior managers. While the need to effectively manage knowledge within large construction organisations is well recognised, a gap exists between the theory of KM and its implementation in practice. This paper considers the research in terms of its philosophical position, the use of grounded theory and the research methods utilised, from theoretical and practical perspectives. Progress in the study thus far is presented and future directions considered in achieving theoretical saturation and a well developed model. It is anticipated that the study will contribute to the field of construction management where further empirical research into KM is required. Much previous research in the area of KM in construction has focussed solely on technological, cultural or strategic issues in the development of KM models. The developed integrated model will form the basis of education and guidance resources on KM for the leading Irish construction organisations. As a traditional and pragmatic industry, the rationale for using grounded theory is provided from the viewpoint that it requires researchers to focus upon developing theory which produces explanations that are recognisable to the subjects of the research. In order to ensure the credibility of the developed model, it will be evaluated by industry as part of a pilot KM education programme, with further refinement if necessary.

Keywords: construction, constructivism, grounded theory, knowledge management, mixed methods

Educating Research Students for Employment in a Global Environment: A Practitioners View

Daphne Hartney and Corrinne Shaw
University of Cape Town, South Africa

Abstract: Managers in organisations have the responsibility of coordinating activities so as to maintain a reasonable degree of control and order over the entity for which they are responsible. However, the variables that they are responsible for managing are not static. Priorities and environments change and so variables change. The approach to understanding and implementing management practice therefore needs to be flexible enough to adapt to these changes. Current management research which aims to support managers in their daily practice has been criticised for not being practical enough and for being too compartmentalised in its approach. This approach to management research is largely underpinned by social science theory which emphasises the creation of 'true' and accurate descriptions rather than the creation of a better work or social environment. This paper argues for an alternate approach to management research – one that is underpinned by action research and systems theory, which are considered to be more action oriented and flexible and hence more enabling in the practical work environment. It aims to achieve this by justifying research that is conducted from an organisational and issue based perspective rather than from broad based theory; research that encourages the participation of non-experts that are affected by the issue at hand; and research that encourages the use of multiple methods in order to cover the range of organisational issues. This paper will discuss a research approach to addressing specific problems in the workplace, while addressing concerns regarding rigour and validity. A case study will be used to illustrate the application of the approach.

Keywords: Action research, systems theory, case study, management research, real world application of management theory, biodiversity conservation program coordination

Researching Ethical Consumer Behaviour: Reflections on an Emergent Methodology

Alex Hiller
Nottingham Trent University, UK

Abstract Consumers' ethical shopping habits are of increasing importance to organisations, but there has been little discussion and development of the methods used to research them. The purpose of this paper is to reflect on the methodology employed for an empirical study of consumers' ethical concerns in buying clothes. Research in consumer ethics has traditionally adopted positivist epistemologies, but interpretive approaches may be more appropriate for researching ambivalent consumers and the subjectivity of ethical beliefs. Whilst qualitative studies are beginning to emerge, this research adopts an interactive approach which is more appropriate for understanding consumers' shopping behaviour; the study seeks to not only understand consumers' ethical beliefs, but also the extent to which those beliefs are acted upon. The study therefore adopts an interpretivist epistemology with the data collection and analysis rooted in grounded theory. More specifically, the study takes an ethnographic approach in the form of existential-phenomenological interviews coupled with accompanied shopping. Due to the meta-ethical position adopted and the issue of social desirability bias, a key factor of the research is the decision not to immediately reveal to the respondents that the study is about *ethical* purchasing. The study finds that whilst the methodological stance and methods used are appropriate, the methods used could be refined to enhance data collection. In particular, respondents revealed that other criteria were more important in buying clothing, and as a result the research generated a great deal of data of indirect relevance to the study. To counter this, an ethical element should be introduced. Interactive synthesis is recommended as a mode of analysis to increase reliability by allowing a cross-case analysis whilst retaining an interpretive and constructivist approach. The findings of the research will be of value to anyone researching consumer or managerial ethics, grounded theorists or those interested in qualitative interactive research techniques.

Keywords: Consumer ethics, ethical shopping, clothing purchase, grounded theory, participant observation

Evaluating Model Fit: A Synthesis of the Structural Equation Modelling Literature

Daire Hooper[1], Joseph Coughlan[1] and Michael Mullen[2]
[1]Dublin Institute of Technology, Republic of Ireland
[2]Florida Atlantic University, USA

Abstract: The following paper presents current thinking and research on fit indices for structural equation modelling. The paper presents a selection of fit indices that are widely regarded as the most informative indices available to researchers. As well as outlining each of these indices, guidelines are presented on their use. The paper also provides reporting strategies of these indices and concludes with a presentation of the current debate on this pertinent area.

Keywords: Structural equation modelling fit indices, covariance structure modelling, reporting structural equation modelling

My Colleagues and My Filing Cabinet: Insider Research Access for Part-Time Post-Graduate Students

Deborah Knowles
Westminster Business School, London, UK

Abstract: Access is described as “one of the key and yet most difficult steps” in organizational research (Bryman and Bell, 2007:444). Typical definitions of business research access in the methods literature emphasise physical entry to premises and the establishment and maintenance of relationships with gate-keepers and potential respondents (Bryman and Bell, 2007:444; Coffey, 2006:1). This implies that the part-time student conducting insider research at their own workplace has nothing more to do to achieve the necessary access. The initial stage of this study bears out the necessity of testing the anecdotal model that students conducting insider research do not apply for research access in their employing organizations sufficiently early. It indicates that there are a number of bases for this, including misunderstanding of what research access means and a belief that negotiation of research access is unnecessary for insider researchers.

Keywords: Research methods, insider research, research methods teaching, postgraduate research projects, research access, research ethics

The Use of a Sequential Multi Method Research Design in Exploring Psychological Contracts Within Academia

Branka Krivokapic-Skoko and Grant O' Neill
Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, NSW, Australia

Abstract: It has been argued that in a workplace environment that is characterised by significant change and uncertainty, the formation and content of the psychological contracts that exist are of increasing importance regarding levels of employee trust, satisfaction, commitment and motivation, and teaching and research outcomes. While research has clearly demonstrated that psychological contracts can have considerable impact upon workplace relations and employee performance, research into the formation, content and effects of psychological contracts between academics and the University has been very limited.

The paper used a sequential multi methods research design to explore the formation and content of psychological contracts established by the academics within an Australian University. The focus groups were carried first to identify the issues and themes that can subsequently be drawn upon to assist with development of relevant survey questions. Focus groups sought to elicit insights and subjective interpretations of the psychological contracts and the consequences of perceived fulfilment or breach. This, first qualitative phase of research has identified four key foci of academic responsibility that greatly influenced the formation and effects of the psychological contracts that have been formed, and these are: the University, the discipline, society, and students. These four categories were used later on to further develop the questionnaire and carry out exploratory factor analysis of a larger survey of the academics.

Keywords: Mixed methods; psychological contracts; academia

Opportunities and Limitations of a Single Case Study Design for Researching the Post Merger Integration Process

Bärbel Lauser
University of Innsbruck, Austria

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to discuss the opportunities offered by, and limitations of, analysing the integration process and organisational changes following a merger through a single case study. The paper explores the variety of methods which can be combined in a mixed-method approach. Strong arguments are given for following a pragmatic approach and allowing methodological pluralism. The author argues that the integration of qualitative and quantitative research methods can give new insights into organisational change processes. Qualitative and quantitative research methods are not seen as opposites but as different perspectives of the same research question giving a better understanding of the processes which take place during organisational change. The research design, which is based on an 'Integration Excellence Framework' developed by the author, will be described. It combines the qualitative analysis of important enabling factors of the integration process, such as leadership or strategy, with the quantitative analysis of employee or customer surveys. This can be seen as a triangulation of the qualitative part of the research which is based on interviews, workshops and the analysis of documents. The paper elaborates the challenges, opportunities and limitations of the introduced single case research design and explains why a retrospective case study is recommended. The author shows that the in-depth analysis of one single case can generate new knowledge and contribute to a better understanding of the integration processes following an M&A by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. The author points out that there is a variety of methods which can be used in a single case design but each method requires a very different set of skills for data collection and interpretation. Nevertheless, the author hopes to motivate other researchers to use single case designs and take on the challenging opportunity to contribute to a mixed-method approach and develop new research designs.

Keywords: Mixed-method approach, qualitative research, quantitative research, post-merger integration, M&As, change processes

“Using Avatars in Management and Social Science Research”

John Mendy
University of Lincoln, UK

Abstract: This paper reports work aimed to identify how employees interact during times of exceptional change in four organisations. At such times, managers tend to impose various constraints on employees - to facilitate their going away, to make them aware of favours or the need for them, to induce them to contribute more to the business, to accept disadvantages such as lower wages, etc. (Fineman, 2000; Bauman, 2004). Employees do not always react as intended, of course. They may subvert the changes intended by the managers, they may leave, they may develop ways to make themselves necessary to change strategies and so on.

Such behaviours define the micro world of individual reactions to changes in organisations. They may be described in a number of ways. In this paper the responses from individuals in four organisations that recently had to adapt to exceptional external changes are analysed and show to demonstrate something that may be called ‘presence’. This concept refers to the fact that people (employees) may withdraw their experiences from interactions with their companies (lose presence), or they may increase the perception of their contribution (gain presence). In the latter case, the extreme is that the whole of an employee’s contributions becomes visible and in the former, that only part is visible. If presence is reduced in one context it may be increased in others. I use the notion of avatars in my data analysis to compare to changes people play in games of interactions, and the effects this may have on the way the games are played.

Further research is considered necessary to link this paper to aspects of individual and organisational development and to ways of changing interactions by the use of proper linguistic tools.

Keywords: Presence, exceptional organisational change, avatars, imposition, resistance

Longitudinal Research Methods Approaches in International Business - A Typology

Eriikka Paavilainen and Mélanie Raukko
Turku School of Economics, Finland

Abstract: Longitudinal research has been employed in several research fields. It is a versatile research approach encompassing various research methods and designs. However, the use of longitudinal designs is relatively unstructured and stratified, and there is a lack of a general definition of longitudinal research. An absence of solid methodological theorising on longitudinal research prevail the field of international business (IB). For discovering the variety of different longitudinal approaches in use, the authors conducted a literature review in four top-level IB journals for the time period of 2000–2005. To manage this fragmentation in longitudinal approaches, the authors developed a working definition for longitudinal research, which is used in the analysis. *The aim of this paper is to develop a typology of longitudinal approaches based on the findings of the literature review*.

Trying to find a best practice or a universal definition of longitudinal research is not purposeful, since, thus far, researchers have demonstrated a vivid imagination in applying the different versions of the approach. As said, the approach is versatile and flexible to alterations, depending on the research topic and aim. When providing the research community with a typology, the numerous ways of conducting longitudinal research are thoroughly examined.In the review the authors uncovered two main ways a study can be longitudinal; it can either be the data per se or the data collection method that makes the study longitudinal. Then again, a study can be either real-time or retrospective depending on the data or the method. In addition to these classifications, other emerged characteristics of longitudinal studies in IB are presented and discussed.

It has been argued that one of the main drawbacks of longitudinal research is that it is too costly, laborious, and time-consuming research design. Despite these aforementioned drawbacks, several researchers have observed and recognised the lack of, and the need for longitudinal studies, and many have recommended the use of longitudinal designs and proposed different approaches to conduct such a research.Addressing the fragmentation of the longitudinal approach and aiming at developing a typology in the IB field may clarify the approach, and thus also encourage researchers to adopt the approach with less hesitation. Research topics largely guide the approaches and designs used in a research. According to several researchers, longitudinal designs are beneficial when describing change and development and requiring deeper and richer data of a phenomenon. The contribution of this paper addresses mainly the academic community.

Keywords: Longitudinal research, international business, research methods

Issues and Difficulties in Doing Participative Research in China: Lessons Learned from a Survey in Information Systems Research

Guo Chao Peng and Miguel Baptista Nunes
University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract: Contextual, cultural and political differences between China and the West determine that research issues and difficulties, that may not generally be experienced and reported in the West, can occur during participative research processes in China. Disregarding these context specific issues can lead to either a complete failure of the research project or insignificant research findings (e.g. lack of response or meaningless responses to questionnaires). This paper reviews and discusses issues that obstruct researchers carrying out participative survey research in China. These include problems related with identifying an appropriate research sample, translating the survey instrument, retrieving an accurate company list, getting sufficient responses and finally getting earnest responses from participants. The causes for these potential problems are discussed in relation to the political, economic, social, historical and cultural conditions in China. This paper proposes and illustrates a set of heuristics to overcome these problems, based on the lessons learned from a questionnaire survey conducted in an ongoing PhD research project. The project aims to investigate the barriers and risks associated with the post-implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems in Chinese companies. This paper is particularly meaningful for researchers and research project supervisors, who already engage or are interested in doing research in China but are relatively unfamiliar with the research context there.

Keywords: Participative research in China, questionnaire surveys, information system, cultural differences, political differences

Theorising from Case Studies: Current Practices in International Business Journals

Rebecca Piekkari[1], Catherine Welch[2] and Eriikka Paavilainen[3]
[1]Helsinki School of Economics, Finland
[2]University of Sydney, Australia,
[3]Turku School of Economics, Finland

Abstract: The question of how to theorize from case studies has received considerable attention in the methodological literature in management (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007) as well as in other disciplines (George and Bennett, 2004). Theorizing, that is relating theory with empirical observations, can be viewed as an ongoing process, starting from theory generation, moving on to theory building or refinement, and continuing with theory testing. Two distinct positions toward the use of the case study in theorizing can be distilled from the methodological literature. The first position is the variable-oriented approach under which there are two sub-orientations, one by Eisenhardt (1989) and one by Yin (2003). The first one suggests that the case study has a clearly defined role in the early stages of theorizing. Eisenhardt (1989), who is commonly referred to as a methodological authority in management and organization studies, advocates the case study for inductive theory building. According to her, case studies are powerful in producing new theory to then be deductively tested by statistical methods. The case study is viewed as a means to an end where the ultimate goal of theorizing is positivistic, namely, “the development of testable hypotheses and theory which are generalizable across settings” (Eisenhardt 1989, p. 546). Set against this background, the role of the case study is limited to theory building. The second sub-orientation has been famously encapsulated by Yin (2003) as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory purposes of case research. While he acknowledges the use of case studies for various theoretical purposes, the positivistic quest for generalizable theory remains. The second position, also known as the case-oriented approach, grants the case study the broadest role in the process of theorizing. It is considered a legitimate approach to concept “formation, elaboration and refinement” (Ragin 1997, p. 31) as well as to test how and when the conditions of a theory apply (Mahoney and Goertz 2006). Rather than striving for generalizability, this approach valorises the context-specific nature of explanation or interpretation produced by case studies. It is often grounded in critical realist or interpretive traditions. Under the case-oriented approach there are two sub-orientations stemming from the political sciences and the more interpretive view advocated by Stake (1995). In this paper, we present the findings of a review of 135 case study-based articles published in four international business (IB) journals over the period 1995-2005 and 22 from 1975-1995. While the methodological literature makes a clear distinction between theory development and theory testing, practicing case researchers in IB often struggle to explain how (and why) they theorize through case studies. Moreover, we find that IB researchers seem to lack an explicit vocabulary for articulating the theorizing process and its outcome. Perhaps this is because case studies always involve elements of both discovery and confirmatory research. Our empirical evidence from published case-based articles in four IB journals show that we still have much to learn about how to theorize from case studies.

Keywords: Case studies, international business, theorizing

Millennial Students and Technology Choices for Information Searching

Martin Rich
Cass Business School, London, UK

Abstract: This paper draws together ideas about different generations of students, notably the 'millennial generation' (born from around 1982 to 2000) which encompasses a high proportion of current students in higher education, and ideas about the different types of technology available when searching for information. In the context of higher education, this is particularly relevant when students are encouraged to find out information for themselves, typically to relate this to taught material. This is connected with information literacy, as it reflects students' abilities to carry out simple or complex research. This paper focuses on why students choose particular technologies to support their research and the effect of these choices on their learning and on their written work.

A particular current issue is the emergence of the generation of Internet resources collectively known as 'web 2.0' - notably Blogs and Wikis - and the relationship of these to the way that students presently in universities favour structuring their work. These resources also introduce issues of authoritativeness. It is tempting to dismiss wikipedia as the work of amateurs, but where a blog has been created by a notable expert, author, or journalist, questions arise as to whether the blog should be regarded as of different value from the same person's written work. Therefore some consideration will be given to how students can be encouraged to recognise and draw on intelligent exploitation of these new resources. Underlying data for the paper is drawn from discussions with current students, both individually and in groups.

Keywords: Millennial students, web 2.0, information literacy

Researching Sensitive Topics White Researcher- Black Subjects: Exploring the Challenges of Researching the Marginalised and ‘Invisible’

Gisela Schulte Agyeman
City Psychological Service, Kingston upon Hull, UK

Abstract: How to access the *life world* of the *Other* without mis-representing it, has long been a concern in a number of research traditions, including disability, feminist and black research traditions. Feminist debates have addressed issues such as whether researchers can only speak on behalf of their own social groups or whether there is legitimacy in speaking on behalf of the *Other.* Justification for this often arises from the fact that dis-empowered groups may not have access to a public forum where they can be heard, so that social researchers see their role as ‘giving a voice’ to those who would otherwise not be heard. By contrast, other researchers see commonalities with their respondents as a particular strength.

The paper focuses on theoretical perspectives which provided the framework in a study of the lived experiences and expressed views of second-generation female young people of African and Caribbean heritage in predominantly white community and school settings. It examines some of the theoretical as well as personal considerations of a white female researcher and educational practitioner whose personal position and interests had to be negotiated within the research process. The paper highlights some of the difficulties, dilemmas and challenges of a white researcher attempting to access the lived realities of ethnic minority children whose lives are ‘invisible’ in dominant discourses. Drawing on theoretical perspectives from the feminist, black and disability literature, the paper explores the implications for researching ‘sensitive’ topics in organisational contexts from the perspective of an outsider ‘looking in’ and argues for a conscious ‘positioning’ of the researcher who may or may not be part of the lifeworld of individuals or groups being researched.

Keywords: Lifeworld, marginalised individuals, ‘invisible’, dominant discourses, black/ white perspectives

Action Research applied to Knowledge Management (KM) in a Fast Moving Consumer Goods company (FMCG)

Peter Sharp
M*a*KE Inc and Regents Business School, London, UK

Abstract: Action research is a way of bringing rigour and relevance to research in business and management studies. Valuable outputs can be realized: practical solutions and theoretical innovations. However, this approach also entails significant challenges that need to be discussed at conferences so that researchers learn from each other and valuable research is conducted in business and management in the future. This paper contributes to this initiative.

The aim of the paper is to present and discuss a form of action research that was implemented at doctoral level in a major UK FMCG so that researchers can learn about the a particular case of action research applied in a KM domain. The paper explains measures that were taken, prior to implementation, to ensure that the approach was rigorous. It then provides an in-depth reflection and analysis of issues that arose during the implementation of the action research. This reflection draws on accounts written by the author during the action research. The issues that are reflected on resonate with those raised by researchers at the European Conference of Research Methodology in Business and Management in 2007 (ECRM 2007). These issues include inter alia the rigour and relevance of the research, research ethics, conflicts of interest, unexpected reactions from participants and incoherent communication from different stakeholders in the research.

This paper concludes by arguing that the adapted form of action research that was used is an effective research approach in business and management studies. This is because it was helpful in addressing a real KM business problem in a rigorous way whilst also producing valuable theoretical outcomes. Therefore, the author argues that the measures taken to ensure the approach was rigorous should be adopted. The author also suggests that sharing examples and experiences of action research is important to develop more skilled researchers and to encourage the healthy development of research in business and management generally.

Keywords: Action research, rigour, relevance, research ethics, conflict of interest

Varieties of Actor-Network Theory in Information Systems Research

Jim Underwood
University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

Abstract: In the last two decades Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which originated in Science and Technology Studies in Paris, has been used as a framework for interpretive research in a number of areas, including history, ecology, transport studies and health studies. In this paper we describe how a number of projects used ANT for research into the development and use of information systems (IS).

ANT has never been clearly defined, and is certainly more an attitude than a theory or methodology. One of its chief characteristics is an insistence on symmetry or even-handedness. Equal attention is given to explanations of success and failure, to the concerns of humans and non-humans, and to very broad and extremely detailed views. The features of a particular case always dominate, and the number of general theories is minimal. This leads to a wide variety of "schools", interpretations and methods. Three major concerns are the spread and interpretation of scripts (in the earlier work of Latour), the enrolment of the necessary actors in a project (Callon), and the dissemination of an actor network as a complete package, a black box (Law's immutable mobiles). Questions of adoption and enrolment have been of particular interest in IS research, with applications in such areas as the introduction of technology into developing countries, the adoption of standards, and the acceptance of integrated IS solutions (enterprise resource planning packages).

The cases discussed in this paper include a strategy for flexible learning in a university, the installation of packaged software in a large company, the introduction of an intranet in a media organisation, and the introduction of a university institutional repository. Each of the research projects took a different aspect of ANT as its starting point, but all used the basic strengths of ANT to give new insights into other wise intractable phenomena. These projects suggest a variety of suitable approaches for those wishing to use ANT as a guide in their research journey.

Keywords: Actor-network theory, information systems, adoption, interpretive research

Innovative Developments in the use of Template Analysis: Two Comparative Case Studies from the Field

Teresa Waring[1] and David Wainwright[2]
[1]Newcastle Business School, UK
[2]Northumbria University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK

Abstract: One of the most problematic issues for researchers who conduct qualitative research using semi-structured, unstructured interviews or story telling data collection methods is the analysis of large quantities of rich data. In the past this has often led to fairly unmethodical approaches to analysis which in turn has led to qualitative business and management research being seen as insubstantial and unworthy of consideration.

A relatively recent development in organisational research has been the application of Template Analysis to rich unstructured qualitative data following the primary data collection phase. Template Analysis appears to have emerged from the USA during the 1990s and academics familiar with the Grounded Theory approach to data analysis may see similarities in the techniques used. Nevertheless, it has gained credibility in the UK through the work of Nigel King and other colleagues researching in health and sociology related fields.

This paper provides an overview of the origins of Template Analysis and discusses how it has been used to structure qualitative data. It then goes on to examine through the two case studies how Template Analysis has been extended and used by the authors in two different research projects. In the first case study the research team worked within a Primary Care Trust in the North East of England on a project that explored the Diffusion of Innovation of clinical and administrative computer systems across General Practice within the Trust. Seventeen Trust members were interviewed for approximately one hour and this led to over 85000 words of rich data. The second project focused on the NHS Secondary Care sector and examined IT project management practice related to the development of integrated pathology computing systems across 8 separate laboratories in the North of England. Eight senior managers were interviewed and this, combined with participant observation and over 3 years of document collection, also resulted in a large volume of rich textual material. The use of template analysis, combined with a critical success factors methodology, resulted in a novel approach for learning about current IT project management practices.

This paper critically examines these two case studies in terms of their particular research philosophy, epistemological approach and the lessons learnt from the techniques employed. The paper then provides a discussion of the principles and practicalities of template analysis and explores the benefits to the business and management research community at large.

Keywords: Template Analysis, qualitative research

Partial and Total Disaggregation Framework of a Second-order Construct in the Relationship of Organisational Culture and Internal Corporate Governance

Amin Wibowo, Mohammed Quaddus and Robert Evans
GSB-CBS Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia

Abstract An important issue in organisational research is the assessment of constructs' validity of measure or depth. Although several methods are widely available (e.g. exploratory factor analysis, multitrait-multimethod matrix), researchers have come to acknowledge the power of confirmatory factor analysis in investigating the construct validity of a measure. The constructs under investigation can be single-faceted or multifaceted, depending upon their conceptual development, and their sound abstraction can be achieved through different levels of abstraction, namely the use of the total aggregation (TA), partial aggregation (PA), partial disaggregation (PD) or total disaggregation (TD) models. In general, however, to produce more stable estimates of structural relationship, researchers have sacrificed using the TD model in favour of the PD, PA and TA models. In this paper, the TD and PD models were applied in an effort to provide an empirical comparison of second-order construct measurement under these methods. Data from 496 samples were used to examine the constructs and to test the model of the relationship between the second-order constructs of organisational culture and internal corporate governance. The second-order construct of organisational culture consisted of five first-order constructs, while the Internal Corporate Governance construct comprised six first-order constructs. Results indicated that, in general, the two models produced quite similar results. In the measurement part, the requirements of convergent validity and construct scale reliability were satisfied; discriminant validity tests were fulfilled; and overall goodness-of-fit-indices satisfied the benchmark applied. Thus, analyses supported the use of the second-order constructs of organisational culture and internal corporate governance. In the structural part, overall goodness-of-fit indices for both models also satisfied the thresholds applied, and the relationship of the constructs under investigation was significant. As there has been limited study of the partial disaggregation model and the total disaggregation model on a second-order construct, this study provides scholars an example of these models being examined in structural equation modelling

Keywords: Structural equation modelling, partial disaggregation, total disaggregation, second-order construct, organisational culture, internal corporate governance