

8th European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies

**University of Malta
Valletta
Malta
22-23 June 2009**

Edited by

Joseph Azzopardi
University of Malta

Copyright The Authors, 2009. All Rights Reserved.

No reproduction, copy or transmission may be made without written permission from the individual authors.

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: 978-1-906638-32-0 CD

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

ECRM 2009

Contents

Paper Title	Author(s)	Guide Page	Page Numbers
Preface		vi	Vi
Biographies of Conference Chairs, Programme Chair, Keynote Speaker and Mini-track Chairs		Viii	lx
Biographies of contributing authors		ix	X
Building a Qualitative Research Methodological Strategy to Understand Knowledge Management in the Brazilian Organizational Context: Multiple Case Studies for the Proposition of an Integrative Conceptual Model	<i>Rivadavia Drummond de Alvarenga Neto¹, Beatriz Valadares Cendón² and Ricardo Rodrigues Barbosa²</i> <i>¹Fundação Dom Cabral, Brazil</i> <i>²Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil</i>	1	1
Bibliometric Approach to the Study of Student Satisfaction	<i>Helena Alves</i> <i>University of Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal</i>	2	14
Secret Data and Organisational Life: The use of Personal Exchanges to Reveal Hidden Truths	<i>Andrew Armitage and Alan Thornton</i> <i>Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK</i>	3	24
'Read, Mark, Learn and Inwardly Digest' * an International Flavour to a Literature Review*With apologies to the Book of Common Prayer (1662)	<i>Marie Ashwin¹ and Alan Hirst²</i> <i>¹Ecole de Management de Normandie, CAEN, France</i> <i>²London South Bank University, London, UK</i>	4	31
Systemic combinatory use of Brainstorming, Mind-Maps and Rich Pictures for analysis of complex problem spaces.	<i>Peter Bednar¹ and Lynn Day²</i> <i>¹University of Portsmouth, UK and Dept. Informatics, Lund University, Sweden</i> <i>²University of Portsmouth, UK</i>	5	38
Move Along Please – There is Nothing new Here!	<i>Peter Bednar¹ and Christine Welch²</i> <i>¹University of Portsmouth, UK and Lund University, Sweden</i> <i>²University of Portsmouth, UK</i>	6	48
An Intellectual Device to Critically Appreciate Software Project Management Methodologies	<i>Gary Bell, Jon Warwick and Mike Kennedy</i> <i>London South Bank University, London, UK</i>	7	55

Paper Title	Author(s)	Guide Page	Page Numbers
Within and Beyond Corporate e-Boundaries: Supervisor's Experiences with Mentoring Research Students Online	<i>Milena Bobeva Bournemouth University, Poole, UK</i>	8	68
The Values that University Students Attributed to the Internet: Replication of Factor Analysis Results with the Nominal Group Technique	<i>Laurent Bourdeau¹ and Pascale Marcotte² ¹Université Laval, Quebec City, Canada ²Université du Québec à Trois- Rivières, Canada</i>	9	76
Researching Spirituality and Meaning in the Workplace	<i>Carol Brooke and Simon Parker Lincoln Business School, University of Lincoln, UK</i>	10	84
Evaluating Qualitative Research – Implementing the Research Audit Trail	<i>Marian Carcary University of Limerick, Ireland</i>	11	94
Interaction- A Tool for Observing the Relationship in Relationship Marketing	<i>Yi-An Chuang and Yufan Wu University of Lincoln, UK</i>	12	102
The Use of Grounded Theory to Construct Meaning in Corporate Social Responsibility	<i>Phil Considine University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, UK</i>	13	108
Understanding Effective Boards - Grounded Theory Methodology and Mutual Fund Governance	<i>Margaret Cullen and Niamh Brennan University College Dublin, Ireland</i>	14	116
Action Research in Emerging Technologies in Health Information Systems: Creating a Mobile Information Environment in a Hospital Ward	<i>Linda Dawson¹, Julie Fisher¹, Stephen Weeding¹, Liza Heslop² and Andrew Howard¹ ¹ Monash University, Caulfield East, Victoria, Australia ² Victoria University, St Albans, Australia</i>	15	127
How to Make Sure Your Figures Don't Lie – Lessons From Information Systems Survey Research	<i>Verena Dorner University of Passau, Germany</i>	16	136
An Exploration of a Mixed Modalities Approach Within Entrepreneurial Decision Making	<i>David Douglas Business School, Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent, UK</i>	17	145

Paper Title	Author(s)	Guide Page	Page Numbers
A Longitudinal Approach to Evaluating Undergraduate Students Studying 'Enterprise Education' Modules; Pitfalls, Problems and Struggles	<i>Victoria Harte and Jim Stewart Leeds Metropolitan University UK</i>	18	151
Using Personal and Online Repertory Grid Methods for the Development of a Luxury Brand Personality	<i>Klaus Heine Technical University of Berlin, Germany</i>	19	160
Data Collection Among Health Care Professionals – Three Experiences From IS Sector	<i>Eeva Heiro and Reetta Raitoharju Turku School of Economics, Finland</i>	20	171
Research Methods – A Case Example of Participant Observation	<i>Jessica Iacono¹, Ann Brown² and Clive Holtham² ¹Corus International Trading Limited, Schaumburg, USA ²Cass Business School, London, UK</i>	21	178
Towards a pragmatic and philosophical basis for a multi - methods approach to investigating English further education colleges' performance as measured by student retention and achievement	<i>Wyn Jenkins Staffordshire University, UK</i>	22	186
The Journey of Undertaking an Explorative Case Study by Post Modernist Inquiry for the Purposes of a Doctoral Thesis	<i>Diane Keeble-Ramsay Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK</i>	23	195
Claiming the Streets: Feminist Implications of Psychogeography as a Business Research Method	<i>Deborah Knowles Westminster Business School, University of Westminster, London, UK</i>	24	202
Developing a Research Design Supportive Framework for Constructivist Management Studies: A Meta-Analysis of a Research Project	<i>Antonios Livieratos Université Paris 11 Sud, France BIC of Attika, Athens, Greece</i>	25	210
Developing a new Perspective on Leadership Theory: From a Tree of Knowledge to a Rhizome of Contingencies	<i>Chris Mortimer York St John University, York, UK</i>	26	221

Paper Title	Author(s)	Guide Page	Page Numbers
Developing Multipurpose Multidimensional Conceptual Frameworks: A Method for Creating Integrative Realities	<i>John Murphy and Andrew Armitage Anglia Ruskin University, UK</i>	27	228
Interface Design for Affect: A Picture Paints a Thousand Words	<i>Lynne Newall¹, Gill Green¹ and Lynne Half² ¹University of Bolton, UK ²Sunderland University, UK</i>	28	237
Combining Semiotic Perspectives in Consumer Research	<i>Madeleine Ogilvie and Katherine Mizerski Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia</i>	29	244
Researching Organizational Culture Using the Grounded Theory Method: Recognising Some of the Currents and Eddies on the Research Voyage	<i>Noel Pearse and MacDonald Kanyangale Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa</i>	30	253
Challenges of Multicultural Data Collection and Analysis: Experiences From the Health Information System Research	<i>Reetta Raitoharju¹, Eeva Heiro¹, Ranjan Kin² and Martin D'Cruz² ¹Turku School of Economics, Turku, Finland ²School of Business and Economics, IU Northwest, Gary, Indiana, USA</i>	31	260
Some Best Practices Concerning Survey Nonresponse - and a few Good Ones, Too	<i>Karsten Boye Rasmussen¹ and Heiko Thimm² ¹University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark ²Pforzheim University, Pforzheim, Germany</i>	32	267
The Temporal Dimension of Longitudinal Research in International Business	<i>Mélanie Raukko and Eriikka Paavilainen Turku School of Economics, Finland</i>	33	276
Millennial Students and Information Literacy: Educating for Employability	<i>Martin Rich Cass Business School, London, UK</i>	34	285
Googling Companies - A Webometric Approach to Business Studies	<i>Esteban Romero- Frías University of Granada, Granada, Spain</i>	35	291
Mixed Methodology Approach to Place Attachment and Consumption Behaviour: A Rural Town Perspective	<i>Maria Ryan Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia</i>	36	299

Paper Title	Author(s)	Guide Page	Page Numbers
Succession in Nonprofit and Public Sector Organizations: Findings From Case Study Research	<i>Joseph Santora¹, James Sarros² and William Seaton¹</i> <i>¹Thomas Edison State College, Trenton, USA</i> <i>²Monash University, Caulfield, Australia</i>	37	307
Business Research in Service Industries: The Choice of Meaningful Methodological Approaches	<i>Mohd Sahar Sauian</i> <i>Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia</i>	38	315
A Real World Comparison of Responses to Distributing Questionnaire Surveys by Mail and Web	<i>Mark Saunders</i> <i>University of Surrey, Guildford, UK</i>	39	323
The Repertory Grid Technique: A Method for the Study of Workplace Learning	<i>Corrinne Shaw</i> <i>University of Cape Town, South Africa</i>	40	331
An Empirical Analysis of Research Approaches Used by Postgraduate Students in a South African Tertiary Institution	<i>Shawren Singh and Sam Lubbe</i> <i>School of Computing</i> <i>University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa</i>	41	340
Overcoming the Fear of the Social - Moving With ANT Into Burrell and Morgan's Empty box	<i>Jim Underwood</i> <i>University of Technology, Sydney, Australia</i>	42	351
The (Secret and Password Protected) Diary of a Web 2.0 Novice Doing Subtextual Phenomenology	<i>Jocene Vallack</i> <i>Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, Australia</i>	43	358
Implementing 'Grounded Action Research' in Information Systems Development: The OrganiK Approach	<i>Ana Vasconcelos¹, Dimitris Bibikas², Tim Zijlstra¹ and Iraklis Paraskakis²</i> <i>¹The University of Sheffield, UK</i> <i>²The University of Sheffield, UK and CITY College, Thessaloniki, Greece</i>	44	367
Reconciliation of Opposing Research Approaches by Means of Ontological Horizons	<i>Seppo Visala</i> <i>University of Tampere, Finland</i>	45	377

Preface

The Eighth European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies is hosted by the University of Malta.

The now well established aim of ECRM 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 Professor Godfrey Baldacchino from the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. He will be addressing the topic "*Researching Material, Representational and Experiential Tropes: Branding the Island, Enisling the Brand*"

In addition to a varied programme of research presentations Pete Mann from the University of Manchester and Peter Sharp from Regents College London will facilitate a discussion on the topic of *Expectations and Reality: International Students – Research Methods – Supervision Provision*.

ECRM has always sought to include papers on many of the relatively new research 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 75 abstracts, after the double blind, peer review process there are 45 papers published in these Conference Proceedings. These papers come from all parts of the globe including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iran, Ireland, Malaysia, Malta, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, 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.

Joseph Azzopardi
Programme Chair
June 2009

Conference Executive:

Dr George Allan, University of Portsmouth, UK
Dr Joseph Azzopardi, University of Malta, Valletta, Malta
Dr Joan Ballantine, Queens University Belfast, UK
Dr Frank Bannister, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
Dr Frank Bezzina, University of Malta, Valletta, Malta
Dr Carole Brooke, University of Lincoln, UK
Dr Ann Brown, CASS Business School, London, UK
Dr David Douglas, Staffordshire University, UK
Dr Martin Rich, CASS Business School, London, UK
Dr Peter Sharp, 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:

Gisela Schulte Agyeman (Learning Services, Hull City Council, UK); George Allan (University of Portsmouth, UK); Andrew Armitage (Anglia Ruskin University, UK); Marie Ashwin (University of Hertfordshire, UK); Gabriela Avram (University of Limerick, Ireland); Joseph Azzopardi (University of Malta); Sue Balint (Westminster Business School, London, UK); Joan Ballantine (University of Ulster, UK); Frank Bannister (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Edward Barratt (University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK); 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); Milena Bobeva (University of Bournemouth, 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); Aileen Corley (Liverpool John Moores University, UK); Baggy Cox (Imperial College London, UK); Ronald Crawford (University of Greenwich, UK); Marguerite Cronk (Harding University, USA); Barbara Crump, (Massey university, Wellington, New Zealand); Linda Dawson, (Monash University, Caulfield East, Australia); David De Vaus (La Trobe University, Australia); Dudley Dolan (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Verena Dorner (University of Passau, Germany); 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); Robert Edwards (University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom); Jose Esteves (Instituto de Empresa, Spain); Mahmoud Fakhra (College of Business Studies, Kuwait); Jason Ferdinand, (University of Liverpool, UK); Goran Goldkuhl (Linköping University, Sweden); Karuna Gomanee (Regent's College, UK); Roz Graham (University of Winchester, UK); Gillian Green (University of Bolton, UK); Ray Hackney (Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom); Alex Hiller, (Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom); Alan Hirst (South Bank University, United Kingdom); Clive Holtham (CASS Business School, UK); Bob Hughes (University of Brighton, UK); Gordon Hunter (University of Lethbridge, Canada); Kristina Jespersen (Aarhus University, Denmark); Bev Jones (Wolverhampton Business School, UK); Patricia Joubert (University of Swaziland, Swaziland); Govindan Kannan (University of Southern Denmark); Diane Keeble-Allan (Anglia Ruskin University, UK); Habibul Khondker (Zayed University, Abu Dhabi, UAE); Reinford Khumalo (North West University, South Africa); Cyril Kirwan (Cyril

Kirwan Associates, Ireland); Ela Klecun (London School of Economics, UK); Rembrandt Klopper (University of Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa); Karl Knox (Nottingham Trent University, UK); Branka Krivokapic-Skoko (Charles Sturt University, Australia); Denise Leahy (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Leitão João (Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal); Ann Marie Logue (Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Ireland); Sam Lubbe (University of South Africa, South Africa); 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); Lisa McNeill (University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand); Ian Michael (Zayed University, United Arab Emirates); Kersti Nogeste (RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia); Miguel Nunes (Sheffield University, UK); Teemu Paavola (Helsinki University of Technology, Finland); 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 Millia Islamia Central University, India); Sarah Quinton (Oxford Brookes University, UK); Diana Rajendran (Swinburne University of Technology, Australia); Thurasamy Ramayah (Universiti Sains Malaysia); 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); Katherine Sang, (Loughborough University, United Kingdom); Mark Saunders (Oxford Brookes University, UK); Susan Sayce (University of East Anglia, UK); Junaid Shaikh (Curtin University, Malaysia); Mohini Singh (RMIT University, Australia); Ibrahim Sirkeci (European Business School London, UK); Teresa Smallbone (Oxford Brookes University, UK); Kerstin Thomson (Stockholm University, Sweden); Claudine Toffolon (University of Lemans, France); Maryann Valiuis (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland); Ana Vasconcelos (University of Sheffield, 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); 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 Chairs and Keynote Speakers

Conference Chair

Saviour Gauci graduated as a Certified Public Accountant in Malta in 1974 and obtained an M.A. in Marketing Education at the University of Lancaster, U.K. in 1982 and a Ph.D. in European Studies from the University of Bradford, U.K. in 1994. He started his career as an accountant in the private sector of the economy in 1964. He joined the Department of Education as a teacher of Commerce and Accountancy in 1970 and in 1979, he was appointed Senior Lecturer in Management at the University of Malta. Later on he became the Head of the Department of Marketing, a post he left in July 2000 when he was appointed Ambassador of Malta first to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States and in September 2003 to the People's Republic of China and other far eastern countries. Saviour also served as Director with a number of companies amongst which Bank of Valletta Plc., the Malta International Airport Plc. and the Malta Housing Authority. From 1986 to 1990 he was also a member of the Board of Special Commissioners of the Inland Revenue Department. In September 2006, Dr. Gauci took up again his lectureship post with the University of Malta and is currently the Head of the Department of Marketing and the Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy. He is also the author of a number of articles and studies on marketing and banking and finance topics, a number of which have been presented at international Marketing or Banking & Finance Conferences. His research interests include the Regulation of Markets, aspects of Consumer Behaviour and Consumerism and International Marketing Entry Strategies

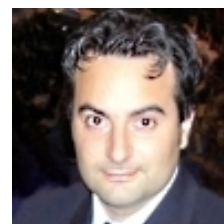


Programme Co-Chairs



Joseph Azzopardi received his Bachelor degree in Public Administration from the University of Malta in 1984. He graduated Master of Science in Human Resource Development, University of Manchester, UK, in 1994 and Doctor of Philosophy in Development Management and Administration, University of Manchester, UK, in 2003. Joseph was employed as a public sector manager for twenty years and as part-time lecturer in Industrial Sociology, Work and Organisation and Human Resource Development for seven years. He joined the University of Malta as full-time lecturer in Human Resource Management in September 2003. He also teaches Qualitative Research methods at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. His research interests include all aspects of Human Resource Management and Development with special focus on small enterprise, Action Learning and Action Research, business and community development, organisational learning and knowledge management. Joseph is also active in the voluntary sector being Director and co-founder of OASI Foundation – Organisation for Anti-drug Solidarity and Initiative

Frank Bezzina is a full-time lecturer in the Department of Management, Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy at the University of Malta. He received his Bachelor of Education with Honours in Mathematics and Physics from the University of Malta 1995. He obtained a Master of Science in Applied Statistics with distinction from the Graduate School of Computing and Management Sciences at Sheffield Hallam University in 2000 and a Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Statistics from the University of Malta in 2004. For over ten years he has been teaching courses in



mathematics and applied statistics at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. In the period 1998-2001, he was a marketing consultant specialising on trade in Japan. Currently, he lectures Operations Research, Managerial Decision Modelling and Quantitative Research Methods on the Faculty's degree and MBA programmes. His research interests focus on data collection and data analysis methodologies applied to business and management research

Keynote Speakers



Godfrey Baldacchino is Professor of Sociology and Canada Research Chair (Island Studies) at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada; Visiting Professor of Sociology at the University of Malta, Malta; and Executive Editor of Island Studies Journal (ISSN: 1715-2593). His research interests include successful small business, entrepreneurship and branding strategies from peripheral regions

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.



Pete Mann

Biographies of contributing authors (in alphabetical order)

Rivadavia Correa Drummond de Alvarenga Neto is Professor at Fundação Dom Cabral (www.fdc.org.br), a Brazilian business school ranked the 16th best business school in the world and the best one in Latin America according to the Financial Times Executive Education ranking 2008. He holds a PhD in Information Science and is currently working in his Post Doctoral Program at the Faculty of Information of the University of Toronto, Canada, hosted by Dr. Chun Wei Choo. Rivadavia speaks regularly on the subject of knowledge management and he conducted the first in depth qualitative study within the Brazilian organizational context in 2005. Since 2001 he's been working with many international firms, such as Petrobras, Embrapa, ONS, Astra Zeneca, Linde, ABN Amro Bank, Anglo American, among others. His newest book has just been released in Brazil (Knowledge Management in Organizations, Editora Saraiva, São Paulo, Brazil, 2008)

Helena Alves is assistant professor in the University of Beira Interior, Portugal. She has a PhD in Management and she has been doing research in the area of the student satisfaction. She has already published some articles on this topic in The Service Industries Journal, Total Quality Management and International Review on Public and non

Profit Marketing. She is Managing Editor of the International Review on Public and non Profit Marketing.

Andrew Armitage Dr is programme director for Postgraduate Training at the Ashcroft International Business School and a tutor for the Open University MBA B852 Research Methods course. He teaches management development and research methods on a diverse range of postgraduate programmes both in the UK and abroad. His research interests are High Performance Working and Wellbeing, and Critical Management Studies. Andrew has also published research and conference papers on the use of Structured Literature Reviews and the and the autobiographical approach as a method of collecting and reporting research data.

Peter Bednar is originally from an engineering background and has several years of experience from industry in systems analysis and development. 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 senior lecturer in the School of Computing at the University of Portsmouth, UK and is also affiliated to the Department of Informatics at Lund University, Sweden.

Gary Bell Dr is a Research Fellow at London South Bank University and a co-founder of the Social, Financial & Social Systems (SFSR) centre. He is developing and applying the Holon Framework for Higher Education Management and Software Project Management.

Milena Bobeva Dr is a Senior Lecturer at the Business School in Bournemouth University. Her research interests are in the field of Information and Systems Management, e-learning, business process improvement and performance management & measurement. She has actively exploited and promoted the use of contemporary information and communication technologies as an enabler for effective research practice. Her work in supporting student learning has been recognised through the BU team award for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning in 2009 and BU Learning and Teaching Fellowship in 2005

Laurent Bourdeau Dr is professor and the chair of management department at Laval University (Quebec, Canada). His research focuses on tourism and cultural management, consumer values, consumer satisfaction and methodological issues. Dr. Bourdeau has published in many journals such as *Environment and Behavior*, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *Museum Management*, and *Journal of International Art Management*.

Marian Carcary completed her PhD in 2008 at Limerick Institute of Technology, Ireland. Her research on ex-post ICT investment evaluation in the Higher Education sector was funded by a research scholarship from the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET). She previously completed a research MSc degree also funded by IRCSET on the realisation of competitive advantage from ERP systems implementation and a first class honours BBS in Business Computing degree. She has published her research in peer-reviewed academic journals and conference proceedings and presented her findings at several European conferences and national and international seminars. She currently works in the Department of Management and Marketing in the Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick. She has also worked as a member of Faculty in the Department of Information Technology, Limerick Institute of Technology since 2002, and as a lecturer in the Faculty of Accounting and Finance, Griffith College Limerick since 2006.

Yi-An Chuang received his first degree in law (LLB). After working as an underwriter in insurance industry for several years he went to study in the UK and obtained an MSc in marketing at the University of Leicester, UK. He is currently pursuing his PhD at Lincoln Business School, University of Lincoln, UK. His research interests include relationship marketing, complexity, and systems.

Phil Considine teaches at the University of Lincoln where he's based in the Business School. He's been there now for 5 years but he's actually a Scot in exile, being originally from Glasgow (he has his MA and MBA from the University of Glasgow). Most of his teaching is around people, strategy and change, predominantly on post graduate programmes. His research interest lies in the Corporate Social Responsibility agenda and how organisations translate it into something meaningful which is where he discovered GT and has become so enthused by it that that he now teaches this on his MRes. He works with a wide range of organisations from large multi nationals to small social enterprises. Other than that, when he gets the chance he enjoys heading for the mountains - which those of you who know the geography of the UK will realise that Lincolnshire is probably not the best place to be based for this particular activity, but it gives an excuse for regular trips to the North of Scotland.

Margaret Cullen holds a B.A. in Economics from University College Dublin and an MSc in Investment and Treasury from Dublin City University. She has over twelve years financial services industry experience, the majority spent working in the mutual fund sector. Margaret is currently pursuing a PhD in corporate governance at the UCD Michael Smurfit School of Business. Specifically, her research is investigating the effectiveness of mutual fund boards.

Linda Dawson Dr 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

Lynn Day became involved in IS whilst serving as a Commissioned Officer in the Royal Air Force from 1980 to 1986, after which she spent 2 years as an independent consultant to the MoD analysing and designing information systems for a number of military projects. She then continued her career in Information Systems mainly as an independent consultant working with many blue chip companies such as IBM, Oracle and Pfizer in addition to national and local governmental agencies. Currently she is a Senior Lecturer in Information Systems at Portsmouth Business School

Verena Dorner is currently working as a research assistant at the Chair of Business Computing II at the University of Passau. She graduated from the University of Passau in 2006, majoring in business administration and management. Her main research interests include the management of information systems and information technology skills, especially in small and medium enterprises, methodology and quality of survey research in information systems research, and information systems and technology project portfolio optimisation.

Vicky Harte is the Research Officer in the Institute for Enterprise, a HEFCE funded Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Her role within the Institute is to undertake research and evaluation of the many aspects of enterprise education and entrepreneurship

in relation to curriculum design and assessment, learning and teaching encompassed within the 'student learning experience'. She is currently working on two large projects with Professor Jim Stewart, HRD Running Stream Professor from the Faculty of Business and Law: a longitudinal survey of students studying enterprise related modules, based on Bandura's theory of 'self-efficacy' and their impact on entrepreneurial career intentions, which has developed an area of inquiry into methodologies for enterprise education, and; an evaluation of an HEFCE funded enterprise learning space exploring how the space adds value to the student's learning experience in the context of the transmission and constructivist learning paradigms and evolving pedagogies

Klaus Heine works as a researcher at the department of Marketing at Technical University of Berlin specialising in luxury brand management. He also teaches marketing as a faculty member of Berlin advanced technical college of arts (BTK) and was lecturing about luxury goods marketing at L'École supérieure de commerce de Toulouse (ESCT), University of Cape Town, University of Monaco and at Tongji-University Shanghai. Beside that he gained work experience with international companies in Europe, America and Asia and cooperated with leading luxury brands.

Eeva Heiro (née Aarnio) is a doctoral student for Information Systems Science at the Turku School of Economics (TSE) and Turku Centre for Computer Science. She holds a M.Sc. (Econ. & Bus Adm.) degree from the TSE and a M.Sc. (Soc.) degree from the University of Turku.

Wyn Jenkins Dr is a Senior Lecturer and a Learning and Teaching Fellow in Staffordshire University Business School. His teaching and research is informed by his considerable industrial and managerial experience. He has published journal articles on competitive strategy, corporate social responsibility, and student performance, and is the joint author of a text book on strategic management.

Diane Keeble-Allen Dr MSc BA (Hons) DipRSA FHE MCIPD is the pathway leader for CIPD courses and HR programmes at the Ashcroft International Business School at Anglia Ruskin University. A Chartered Member of the Institute of Personnel and Development Diane has a Doctorate from the University of Leicester. Qualified previously with an MSc in Training and HRM at the Centre of Labour Market Studies, Leicester and gained teaching qualifications and Hons degree in Business from the University of East Anglia. Diane is also qualified in psychology and has particular interests in subjective employee wellbeing. A Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, current research also lies with Progressive Education, its inspection and links to government vocational education and training aims. Diane's commercial background includes a current role in HRM, having held also management roles in Education with the last being Director of Studies. She currently undertakes consultancy in both management to the private and education to the government.

Deborah Knowles is a Senior Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour at the University of Westminster, London. She is the Course Leader of the BA International Business degree. Her research interests lie within the areas of gender, business and research methods. Deborah's paper at the 2009 ECRM conference combines all three of these concerns.

Chris Mortimer is in his second year of PhD study part time at York St John's University in York. He completed his first degree in 2006 which was in English Literature, having spent fifteen years working in the manufacturing industries as an Operations Manager and

Plant Manager. His PhD is addressing issues that he has observed whilst attending leadership training courses and the application of those courses in practice.

John Murphy is a PhD student at Anglia Ruskin University's Ashcroft International Business School researching how culture change in UK Solicitors' Firms impacts on professional skills. John has an engineering background working with Ford Motor Company and Claas UK. He has seventeen years experience in the management of change having worked as an independent business adviser and as a Law Society Lexcel assessor.

Lynne Newall is Off-Campus Coordinator for the BLIS research centre, University of Bolton, and is responsible for BLIS academic programmes running at partner locations. She previously worked for Northumbria University as an SL with a research focus on empathic agents. Her current research interests are in research methods challenges in interface design for Affective Computing.

Madeleine Ogilvie is a Senior Lecturer in Marketing in the Faculty of Business and Law at Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia. Her major interests are in the fields of semiotics, consumer research, the sales customer interface and international marketing education. Madeleine has coordinated and taught across a range of different marketing disciplines at both a national and international level and currently also serves as the faculty's Client Manager for China programs.

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

Karsten Boye Rasmussen is an associate professor at the Department of Marketing and Management, University of Southern Denmark. He is a sociologist from the University of Copenhagen. His research interests are within information technology, organization, data, methodology and metadata, and the use of business intelligence, data warehousing and data mining. With emphasis on the small and medium-sized companies the focus is on information technology especially as utilized in virtual organizations and collaborative business networks.

Mélanie Raukko is a researcher in International Business at Turku School of Economics. Her research interest lies in the field of organizational commitment, cross-border acquisitions, human resource integration, organizational change, research methodology and longitudinal research.

Martin Rich Dr 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 around applying the scholarship of teaching and learning to management education

Esteban Romero-Frias is an assistant lecturer and PhD candidate in the Department of Accounting and Finance at the University of Granada (Spain). He has published several professional papers on International Accounting and did an internship at the European

Commission in the area of Auditing regulation. His research interests include webometric analysis of companies and application of Web 2.0 to education on business.

Joseph Santora (EdD, Fordham University) is dean, School of Business & Management, Thomas Edison State College, Trenton, NJ. As dean, he is responsible for the undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) and Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership (BS in OL) degrees and the graduate Master of Science in Management (MSM) and Master of Science in Human Resource Management (MSHRM) degrees. He is the founding editor, *International Leadership Journal*, an on-line refereed journal (<http://www.tesc.edu/5947.php>). Dr. Santora has been a visiting professor at the International School of Management (Paris, France) Heilbronn Business School, (Heilbronn, Germany), and a professorial visiting fellow at the Leadership Centre, Monash-Mt. Eliza Business School (Mt. Eliza, Australia). He has held other professorial positions at several undergraduate and graduate schools. A prolific writer, he has published more than two dozen refereed articles and cases in leading international journals and management textbooks, as well as more than 100 academic and practitioner articles, reviews and cases. His research interests include organizational leadership and executive succession in nonprofit organizations with a current interest in global issues associated with executive succession. He has presented papers at conferences in ten countries and on three continents. He serves on several editorial boards, has been a consultant to more than two dozen organization, and is a member of the Academy of Management and International Leadership Association.

Mohd Sahar Sauian Professor Dr has taught quantitative methods, and operations research at Universiti Teknologi MARA for over 30 years. He has a basic degree in Economics majoring Statistics from University of Malaya, He graduated with an MBA in Quantitative Methods (QM) and Operations Management from Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (1980). He obtained his Ph. D in Quantitative Economics from University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK (1988). Besides QM, his main specialisation includes Input-Output Analysis.

Mark Saunders is Professor in Business Research Methods at the University of Surrey School of Management. His research interests focus on two themes. The first, research methods, includes the development of tools to learn about, understand and improve organisational relationships within a process consultation framework, online research methods and methods for researching trust. The second, human resource aspects of the management of change, is concerned particularly with trust, justice and downsizing. Mark is author and co-author of six books, including *Research Methods for Business Students* (FT-Prentice Hall, 2009), now in its fifth edition, as well as book chapters and journal articles.

Corrinne Shaw is based at the University of Cape Town where she teaches systems theory and management practice at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Current areas of research include improving teaching and learning and learning through and researching practice. She has drawn on multiple theoretical constructs for the design of learning contexts, including complexity and systems theory.

Shawren Singh studied Information Systems, with a focus of usability, electronic commerce and systems analysis and design at the University of South Africa. He is currently a lecturer at the University of South Africa, School of Computing, South Africa. His research interest include Human Computer Interaction (HCI), Internet Security, Web-based Courseware Tools, Internet Applications, Web-based Education, Blended learning ,

E-commerce, Accounting Information Systems, HIV&AIDS and ICT. Shawren is currently reading towards a PhD in Information Systems.

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).

Jocene Vallack is a Research Fellow in the Curriculum Development Unit, at Central Queensland University, Australia. Jocene founded Subtextual Phenomenology over a ten year period, up to 2005. This arts-based methodology is currently being used to analyse Weblog data for the PLES@CQU project, an investigation into online Personal Learning Environments.

Ana Vasconcelos, BA, PGDip, PhD, is Lecturer in Corporate Information Management at the Department of Information Studies, the University of Sheffield. She has previously lectured at the School of Computing and Management Sciences, Sheffield Hallam University, and at the School of Information Management, Leeds Metropolitan University. Prior to that, she was a researcher at the National Institute Industrial Technology and Engineering (INETI) in Portugal. She has carried out research evaluation in the field of information technologies and the information society for the European Commission since 1992. Her research interests are in information and knowledge management and information systems adaptation, with a focus on community interaction, discourse and identity in a variety of contexts

Seppo Visala was born in 1952. He took the master's degree in mathematics and philosophy in 1977 at the University of Tampere, and PhD degree in information systems science in 1993 at the University of Oulu, Finland. He has worked as a researcher and a teacher at the universities of Oulu, Vaasa and Tampere. His research interests include philosophical background of information systems research and organizational ethics. At present he is CIO of the University of Tampere.

Building a Qualitative Research Methodological Strategy to Understand Knowledge Management in the Brazilian Organizational Context: Multiple Case Studies for the Proposition of an Integrative Conceptual Model

Rivadavia Drummond de Alvarenga Neto¹, Beatriz Valadares Cendón² and Ricardo Rodrigues Barbosa²

¹Fundação Dom Cabral, Brazil

²Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil

Abstract: This paper describes the methods utilized in an investigation on how Brazilian firms defined, implemented and assessed their Knowledge Management (KM) initiatives, as well as which were the motives and expected results of such initiatives. Three cases studies with incorporated units of analysis were conducted and three criteria were adopted to evaluate the quality of the research design: construct validity, external validity and reliability. Multiple sources of evidence were used - documentation (paper and electronic documents), semi-structured interviews and direct observation. Data analysis was conducted simultaneously through data reduction, data display and verification/ conclusion based on inferences from evidences or premises. One of the main outcomes of the research is the proposition of a KM integrative conceptual model. According to the authors, case studies are valid for theory and model building, as long as they abide by rigorous methodological procedures

Keywords: Knowledge management; qualitative research; qualitative data analysis; multiple case studies; research methodology.

Bibliometric Approach to the Study of Student Satisfaction

Helena Alves

University of Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal

Abstract: Bibliometric methods have gradually been used since the 1960s. Co-citation analysis is one of the most commonly bibliometric method used today and examines networks between cited references. Citation analysis can be a powerful instrument in explaining a body of research's intellectual bases and underlying research streams. This paper presents a methodology to study student satisfaction, delimiting, in a scientific way, the field object of study and its bibliographical sources based on citation and co-citation analysis. For it, Sitkis, a bibliometric analysis program developed by SCHILDT was used, combined with UCINET. First a search with keywords on the field of study in the ISI Web of Knowledge databases was made. That search produced a result of 83 articles. Using Sitkis data from ISI Web of Science databases was exported to MS Access databases what allowed to analyze scientific production evolution in the field of study and to find which authors and documents are more influential on the study of student satisfaction. Sitkis analysis can produce two-dimensional article-to-reference networks, normalized co-citation networks, two-dimensional author-university, or country-to-article networks, networks of keywords relatedness, and cross-citation networks. Additionally, it provides information about the exported articles, statistics on most cited references (such as citation frequencies and citation timing), and a yearly analysis of citation frequencies. At a second phase the bibliometric analysis done with Sitkis was enriched by exporting the information produced to UCINET. UCINET allows producing analysis of social networks (A. R.S.). The social network analysis produces an index of centrality and show similarities between articles trough co-citations. Finally data was represented trough MS Excell and NetDraw. This methodology allows new researchers in the field to start research with core investigations, authors and journals. Although it also present some limitations, namely the fact that data is only extracted from ISI WEB of Science. This fact may introduce skewness on the field of study, since research in other languages or in other journals (not included in ISI Web Science) is not included.

Keywords: Student satisfaction, bibliometric analysis, higher education

Secret Data and Organisational Life: The use of Personal Exchanges to Reveal Hidden Truths

Andrew Armitage and Alan Thornton
Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK

Abstract: This paper considers the use of narrative exchanges in the form of letters and conversations as a legitimate research method when collecting “secret data” within organisational settings. Two colleagues undertook narrative exchanges over a three-month period, regarding their opposing perspectives on their University Staff Appraisal System. It explores personal tensions and anxieties that reside within the “secret data” of organisational life. It also reveals a concern regarding “professional commitments” with colleagues and the “managerial” edicts that dominate their work environment. From a “critical management” perspective, the paper initially provides an overview of the postmodern position and its impact upon organisational power relationships and knowledge as individuals strive to attain and gain their authentic and personal voice within the domination of modernistic organisations. It then explains the methodological approach used for the narrative exchanges and describes the context and relationship of the two colleagues. Commencing from a discussion of organisational policy and postmodernist critiques the conversations increasingly developed into a dialogical meditation on the relationship between “self” and “other”. These narratives revealed, through their autographical, autobiographical and at times surreal discourses, messages that are often absent from conventional research data. The paper concludes with a perspective regarding critical management in which individual values, dignity, honesty and respect are upheld. Thus, narrative exchanges of this kind allow dialogical conversations in which statements are agreed, accepted, challenged or sometimes synthesised to be used as a means to explore and collect legitimate “secret data” of organisational life within an environment that respects the ethical and value systems of the participants engaged in narrative exchanges.

Keywords: Postmodern, surrealism, autography, autobiography, aesthetic, individual voice, “critical turn”

‘Read, Mark, Learn and Inwardly Digest’ * an International Flavour to a Literature Review

***With apologies to the Book of Common Prayer (1662)**

Marie Ashwin¹ and Alan Hirst²

¹Ecole de Management de Normandie, CAEN, France

²London South Bank University, London, UK

Abstract: An invitation to deliver research method classes on the topic of undertaking a literature review to help prepare students for their year of study abroad turned out to be a much wider issue of change for both staff and students within the French Grande Ecole educational system. In discussions with colleagues from partner institutions during the School’s international week activities, tutors identified a weakness in the work presented by students in previous years relating to the preparation and writing of a literature review. This is something which was extremely important for the third-year students who would be going overseas and doing a dissertation in their host institution. Feedback from these international partners revealed a weakness in referencing of academic writing, and the use of the Harvard system in particular. To overcome this, a British colleague was invited to run three weeks of classes focusing upon the research and writing of a literature review embedded in a Business Management module. A second driver for this intervention was the upcoming implementation of a formal Academic Integrity system in the following year. By introducing the Harvard system of referencing during these sessions and working with the students to identify appropriate sources their academic skills were developed. The activities were focused by using a journal article as the vehicle for the exercise. Students were asked to locate additional materials, bring them to class and work with them to improve their skills. Each session built upon the last to ensure that students could follow a route through the activities and understand what they needed to do, why they needed to do it and how they should do it. This experiential learning approach was considered appropriate for the target group. The end result was that students undertook a critical review of several source documents and delivered their findings to their peer group. Encouraged to develop their study skills it was satisfying to hear that subsequent papers written by these students demonstrated their enhanced understanding of the concept of a critical review of the literature and many successfully used the Harvard referencing system. Permanent tutors on this programme offered positive feedback on the activity as not only did they acknowledge the direct benefits for the students but they saw the evidence in work prepared in the next semester.

Keywords: Anglo-Saxon pedagogy, literature review, research skills, referencing, cross cultural teaching, change

Systemic combinatory use of Brainstorming, Mind-Maps and Rich Pictures for analysis of complex problem spaces

Peter Bednar¹ and Lynn Day²

¹University of Portsmouth, UK and Dept. Informatics, Lund University, Sweden

²University of Portsmouth, UK

Abstract: For years tools and techniques such as Brainstorming, Mind-Maps and Rich Pictures have been used in both academic and professional practices to assist people with making sense of complex problem spaces. These tools have their supporters and in many cases their uses can be argued to be interchangeable. Seldom however have they been systematically applied in combination in theory or practice. Even though that these techniques have different analytical focal points their combined usage has not been distinctively elaborated upon. They have different strengths and weaknesses which supports their users in meaning shaping and practical reflective thinking in contextual analysis. Not only do these tools draw upon different historical backgrounds but they are also usually employed in a basis of different philosophical groundings. In this paper we will show how a philosophically common grounding can be achieved to combine the strengths of these three techniques. The discussion will include the outline of the complementarities of the different focal points of the techniques in application and describe their individual unique strengths. We will outline how the inherent weaknesses of each of the techniques can be overcome with the support of the other two. We will also demonstrate, with practical examples, a particular systemic approach to transfer and develop further the analysis from one technique to another in a systematic fashion. The approach described in this paper allows the combined techniques to be used in an organised and structured way to expand the sense-making and reflective ability of the analyst when dealing with uncertain and complex problem spaces.

Keywords: Rich Pictures; mind-maps; brainstorming; reflection; problem-solving; critically informed research

Move Along Please – There is Nothing new Here!

Peter Bednar¹ and Christine Welch²

¹University of Portsmouth, UK and Lund University, Sweden

²University of Portsmouth, UK

Abstract: This paper considers how researchers can best establish a forward trajectory in their work, individually and collectively. The suggestion is sometimes made in academic circles that it is inappropriate to present work that revisits an area previously discussed within the field. While we accept that any published paper should make an original contribution to what is collectively known about a particular area of inquiry, we nevertheless believe that it is both necessary and desirable to revisit and discuss again topics of significance. Only through reflection upon our own past work and that of others can we build productive learning spirals. Only in this way can we establish and extend a reflexive relationship to future practice. Whilst research needs to maintain an agenda of innovative inquiry, we should also remind ourselves of a need to ‘stand upon the shoulders of giants’ - good research should include reflection upon the accumulated wisdom of our predecessors. In pursuit of inquiry, we should also be open-minded and therefore prepared to revisit ideas and issues previously discarded or forgotten, in the light of fresh evidence or contexts. We believe, therefore, that research methodology should explicitly incorporate opportunities for such reflection. We draw upon examples from our own field of Information Systems research to illustrate these views.

Keywords: Orders of learning; reflection; problem-solving; critically informed research

An Intellectual Device to Critically Appreciate Software Project Management Methodologies

Gary Bell, Jon Warwick and Mike Kennedy
London South Bank University, London, UK

Abstract: This paper offers an intellectual device as an approach to benchmarking software project management methodologies. We argue there is a need to benchmark methodologies connected with the Software Project Management discipline. Moreover, it is asserted that the Software Project Management discipline should be associated with Social Science. This engenders an examination of different theoretical assumptions that underwrite the Philosophy of Science. We outline key parts of the intellectual device, which was originally developed within the Systems Movement. Furthermore, its connectivity with scientific philosophy and aspects of the Organisational Learning concept are explored. The intellectual device is used to guide the critical appreciation process of an improvement methodology known as the Goal/Question/Metric (GQM) Paradigm. The appreciation aspect examines the original methodology and important developments which assists in uncovering key characteristics (*e.g.* concepts and principles). Furthermore, the research strategy and method linked with GQM are identified. The critical aspect investigates the benefits and costs of implementing this methodology. This novel approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the GQM Paradigm, and generates its epidemiological framework. Moreover, it can direct informed changes to this orthodox improvement methodology. Finally, we discuss future enhancements to the intellectual device and further work.

Keywords: Intellectual device, methodology, philosophy of science, and software project management

Within and Beyond Corporate e-Boundaries: Supervisor's Experiences with Mentoring Research Students Online

Milena Bobeva

Bournemouth University, Poole, UK

Abstract: This paper aims to engage the Higher Education community in a discussion of ways of using online technologies to support student research projects. The experiences of research supervisors on both blended learning and e-learning undergraduate courses are reported and analysed using a simple temporal-spatial-usage framework. The findings are evaluated for feasibility of a wider application within and outside the boundaries of a University Virtual Learning Environment and a set of recommendations are drawn for consideration when adopting contemporary online communication technologies in the context of research supervision.

Keywords: Research supervision; dissertations; Virtual Learning Environment (VLE); blogs; instant messaging; audio feedback

The Values that University Students Attributed to the Internet: Replication of Factor Analysis Results with the Nominal Group Technique

Laurent Bourdeau¹ and Pascale Marcotte²

¹Université Laval, Quebec City, Canada

²Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Canada

Abstract: This paper presents a replication of a study of the values that university students attributed to Internet use by comparing factor analysis results with those obtained with the nominal group technique (NGT). This paper is divided into two main sections which present our empirical study of the values of Internet users. The first section of the article presents the values of Internet users identified through a qualitative research method called the NGT. This method represents a sort of brainstorming in which participants can all express themselves equally. The NGT thus enables researchers to generate a large number of elements and compare these elements by classifying them so as to better understand a phenomenon. In the second section, the NGT results are compared with those from a quantitative data that were obtained using a factorial model. The replication of a study through two research methods confirmed both the values attributed to the Internet, and the social, economic and consumer dimensions associated with it. In this study, our use of the multi-method approach allowed us to concentrate on the explanatory power of the empirical results. Neither of the methods was better than the other, they simply had different goals and roles. We modelled the comparison presented in the second section on a multi-method approach. In this approach, a research phenomenon must be studied from different angles in order to verify the reliability of the methods and results. We chose to examine the values of the Internet users from the two studies so as to verify whether the results from two different research methods converged. The use of two research methods and two student samples increased the depth of the theoretical constructs. The results obtained with the NGT agree, for the most, with those of factorial analysis.

Keywords: Nominal group technique – replication - internet – value – students

Researching Spirituality and Meaning in the Workplace

Carole Brooke and Simon Parker

Lincoln Business School, University of Lincoln, UK

Abstract: In this paper we begin to address the topic of researching spirituality in the workplace. The notion of spirituality at work has been an increasing focus of attention in the academic literature over the last 10 years or so, with several special editions of journals being dedicated to the topic. However, we find at least two areas of this work so far to be problematic. One aspect relates to the apparent ambiguity relating to the term 'spirituality' in itself and, especially, in comparison to the use of the word 'religion'. Another aspect refers to the motives and drivers behind the study of workplace spirituality and the search for 'higher meaning'. In essence, we find the predominant objectives behind the research to be highly instrumental. Sometimes this seems to be deliberately espoused but sometimes it is more hidden. This paper attempts a preliminary critical review of the field with a special emphasis on the issues it raises for the researcher. In particular, we seek to show how the way in which 'spirituality' is conceived and constructed directly affects decisions related to methodological choice and (ultimately) to research design itself. We close the paper by reflecting on the importance of the topic and yet the dangers inherent in appearing to trivialise its nature.

Keywords: Organisations; spirituality; critical management; meaning and work; religion; research methods; Protestant Ethic; essential self; methodology

Evaluating Qualitative Research – Implementing the Research Audit Trail

Marian Carcary

University of Limerick, Ireland

Abstract: Positivist and interpretivist researchers have different views on how their research outcomes may be evaluated. The issues of validity, reliability and generalisability, used in evaluating positivist studies, are regarded of relatively little significance by many qualitative researchers for judging the merits of their interpretive investigations. In confirming the research, those three canons need at least to be re-conceptualised in order to reflect the keys issues of concern for interpretivists. Some interpretivists address alternative issues such as credibility, dependability and transferability when determining the trustworthiness of their qualitative investigations. A strategy proposed by several authors for establishing the trustworthiness of the qualitative inquiry is the development of a research audit trail. The audit trail enables readers to trace through a researcher's logic and determine whether the study's findings may be relied upon as a platform for further enquiry. While recommended in theory, this strategy is rarely implemented in practice. This paper examines the role of the research audit trail in improving the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Further, it documents the development of an audit trail for an empirical qualitative research study that centred on an interpretive evaluation of a new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) student administrative system in the tertiary education sector in the Republic of Ireland. This research study examined the impact of system introduction across five Institutes of Technology (IoTs) through case study research that incorporated multiple evidence sources. The evidence collected was analysed using a grounded theory method, which was supported by qualitative data analysis software. The key concepts and categories that emerged from this process were synthesized into a cross case primary narrative; through reflection the primary narrative was reduced to a higher order narrative that presented the principle findings or key research themes. From this higher order narrative a theoretical conjecture was distilled. Both a physical and intellectual audit trail for this study are presented in this paper. The physical audit trail documents all keys stages of a research study and reflects the key research methodology decisions. The intellectual audit trail, on the other hand, outlines how a researcher's thinking evolved throughout all phases of the study. Hence, these audit trails make transparent the key decisions taken throughout the research process. The paper concludes by discussing the value of this audit trail process in confirming a qualitative study's findings.

Keywords: Qualitative research, research audit trail, research confirmability, trustworthiness, transferability, information technology, higher education

Interaction- A Tool for Observing the Relationship in Relationship Marketing

Yi-An Chuang and Yufan Wu
University of Lincoln, UK

Abstract: The aim of this theoretical paper is to propose and elaborate a means which can help us to identify the relationship in relationship marketing. The term “relationship” is the core concept of relationship marketing discipline. However, little has recognised the fact that the complex notion of “relationship” cannot be observed by employing the traditional Cartesian or Galilean observation approach. The theory *for* observing relationship, which is proposed in this paper, is interaction. We shift our focus to organising the on-going interaction between community members (actors). It is argued we can observe the interaction of actors (for example an organisation and its stakeholders, or members of the community with other members of the community, both as a collective) from inside the community, and make every member an observer. It is also this paper’s position that the principle of relationship marketing management is actually the maintenance of the interaction within the community (system).

Keywords: Actor, community, interaction, observation, relationship, relationship marketing

The Use of Grounded Theory to Construct Meaning in Corporate Social Responsibility

Phil Considine

University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, UK

Abstract: The process of sense making in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is complex and is impacted on by a range of issues. The experiences and values of the person, the espoused and actual values of the organisation and the impact and input of external stakeholders all have a role to play in the process. This paper examines the way that Grounded Theory (GT) can be used to empirically investigate how employees of a range of businesses make sense of CSR, how they identify with initiatives and what, if any, business case can be made for CSR. The paper considers exactly how GT gives us an insight into what CSR means to staff throughout a range of businesses and organisation types and how, by rigorous application of this methodology a framework for considering a range of activities that might be classified as socially responsible might be arrived at

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, grounded theory sense making

Understanding Effective Boards - Grounded Theory Methodology and Mutual Fund Governance

Margaret Cullen and Niamh Brennan
University College Dublin, Ireland

Abstract: Prior qualitative research on boards has focussed on listed company boards, and on private company and family boards to a lesser extent. This paper presents the research design of a study, which extends research on boards of directors to mutual funds and which examines the determinants and measurement of mutual fund board effectiveness. Differences exist between traditional corporate boards and mutual funds, arising from the complexities of mutual fund structures, and from the contextual framework within which mutual funds operate. Little prior theory exists on the operation of mutual fund boards. In the absence of specific theorising on the operation of mutual fund boards, this research adopts a building approach using grounded theory. Glaser and Strauss's (1967) grounded theory is adopted, including (i) the constant comparison of data to develop concepts and categories; (ii) the abstraction over time of descriptive data to theoretical categories; (iii) use of theoretical sampling (as distinct from purposive sampling); (iv) use of memos to track the thought process of the researcher; and (v) the theoretical saturation of data. The more analytical and structured approach of Strauss and Corbin (2008) is used to make sense of the qualitative data. Finally, the research takes cognisance of recent recommendations regarding the use of grounded theory methodology in management research (Suddaby, 2006; Fendt and Sachs, 2008). By presenting (a) the overall research problem, and (b) some underlying philosophical assumptions, this paper demonstrates a consistency between the (a) and (b) and the choice of grounded theory methodology. While an established and credible methodology in the field of sociology, grounded theory has gained popularity in management research. It has, however, had minimal use in corporate governance research. Using a rigorous and transparent methodology, this paper seeks to motivate further research on corporate and mutual fund governance using a grounded theory approach.

Keywords: Grounded theory; board effectiveness; mutual fund governance

Action Research in Emerging Technologies in Health Information Systems: Creating a Mobile Information Environment in a Hospital Ward

Linda Dawson¹, Julie Fisher¹, Stephen Weeding¹, Liza Heslop² and Andrew Howard¹

¹ Monash University, Caulfield East, Victoria, Australia

² Victoria University, St Albans, Australia

Abstract: Wireless networks, mobile devices and associated applications are key emerging technologies ideal for nomadic workers such as clinicians in hospital ward settings. These mobile information environments can potentially enhance clinicians' use of patient management and clinical systems by providing decision support and clinical information at the bedside or point of care. Such technologies need to be critically assessed in a hospital environment for their wider potential and application for delivery of information at the point of care. This paper describes the use of action research methods in a project which analysed an existing clinical Information Communication Technology (ICT) environment in a typical hospital ward setting and the implementation of a mobile infrastructure to support patient management. The research found that although many of the clinicians acknowledged the usefulness of the devices there is a high level of scepticism, concern and "resistive compliance". There were also concerns over change management and training. From the findings, we propose a holistic approach to the introduction of mobile wireless technologies in hospital ward settings based on a variety of activities that need to be undertaken in the implementation environment for successful adoption of these technologies. The action research approach used in this project was found to be a useful approach for understanding the implementation of emerging technologies in a hospital environment provided stakeholder analysis takes place early in the project.

Keywords: Action research, mobile devices, health information systems, hospitals, stakeholder analysis

How to Make Sure Your Figures Don't Lie – Lessons From Information Systems Survey Research

Verena Dorner

University of Passau, Germany

Abstract: The amount of surveys that are published in scientific and popular literature has multiplied in the last decade. The quality of many surveys, however, is still less than satisfactory. Nevertheless, survey results are often referred to as if they were facts even if the original survey suffers from severe methodological limitations. Evaluation of survey research in Information Systems Research has highlighted several areas where survey quality is regularly found to be unsatisfactory. The issues discussed here are assessing instrument validity and result validity and reliability, non-response, and following appropriate sampling procedures. For researchers, especially those who are inexperienced in utilising this research instrument, this article serves as a valuable guide for avoiding the pitfalls of designing and conducting survey research. Readers of scientific journals will profit from this article, too. Assessing the quality of the survey, or the generalisability of its results, is sometimes difficult when one is not very familiar with the ins and outs of survey research. This article will offer cues what criteria to look for in a description of a survey when trying to decide whether the reported results can be trusted, or even be used as a basis for one's own research.

Keywords: Survey research methodology; survey research evaluation; sampling procedures; validity

An Exploration of a Mixed Modalities Approach Within Entrepreneurial Decision Making

David Douglas

Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent, UK

Abstract: Firstly, the paper reviews the domains of decision and human cognition theories. Secondly, the constructs of decision and cognition are explored and discussed within entrepreneurship theory. Thirdly, emergent ontology-epistemology issues are considered, and what methodological approaches to potentially identifying entrepreneurial and more generally management decision-cognitions may be available. Finally, by developing this line of inquiry and importantly the potentiality of 'looping' into practice-based knowledge, the paper discusses what may be learned from a mixed or multi-modalities approach to improved understanding of a complex area of business inquiry.

Keywords: Mixed modalities, decision, cognition, entrepreneurship

A Longitudinal Approach to Evaluating Undergraduate Students Studying 'Enterprise Education' Modules: Pitfalls, Problems and Struggles

**Victoria Harte and Jim Stewart
Leeds Metropolitan University UK**

Abstract: Educational programmes that are concerned with the learning and teaching of enterprise education, such as enterprise focused degrees and/or modules could be argued to be of particular interest to research since they commonly have an overt focus on influencing and shaping the career choices of students. Furthermore, the perceptions of students about their own career choices are of particular value, especially in a period of economic downturn and financial uncertainty. This paper will discuss the evaluation of students studying enterprise modules employing a 'longitudinal study' research design using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The decision to embark on a longitudinal study was to deliberately distinguish short from long-term phenomena and to see how student's attitudes and perceptions change over the course of time in relation to enterprise and entrepreneurship. However, this journey hasn't been particularly smooth or easy and there are numerous problems and struggles associated with this type of longitudinal study. It is intended that this paper will discuss the strengths and weaknesses to this type of study and emphasise the pitfalls to such approaches and how a major review of the data collection methods had to be devised in order to keep the research study alive and more importantly afloat.

Keywords: Enterprise education, self-efficacy, longitudinal study, attrition, higher education, career intentions

Using Personal and Online Repertory Grid Methods for the Development of a Luxury Brand Personality

Klaus Heine

Technical University of Berlin, Germany

Abstract: Interest has been growing in the brand personality concept, because it offers a systematic approach for developing symbolic benefits, which are becoming more and more essential for brand differentiation. Although they are a distinctive feature of luxury brands and often even exceed their functional benefits, there are still no personality concepts designed especially for luxury brands. The aim of this article is therefore to develop and implement an appropriate methodology for developing a luxury brand personality. In contrast to the common quantitative approach, the article proposes a qualitative methodology including the repertory grid method (RGM) and explains its benefits. It was implemented with a survey of 31 German millionaires who can be described as heavy luxury consumers. The content analyses of the data uncovered five personality dimensions including, for example, Modernity, which relates to the temporal perspective of a brand. The study extends the RGM areas of application and demonstrates its applicability in developing brand personality dimensions. The validity of results improves if they are replicated with other studies and with varying research methodologies. To this end, recent developments in Web 2.0 provide a great source of inspiration. As a result, a complementary study was conducted to exploit these opportunities for online RGM and to allow for a more in-depth understanding about the personality dimensions. The article builds on an overview of qualitative online research, common online RGM and the idea of Web 2.0 to expand the methodological toolbox with collaborative RGM that allows respondents to build on the input of previous participants. The procedure was simplified according to the explorative approach and implemented with a specially programmed online tool. Results support the five personality dimensions and give further insight into adequate brand personality traits. The article concludes with a discussion of the results and benefits of collaborative RGM for researchers and marketers.

Keywords: Qualitative online research, Repertory Grid Method, luxury brand, brand identity, brand personality

Data Collection Among Health Care Professionals – Three Experiences From IS Sector

Eeva Heiro and Reetta Raitoharju
Turku School of Economics, Finland

Abstract: The ways to restrain health care sector costs are several and especially the role of IT has been widely discussed. The benefits expected from IT include cost savings, improved care quality and patient safety. As the opinion of end user is often considered essential for IT adoption and use, the health care professionals are in crucial role when collecting data on health care information systems performance. During a project concentrating on health care professionals' needs of patient-specific data, and current and future roles of information systems, three different data collections were organised and conducted. This paper concentrates on the experiences from those three data collections, studying barriers and issues that had positive effect on the process. The data collections included interviews, an Internet discussion board and a survey. The interviews were found to be the most effective way of data collection because of the possibility to explain the research theme thoroughly. The interviewees did not feel very familiar with the theme though it was closely related to their daily routines. Therefore there were not many voluntary participants but the interviews still provided useful information. A more innovative data collection on a closed Internet discussion board provided some interesting and useful answers but did not attract many participants, possibly because the participants are not used to this type of data collections. Preparations of the survey took over a year and the process is still unfinished. The major problems related to it are the field-specific terminology and the delayed schedule of the partner organisation. Conducting cross-scientific data collections has been challenging but the health care professionals' attitude to researchers from other field has been mainly positive despite the fact that they come from a field with established quantitative data collection methods.

Keywords: Data collection, information systems, health care professionals, interview, web-based discussion board, survey

Research Methods – A Case Example of Participant Observation

Jessica Iacono¹, Ann Brown² and Clive Holtham²

¹Corus International Trading Limited, Schaumburg, USA

²Cass Business School, London, UK

Abstract: This paper discusses the role of the researcher as a participant observer and reflective practitioner. The paper aims to assess the benefits and limitations of participant observation, and offer guidance as to how to manage the challenges inherent in this technique. The paper draws on the lead author's experience as a participant observer when working on her doctoral thesis: 'Factors Affecting the Viability of Electronic Marketplaces: an Empirical Investigation into International Steel Trading'. It discusses the issues and concerns resulting from participant observation and how these were dealt with in the case example. The empirical research was a longitudinal study tracking the evolution of steel electronic commerce between December 1998 and the present time. The events examined in this study were observed during the lead author's ten years at a large steel producer/trading house. As a trader and a manager, the lead author was directly involved in the conduct of business. The study represents the contribution of an industry practitioner and, as such, provides a unique insight into a real-world setting.

Keywords: Participant observation, qualitative research methods, qualitative data, longitudinal case work, steel trading case

Towards a Pragmatic and Philosophical Basis for a Multi - Methods Approach to Investigating English Further Education Colleges' Performance as Measured by Student Retention and Achievement

Wyn Jenkins
Staffordshire University, UK

Abstract: This paper describes an investigation of how managers' and teachers' behaviour impacted on student performance in English further education colleges. A major principle of UK government policy has been founded on the contested belief that effective management is the main predictor of college performance. Other research has suggested that students' personal circumstances and previous educational experiences are significant influences on differences in the overall performance of colleges with respect to aggregate student retention and achievement. This study has compared two types of college, Sixth Form and General Colleges. The literature on student performance indicated that a large amount of evidence for the managerial perspective on student performance was based on questionnaire studies and interviews with students after they had left college with qualifications or had dropped out. This methodology was justifiably criticised because of the risk of post hoc rationalization by informants, and because of the lack of rigorous statistical analysis in the comparison of responses from the various categories of student. This study has used three methods of investigation: a survey of college inspection reports; a survey of students in four colleges; interviews with college managers. The study is used as an example of how multi-methods research can be used to throw light on complex problems that are oversimplified by simple quantitative approaches. The study has revealed that an understanding of the openness of the system is an important consideration when trying to understand the behaviour of organisations. College culture and the cultural capital of students and staff are suggested as the basis of explanatory mechanisms. The paper proposes that the multi-methods approach described can be justified within a critical realist paradigm.

Keywords: Student retention and achievement, research methods

The Journey of Undertaking an Explorative Case Study by Post Modernist Inquiry for the Purposes of a Doctoral Thesis

Diane Keeble-Ramsay

Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK

Abstract: Post-modernist research is not a new concept. Yet it questions modernist notions of representation (Stronach and MacLure, 1997). Facts are constructions dependent upon the questions asked, ie how they are asked, for example through social constructs in hierarchical forms. Subjects cannot be separated from their subjectivity (Usher, 1996; Usher and Edwards, 1994). However, there is little guidance as to how 'to do' postmodernist research. Especially there seems to be no literature or research into how this might be incorporated in a doctoral thesis, particularly where such research attempts to produce a case study, to provide depth rather than breadth (Velma and Mallick, 1999). In an attempt to address these issues, this paper considers the production of doctoral case study. It intends only to provide a witness to others in their personal endeavours to find a research methodology which will meet the purpose of their research, whilst recognising conflicts faced particularly within the constraints of a doctoral thesis.

Keywords: Postmodernism, modernist, rationalist, research traditions

Claiming the Streets: Feminist Implications of Psychogeography as a Business Research Method

Deborah Knowles

University of Westminster, London UK

Abstract: This paper is intended to establish a claim that the techniques of psychogeography may be advantageously employed in business and management research in order to provide a new perspective on how organisations are experienced. It examines this practice for its possibilities as a research approach for women and its compatibility with feminist research methods. Psychogeography offers an approach to gaining an understanding of the ways that human behaviour is shaped by the geographical environment (Coverley, 2006). It constitutes a style of collecting a variety of qualitative data using complementary methods, which gives a textured view of the real world in a particular environment. Psychogeography is primarily a literary tradition. However, its constituent parts are academic disciplines rooted in real world experience. The attraction of psychogeography to a business researcher is many layered. It invites the researcher to observe the environment slowly and painstakingly, whilst “strolling”, and to construct meanings in a number of ways. Walking is celebrated by psychogeographers as a cultural act and an important way to understand the world, yet the male-as-norm character of psychogeographers is well established (Solnit, 2001). The masculine tradition of psychogeography may operate to challenge woman researchers to examine the possibility of using this approach in conjunction with feminist perspective research methods as a way of exploring and questioning women’s place in a patriarchal culture (Acker et al, 1983). Feminist research methods seek to address the “invisibility” of women’s experience in academic studies (Roberts, 1990:7), to overturn the male-as-norm perspective, and to highlight the possibilities for women to engage in ‘male-preserve’ activities. In the case of the male preserve of psychogeography these intentions would apply not only to the subject of the study but also to the practice of the research method itself.

Keywords: Psychogeography, feminist research methods, qualitative research, safety in the field, London, organisations

Developing a Research Design Supportive Framework for Constructivist Management Studies: A Meta-Analysis of a Research Project

Antonios Livieratos

Université Paris 11 Sud, France

BIC of Attika, Athens, Greece

Abstract: Since the early 1990s, a significant number of scholars active in the fields of knowledge management and intellectual capital have highlighted the socially constructed nature of knowledge. In regard to this epistemological shift towards the adoption of a more constructivist approach, Charreire-Petit and Huault (2008) have identified a glaring contradiction between the epistemological standpoint of authors and the methods used to conduct such research. Although the former seems, in most cases, to follow constructivist epistemological principles, the latter accords with positivist approaches. The present paper's scope is not to provide answers on how a researcher may achieve such internal consistency as this can only be answered case by case. Rather its scope is to develop a supportive framework that can help the researcher as a guide in his quest to achieve internal consistency between epistemological positioning applied to the organization(s) serving as the object(s) of research, on the one hand, and the methodological apparatus, on the other. The proposed framework was developed for a particular research project conducted by the author. In this respect, the proposed framework is presented in this paper along with its application. The supportive framework is to a great extent based on the 'research onion' initially introduced by Saunders and al. (2007). It has seven layers, namely 1) pre-understanding of the phenomena, 2) research philosophy, 3) research approach, 4) research strategy, 5) choices, 6) time horizon and 7) techniques and procedures; it is viewed as a non-linear roadmap to which a researcher can turn at any stage of the formulation of the research design in order to check his project's consistency. Extending the supportive framework from the project's design to its results, a link is suggested between the researcher's epistemological stance to the outputs of his research. According to this approach, the following is argued: i) positivism can lead to formal models revealing causal relationships, ii) interpretativism can lead to the formation of models that aim to increase our understanding on patterns of behavior without introducing causal relationships and iii) constructivism can neither lead to models or causal relationships.

Keywords: Constructivism, knowledge, epistemology, research methodology

Developing a new Perspective on Leadership Theory: From a Tree of Knowledge to a Rhizome of Contingencies

Chris Mortimer

York St John University, York, UK

Abstract: Does the discursive formation of leadership theory hinder the development and practise of alternative leadership styles in the UK? This research question is in response to the issues summarised in the PriceWaterhouseCooper's 2008 report on Key Trends in Human Capital. Eight years into the new millennium, leadership is still at the top of the human capital agenda. Although companies invest considerable amounts of money in leadership training, the report suggests that there is limited evidence of leadership programmes delivering value for money, and that three in every ten leaders do not demonstrate essential leadership qualities. This indicates issues with the practical application of leadership research. The common denominator of all leadership research and application is the leadership theories. The theories are an easily comprehensible, continuous series of events that lead into the present of leadership, supporting all leadership research. Unquestioned assumptions support the theory framework, becoming commonly accepted truths. These suppositions include; the grounding of theory and research in reality; leadership is a fundamental component of the human condition; that social and economic progress has only been possible due to leadership, and the unquestioned dismissal of alternative voices. Finally there is a notion that leadership theory evolves, drawing on a Darwinian event of natural selection, by evoking biological empirical science to explain a discursive structure. The research and the subject of this paper is to challenge the assumptions and framework of leadership theory through the creation of a research strategy based on Foucault's methods, creating a rhizome of contingencies rather than a progressive tree of knowledge. Definitions of Foucault's notions of the 'archive, archaeology, genealogy and the technologies of self' will appear within the context of this paper and study. The resultant research will assist in the application of theory to the practise of leadership.

Keywords: Leadership theory, Foucault, methodology, philosophy, research strategies

Developing Multipurpose Multidimensional Conceptual Frameworks: A Method for Creating Integrative Realities

John Murphy and Andrew Armitage
Anglia Ruskin University, UK

Abstract: At an early stage of a research study, the defining of research questions and an appropriate ontological and epistemological position that will be articulated within the intended methodology formulation of underpinning theories is central to the development of a conceptual framework. This often poses a challenge for doctoral students when coming to terms with the interpretation of academic language and making sense of the numerous research paradigms they are confronted with at the commencement of their studies. The conceptual framework is central to the initial stages of a research study in the conceptualisation and ultimately the designing of the study. When planning a research project, mind mapping has been shown to help articulate ideas and plans with a visual strategy and provides a method for organising concepts within a graphical interface environment. For research students this is a vital research tool and a bridge between conceptualisation and operationalisation of the research endeavour as evidenced by the data methods and procedures used. This paper develops a methodological approach for creating multipurpose and multidimensional conceptual frameworks to enable researchers to progressively 'concept build' by utilising a file retrieval map that links data base sources and underpinning literature for the research study within the confines of a single 'entity'. The development of the multipurpose and multidimensional methodology enables the researcher to use the conceptual framework in a dynamic manner as the research progresses, and thus provides a 'concept audit trail' of the study by retrieving literature reviews and field data that will be amassed over the course of the research study within a 'real time environment'. The development of conceptual frameworks as articulated by Miles and Huberman and their use of 'bins', and Maxwell's use of mind-mapping is advanced by this multipurpose and multidimensional form that is replicated in 'real time'. This paper addresses the gap between the conceptualisation of the research problem and the design of an appropriate conceptual framework by proposing a dynamic methodology linking conceptual modelling and the retrieval of data to the eventual writing of the thesis.

Keywords: Multipurpose conceptual framework, multilayered conceptual frameworks, mind mapping

Interface Design for Affect: A Picture Paints a Thousand Words

Lynne Newall¹, Gill Green¹ and Lynne Hall²

¹University of Bolton, UK

²Sunderland University, UK

Abstract: This research explores the design of computer interfaces for use by younger people (18-25 year-olds), using a picture-based method. Historically, HCI design methods were developed by experienced older designers, whereas computer systems are now used by people of all ages, so existing design methods may not be appropriate for use by and for younger people. There is a need to elicit how younger people 'see' the world and how they feel about what they see, and pictorial methods are gaining in popularity (Hurwood, 2003). Lomography is a casual, candid method based on photography using a LOMO Kompact Automat (Bayr 2006) and is being used to elicit childrens' and teenagers' perspectives on design (Hall, Jones et al. 2007). It was chosen as a basis for this research as it allows users to record their view of the world quickly, cheaply and easily without having to possess any photography skills. An experiment was carried out whereby 18-25 year-old participants were asked to carry a camera with them at all times, and take a number of pictures in one week. These pictures were then collected and developed, and the participants were invited to arrange their pictures into self-chosen categories, and then repeat the grouping using specified categories. These results were then analysed to determine the environment that the various users feel represents their world views. The results confirmed some expectations, but also showed a number of contradictions, leading to questions about the meaning behind the subjects' categorisations, suggesting they may be based on their remembered associations of the external environment when the pictures were taken, their associations with past behaviour/experiences, their misunderstanding of precisely what was being requested by categorisation, or the naming of categories using words that have different meanings to the subjects.

Keywords: Photo-elicitation, lomography, HCI, affect, relaxation

Combining Semiotic Perspectives in Consumer Research

Madeleine Ogilvie and Katherine Mizerski
Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia

Abstract: In recent years semiotics has been used to examine consumer research on a range of issues including fashion, advertising, everyday possessions and entertainment and is re-emerging as a useful framework to examine issues of symbolism and meaning. This paper introduces a new method through which to study consumer phenomena by combining two different semiotic philosophies. The paper proposes that by using this technique the researcher can gain greater insights into the communication aspect, as well as the experiential perspective of the sign under study. Using cosmetics as the vehicle to test the methodology, this study explores the semiotics of visible face make-up in Australian Caucasian women. It aims to understand why women wear makeup and how they experience the sign of makeup and appearance in everyday life? The study comprises of two phases where the initial phase adopts a communication model extended from Saussurean semiotics; while the second phase employs a triadic semiotic philosophy as proposed by Charles Sanders Peirce. Results indicate that by combining two semiotic perspectives within the one study, the researcher is able to gain greater depth and understanding of the phenomenon. The managerial implications are that this provides the marketer with more insight into the consumption behaviours of individuals from a communication as well as an experiential perspective. This means greater depth of understanding of how the consumer interacts and experiences brands and products, thereby allowing marketers and business managers more strategic and focused communication with their target market. This approach also provides useful information to understand symbolic consumption by consumers and enables the marketer to predict trends and the direction of cultural paradigms. It is therefore a useful tool in developing brand positioning or new product development.

Keywords: Semiotics, cosmetics, consumption of appearance, self, qualitative methods

Researching Organizational Culture Using the Grounded Theory Method: Recognising Some of the Currents and Eddies on the Research Voyage

**Noel Pearse and MacDonald Kanyangale
Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa**

Abstract: Researching organizational culture using the grounded theory method is intuitively logical, given the ease of conceptualising organizational culture as a basic social process. In spite of its intuitive appeal, there are numerous currents and eddies along the research voyage that could facilitate or jeopardise the unsuspecting researcher's investigation. The aim of this paper is to alert prospective researchers, to some of the critical considerations that arise when conducting research of this nature. The paper first tackles issues that are related to the conceptualisation of organizational culture as the phenomenon of interest, before turning to the research design implications. Research design considerations that are related to the conceptualisation of organizational culture and that are addressed here, include (1) the school of thought that the researcher embraces and the implications of its research traditions; (2) the assumptions made about the nature of organizational culture (such as its degree of uniformity or variation, its definition and construction, and its stability and development over time) and the implications for its investigation; (3) the contextual characteristics of the study (such as the size of the organization being investigated) and their implications for the manifestation of organizational culture; and (4) the researcher's values and interests and their implications for accessing credible data. Further research design considerations discussed include (1) aligning the researcher's ontological and epistemological assumptions with the assumptions made about organizational culture; (2) identifying sources of data and techniques for its collection, that are appropriate to the conceptualisation of culture and its temporal characteristics in particular; and (3) reconciling the level of data collection with its level of analysis in order to aggregate and reconcile various individual perspectives of a collective social construct.

Keywords: Grounded theory; organizational culture; research design

Challenges of Multicultural Data Collection and Analysis: Experiences From the Health Information System Research

Reetta Raitoharju¹, Eeva Heiro¹, Ranjan Kini² and Martin D'Cruz²

¹Turku School of Economics, Turku, Finland

²School of Business and Economics, IU Northwest, Gary, Indiana, USA

Abstract: The effect of culture has been popular topic in recent information system research. However, it is not a simple task to neither collect nor analyze data containing elements of “culture”. This paper presents previous literature on how to measure culture, the theoretical background how to build this construct and a short description of empirical study we conducted in a multicultural environment. Our research topic was to examine the usage of health information exchange systems in two different kinds of healthcare sectors (i.e. Finland and USA). Finally we reflect our experiences both in collecting data as well as in analyzing it through the lenses of cultural differences. Strengths and weaknesses of multicultural data collection are discussed together with opportunities and threats of analyzing data with the purpose of finding cultural elements.

Keywords: Multicultural data collection, information systems, health care professionals, interview, focus groups

Some Best Practices Concerning Survey Nonresponse - and a few Good Ones, Too

Karsten Boye Rasmussen¹ and Heiko Thimm²

¹University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark

²Pforzheim University, Pforzheim, Germany

Abstract: Information gathering through business surveys can deliver great benefits by gaining reliable new information. However, more and more business surveys also carry the sad burden of nonresponse. A 2007-2008 two-nation business survey was carried out by two universities and supporting business development agencies. The intention of describing small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and their use of information technology and cooperation with business partners was disturbed by a very low response rate. This presentation will demonstrate an investigation into nonresponse. We will present some best practices (N-BIAS in Rogelberg & Stanton (2007)) by mentioning the methods of extrapolation of time-stamped responses into the expected late-coming but never-arriving nonresponse values (wave analysis) and also applying the static methods of comparison of the group of nonresponse and response in respect to known values available (archival analysis). Our survey was supplemented with mixed methods in order to investigate the nonresponse. In connection with reminder phone calls an extra data collection was created as the callers produced short notes. Another supplementary data source was the registry used for the sampling that in one country had sufficient attributes for analytic comparisons between the groups of responding and non-responding companies. Finally, nonresponse was related to data about contact between the companies and business development agencies. We build upon theories of interest and assume that the self-selection when responding is connected to the interest companies have in the subjects of information technology, collaboration, and networking that were addressed in the survey. We expect this interest to be prevalent among companies that the development agencies have been in contact with. The main aspect of the presentation is that even what in "best practice" is considered as acceptable nonresponse cannot be conclusive. As the nonresponse behavior remains unexplained we will instead of the "best" be searching for an external nonresponse explanation that is "good enough" and has a practical insight for business development.

Keywords: Business survey, nonresponse, self-selection, regional development, SMEs

The Temporal Dimension of Longitudinal Research in International Business

Mélanie Raukko and Eriikka Paavilainen
Turku School of Economics, Finland

Abstract: Time represents an essential factor in longitudinal research. However, the meaning of time and its implications to theory building and methodology are seldom defined. Therefore the aim of this paper is to analyse the temporal dimensions of the methodological domain of longitudinal studies in the field of international business. The research questions are 1) what is the temporal dimension of longitudinal research design from a methodological perspective, and 2) how are the timeframes selected and justified in longitudinal researches. The research was conducted as a literature review in four top-level international business journals during 2000-2005. The main contribution of this research is to the methodological domain of longitudinal research designs and temporal research in general.

Keywords: Time, longitudinal research, international business

Millennial Students and Information Literacy: Educating for Employability

Martin Rich

Cass Business School, London, UK

Abstract: This paper draws on recent research within a British business school into the information skills associated with students of the 'millennial generation', or 'generation Y', that is, born from 1983 onwards. The underlying research draws on their experience of using information sources when they embark on studies in higher education, the evolution of their information literacy skills while they are at university, and their receptiveness to learning new approaches. A widespread criticism of students of this generation is that, while they are very familiar with simple navigation of the Internet with the aid of search engines, they lack the skills necessary to seek out information in more depth. Within universities, one response to this is to offer training in specialised databases available through university libraries, and this can offer a valuable introduction to academic research. Another important skill that students can acquire is to evaluate how authoritative information sources are, and this has become a particularly pertinent issue with the increase in the volume of information over the Internet. These professional information management skills are important in the workplace as well as for students, and one incentive for business and management students to develop these skills is the prospect that an employer will pay them to find out more about a subject than can be determined from a quick enquiry using Google. But the competences demanded by employers are not necessarily well aligned with those covered in business and management degree courses, and a challenge for universities now is to equip students with skills that employers want. This paper draws a connection between the changing information literacy skills associated with the millennial generation, and the challenge created by this generation's expectations and experiences as they enter employment. Given the centrality of employability in much contemporary policy affecting higher education, it discusses what moves universities should take to develop the necessary skills.

Keywords: Millennial generation, information literacy, employability

Googling Companies - A Webometric Approach to Business Studies

Esteban Romero- Frías

University of Granada, Granada, Spain

Abstract: Although Internet studies have focused so far on using website content for gathering business information, still web hyperlinks have not really been exploited directly for business purposes. Webometrics is a new discipline that applies bibliometric techniques to the quantitative study of the Web, as well as new concepts and methodology. So far studies in this field have focused on academic and scholarly Web spaces; however this methodology is equally applicable to commercial sites which dominate the Web. This paper shows how webometric methodology could be applied to business and management studies. The study describes a number of concepts and techniques and their potential to provide better insight into business environment. Search engines are the main source of information for gathering link data. Some studies found that the number of links pointing to company websites correlate significantly with the company's business performance measures. This finding shows that links to a website could also be used as a timely indicator of business performance. Secondly, the examination of co-links (which means that a webpage links two business sites at the same time) between pairs of business sites are a potential source of business competition information. Qualitative studies have shown that links to competitors are extremely rare, but competitors are often co-linked. The hypothesis tested in these studies suggests that the number of co-links to the websites of a pair of companies is a measure of the similarity between the two companies and therefore it could provide information about their competitive positions in the industry. Finally, motivations for the creation of hyperlinks to business sites could be analysed through a content analysis approach in order to get confirmation about the business relevance and nature of links. This view complements the quantitative perspective to link and co-link research, providing a brand new approach to business studies.

Keywords: Web mining, webometrics, business intelligence, business management, internet studies

Mixed Methodology Approach to Place Attachment and Consumption Behaviour: A Rural Town Perspective

Maria Ryan

Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia

Abstract: This paper discusses the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in examining the influence people's attachment to their environment had on a number of consumption behaviours and related choices made by residents of a regional town in Western Australia. It briefly discusses the concept of place attachment; its relationship with community attachment and the subsequent perceived value ascribed to living in the town of Narrogin. The use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods provided an opportunity to take a macro perspective in quantifying major place and community attachment influencers in the decision-making process, while understanding the meanings and sentiment behind these concepts from a micro perspective. The complex nature of place attachment and its limited application in the current context facilitated the use of this mixed methodology approach. Thirty two in-depth interviews were undertaken with residents of the Town and Shire of Narrogin. These interviews used a photo-elicitation technique in which residents were sent a camera and asked to take photographs of important places, people and aspects of their lives. The photos were then used as prompts for personal interviews, as respondents discussed the meaning, sentiments and stories behind the chosen photographs. The interviews provided a depth and richness to our understanding of the value of respondents' attachment to Narrogin. The use of this technique as a forerunner to the quantitative phase is discussed and recommendations for future use are detailed. The second phase of data collection involved a telephone survey of 305 residents from the Town and Shire of Narrogin. This was designed to test a model and a number of hypotheses developed from the literature and the qualitative data collection phase of the research. The model presented place and community attachment as separate, yet related, constructs affecting the perceived value ascribed to living in Narrogin. Value was seen as a mediating construct between place and community attachment and consumption (shopping and staying in Narrogin) decisions. These shopping decisions included shopping for everyday grocery items, white goods, farm equipment and machinery and various services including educational, medical and aged care. Exploratory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling were used to examine the prescribed model. The results identified different attachment weightings for the town and shire communities and, in general, the model was a better predictor for the shire residents than it was for town residents. The results suggest different types of management strategies are required for businesses providing for the needs of town and for shire residents based on respective residents different attachment weightings. Methodological implications for the place, community and perceived value constructs are presented and discussed. Moreover the paper discusses the use of the photo-elicitation technique in the in-depth interview stage of the research and its contribution to the development of the model as presented in the quantitative phase. Operationalising the constructs in this study has been, and still is, a challenge for researchers. This paper provides valuable insights into the operationalisation process by utilising the combined methodologies approach. Uncovering stories, meanings and emotions can be integrated with an objective epistemology of attachment.

Keywords: Mixed methodology; Photo-elicitation technique; Structural Equation modelling; Place attachment; Community attachment

Succession in Nonprofit and Public Sector Organizations: Findings From Case Study Research

Joseph Santora¹, James Sarros² and William Seaton¹

¹Thomas Edison State College, Trenton, USA

²Monash University, Caulfield, Australia

Abstract: Researchers have been enthusiastic about investigating executive succession across a variety of organizations, in general, but only limited attention has been devoted to this issue in the nonprofit and public sectors. As researchers, we have maintained a keen interest in this area of study for some 15 years. Therefore, we decided to focus our attention on the findings of case study research on nonprofit and public sector organizations. Despite the criticism often leveled at the case study as a research method (specifically its lack of generalizability in the broader community), our position is that the case study method far exceeds the results often yielded from other research methods used to collect data on executive succession. Case studies provide researchers with unique opportunities to get “inside” the organization and to gain an in-depth understanding of rich and complex organizational phenomena. Our search of the literature and forthcoming/working papers produced 18 case studies on executive succession in nonprofit/public sector organizations from 1959 to the present day. Of the 18 case studies (13 nonprofits and five public sector organizations) in our study, 15 were U.S. nonprofit organizations and three (3) were international nonprofit organizations. Further, 12 cases were classified as single cases, and six were multiple cases. Our analyses revealed the following: even though our 18 case analyses spanned various nonprofit and public sectors, some common themes and findings (e.g., stages of succession, insider-outsider succession) emerged. Second, case researchers focused on different aspects of succession (e.g., succession and follower loyalty). Third, international case studies revealed some similarities (e.g., founders’ views about succession) with their U.S. nonprofit counterparts. We recommend that researchers interested in pursuing research on executive succession in nonprofits and public sector organizations continue to use the case study method as a research strategy for it makes a valuable contribution to the literature in the field. As a caveat, we suggest that researchers make an earnest attempt to pursue multiple case analyses which would lead to superior and richer comparative data. Further, we recommend that international researchers pursue investigating executive succession in nonprofits and public sectors. Cross cultural case studies of executive succession could lead to interesting findings between countries.

Keywords: Case study, nonprofit, public sector, organizations, succession

Business Research in Service Industries: The Choice of Meaningful Methodological Approaches

Mohd Sahar Sauian

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Abstract: The competitiveness of many service organizations depends largely on the operational effectiveness of the organization itself. This means that the delivery system should always be conducive to the customers, management as well as the stakeholders. This paper discusses two scenarios where choice of meaningful approach in business research is applicable. The first scenario is the selection of business location for healthcare organization and the second is the dealing of “delivery-time” service in fund financial service. In the first scenario, the adoption of AHP (Analytic Hierarchy Process) approach in evaluating the best location strategy is considered as more meaningful as compared to the existing approach of factor-rating method. The second scenario, rather than using the normal percentage of non-conformance of certain norms, the use of Gap Analysis approach is recommended. The AHP Approach utilizes data with respect to various criteria or factors as well as weights for each of the criterion used. On the other hand, in Gap Analysis, the data reflects the actual “delivery time” as compared to the “planned or targeted delivery time.” The AHP methodology used in the study might give different results from the management and staffs’ perspective as compared to customers’ perspective. However, it gives the advantage of not giving an intuitively biased decision. This is due to the fact that the calculations of weights of the factors are not influenced by subjectivity. In the case of the Gap Analysis, it is considered as reliable because we could use inferential statistics by resorting to significant tests. The results in both scenarios can help management in their operational planning. What is important is that, it gives benevolent impact to both organizations.

Keywords: Operational effectiveness, analytic hierarchy process, pair-wise comparisons, gap analysis, delivery time, inferential statistics

A Real World Comparison of Responses to Distributing Questionnaire Surveys by Mail and Web

Mark Saunders

University of Surrey, Guildford, UK

Abstract: This paper reports on the findings of a real world experiment comparing mail and online questionnaires for response speeds and rates, partial non-response and differences between attitudinal data. A questionnaire was delivered to 3334 employees of a large public sector organisation stratified by directorate as part of their triennial staff attitude survey. Employees in each of the organisation's directorates, whom could be reached by both email and mail, were allocated from a hierarchical list drawn from the HR database alternately to the mail or online groups. Subsequently the questionnaire along with a covering letter was delivered by mail in paper form to the mail group and by email with a web link in electronic form to the online group. The design of the online questionnaire replicated that of the paper based questionnaire and, in order to help minimise differences in the questionnaires, did not make use of additional features afforded by the online software tool. Results contradict earlier findings indicating that web delivery can result in a significantly higher response rate (49%) than mail (34%). Although the proportion of question non-response is higher for questionnaires delivered online than by mail, the rate for complete returns for web delivery is still higher than that for mail delivery, indicating that web surveys can offer higher returns than mail. Although significant differences are found between web and mail in employee responses to survey questions the size effect means, in general, they are practically insignificant. For those considering the move from mail to web delivery, where employees are computer literate and have ready access to work stations, email and the Internet, web surveys offer the opportunity of higher returns than mail. This is without making use of the additional features of online survey software to enhance response.

Keywords: Web, mail, survey, response rate, questionnaire

The Repertory Grid Technique: A Method for the Study of Workplace Learning

Corrinne Shaw

University of Cape Town, South Africa

Abstract: The concepts of lifelong learning, learning organisations, situated learning theories, recognition of prior learning, among others, all acknowledge the idea that learning occurs outside formal classroom settings (Boud and Solomon, 2003). Such learning is increasingly finding legitimacy in academic institutions and is actively encouraged in management education. As an area for scholarship and research, the informal nature of this learning poses a number of challenges for gathering data and developing theory on what is learnt, how learning takes place and which elements of context promotes productive learning. In the absence of a specific methodology for addressing this and in response to calls for exploring different approaches for understanding and enhancing workplace learning (Eraut, 2007), this paper proposes Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955) and the Repertory Grid (RepGrid) technique as a theory and method suited to the study of informal workplace learning. Specific ontological and epistemological assumptions which consider the tension between agency and structure are argued for in this discussion. The second part of the paper serves to illustrate the flexibility of the RepGrid by consideration of its application in a study which involves RepGrid interviews with individuals reflecting on their practice as “unintentional” or “informal” learning events at their places of work i.e. multiple sites. This application, through the structured interview process of exploring personal constructs held by individuals on learning outside the classroom setting, yielded rich data which could be subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis. This informs a proposal for the method as a means to research practice. In conclusion, the benefits of the RepGrid method for gaining access to tacit personal constructs of learning and practice, and for identifying the relationships between learning and context far out way the challenges of the method.

Keywords: Personal construct theory, repertory grid technique, workplace learning, critical realism, research methods

An Empirical Analysis of Research Approaches Used by Postgraduate Students in a South African Tertiary Institution

Shawren Singh and Sam Lubbe

School of Computing University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

Abstract: Lubbe *et al.* (2005) argue that worldwide the completion rate for post-graduates ranges from poor to abysmal. They note that the responsibility for this must be shared by candidates, supervisors and the institutions to which they belong. In particular it is suggested that, postgraduate student cause their studies to derail because the students select the wrong research approach (no problem-based research approach used was proved). This is in Computer Science at a South African Tertiary Institution. While supervisors can change particular research protocols to improve research approaches, the extent to which postgraduate students themselves take ownership of their research approach, will determine their degree of success. This paper therefore looks at a specific institutional dropout rate of postgraduate students. A random sample of doctoral theses were analysed in terms of the approach used to identify and solve the problem. This article presents some insights into whether these research approaches are supported by linked research questions and some do not even have a research methodology chapter.

Keywords: Postgraduate, dropout, supervisor, research, doctoral, masters

Overcoming the Fear of the Social - Moving With ANT Into Burrell and Morgan's Empty box

Jim Underwood

University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

Abstract: It is now 30 years since the publication of Burrell and Morgan's Sociological Paradigms. In the 1990s it was almost obligatory for Information Systems researchers to justify their methodology by declaring their position on the Burrell and Morgan matrix. This fashion has thankfully subsided, but this leaves many starting IS researchers unclear as to their philosophical position. Some cling to the hope of finding simple cause-effect relations, some launch into 'ethnographic research' unprepared for questioning their own cultural assumptions, some attempt to avoid deciding by claiming 'multi-paradigm' research. Very few embrace the final 'radical humanist' quadrant, a position that can be seen as the holy grail of responsible research, a way of avoiding making a stand, or simply crazy. In this paper we interpret the Burrell and Morgan matrix as a stage in the ongoing struggle to conceptualise cultures, societies and organisations as suitable objects for research. Since at least Hume students of the social have looked jealously at mathematics and physics as the true paradigm of knowledge, sometimes attempting exact imitation, sometimes attempting to mark out an independent but equal territory. Most recently Latour has proposed that our problem is in believing that there is such a domain as 'the social', a domain in which we can theorise about human interaction in the abstract, without needing to immerse ourselves in messy particulars. While we sympathise with Latour's latest concerns, we feel that they are yet another emanation of 'science envy', the belief that somehow other domains such as the mathematical, the biological and the economic, have special connections with 'reality' which the social lacks. We believe that before we can 're-assemble the social' we need to overcome our fears of the demons of constructivism, relativism and solipsism, and accept the subjectivity of the particular. In this we are helped by the ideas of Marquard, Geertz, Merleau-Ponty, Foucault and Deleuze among others. Only then can we return to actor-network theory as a tool that we can use as we participate in the reconstruction of the mutual understanding that is the social fabric of particular organisations, a reconstruction that will lead we know not where.

Keywords: Paradigms, relativism, meaning

The (Secret and Password Protected) Diary of a Web 2.0 Novice Doing Subtextual Phenomenology

Jocene Vallack

Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, Australia

Abstract: This paper presents a new methodology for examining reflective data. It is called Subtextual Phenomenology. It is authentic phenomenology in the true Husserlian sense, and it taps into the subtext of the data, using psychological techniques akin to psychoanalysis. At Central Queensland University, we are doing research into *Personal Learning Environments* (PLEs) as they are enabled through Web 2.0 technology. The governing *group-approach* for the project is Action Research, in which the researchers are required to reflect on the issues, plan together for new action, implement that initiative, and then reflect again: Plan; Act; Reflect. This is the ongoing Action Research cycle. Subtextual Phenomenology is the methodology I use to make sense of the *reflective phase*. Like autoethnography (Boucher 2002) and Heuristic Inquiry (Moustakas 1990) it requires the user to be both researcher and research subject. As such, I record my experiences as a novice practitioner using Web 2.0 social media tools. I write my impressions and observations of this process in my blog. When I switch to analysis mode, I then analyse the candid, autoethnographic blog using the research paradigm of Subtextual Phenomenology (Vallack 2005). The approach strives to reveal archetypal, mythical forms, which act as analogies for the research issues. At the end of the first reflective phase in the Action Research spiral, Subtextual Phenomenology has shown that the plight of the Web 2.0 Novice is akin to that of the unfortunate protagonist in the Greek myth of *Echo and Narcissus*.0

Keywords: Subtextual phenomenology, blogs, Web 2.0, personal learning environments, action research

Implementing 'Grounded Action Research' in Information Systems Development: The OrganiK Approach

Ana Vasconcelos¹, Dimitris Bibikas², Tim Zijlstra¹ and Iraklis Paraskakis²

¹The University of Sheffield, UK

²The University of Sheffield, UK and CITY College, Thessaloniki, Greece

Abstract: This paper presents and discusses an approach that aims at addressing the socio-technical gap in systems development by integrating principles of Grounded Theory within an action research approach. The paper discusses some of these ideas within the context of the development approach adopted within an ongoing project, which aims at the development of a knowledge management framework and system for knowledge intensive SMEs in Europe. Principles of Grounded Theory were integrated in an action research framework in two phases of the development life cycle: i) qualitative case studies on collaborative work practices at SMEs, leading to the definition of requirements, and ii) the evaluation of project results. We discuss challenges and issues faced within real life constraints of projects with a tightly defined life-cycle, milestones and deliverables.

Keywords: Grounded theory, action research, case study, information systems development, information systems evaluation

Reconciliation of Opposing Research Approaches by Means of Ontological Horizons

Seppo Visala

University of Tampere, Finland

Abstract: Organization research has been one of the battlefields in the conflict between positivism/ functionalism and interpretivism. Burrell and Morgan's seminal work (1979) classified organization research into four paradigms. Their critics (Chua 1986, Deetz 1996) have mitigated their strict dualisms between the dimensions of subjective-objective and social regulation-radical change. The present paper seeks to throw light on the following questions: Why do many researchers find it difficult to adhere to one research approach only? Why do we need statistical and economic models as well as an interpretation of human behavior in order to make sense of what is going on in organizations and between organizations in society? The paper tries to render coexisting research methods and argumentation contexts understandable through different ontological layers, or modes of being. These contexts are derived through a phenomenological analysis of our way of seeing things, and therefore they will be called horizons.

Keywords: Argumentation, research approach, phenomenology