

FIT5190 Assignment 1: Research Writing Task 2

State the problem

Please write one or two paragraphs to outline the main problem (e.g. research issues or questions) to be addressed in your research. In your problem statement, you should clearly identify and briefly describe a particular situation or condition that needs to be resolved.

Example 1: Effective use of graphics in web page design

Graphics is an essential element of a web page. To use graphics effectively in web page design, we need to consider not only the ratio of graphics to the text but also how it interacts with other design elements in contributing to the users' overall feeling or perception of the web page.

This research aims to address this web page design problem by answering the following research questions. What are the key design elements of a web page that affect the users' feelings of the web page? Is the ratio of graphics to text a significant design element in affecting the users' feelings of the web page? How various ratios of graphics to text affect the users' feelings of the web page? Is there a combination of graphics and text that best matches desirable feelings of the users for given design elements of a web page?

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Example 2: Selecting multiattribute decision making methods

Numerous multiattribute decision making (MADM) methods have been proposed for ranking or evaluating a finite number of alternatives with respect to multiple, usually conflicting criteria or attributes. Due to the multiplicity and complexity of multicriteria decisions, there is no best method for the general MADM problem, and the validity of the decision outcome remains an open issue. A number of MADM methods are generally available for solving a given problem and they often produce inconsistent decision outcomes for the same problem. How to select the most valid decision outcome among those produced by different MADM methods is a significant issue to be resolved in MADM research.

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Example 3: Sustainable planning of e-waste recycling activities

In the current practice, the e-recycling companies make planning decisions of e-waste recycling jobs based on their experiences. This rule-of-thumb approach cannot always ensure that the e-waste recycling jobs are carried out in an economically viable, environmentally friendly, and socially responsible manner that will maximise their corporate sustainability.

How to maximise the corporate sustainability of an e-recycling company through sustainable planning of recycling activities is the main research question to be addressed in this study. In addition to addressing this practical planning problem, this study will address the research problem of how to objectively determining a set of optimal weights for the three sustainability dimensions, while considering the subjective sustainability preferences of the e-recycling company.

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Example 4: A performance-based approach to project assignment and performance evaluation

Assigning projects to project managers has been a critical process in project management in order to ensure a project can be best performed. The performance outcome of a project will be affected by the assignment outcome of the project, as different project managers will perform the same project differently. To best manage multiple projects for a project-based organisation, there is a need to develop an optimal project assignment process and an effective performance evaluation process in an integrated manner.

To achieve this, four research issues are to be addressed. First, a project should be assigned to a project manager who is expected to have the best performance on the project. Second, the project assignment process should ideally help maximize the overall contribution of the projects. Third, the performance evaluation phase should effectively assess the actual performance of the completed projects and of their responsible project managers against the expected performance resulted from the project assignment process. Fourth, the outcome of the performance evaluation process should be used as a basis for the project assignment process.