University of East London

Pioneering Futures Since 1898

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UEL-CN-7000 Mental Wealth; Professional Life

(Dissertation)

Week 4 – Reading Material

Research/Dissertation Methodology

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INTRODUCTION

A systematic approach to discovering the solution to a particular issue is known as research methodology. Its goal is to provide the research work plan and is described as the study of knowledge acquisition methods. Based on the appropriate research purpose, the type of material, and the resources available, the optimum research approach should be chosen. The methods you utilized for data gathering and analysis in your research or dissertation are discussed and explained in research methodology. It ought to contain:

- The kind of research you carried out.
- Your data collection and analysis procedures.
- Any equipment or supplies you used during your research.
- The reasons for your technique selection.

In addition to providing crucial insight into two crucial components of your research: your data collection and analysis processes and your justification for conducting your research, the methodology section of your research/dissertation enables readers to assess the overall validity and reliability of your study. Keep the discussion brief and in the past tense when writing a methodology section for a research or dissertation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this week, students will be able to understand the:

1. Exhibit the capacity to select techniques that are appropriate for the goals and objectives of the research or dissertation.
2. Recognize the constraints imposed by specific research/dissertation methodologies.
3. Gain proficiency in the presentation and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.
4. Enhance one's capacity for critical thought.

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH/DISSERTATION

The appropriate topics for a qualitative or creative research project are listed below. Depending on your committee, advisor, and/or discipline, the content may change. The creative pieces that make up the qualitative/creative dissertation are likely to be too large to fit into the typical qualitative dissertation chapters. In fact, the topics that were given individual chapters may all be condensed into a preface or introduction that comes before the creative parts themselves, which make up the dissertation's body. The author of the dissertation should make an effort to avoid just presenting a collection of ideas, instead working to arrange the creative materials in accordance with some aesthetic ideal. This could entail grouping and/or sequencing works to establish a sense of a beginning, middle, and conclusion while also establishing some thematic continuity or counterpoint.

Guidelines for conducting research and writing a quantitative dissertation are provided in this section. Keep in mind that your project should be the outcome of independent research that demonstrates original research and critical analysis when you start your research or dissertation (Dawson, 2005). The work should show that the student has the following knowledge of the subject area:

- Knowledge of significant ongoing projects around the world.
- The capacity to design experiments or other research projects that include essential hypo-deductive components including controls, hypotheses, sample sizes that are statistically suitable, independent variable manipulations, and accurate statistical analyses.
- The ability to do the intended research activity and the drive to do so.
- The capacity to analyze research activity outcomes in a way that is both mathematically and statistically accurate.

- The capacity to derive valid conclusions from the research.
- The capacity to finish a well written and arranged dissertation as a written explanation of work.
- The capacity to complete a dissertation with the possibility to present at professional conferences and/or publish in academic journals.

METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

You must be completely clear on the approach you are employing and how you are applying it in order to complete a project successfully. (I use the term "methodology" to refer to both general principles and modes of operation and to particular procedures and techniques.) However, there are some general issues concerning technique to which you must have adequate answers if you hope to manage your project successfully. In this part, various subject types and the approaches associated with them are distinguished, and a list of questions to ask about each kind is provided. There are various categories of subject. Each necessitates the appropriate methodology.

Table 1 Project Subjects and Methodologies

Subject	**Methodology (what you do)**
An event, circumstance, procedure, or the actions of a person or group that occurs naturally or artificially	Look into it, explain it, and describe it.
A hypothesis, theory, theoretical model, or "law"	Check it
An assertion or justification in philosophy	Check it
A plan, idea, course of action, or method	Review it
A difficulty or concern	Investigate it and, if you can, (re)solve it.
A work of art	Examine it and offer a critique.
A theme	Examine it.
A thesis	Make a case for it

investigation, explanation, and description of a phenomena The phenomenon you want to study might already exist or may have done so in the past, or it might be one you create on your own, as when you conduct an experiment. You must at least have a description of a phenomenon before you can investigate it. There must be aspects of it that you have noticed. Additionally, your description must be specific enough for you to spot it when you see it.

Testing a hypothesis, theory, theoretical model, or "law" It is necessary to understand what a theory claims to do before you can test it. Most theoretical models, "laws," hypotheses, and theories center on relationships between different variables.

Putting a claim or philosophical argument to the test Having a concise formulation of the proposition or argument is the first step in testing a proposition, P, or a philosophical argument. Unpick it once you have it; disassemble it into its component bits before doing anything else. Make a list of the steps in the chain of reasoning when addressing an argument.

Assessing a plan, idea, course of action, or method You must formulate and convey a judgment when evaluating a design, proposition, action, or approach. There must be three steps in this procedure. You must consider this:

- What results can be expected from putting the design into practice?
- What standards should I employ while evaluating something? (Consider the word "criteria" whenever you encounter the phrase "assessment")
- How do I apply those standards to the results I've determined?

Investigating and addressing a problem or issue Before any suggestions or actions, there must first be a problem, which is sometimes expressed as a "what should be done?" inquiry. There are problems in many different fields, thus your language and strategy will change correspondingly.

Making a creative work critique When you subject a piece of creative work to a critique, you are 'interrogating' it and approaching it with a critical eye. Your classroom instruction should have provided you with the conceptual framework and methods required to accomplish this.

Talking about a theme A theme challenges you to locate the literature that is related to it, read the pertinent passages, and generate opinions about it. You will later convey your viewpoints in your dissertation when you are writing up your work.

Developing a thesis Advocacy is the process of defending a position and supporting it with facts, arguments, etc. It's crucial to make a distinction between your project and the writing you're doing here. It is feasible to complete a project that is essentially an investigation and then write it up as an advocacy piece, but be mindful that if you do this, you are essentially switching horses (or at least attitudes) in the middle of the process.

Creating a dissertation project on your subject requires using your thoughts, as well as materials and sources. The "materials" that are related to your subject are that something. Materials can be discovered in "sources." sources of information can be broadly divided into five types:

- ***Academic publications,*** works written by academics and other researchers.
- ***Professional literature,*** especially articles appearing in periodicals geared toward professionals in the pertinent vocations.
- ***Formal publications,*** like statutes (parliamentary acts); law reports; annual reports of government agencies, other official bodies, and non-governmental organizations; business reports and financial statements; and the publically available records of parliamentary and parliamentary committee proceedings.

- ***Sources of data,*** such as census data, publicly available economic information, and encyclopedias where equations and physical constants, among other things, can be sought up.
- ***Subject matter,*** such is the books, plays, and poems that make up the literature you are studying, as well as ephemera like newspaper and magazine articles and manifestations in other performance media like film, theater, music media, TV, and radio (Levin, 2012).

TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Have some idea of how you are going to approach that work before beginning the real work you need to do to finish your project. Without an effective project plan in place, you will lack direction, lose track of where your project is headed, and fail to finish it on schedule. We'll look at several methods in this section to help you organize how you'll approach your project. You will be able to manage your time more efficiently, choose the priorities for your project at various phases, and get clear direction and motivation if you have a reasonable project plan in place. The ability to recognize, manage, and control any potential hazards to your project will be provided by our discussion of risk management. Before introducing various project management strategies using this framework, we will first talk about a general understanding of the project process (Dawson, 2005).

The project process The five aspects time, resources, money, scope, and quality are introduced in Figure 1 along with a generalized picture of the project process. From major industrial operations to small, one-person enterprises like your own, this viewpoint may be applied to any endeavor to a greater or lesser level. The figure demonstrates how every project requires time,

resources, and money (budget or cost) to generate a specific good with its unique scope and quality.

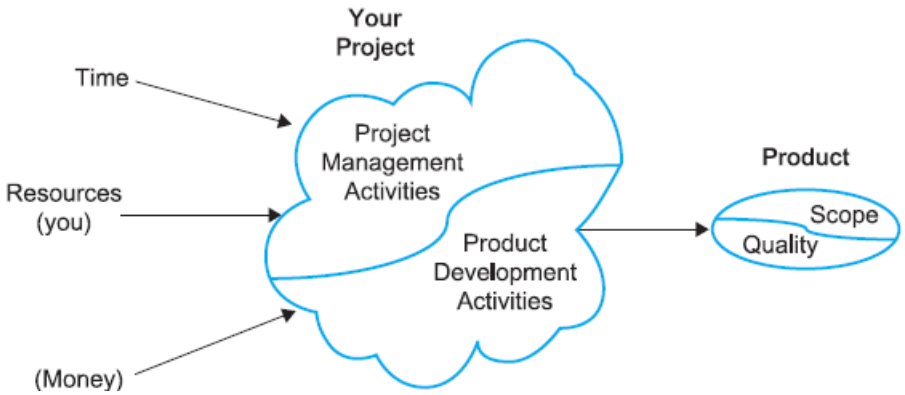

Figure 1 A Generic View of the Project Process

The project's stages From the perspective of project management, every project moves through five key phases throughout the course of its existence, from the moment the project is founded as an initial idea until the moment it is eventually finished. All projects, from small academic computing research to lengthy, multi-year industrial ones, can be divided into these stages. Specific tasks that might be exclusive to academic computer projects are not of interest at this level of specificity. The more general phases in which project operations are carried out are of interest to us (Berndtsson et al., 2008). As your project moves through these stages, you will need to manage them in one way or another and take various factors into account. The five main stages are:

- Definition
- Planning
- Initiation
- Control

- Closure

Project planning Even though you now know exactly what you want your project to accomplish, you still need to figure out what work has to be done to accomplish these goals. Project planning helps you by outlining the tasks you must complete, making clear the sequence in which you should complete them, and indicating how long it will take. You may now recognize that your project either is too complicated or has too little depth for the demands of your course. Then, before re-planning your task, you can choose to reframe your project (enlarging or contracting its scope). Six steps make up the process of project planning, which makes use of several project management methods:

- Breakdown of the work
- Estimated times
- Identifying milestones
- Activity synchronization
- Scheduling
- Re-planning

Risk Management is a procedure that operates concurrently with project management and adheres to a very similar process. It is inextricably related to project management. Risk management entails identifying hazards at the commencement of the project and controlling those risks as the project develops, just as project management entails developing a project plan and controlling the project using that plan as the project proceeds. You will be incorporating the risk management process activities as you go through the project management stages. You can utilize the risk management process that is introduced in this section to manage and control

hazards in your own project (Phillips and Pugh, 2005). These are the four primary steps in this risk management process:

- Identify hazards
- Evaluate their effects
- Reduce serious risks
- Control risks

WHAT EXAMINER LIKE AND DON'T LIKE TO SEE

While some examiners do have rigid opinions regarding the proper format for dissertations in their field, making their viewpoint essentially critical, past observations show that the majority have a mindset that values the characteristics of excellent dissertations. A dissertation that demonstrates some or all of the following traits on the part of the author, the project, or the dissertation itself will be rewarded by examiners in addition to demonstrating the author's command of the subject:

- The capacity to formulate a focused, controllable, and practical endeavor as well as a clear, insightful inquiry or queries.
- The capacity to select and use a precise and useful technique for the project.
- The capacity to manage a complex subject without oversimplifying it, a knowledge of the subject's nuances, a keen eye for relevance and meaning.
- An understanding of the project's larger context, including the capacity to comprehend both the "big picture" and important particulars.
- Proof that the pertinent literature has been read, absorbed, and properly applied.

- Some indication of the capacity for autonomous and critical thought. A merit or distinction will typically be given to a dissertation that contains original work.
- Thoroughness: proof that the work has been done attentively, that the necessary attention to detail has been given, that the subject has been treated extensively (e.g., no significant elements have been left unexamined), and that the study has been appropriately completed.
- A dissertation with a methodical, logical, and acceptable framework.
- Persuasive advocacy in areas where you are required to present a viewpoint and defend it.
- Proof that the dissertation was indeed written by the person submitting it.
- Adherence to formal requirements. In most cases, failure to adhere to the word limit or submit by the deadline will result in a penalty, such as loss of marks or worse.

Additionally, you need to be aware of what examiners often avoid:

- Reliance on personal experience (sometimes known as "anecdotal evidence") without thorough analysis.
- The use of the pronouns "I think" and "I believe." Your personal opinions and beliefs do not qualify as sound arguments in an academic dissertation. If your ideas are supported by evidence, as they should be, provide that evidence and show how it leads to your conclusions. Likewise, be clear about your values if your beliefs are based on them.
- Deviating from your discipline. Although using a method created in one academic subject to another may show that you are a great lateral thinker, the examiners might not find this admirable. A select few enlightened academics are aware of the advantages of using a cross-disciplinary approach to a subject, but sadly, the majority are not.

- Poor English usage, particularly when it obscures the sense of what you write. It is not necessary for your English writing to be sophisticated or eloquent, but you must use words correctly — that is, you must choose the word that best expresses the idea you want to get across — and your grammar, punctuation, and spelling must pass the examiners' muster. Slang and "chatty" language will not be tolerated (Levin, 2012).

SUMMARY

Guidelines for qualitative and quantitative research/dissertations are provided in this chapter, along with information on time management, planning, and what examiners like and don't like. After reading the pertinent documents, make a note for yourself outlining what you currently know. To aid you in writing your literature review and compiling your list of references, list each thing separately and make sure to provide a complete citation to each item's source. Defining your goals and figuring out how to get there are the first two steps of project planning. Your project's goals and objectives must be identified as part of the project definition. You can use project management software programs like Microsoft Project to help you plan and manage your project. Although you can manually create your own Gantt charts and activity networks. Project management and risk management are carried out simultaneously, and both involve the stages of.

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