

Lecture 5 Research Process

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The **research process** is a set of ordered steps a researcher takes to ensure that all parts of an investigation are completed to a high standard. Following the research process allows the researcher to cover all angles and ensure that the information they gather is reliable and effectively presented.

A typical research process comprises the following stages:

1. Selecting the research area. Your dissertation marker expects you to state that you have selected the research area due to professional and personal interests in the area and this statement must be true. Students often underestimate the importance of this first stage in the research process. If you find a research area and research problem that is genuinely interesting to you it is for sure that the whole process of writing your dissertation will be much easier. Therefore, it is never too early to start thinking about the research area for your dissertation.

2. Formulating research aim, objectives and research questions or developing hypotheses. The choice between the formulation of research questions and the development of hypotheses depends on your research approach as it is discussed further below in more details. Appropriate research aims and objectives or hypotheses usually result from several attempts and revisions.

Accordingly, you need to mention in your dissertation that you have revised your research aims and objectives or hypotheses during the research process several times to get their final versions. It is critically important that you get confirmation from your supervisor regarding your research questions or hypotheses before moving forward with the work.

3. Conducting the literature review. Literature review is usually the longest stage in the research process. Actually, the literature review starts even before the formulation of research aims and objective. This is because you have to check if exactly the same research problem has been addressed before and this task is a part of the literature review. Nevertheless, you will conduct the main part of the literature review after the formulation of research aim and objectives. You have to use a wide range of secondary data sources such as books, newspapers, magazines, journals, online articles etc.

4. Selecting data collection methods. Data collection method(s) need to be selected on the basis of critically analyzing advantages and disadvantages associated with several alternative methods. In studies involving primary data collection, you need to write about advantages

and disadvantages of selected primary data collection method(s) in detailed manner in methodology.

5. Collecting the primary data. You will have to start primary data collection only after detailed preparation. Sampling is an important element of this stage. You may have to conduct pilot data collection if you chose questionnaire primary data collection method. Primary data collection is not a compulsory stage for all dissertations and you will skip this stage if you are conducting a desk-based research.

6. Data analysis. Analysis of data plays an important role in the achievement of research aim and objectives. This stage involves an extensive editing and coding of data. Data analysis methods vary between secondary and primary studies, as well as, between qualitative and quantitative studies. In data analysis coding of primary data plays an instrumental role to reduce sample group responses to a more manageable form for storage and future processing.

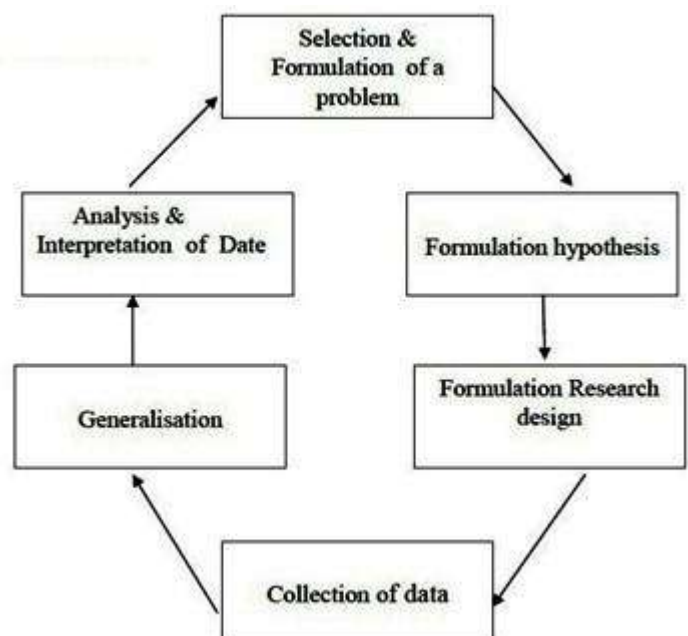
7. Reaching conclusions. Conclusions relate to the level of achievement of research aims and objectives. In this final part of your dissertation you will have to justify why you think that research aims and objectives have been achieved. Conclusions also need to cover research limitations and suggestions for future research.

8. Completing the research. Following all of the stages described above, and organizing separate chapters into one file leads to the completion of the first draft. You need to prepare the first draft of your dissertation at least one month before the submission deadline. This is because you will need to have sufficient amount of time to address feedback to be provided by your supervisor.

The Research Process is the Paradigm of research project. In a research project there are various scientific activities. The research process is a system of interrelated activities. Usually research begins with the selection of a problem. The various stages in the research process are explained in the above diagram. Research is a cyclical process. If the Data do not support the hypothesis, research is repeated again.

C.R. Kothari in his book, “Research Methodology: Methods & Techniques” presents a brief overview of a research process. He has given the following order concerning the Research Process.

- Formulation the Research problem
- Extensive Literature survey



- Developing the hypothesis
- Preparing the research design
- Determining sample design
- Collection of Data
- Execution of the Project
- Analysis of Data
- Hypothesis testing
- Generalisation & Interpretation
- Preparation of the report.

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