RESEARCH METHODS

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Topic 4

Formulation of Research Objectives
How Research Objective is Formulated

Common research problem:
- lack of research
- Some of the phenomena is still unexplained
- Inconsistencies in findings
- Methodological problem in mist research

By getting answer to those research questions, the study goals are met and a contribution towards solving the problem is made (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005)
The Formulation of Objectives

Objectives = Goals set to attain your study

Guide the research process

Inform reader what you want to achieve through your study.

2 types of objectives:

- General/main objective
  - Overall statement of the purpose of study

- Sub-objective/specific objective
  - Specific aspect that you want to study
General Objective

• A statement for the main trust/focus of a study.
• Usually represent the whole specific objectives consist of variables of the study, the subjects and organization where the study is conducted.
• The objectives should start with the words such as: “to determine”, “to find out”, “to ascertain”, “to measure”, “to explore”.

E.g. To study whether organizational learning capability (OLC) is related to human resource management (HRM) practices such as selection, development, appraisals and rewards.
Specific Objective

- Specific aspect that the researcher topic of study.
- Should be numerically listed.
- Should be clearly worded.

- Use action-oriented words/verbs such as:
  
  **To explore** – develop an initial rough description/understanding of the phenomenon of study. (new area)
  
  **To describe** – provide detailed account/report the characteristics/population/sample/phenomenon.
  
  **To explain** – to establish the factors/elements that are responsible for producing the state of the phenomenon.
  
  **To understand** – to established reasons for the occurrence of an event.
  
  **To evaluate** – to monitor social phenomenon/program – to assess whether have achieve the desired outcome.
Characteristics of Objectives (Kumar, 2011)

- **Clear**
- **Complete**
- **Specific**
- **Identify the main variable to be correlated**
- **Identify the direction of the relationship**

**Descriptive studies**
e.g. To describe the types of treatment programme provided by AADK to alcoholics in KL.

**Correlational studies (experimental & non-experimental)**
e.g. To compare the effectiveness of different teaching methods on the comprehension of students.

**Hypothesis-testing studies**
e.g. To ascertain if an increase in youth unemployment will increase the incident of street crime.
Elements of a Quantitative Purpose Statement

- A **quantitative purpose statement** identifies the variables, their relationship, and the participants and site for research.

- Guidelines for writing:
  - use a single sentence
  - use wording such as “The purpose of this study…”
  - use quantitative words (e.g. “relate”, “compare”, “describe”) to describe the relationships between variables.
Elements of a Qualitative Purpose Statement

- A single statement
- A statement such as “The purpose of this study…”
- The central phenomenon
- A statement identifying the type of qualitative design
- Qualitative words (e.g. “explore”, “understand”, “discover”)
- The participants
- The research site
Explaining/Predicting Variables (Quantitative study) vs. Exploring/Understanding a Central Phenomenon (Qualitative study)

Quantitative Explaining/Predicting Variables

| Job Satisfaction (IV) | Career Success (DV) |

The independent variable (X) influences a dependent variable (Y)

Qualitative Understanding/Exploring a Central Phenomenon

Y

In-depth understanding of Y; external forces shape and are shaped by Y
Antecedents of Intent to Change Careers Among Psychologist

The aim of this research was to examine the antecedents of intent to change careers among psychologists. Specifically, the research examined the importance of the following predictor variables: a multi-dimensional model of career commitment (career planning, career resilience, and career identity), job satisfaction, and conscientiousness. A self-report questionnaire was used to obtain data from a sample of Australian psychologists ($N = 437$). The findings showed that career planning, career resilience, and job satisfaction were significant predictors of intent to change careers. Career identity and conscientiousness were not significant predictors. Theoretical and practical implications of the research were discussed.
Relational Processes in Career Transition: Extending Theory, Research and Practice

My qualitative investigation of midlife women’s career transition process builds from these important contributions and illustrates an extension of the current work in theory, research, and practice. Specifically, this empirical study (Motulsky, 2005) extends the relational career literature by (a) using feminist relational theories more centrally, including relational cultural theory (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004; Walker & Rosen, 2004), that focus attention on gendered and cultural dimensions of career transition and decision making, thus moving from a gender neutral to a gendered analysis of women’s experiences; (b) expanding the