Research Methods for Business Students 9th edition Saunders Solutions Manual

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Case 1CE: A reflective journal? … About research? … Where do I even begin?" [1]

1. *Which parts of Michael's journal entry, if any, were reflective or reflexive? Give reasons for your answer, including the evidence you used to inform your assessment.*

Part 1 of Michael's journal entry only presents facts—the time of day, the length of time spent writing, and the writing focus. Part 1 is therefore not reflective (or reflexive) as it only notes what has happened much like a reporter sharing a recording. The second part of the journal again focuses on what happens, particularly in the first paragraph. However, in the last sentence of the second paragraph, Michael is reflective. He notes the lesson he has learned from the University Writing Centre support people, which is about how reading his work out loud helped him identify punctuation errors. Here, he is examining his own writing practice and what has happened. There is no evidence of reflexivity.

Reflexivity requires researchers to critically reflect on how our "social background, assumptions, positioning, and behaviour impact on the research process" (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p. ix). It requires us to check ourselves and our research process(es), if you will (Morrison, 2015). It is a more dynamic, continuing practice of self-awareness while critical reflection tends to be a more cognitive act that tends to happen retrospectively. In this case, Michael could have demonstrated reflexivity by talking about how his own biases, assumptions, background, and/or experiences in Ghana affected his research process (e.g., how he gathers data, questions sources, interprets data, and decides what to include and exclude).

Finlay, L. and Gough, B. eds., (2003). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Morrison, E.A. (2015) "How the I shapes the Eye: The imperative of reflexivity in global service-learning qualitative research," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 22(1),* 52-66.

2. *The journal entry was to consist of two parts: first, a table that summarizes data points about his writing practices for the week; and second, a critical reflection of his research process and content. To what extent, if any, did Michael fulfil these requirements? Is there a better way he could have approached and written the research journal entry? In your answer, state how you assessed the entry and include examples that illustrate your point. If you think there was a better approach, describe it.*

For part 1, Michael completed the table and partially fulfilled the assignment instructions. However, some of the data points are not specific enough. For instance, how much time was spent at the Writing Centre versus spent on his own making edits? Which parts of the literature review did he do? More specificity would allow for greater awareness and deeper reflection about how to focus time, attention, and energy should the process not be going well? For example, students sometimes spend hours getting lost in the proverbial rabbit hole looking for articles rather than spending part of that time actually reading the articles found.

For part 2, Michael reports a few things he did, but he does not adequately fulfil the assignment instructions. Much of the entry is about how he felt and what he wants to happen rather than offering a substantive analysis of his process or content (e.g., how he went about it, why it did or did not work, what it means for what he found, and what he actually found).

[1] Answers provided by Emily Morrison

He spends more time talking about writing than he does actually writing about what he has learned about the writing process and his research project. For instance, it may be useful to discuss a finding from one of the sources he reviewed that surprised him or something with which he disagreed. Such notations in his reflective journal can offer anchor points that offer insight into potential bias, as well as show how his thinking has evolved over time. Further, it helps you discern where a student may be struggling.

With regards to other approaches, students may offer a number of different ideas. Each student's response will depend on who they are, their learning to date, and the extent to which their learning style preferences are naturally more reflective or not. However, there are a few points that may emerge about the structure or importance of journals, which include:

- There isn't one way to do reflective journals. The crucial thing is that they are actually reflecting critically regardless of the format in which they present their insights.
- Some students will prefer a less structured, stream of consciousness approach and will be of this mindset: "How can I know what I think until I see what I say?" If they choose this route, it may be helpful to do an initial free write and then reflect on what they have written. They should then enter their reflections into their reflective journal.
- The journals offer space for students to raise questions, muse, remind themselves of decisions they are making throughout the process, make methodological notes (e.g., rather than waiting for participants to introduce a word or concept, the student may introduce language to participants that may affect how they respond), identify potential connections to specific theories or other stories the student has read, and get feedback from you.
- Students may prefer to write an outline to organize their thoughts and then identify which aspects of their experience are most important to raise in their journal for feedback. This is a strategy that can enable students to address questions and request feedback.

3. *Imagine you are Michael's project tutor and you need to give him feedback. Reread his entry, making comments throughout it. While critiquing and commenting, be sure to note what he has done well and provide specific feedback on what he could do to strengthen it.*

Students' answers to this question will vary and likely differ from the answers below, which run the gamut from broader perspectives to finer details. However, they will, hopefully, have gotten the main points and may have a few points of their own to add!

Rather than evaluate whether or not the students identified all of the same issues, it is more important to address the key issues or points that will relate to their class assignments. Thus, the notes below are meant to provide some potential class discussion points.

Part 1:
I am to spend a minimum equivalent of 15 minutes of writing time per day each week[2] (Gray, 2010). Here is my writing record:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total
Writing Time	0	11pm-1am[3]	0	0	0	2-3:30 pm	0	X

[2] The instructions say per day, but you have concentrated his writing time to only 2 out of 7 days

[3] Writing around midnight may not be your sharpest writing/thinking time.

Time spent Writing*	0	2 hours	0	0	0	1.5 hours	0	3.5 hours min.
Writing Focus		Lit Review[4]				Writing Centre; Edits[5]		

**** Note**: "Writing time" includes any time working to communicate your research with words, such as outlining, revising, editing, writing paragraphs that will someday appear in the final paper, writing paragraphs that will never appear in the final paper, and writing the final presentation (not the generation) of numbers in tables or graphs.*

Part 2:

This week Monday-Sunday I worked on improving my literature review on two different days[6] and met with the support staff at the University's Writing Centre. I reckoned what I had written for my literature review was not that good and was hoping to learn how to improve it[7]. The person I met with in writing support was only able to help me with a few small things like referencing, most of which I already knew[8]. However, I was asked to read my work out loud and I was surprised by how much that helped. It made punctuation errors clearer.

I really want to improve my writing techniques[9], but I am not sure about how to do that. Speaking with the writing support person was not as useful as I hoped it would be. When I have asked my friends to read my work and be honest, they say it is "fine." But, I hate it when I turn in the "fine" draft and my paper comes back "bleeding," covered in questions and corrections from my project tutor or instructor. It's clear that I need to start thinking and writing more critically. After visiting the Writing Centre, I should be able to read my own work and see the flaws in my own arguments[10]. I suppose I want to write better so people can't

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[4] Might work better if you break your literature review into separate sections and work on them one at a time. This can help you have more focus and better project management.

[5] Unclear—how much time was spent at the Writing Centre and how much time was spent actually making edits?

[6] Did you feel like you had to cram it all into those two time periods? Was it for a particular reason? Did you have space to think? Were you in a flow? Or, since it had been several days, did it take some time to remember your train of thought and get back into flow?

[7] It might help if you let the Writing Centre people know exactly with which aspects of your writing you need help and want feedback. In other words, give them clear direction. Alternatively, you might ask them to 'fix' a paragraph of what you've written, explaining what they did and why. Your odds for receiving meaningful feedback will increase when you ask directly for what you need from the person reviewing your work. Help them help you.

[8] Knowing you, my friend, you were probably handing in your first draft as the final draft. If you knew what to do already, you should have sorted it! Take responsibility for your own work. Otherwise, it doesn't reflect well on you. And, assuming the person reviewing your paper will fix it for you is not only presumptuous, but also may prevent them from having time or the energy needed to provide substantive feedback on things such as flaws in the argument or disorganization.

[9] In looking at part 1, it seems you did most, if not all, of your writing in one big chunk of time. How does doing everything at one time align with that goal?

[10] This seems really ambitious after one meeting. Rather than just say what you want to do, pause, think carefully about what has and has not gone well. Why? Once you have more clarity about what is and is not working, you can identify a clearer path forward towards your goal.

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Instructor's Manual

Research Methods for Business Students

Ninth edition

Mark NK Saunders
Philip Lewis
Adrian Thornhill

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INTRODUCTION

An overview of the instructors' manual

This instructors' manual provides commentary for the ninth edition of the textbook *Research Methods for Business Students*. The commentary is on a chapter by chapter basis and includes:

- chapter learning outcomes;
- summary of the content;
- comments on likely student reactions and possible use of materials;
- ideas for students' preparatory work;
- suggestions for delivery in the classroom;
- ideas for students' follow-up work.

In addition, we have included a copy of a research project assignment, a group research project poster assignment, and a copy of a dissertation proposal assignment as appendices.

Research Methods for Business–an overview of the ninth edition

Pedagogic features

The over-riding purpose of *Research Methods for Business Students* is to help undergraduate and postgraduate students and students on professional courses to undertake research. Each chapter deals with a part of the research process and discusses the ideas, techniques and methods using as little jargon as is possible. Tables, checklists and diagrams are used to aid this discussion. Where new terms are introduced for the first time, they are shown in bold, and a definition or explanation follows shortly afterwards. They are also listed with a brief definition in the glossary. The application of appropriate information technology is considered, in most instances as an integral part of the text. Chapters have been cross-referenced as appropriate, and an index is provided to help students find their way around the book.

Focus on student research boxes are included within the text of each chapter. These are based on actual research projects, undertaken by students, in which points made in the text are illustrated. In many instances these worked examples illustrate possible pitfalls students may come across while undertaking their research. Where a pitfall has been illustrated, it will, it is hoped, help your students avoid making the same mistake. Further illustrations are provided by focus on management research and research in the news boxes.

Focus on management research boxes discuss recent research in business and management. These are normally derived from refereed academic journal articles and students are likely to be able to download the actual articles from online databases at their university.

Focus on research in the news boxes provide topical news articles that illustrate pertinent research related issues. All these will help students to understand the technique or idea and to assess its suitability or appropriateness to their research.

Boxed checklists provide students with further focussed guidance for their own research.

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A ***summary of key points*** at the end of each chapter, can be used by students before and after reading the chapter to ensure that they have digested the main points.

Self-check questions enable students to check they have understood the chapter. These can all be answered without recourse to other (external) resources. Answers are provided to all the self-check questions at the end of each chapter.

Review and discuss questions follow the self-check questions. These suggest a variety of activities students can undertake to help them further develop their knowledge and understanding of the material in the chapter, often involving discussion with a friend.

Self-test multiple choice questions and ***true/false questions*** for each chapter are available on this book's companion web site.

All chapters include a section towards the end titled "***Progressing your research project***" that can be undertaken as part of the student's research project. These are presented in sufficient detail to enable them to focus on the techniques that are most appropriate to his or her research. By completing all these sections, the student will have also completed their project report.

Each chapter is also accompanied by references, further reading and a case study.

Further reading is included for two distinct reasons:

- to direct students to other work on the ideas contained within the chapter;
- to direct students to further examples of research where the ideas contained in the chapter have been used.

Case studies at the end of each chapter are all new to the ninth edition. They have been drawn from a variety of business and management research scenarios and have been based on the case study's authors' students' experiences when undertaking a research project. They have been written to highlight real issues that occur when undertaking business and management research. To help to focus students' thoughts or discussion on some of the pertinent issues each case is followed by evaluative questions, answers to which are provided on the Instructors' Companion Web Site. A case study follows every chapter. A further 65 case studies from earlier editions of the book are available on the Students' Companion Web Site; answers to these cases are provided on the Instructors' Companion Web Site. A complete list of these cases and those in the current edition is provided in Appendix 4.

Contents

Chapter 1 outlines the nature of research and, more specifically, of business and management research. The basic versus applied research and relevance debates are considered and the Responsible Research in Business and Management (RRBM) movement is discussed. Advice is offered regarding keeping a reflective diary or notebook. The chapter concludes with an overview of the purpose and structure of the book.

Chapter 2 is written to assist students in the generation of ideas, which will help them to choose a suitable research topic, and offers advice on what makes a good research topic. If your students have

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already been given a research topic, perhaps by an organisation or tutor, they will need to refine it into one that is feasible, and should still therefore read this chapter. After their idea has been generated and refined, the chapter discusses how to turn this idea into clear research question(s) and objectives. (Research questions and objectives are referred to throughout the book.) Finally, the chapter provides advice on how to write a research proposal.

The importance of the critical literature review to students' research is discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter outlines what a critical review needs to include and the range of secondary and primary literature sources available. The chapter explains the purpose of reviewing the literature, discusses a range of search strategies, and contains advice on how to plan and undertake a search and to write the review. The processes of identifying key words and searching using on-line databases and the Internet are outlined. It also offers advice on how to record items and to evaluate their relevance as well as discussing plagiarism.

Chapter 4 addresses the issue of understanding different research philosophies including positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism. Within this the functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist and radical structuralist paradigms are discussed. Deductive, inductive, abductive and retroductive approaches to theory development are also considered. In this chapter students are challenged to think about their own values and how they view the world and the impact this will have on the way they undertake their research.

These ideas are developed further in Chapter 5, which explores the process of research design. As part of this the methodological choice of quantitative, qualitative, multiple, or mixed methods is considered and within this whether research is exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, or evaluative. A variety of research strategies, comprising Experiment, Survey, Ethnography, Grounded Theory, Narrative Inquiry, Archival Research, Case Study and Action Research are explored and longitudinal and cross-sectional time horizons discussed. Consideration is given to the implications of design choice for the credibility of students' research findings and conclusions.

Chapter 6 explores issues related to gaining access and to research ethics. It offers advice on how to gain physical and cognitive access both to organisations and to individuals using both traditional and Internet mediated strategies. Potential ethical issues are discussed in relation to each stage of the research process and different data collection methods. Issues of data protection and data management are also introduced.

A range of the probability and non-probability sampling techniques available for use by students in their research is explained in Chapter 7. The chapter considers why sampling is necessary and looks at issues of sample size and likely response rates for both probability and non-probability samples. Advice on how to relate the choice of sampling techniques to the research topic is given, and techniques for assessing the representativeness of those who respond are discussed. The extent to which it is reasonable to generalise from a sample is also assessed.

Chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11 are concerned with different methods of obtaining data. The use of secondary data is discussed in Chapter 8, which introduces the variety of data that are likely to be available and suggests ways in which they can be used. Advantages and disadvantages of secondary data are discussed, and a range of techniques for locating these data is suggested. Chapter 8 provides an indication of the myriad of sources available via the Internet and also offers advice to students on how to evaluate the suitability of secondary data for their research.

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Chapter 9 is concerned with collecting data through observation. Three observation methods are presented and discussed in this chapter: participant observation; structured observation and Internet-mediated observation. This chapter also discusses the use of videography, audio-recording and static visual images in the collection of observational data. These approaches are considered in turn to allow practical advice on each to be offered and their respective data quality issues to be discussed.

Chapter 10 is concerned with collecting primary data using research interviews and research diaries. Types of research interview are outlined and their appropriateness discussed. Advice on how to conduct in-depth and semi-structured research interviews is offered, including group interviews and focus groups, telephone interviews, Internet-mediated interviews and visual interviews. Attention is given to the respective advantages and disadvantages of these types of research interview. Visual interviews are discussed along with ways to conduct these online and face-to-face. This chapter also introduces both quantitative and qualitative research diaries and discusses advantages and issues associated with their use.

Chapter 11 is the final chapter concerned with collecting data. It introduces students to the use of both self-completed and interviewer-completed questionnaires, and explores their advantages and disadvantages. Practical advice is offered on the process of designing, piloting and delivering Internet, SMS, postal, delivery and collection and telephone and face-to-face questionnaires to enhance their response rates. Particular attention is given to ensuring that the data collected are both reliable and valid.

Analysis of data is covered in Chapters 12 and 13. Chapter 12 outlines and illustrates the main issues that students need to consider when preparing data for quantitative analysis and when analysing these data by computer. Different types of data are defined, and advice is given on how to categorise and code text and visual data and create a data matrix and to code data. Practical advice is also offered on the analysis of these data using computerised analysis software. The most appropriate diagrams to explore and illustrate data are discussed, and suggestions are made about the most appropriate statistics to use to describe data, to explore relationships and to examine trends.

Chapter 13 outlines and discusses the main approaches available to students to analyse data qualitatively both manually and using Computer Aided Qualitative Analysis Software (CAQDAS). The nature of qualitative data and analysis, and issues associated with transcription, are discussed. A number of aids that will help students to analyse these data and record their ideas about progressing their research are also discussed. The chapter then outlines and briefly evaluates a number of techniques to analyse data qualitatively.

Chapter 14 helps students with the structure, content and style of their final project report (dissertation) and any associated oral and poster presentations. Differences between consultancy (management) reports and project reports (dissertations) are outlined. Above all, the chapter encourages students to see writing as an intrinsic part of the research process that should not be left until everything else is completed. This chapter also includes sections on writing a reflective essay and making presentations.

In addition, there are four appendices including guidance on author-date (Harvard, American Psychological Association) and numeric (Vancouver) styles of referencing and guidelines for non-discriminatory language. The ninth edition also includes an extensive glossary of over 750 research methods terms.

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