



Book Review: "Research Methods for Business Students" (Eighth Edition) by Mark N. K. Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill (Pearson Education, 2019)

Huqa Arbale¹
David Nzioka Mutisya²

¹molu.huqa@gmail.com
²nziovid@gmail.com

²<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5422-4577>

¹St. Paul's University, Private Bag - 00217 Limuru, Kenya, ²Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

ABSTRACT

Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill's book "Research Methods for Business Students" provides a comprehensive guide for students and researchers involved in business and management research. It offers a pragmatic approach, clear explanations, and a wide array of research methods suitable for both novice and seasoned researchers. The book extensively discusses various research methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, providing detailed descriptions to help readers choose the most appropriate approach for their research objectives. The book delves deeply into specific research approaches like experiments, surveys, case studies, and ethnography, helping readers comprehend their utility and implications. A notable strength of the book lies in its emphasis on ethical considerations throughout the research process. The authors address ethical issues related to access negotiation, consent acquisition, and data management, preparing readers to navigate ethical challenges in modern research environments effectively. Furthermore, the book offers practical insights into data collection and analysis techniques, with chapters dedicated to sampling, secondary source utilization, observations, interviewing, questionnaire design, and data analysis, all explained step by step with clear illustrations. The book engages readers through theoretical frameworks, conceptual discussions, and real-world examples, enhancing their understanding of key research concepts like validity, reliability, and generalizability. By integrating case studies and detailed examples from various organizational contexts, the book illustrates how research methods are applied in practice. The authors' ability to convey complex subjects in an accessible manner ensures that readers from diverse backgrounds can grasp the material effectively. The practicality and relevance of "Research Methods for Business Students" to the business context set it apart, as it presents real-world examples and case studies from various industries. It emphasizes the importance of keeping abreast of the latest developments in research methodologies, ensuring the content remains useful and current for students and scholars. In conclusion, "Research Methods for Business Students" is an invaluable resource for individuals embarking on business and management research. Despite minor limitations, the book equips readers with essential knowledge and skills, fostering responsible and effective research practices within the business domain. Through its practical approach, comprehensive coverage, and engaging style, the book empowers readers to conduct high-quality research and make meaningful contributions to the field of business studies.

Keywords: Business, Ethics, Methods, Research, Students

I. INTRODUCTION

Research Methods for Business Students, authored by Mark N.K. Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill, offer a comprehensive guide specifically tailored for students engaged in business research (Saunders et al., 2019). This book primarily aims to provide students with the requisite knowledge and abilities for practical research in a business setting. The text begins by emphasizing the importance of clarity and comprehensiveness in specifying the research objectives, comprehending the study's rationale, and understanding the method used. This also focuses on the necessity of grounding research in the available literature, creating a solid research design, and carefully planning data collection and analysis methods. The authors also stress the critical assessment of the data's validity, reliability, and ethical issues.

The book is divided into sections, reflecting a systematic approach represented in the research process outlined in Figure 1.2. Every chapter covers certain features of research methods with clear language and little to no jargon. The introduction identifies key terms backed up with succinct definitions and explanations, further supported by summaries, lists, and figures.



The "Focus on Student Research," "Focus on Management Research," and "Focus on News Research" boxes provide real-life cases to illustrate the practical tips and pitfalls. The box gives students a checklist that can help them find the sources of information, increase their level of awareness, and avoid errors.

To consolidate the knowledge, each chapter ends with a summary of the main points learned. This is supported by self-review questions, review questions, and discussion questions, which help to determine understanding and foster more profound engagement with the material. The book also offers directions for progressing a research project and prompts students to use the concepts in their work with a set of rather challenging questions.

Moreover, each chapter offers abundant resources, such as sources of further reading and cases from numerous business and management contexts. Assessment questions provide actual instances and help promote critical analysis accompanying these case studies.

In essence, *Research Methods for Business Students* is a vital tool for students carrying out business research projects. It offers a well-organized approach, solid advice, and numerous opportunities to improve one's study and research skills. *Research Methods for Business Students* is a comprehensive resource for business and management research projects. Every chapter focuses on a distinct aspect of the research process.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Chapter 1: Research Methods for Business Students

The first chapter of *Research Methods for Business Students* provides a basis for students to grasp the nature of research and its significance to business and management. It highlights the importance of keeping a reflective diary throughout the study journey, stating that it promotes self-awareness, critical thinking, and ongoing learning. Outlining the stages of the research process provides the reader with a clear roadmap for working through the complexities of the process.

This chapter is an overview guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students of business and management, as well as practicing managers undertaking research. The book seeks to remove the mystery from the research process and empower readers with the requisite tools and insights to carry out research projects with assurance and vigor.

The book dedicates one of its chapters to explaining that the business and management field is transdisciplinary since it unites theory and practice. It draws attention to the multifaceted relationship between research discoveries and their productive application, with a focus on the creation of findings that serve as the background for both theoretical progress and practical solutions.

Also superimposed is the situation where research projects can be categorized as continuous-applied, according to their scope and depth of work. By considering the research happening over the spectrum of this continuum, readers should have an understanding of how systematic and rigorous research should be approached in both theoretical and practical ways.

The chapter highlights the multistep procedure of research, from formulating an idea to reporting the findings. While most people portray scientific studies as a progression from conceptualization to completion, the authors highlight that this process is often non-sequential and iterative. It shows us the need to be reflective, revise, and rethink at each stage of the research, as well as how to deal with the uncertainties and problems that may arise when we do research.

In addition, this chapter familiarizes readers with the diverse range of resources and supportive mechanisms integrated into the book. The chapter provides a scaffolded learning approach, from boxed examples highlighting student and management research to checklists, self-check questions, and review and discussion questions. The purpose of these resources is to enhance comprehension, foster critical thinking, and revisit the main subject matter of the text.

Further, the chapter describes the "Progressing your research project" part, which is a road map for producing the information necessary for the research report. The book guides readers through an organized process of reflection and synthesis, culminating in the submission of a research report at the end of Chapter 14.

Chapter 2: Choosing a research topic and developing your research proposal

The second chapter of *Research Methods for Business Students* acts as a complete source for the reader involved in the selection and refinement process of research topics, resulting in the formulation of a solid research proposal. This central chapter highlights the need to select a research topic that corresponds to personal interests as



well as the specific requirements of the examining body. It outlines the features of a good research topic, stressing suitability, feasibility, satisfaction, and conformity with academic criteria.

The readers are brought to several ways of creating the research ideas and their subsequent perfection, starting from the rational way and going up to the creative brainstorming. The chapter supports the use of different methodologies, such as the Delphi technique, preliminary inquiries, and idea integration approaches, to improve the quality and depth of research ideas. In addition, it highlights the importance of formulating a well-defined research question, which functions as the core of the research project, directing the following investigations and analyses.

Furthermore, the process demonstrates to the readers how they can formulate a concise research question and a research aim that articulates the project's purpose. This goal not only serves as a working compass, but it also represents the overall objective of the entire study process. Moreover, the chapter emphasizes the formulation of specific research objectives that coordinate the sequence of measures necessary to provide a consistent and extensive answer to the question.

One of the critical elements stated in Chapter 2 is to develop research questions in line with the academic theories that one has researched. It is not worth the approach to research that can be chosen; the audiences will be encouraged to situate their research on the existing theoretical framework, which is to provide a strong foundation of inquiry and analysis. Also, the chapter investigates more deeply the subtleties of composing a research proposal—a written scheme encompassing the what, why, how, when, and where of the research project that is to be proposed. A well-framed research proposal is not just a way of bringing about clear-cut purposes and goals but also serves as a solid platform for navigating the research process successfully.

Chapter 3 - Literature review

Chapter 3 of "Research Methods for Business Students" covers the essential activity of a literature review, which is the first step in any research. This chapter discusses the importance of critically evaluating previous research, clarifying its function within the theoretical framework of the study, and guiding research questions and objectives.

The literature review is based on previous research, thus positioning the current study in a more significant academic context. Through critical discussion and reference to pertinent literature, researchers can point out their main findings, cavities, and areas for further research. This method not only broadens the theoretical base of the study, but also lays the groundwork for the following sections of the research report.

The chapter underlines that the literature review should be structured to allow readers to follow the arguments from the broader end to the specific questions and objectives of the research. It advocates for the adoption of a systematic method, which is like a funnel. At the beginning, a review is made, starting with a general overview until specific issues are identified and made the center of focus.

Additionally, the section offers valuable insights into literature search techniques, emphasizing the necessity of a well-formulated research inquiry, parameter setting, and appropriate search terms and techniques. We suggest strategies like brainstorming and relevance trees to ensure an exhaustive literature search that includes both formally published material (secondary literature) and published works not available commercially (grey literature).

Researchers need to include methodologies to aid in their literature searches, such as using online databases, referencing tracking, and visiting university libraries. To make the process transparent and reproducible, researchers place more emphasis on documenting search processes and results.

In addition, the chapter highlights the need to assess the relation and significance of the acquired literature to the research question and aims. We must thoroughly critique each identified work, recording bibliographic information and content summaries for future reference. Researchers and ethics emphasize the avoidance of plagiarism throughout the literature review.

The next chapter, which serves as an introduction to research methodology, elaborates on the systematic reviews approach discussed in this section. Last, researchers should beware during the writing and rewriting stages of the literature review in order to prevent accidental plagiarism and to maintain scholarly integrity.

Chapter 4 - Research Methods for Business Students

Chapter 4 of "Research Methods for Business Students" delves deeply into research philosophies as a guide for readers to navigate through the underlying ideologies and assumptions that influence their way of creating knowledge. Upon an investigation of varied philosophical views, positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism, to name



some, a reader is challenged to reflexive inquiry, that is, to analyze his or her values and beliefs and their effect on the research methodology.

The essence of this chapter is the research onion—an imaginary construct that removes layers from a research design and exposes the basal components affecting the choice of methodology. Chapter 4 adds further layers of methodological choice, research strategy, and time horizon selection to the outer layers of research philosophy and theory development presented in previous chapters. The layers together create the scaffold for turning research questions into an entire research project, stressing the importance of coherence during the research design journey.

Fundamentally, we must acknowledge research philosophies because they encompass systems of ideas and beliefs about the inquiry process and the establishment of reality. Readers are then coached to reflect on themselves, practicing introspection as opposed to the introspection of others. In this chapter, the authors highlight pluralism, giving an example that there is no absolute "best" research philosophy; instead, each school of thought provides distinctive intuitions about organizational life.

More specific discussions of the main assumptions of research philosophies falling under the ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions are provided. Ontology deals with researchers' ideas about the concept of reality; epistemology is the idea of the process of obtaining and verifying knowledge; and axiology refers to values and ethical issues within investigation. These hypotheses, born through the continuum of objectivism to subjectivism, determine the method as well as an approach to the processes of researchers.

Employing Burrell and Morgan's social perspective on research paradigms, the chapter underscores the vast spectrum of management and business research that covers functionalist viewpoints, interpretive approaches, radical structuralist stances, and radical humanism views. The section examines five leading research paradigms, including positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism, which provide different perspectives on social issues that researchers can use to conceptualize and study various kinds of social phenomena.

Like the philosophy of natural science, positivism focuses on the observable aspects of social life and the formulation of general laws in the way physicists do. On the contrary, critical realism penetrates the underlying structures of reality to make plain observed occurrences, usually through historical analyses. Interpretivism interprets social phenomena through the subjective interpretations of social actors, whereas postmodernism attacks traditional concepts of truth and knowledge. Pragmatism is an approach that accommodates practical utility and flexibility, bringing together a variety of perspectives for the solution of complex research problems.

Chapter 5 – Research Design

The book "Research Methods for Business Students" devotes Chapter 5 to the intricate process of research design, offering a comprehensive explanation of how to transform research objectives and questions into a robust research project. The methodological choices, such as choosing a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approach, and selecting appropriate research strategies that align with the research questions, revolve around the research design.

The design research process is a set of discussions that are directed at unifying the disparate components into a coherent structure. Methodological choices are based upon the philosophical outlooks of the researchers, which demands a critical understanding of such assumptions and their consequences. Additionally, the type of research - exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative—defines the research design and helps to make a decision on data collection and analysis methods.

The selection of a specific research design represents a central part of composing research strategies that will be responsive to the research question and research objectives. The approach of Chapter 5 is comprehensive because it discusses several research strategies, e.g., field experiments, questionnaires, case studies, and ethnography, and the need to integrate the plan to provide research work of high integrity. The different weighting of the ideal research period is yet another factor that should be taken into account while designing the research methodology, as it helps make sure that the strategies are in line with the research's long-term objectives.

Ethics are at the core of research design and methodology, requiring extra care in respecting the rights and dignity of research participants, among other things. To encompass the duties of ethicists, researchers should handle any dilemma ethically and sensitively by upholding the norms of research ethics and credibility. Besides this, the harmonization of quality research presents a vital issue, where researchers employ various criteria to verify the reliability and credibility of their research.



However, pragmatic concerns about the researcher's position and practical limitations play an essential role in design. The researchers have to solve the problems pragmatically, juggling methodological rigor and practical constraints. Researchers can combine theoretical insights with practical realities to create conceptually strong and operationally practical research designs.

Chapter 6 – Research Ethics

Chapter 6 of the textbook "Research Methods for Business Students" goes into the detailed area of ethics and access pre, presents the ethical considerations in the current research process, and gives some tips on how to negotiate and deal with access challenges professionally and ethically. This chapter re-emphasizes ethical conduct in research, highlighting the accountability of the rights and general well-being of the research subjects throughout the research process.

First, the chapter explains the many-sided character of access, defining such forms as traditional, Internet-mediated, and hybrid. In addition, it outlines the details of organizational and individual access, highlighting the impact of each kind of access on the quality and feasibility of data collection.

Ethical questions have always been and still are the primary focus area for researchers, from the selection of research directions to data retrieval methods. Researchers face an arduous task to keep up with and tackle prospective ethical dilemmas efficiently, constantly drawing upon moral codes of conduct, guidelines, and principles. The chapter concentrates on the ethical concerns that arise from using the Internet for research. There is an emphasis on the need to safeguard online users' rights, such as privacy and copyright.

Along the route of research at any point, be it in the design phase, data collection, analysis, or reporting, a researcher may be faced with ethical challenges. Whereas qualitative research involves a wide range of moral issues because of its real-world nature, research that involves participants may affect the respondents significantly. In addition to this, the chapter stresses the role of the power structure between the researchers and the participants. The researchers must be aware of their ethical responsibility to correct any imbalances of power or privilege that exist in the study.

Researchers also have to overcome ethical matters, legal aspects, and regulatory aspects governing data protection and management. Strict compliance with the laws governing data protection is vital to guaranteeing the privacy and confidentiality of research participants. This will minimize the risk of undesirable effects from gathering, dealing with, and maintaining personal data.

The chapter acts like a beacon, guiding researchers in the adoption of ethical standards and competencies necessary for ethical and responsible research. This chapter emphasizes ethical principles and access dynamics. As a result, once the researchers have a deep understanding of the moral landscape in modern research, they will be able to proceed with integrity and sensitivity during their scholarly quests, resulting in the observance of the highest standards of ethical conduct throughout their research.

Chapter 7 - Obtaining samples

Chapter 7 of "Research Methods for Business Students" discusses obtaining samples, revealing the complexities of choosing sampling methods and deciding on sample sizes. This chapter provides a thorough overview of probability and non-probability sampling methods for researchers, discusses strategies to accommodate the challenges of different types of research questions and objectives, and serves as a practical guide for researchers.

At the heart of the discussion is the idea that the choice of sampling techniques depends on the possibility and appropriateness of collecting the data from the target population to effectively address the research questions and objectives. In probability sampling, researchers usually prefer to sample the entire population, especially when the target population is small (50 or fewer). On the other hand, non-probability sampling techniques may be more appropriate when the research questions do not require statistical generalizations.

The methodology of probability sampling, as explained in the chapter, always implies the need for a sampling frame. This requirement creates trouble for research areas without a sampling frame. While creating a sampling frame is impossible in some cases, non-probability sampling methods are still feasible because they allow you to select samples specifically and access less accessible segments of the target population.

The importance of the sample size is highlighted as a crucial step, while different methodologies are responsible for the probability and non-probability samples. For the types of research questions that use statistical estimation, sample size is dependent on factors like the sample size of the target population, the margin of error, and



the confidence level to be achieved in the results. At the same time, non-probability samples are aligned to fit a particular research question and the goals of the study, which are considered credibility and resource constraints alongside determining the sample size.

Apart from that, the chapter explains that the impact of resource availability—financial and temporal—on sampling choices has been shown, which emphasizes the need for sound methodology to serve practical purposes. Furthermore, the goal of the discussion stresses the opportunities for integrating different sampling techniques to corroborate the data and give more reliable answers.

The chapter, however, promotes a practical view of sampling where methodological rigor is balanced with the specificities of research settings and resource limitations. Chapter seven provides a comprehensive insight into the methods and concerns associated with the practice of sampling, which enables researchers to accurately choose the appropriate samples and, therefore, form the basis of valid and intelligent research in business studies.

Chapter 8 – Utilizing Secondary Data

Chapter 8 of *Research Methods for Business Students* covers the importance of using secondary data in research, providing a detailed description of different sources and the use of such data. Secondary data refers to data that was collected initially for another purpose, including both raw data and published summaries. It constitutes a data treasure chest for researchers that may enhance their studies and complement their results.

The chapter thus emphasizes that secondary data is gaining importance as an alternative source for resolving research questions and pursuing goals, taking into account the limitations of time, funding, and accessibility faced by students and researchers. Students, as opposed to national governments and organizations with massive resources, may need the ability to collect substantial primary datasets that compromise the importance of secondary data as a substitute for insightful analyses.

Different sources of secondary data that inform us are told, including but not limited to organizational records and government surveys, consumer research databases, search engines, and social networking sites. Closing search, these archives represent treasure troves that range from social, demographic, economic, and consumer behavior issues, therefore providing a wide perspective for researchers to deepen their research areas of inquiry.

The chapter delineates three primary types of secondary data: surveys, documents (some of them in text, sound, and visual formats), and multiple-sources data, which have their strengths in the application in the research world. In this regard, the statement shows how primary and secondary data are supplementary and, hence, benefit from their judicious integration in making the research findings richer and broader.

The guidelines given here are about sourcing and evaluating secondary data, emphasizing thoroughness and discernment while assessing the suitability, validity, reliability, and coverage of available data sources. Researchers will be directed to carry out extensive sleuthing to locate data relevant to their work and strictly subject such data to vigorous assessment to establish their alignment with research objectives and methodological framework.

While highlighting the necessity of considering both sides of secondary data use, the chapter indicates that even incomplete data may be used when it assists the researcher in partially addressing their questions and objectives. Through sophisticated evaluations and the use of different dividers, researchers are able to improve the data sets available and, consequently, their research results.

Chapter 9 - Observation

Chapter 9 of *Research Methods for Business Students* highlights the often overlooked method of observation in business and management research, detailing its capacity to generate rich and valuable data. Traditionally neglected, observation has regained attention and popularity, in part because of technological advances that enable new forms of observation, as exemplified by the opening vignette of online-mediated structured observation for market research.

The chapter delineates three primary observation methods: participant observation, structured observation, and internet observation. Qualitative inquiry-based participant observation allows researchers to either be in the lives of the subjects or to carefully watch and observe their activities with the aim of exploring the underlying meanings of their actions and interactions. On the other hand, structured observation is characterized by a quantitative approach that focuses on the systematic recording of the frequency of behaviors or events. Internet-mediated observation, as a modern modification, comprises data collection from online communities and uses digital platforms to observe or interact with members from a distance.



A general outline includes observational methods that utilize the structure of the observational researcher, the overt or covert methodology, and the setting of the observational environment. Each type of method offers its advantages and challenges. The ecological validity of participant observation is one of the advantages. As a result, there are no problems, and the structured observation has its rigor. Finally, Internet-mediated observation is far-reaching.

In this section, the author explains in detail the possibilities of mistakes and errors that can occur during and after observational research, such as observer error, drift, bias, and effects, and suggests improving approaches to ensure minimum bias and better data reliability and validity. We recommend approaches such as showcasing the observer's familiarity, taking interpretive steps, and pilot testing coding schedules to ensure the quality of observational data.

Additionally, the chapter describes the utilization of video recordings, audio recordings, and static visual images as instruments in observational research, highlighting the variety of ways in which data can be gathered and analyzed through observations. The ethical implications of such media, as well as data quality and interpretation issues, are also discussed, stressing the need for cautious evaluation and ethical scrutiny when using visual and auditory data.

Chapter 10 - Collecting Primary Data Using Research Interviews and Research Diaries

Chapter 10 of the book *Research Methods for Business Students* elaborates on primary data collection via research interviews and research diaries, pointing out that these methods can provide rich and detailed information. The chapter highlights the need to build the competence to conduct interviews and to have access to the data the interviews are associated with.

We categorize interviews based on their mode of administration, such as structured, unstructured, or semi-structured. As a result, it is critical to design semi-structured and in-depth research interviews as effective ways to elicit perceptions about topics and expound on findings. Many factors, including the need for personal connection, the type of questions asked, and the time-consumption perspectives of the participants, govern the choice between these interview formats.

We recommend that researchers integrate various types of interviews into their research plan. They are made aware of the flexibility and adaptability of various other designs, such as semi-structured and in-depth interviews, in different research strategies. Despite the unique and powerful nature of this data, the interview process design must carefully address data quality issues such as reliability, bias, cultural differences, and generalizability.

The way interviews are conducted is influenced by factors such as how the interviewer arrives at the scene, their opening remarks, the type of questions they will be asked, their ability to listen well, their skills in summarization, the way difficult participants are treated, and the correct recording of the data. The logistical and resource aspects also form a profound part of good interview process management.

Interviewers have options beyond telephone or electronic interviews, such as group interviews and focus group interviews. Every format has benefits and difficulties, but in the case of group interviews, you should pay special attention to their complexity.

Subsequently, a discussion of inquiry that includes visual images in the interview, depending on the research objectives, is underlined. For instance, we can conduct quantitative or qualitative studies based on individual diaries as a primary data collection source.

Chapter 11 - Collecting Primary Data Using Questionnaires

Chapter 11 of *Research Methods for Business Students* discusses questionnaires as primary data collection instruments that help to receive standardized responses from the respondents. Here are the main points discussed in the chapter: Here are the main points discussed in the chapter:

Questionnaire Purpose: Questionnaires are instruments of data collection through which respondents are confronted with a standardized set of questions. They are frequently utilized in survey designs to collect descriptive and explanatory data about demographics, attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and events, usually for quantitative analysis.

Types of Questionnaires: The research questions, objectives, and available resources determine the type of questionnaire to use. The most common types are online, SMS, mail, delivery and collection, telephone, and personal questionnaires.



Designing Questionnaires: Before formulating a questionnaire, one should identify the specific data needed to answer the research questions and objectives. Methods like data requirements tables can assist in achieving a complete data set. Question design, questionnaire structure, and meticulous pilot testing all play a significant role in determining a questionnaire's validity, reliability, and response rate.

Question Types: Questions can be classified as open or closed. Closed questions can be subdivided into list, category, ranking, rating, quantity, and matrix types. Cloud-based survey software automatically codes closed-to-queries in Internet and SMS surveys after the responses have been collected and entered into the application for data analysis.

Questionnaire Structure and Flow: The sequence and pattern of questions should be user-friendly for respondents, which can be achieved by using filter questions and linking statements. The questionnaire should look visually pleasing and be legible, with the response options presented in the fillable form.

Introduction and Delivery: Proper introduction of questionnaires to respondents is crucial for achieving a favorable response rate. It should be done either through a cover letter or by email for questionnaires that are completed by the participants themselves or by the researcher or research assistant for those questionnaires that are to be filled out by the researchers. A pilot test of questionnaires is necessary to check the validity and probable reliability of the questions before they are disseminated.

Chapter 12 Analysing data quantitatively

Chapter 12 of "Research Methods for Business Students" discusses quantitative data analysis. It emphasizes the importance of converting data to numerical form or quantifying non-numeric data for analysis. This chapter also emphasizes the importance of understanding measurement scales, as they dictate the analysis techniques available for use.

Data preparation is a significant step in quantitative analysis. It consists of arranging data in a matrix form where every column is a variable and every row is a case. Recording data using numerical codes makes analysis more accessible and facilitates comparison using already established coding schemes.

The introduction begins by creating an environment in which you focus on looking at data through a variety of tables and charts. Your choice of graphic representation significantly depends on your research questions, objectives, and measurement accuracy. Techniques such as tables, bar graphs, histograms, and scatter graphs help greatly with the accurate and effective presentation of data in business reports.

Next, we proceed with data description, exploration, and relationship examination using various statistical methods. Measures like mean, median, mode, and standard deviation provide insight into the characteristics of the data set. At the same time, t-tests, ANOVAs, and regressions are used to infer comparisons among variables and test the hypotheses.

A longitudinal data analysis mostly calls for advanced methods, such as index numbers and regression, to examine trends and make forecasts. Chapter 12 provides robust coverage and an understanding of quantitative data analytics techniques, as well as why it is necessary to properly prepare the data, explore it, and then perform a trend analysis to gain the desired insights.

Chapter 13 - Analysing data qualitatively

Chapter 13 of Research Methods for Business Students seeps into the qualitative data analysis process. Here are the key points covered in the chapter: Here are the key points covered in the chapter:

Qualitative Data: Abundant and well-articulated verbal, textual, and visual data comprise qualitative data. They are usually not standardized or even numerical.

Data Collection and Analysis: In qualitative research, the processes of data collection, analysis, and interpretation intertwine and interact. Analysis can occur concurrently with data collection and, to some extent, even beyond it.

Choosing Analysis Techniques: Various approaches to qualitative analysis assist researchers in determining the appropriate methods or combinations of methods for their qualitative data analysis.

Data Preparation: From transcription of spoken language to classification of discursive categories, qualitative data frequently undergo thorough preparations for either manual or computer-assisted processing.



Analysis Aids: Researchers use a diverse range of tools while conducting qualitative analysis, including interim summaries, event summaries, document summaries, self-memos, research notebooks, and reflective diaries or reflexive journals.

Qualitative Analysis Techniques: The section presents some qualitative data analysis techniques like analytical induction and grounded theory methods (an inductive approach), pattern matching and deductive explanation building (a deductive approach), thematic analysis, template analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, visual analysis, and data display and analysis (these approaches offer more flexibility).

Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS): CAQDAS will support qualitative data analysis through project management, data organization, close reading of data, exploration, coding and retrieval, searching and theorizing, and systematic recording of thoughts.

Chapter 14- Writing and Presenting Your Project Report

Chapter 14 of the book "Research Methods for Business Students" highlights the importance of writing and presenting the project report. It focuses on writing as a way of making thoughts and ideas clear and on the creative nature of writing, which needs specific conditions for successful results. The chapter highlights the need for a proper and suitable framework for the report that corresponds to the research approach and audience. Furthermore, it promotes accessibility, readability, and flawless writing, while also suggesting the need for numerous revisions for perfection. The reflective section aids in providing personal insights and improving research practice. For presenters, the chapter recommends a well-organized and purposeful approach, along with the application of visual aids for clarity and professionalism. In general, good writing and presentation skills are considered crucial in delivering research findings to the target audience.

Appendices

The appendices provide other support regarding referencing systems, sample size calculations, and guidelines for non-discriminatory language. They also contain a glossary of research methods-related terms for easy retrieval. Boxed examples, checklists, self-check questions, review and discussion questions, assignments, and case studies all help to reinforce comprehension and practice of research principles in the text. Each chapter includes a "Progressing your research project" section that supports reflection and the application of learning to personal research projects.

II. REVIEW OF THE BOOK

Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill offer "Research Methods for Business Students," an exhaustive and essential manual for business students and researchers dealing with the challenges of business and management research. Through its pragmatic nature, clear clarification, and wide range of research methods, this book also acts as an essential guidebook for both beginners and veteran researchers. The approach is essential in advancing the subject, as is the case with similar books such as "Fundamentals of Research Methodology and Statistics" by Singh (2006).

The book's strength lies in its detailed discussion of different research methodologies. Regardless of whether it is quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, the authors give thorough descriptions, leading readers to choose the most suitable approach for their research questions and objectives. In addition, the book discusses particular research approaches, e.g., experiments, surveys, case studies, and ethnography, giving the reader an idea of their use and consequences. The book is exhaustive, which gives it an edge alongside other related literature such as the book "Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods" by Almeida et al. (2017).

Ethical issues are a central concern throughout the book, demonstrating the authors' commitment to ethical research. Focusing on ethical considerations, the book addresses issues related to negotiating access, obtaining consent, and ethical data management. It also deals with the ethical nature of the new technologies and methods of collecting online data, leaving readers equipped to deal with ethical issues in modern research environments. This book underlines the importance of ethics in research, an area with standalone works such as "What Is Ethics in Research and Why Is It Important?" by Resnik (2020).

The author's focus on precise and valuable insights gives this book a unique benefit to students who are conducting research. Sample chapters focusing on taking samples, utilizing secondary sources, and conducting observations offer practical information and techniques for collecting data as well as analyzing it effectively. On the



other hand, the sections on interviewing, questionnaire design, and data analysis are exact, with each of them explained step by step, accompanied by clear illustrations, equipping readers to do high-quality research and arrive at reliable results. The rich and detailed presentation of this section is of paramount importance. This aligns with similar literature, including but not limited to “Data Collection Methods and Tools for Research: A Step-by-Step Guide to Choosing Data Collection Techniques for Academic and Business Research Projects” by Taherdoost (2021). This makes the book good reading material for students looking to gain a strong grasp on sampling and sampling techniques.

Besides providing practical insights, the book intersperses the text with theoretical frameworks and conceptual discussions to absorb the reader into the research methodological domain. The book provides clarity on concepts such as validity, generalizability, and reliability, enabling readers to make informed decisions about research findings and designs. The infusion of real-world examples and detailed case studies completed the learning with care, demonstrating how to use research methods in various organizational contexts. This strengthens researchers’ capacity to utilize results through literature reviews for other studies, as envisaged by Fink (2014) and Snyder (2019), among other uses.

This feature of the book writers is their ability to convey complex subjects in a simple and catchy way, so readers of any background can grasp them. The chapters are well structured. They consistently and homogeneously deliver objectives, summaries, and self-studying questions. Adding elements such as post-chapter exercises and suggested readings will not only develop active learning, but also a more profound knowledge of particular topics.

In addition, the book comes with plenty of online resources, such as quizzes, video tutorials, and supplementary materials, which are beyond the limitations of printed pages and complete the learning cycle. These resources act as supplementary material, providing relevant content to deepen readers’ knowledge of research methods.

2.1 Strengths and Relevance

“Research Methods for Business Students” is an excellent resource that provides a profound coverage of different research methodologies that have been adapted for business students and researchers. It works because it offers practical help at every stage of the research process, starting with the research questions and ending with data analysis and reporting. The authors of the book also stress ethical considerations, which are semantically connected with the increasing importance of research ethics in both academia and industry.

The book has a very concise structure, where each chapter addresses one of the process’s components in particular. This organization simplifies the study process, helping a reader understand the information easily and find the necessary information faster. Added to that, many illustrations, case studies, and practical advice are very helpful in helping readers appreciate the theory and apply the takeaways in their real research work. As pointed out by Almutairi (2018), this could play key roles in enhancing “Effective reading and reading comprehension” of research textbooks.

“Research Methods for Business Students” is very business-related while maintaining its application. That way, the book informs readers about real business examples and cases where the research methods are being used. Moreover, the authors strive to update the content with the latest developments in the field so the book remains useful and attractive to students and scholars.

2.2 Weaknesses of the Book

The book “Research Methods for Business Students” by Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill is indeed an extensive and very influential companion for people interested in business and management research. Nevertheless, as with any other academic text, it does not lack its restrictions.

The book is criticized for its subtle and, at times, overly academic writing style. Even though the authors attempt to explain complicated concepts in an easy-to-understand form, some parts of the book may be difficult for beginners in research methodology. This may also discourage novice researchers and affect their understanding of the main aspects. As posited by Booth, et al. (2016) in “Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review” this could limit the ability of authors to be effect in its use in writing tasks.

Also, although the book discusses several research methodologies and approaches, the author gives more importance to quantitative research practices. Quantitative data is getting more publicity, while qualitative methods have been left behind, which denies us a chance to explore qualitative methods in depth. This is not the case with other



related works such as Rahman (2017) which draw the pros and cons of both qualitative and quantitative research. This means that the book has to be complimented by other literature and cannot be solely relied upon.

We would have appreciated a more equitable portrayal of both qualitative and quantitative methods had those, along with the book, been more comprehensive.

From the content point of view, another area for improvement is the structure. Although the book is basically structured logically, going from the research methodology to the data analysis, some people may go through some chapters that are too detailed and repetitive. Making the text clear and understandable by streamlining the content and deleting the extra wording would make the text easier to read and comprehend.

First and foremost, the book teaches research methods practice using various techniques; however, in-depth discussions on how these methods are applied in natural research settings would be helpful. Case studies and concrete metrics are helpful, but it would be nice to highlight other research and decision-making practices, which would enrich the learning process, too.

In addition, although the book admits that ethical concerns are critical in research, more than a discussion of ethical issues is needed. Ethical dilemmas in business research are complex and changeable, and a more in-depth discussion of ethical frameworks and decision-making processes would benefit readers who encounter ethical dilemmas in their own research activities.

Finally, the book's reference to traditional research paradigms and methodologies may require more attention to the emergence of trends and innovations in research practice. The development of new technologies and interdisciplinary approaches necessitates the integration of non-conventional research methods in the discussion. Including the consideration of emerging research methods and multidisciplinary approaches could make the book more necessary and actual, as in today's research world, everything is evolving rapidly.

2.3 Innovation

"Research Methods for Business Students" reveals creativity in many areas, being a truly unique source of business research. One of the main areas of novelty is technology incorporation in research methodologies. The book recognizes the role of technological progress in the process of data collection and analysis and talks about Internet-mediated observation, online surveys, and Computer-assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS). Through the introduction of these modern tools and techniques, the book readies students and researchers to use technology for better and more appropriate research results.

Another unique feature is the ethical considerations related to the focus of the book from the beginning to the end of the research process. Although research ethics has always been a vital issue, the book takes a proactive stance by devoting whole chapters to research ethics, access, and data protection. Such emphasis on ethics is an indication of increasing awareness of ethical issues in research and the readers' need to carry out their research responsibly and ethically as envisaged by Kim (2012) among others.

Moreover, the book is revolutionary in how it teaches research methodologies. Rather than offering theoretical concepts without any practical context, it provides a pragmatic approach with examples, case studies, and practical tips to show the main ideas and techniques. This method improves the learning process and makes the material more attractive and approachable for students.

Second, the innovative feature of the book is the relevance of this book to the business context. It provides real-world examples and case studies drawn from different industries that help to connect theory with practice, allowing readers to see how research methods are used in actual business contexts. This pragmatic orientation guarantees that the knowledge obtained from the book is instantly operational in the natural business environment, increasing its satisfaction to the students and researchers in the same way.

2.4 Engagement

"Research Methods for Business Students" is outstanding at capturing readers' attention with its straightforward and user-friendly writing style, applied examples, and interactive learning sections. One of the book's strengths is that it captures the reader's attention and keeps them involved in the learning process.

Interest the readers through different methods. First, complex research topics are written clearly and directly, which ensures that any reader, even a novice in the subject, can understand the issues. Authors employ simple language and avoid complex words, which helps the audience understand the reasoning without feeling overloaded.



Secondly, this book uses several realistic samples and case scenarios to visualize main concepts and on-the-job implementation. Lacking complex flowcharts or methods, these books help readers see practical applications of research methods to their future careers and encourage a deep level of comprehension.

In addition to this, the book presents supplementary innovative learning that includes review questions, practical tasks, and reflection prompts after each chapter. Such elements tie the readers up with the studied material, provide understanding tests, and encourage the readers to reflect on how to apply the acquired knowledge. By having readers try some hands-on learning themselves; the book maximizes their involvement and effectiveness.

Consequently, the choice of vignettes, anecdotes, and practical tips within the text not only makes the content more story-like, thus making it more fascinating but also unique for the readers. These real-life cases enable readers to put themselves in the stories and to detect important points by their very nature. This is important since as pointed out by Delgado and Salmerón (2021) in “The inattentive on-screen reading: Reading medium affects attention and reading comprehension under time pressure,” engagement is important in enhancing the ability of readers to grasp the content being passed across.

Moreover, the book's layout, user-friendly format, clear headings, subheadings, and graphics, as well as such characteristics, improve navigation and facilitate reading, again increasing reader involvement. Moreover, the use of tables, charts, and illustrations assists in paragraphing blocks of text. It provides visual appeal to validate the main ideas, thus making the material reader-friendly and enjoyable.

2.5 Practicality and Applicability

"Research Methods for Business Students" is distinguished by its practicality and immediate applicability. It provides its readers with an abundance of tools and techniques that can be easily applied in the business environment. The book's practical focus helps readers not just understand research concepts but also know how to apply them to solve business complications.

Another practical issue of the book is developing a step-by-step guide for employing various research methodologies. From formulating research questions to collecting and analyzing data, the book presents practical and concise guidance to all the steps of the research process that one can follow to conduct their project with great confidence. The book is useful, featuring extensive illustrative examples, case studies, and tutorials, which, in conjunction, enhance the practical approach, making it easy for the readers to transfer theoretical knowledge into valuable skills.

Likewise, the book offers a variety of research methods applicable to business settings, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. This assesses the methodology so that readers can readily use the research approaches that suit the specific study objectives and questions. Through the analysis of different techniques, the text gives readers the power to make their choice not less effective and suitable than others for their specific research needs and restrictions. This is a key strength as pointed out by Venkatesh et al. (2013) in “Bridging the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide: Guidelines for Conducting Mixed Methods Research in Information Systems” since the book gives readers ability to gain a grasp on the various research methods.

However, the book delves into topics such as research ethics, data access, and data management, which are crucial matters in conducting research in business scenes. The book tackles ethical concerns, data collection issues, and data management, and the readers are steered through these problems to equip them to manage their workmasters and deal with ethics, data collection, and data handling during the research process.

Further, the book presents instrumental perspectives on how different research methods are used across various business disciplines, such as marketing, management, finance, and entrepreneurship. The book shows how research methods can be customized to particular business situations, thus demonstrating the importance and amenable nature of research methodologies across different areas of business practice.

2.6 Pedagogy

"Research Methods for Business Students" has pedagogy imprinted all through its content, which makes it useful for students and instructors alike. Several pedagogical strategies improve learning and understanding, turning complex research concepts into something that readers can quickly achieve.

The book incorporates an orderly and systematic presentation of information. The book outlines each chapter, starting with a brief topic introduction, followed by explanations of essential concepts, real-life examples, and



highlights at the end. This formatted style aids in content scanning, reinforcing understanding by creating a sequence of ideas.

In addition, the use of case studies, practical exercises, and real-world examples adds value to the book from a pedagogical point of view. This contextualization architecture helps to portray abstract notions through specific business situations, allowing readers to see research methods in action. The interplay with case studies and exercises strengthens the comprehension of theoretical ideas and stimulates the reader's critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities. This is important since researchers are empowered to go the extra mile in enhancing the quality of their research, which is envisaged by works such as "Value-adding' analysis: Doing More with Qualitative Data" by Eakin and Gladstone (2020).

Furthermore, visual aids, including diagrams, charts, and tables, complement the text and represent the main points visually. Images strengthen the learning process since they provide alternative ways to understand complex concepts and relationships. The book ensures that readers with different preferences can interact with the content, meeting diverse learning styles.

In addition, the book emphasizes self-reflection and self-evaluation, facilitating the process of active learning. The book guides readers to consider how these concepts can benefit their research projects or real-life situations through reflective exercises and question posing. This metacognitive approach leads readers to be more engaged with scientific principles and to think critically about the entire learning process and results.

Summing up, introducing key terms, and posing review questions after each chapter impresses knowledge and understanding. On the other hand, summaries offer readers a clear, concise guide to the chapter's main ideas, and the key terms help readers retain vital terminology. Review questions serve as a tool for self-assessment, allowing readers to consolidate their knowledge and pinpoint areas that require additional exploration.

III. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, "Research Methods for Business Students" by Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill is a full handbook for conducting bounded business research. Though the book is strong in terms of its coverage of various methods and practical applications, it also has some weak points.

Newcomers to research methodology may find the style of writing and quantitative methods challenging, necessitating a reorganization of the text to enhance its popularity. We should add an extra section on qualitative methods and carefully consider ethical issues to make the book more representative and fair.

Nevertheless, there are some critiques, but the book "Research Methods for Business Students" is still a great resource for those who would like to start research in the business field. It provides concepts such as ethics, proper research execution, and diligence, which are essential elements for conducting credible and insightful research.

"Research Methods for Business Students" is a valuable resource for students and researchers who are willing to conduct thorough and nuanced studies of business and management with confidence and expertise, despite the fact that none of the books are perfect.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The book "Research Methods for Business Students" is best for business students, researchers, and professionals, providing a substantial and hands-on guide to research. The book has much strength, which makes it a suitable source for people at different levels in their academic or professional lives.

Firstly, readers with little knowledge of research methods can easily comprehend complex research concepts thanks to the book's lucid and simplified writing style. The authors word their texts very simply and explain the material in detail so that the reader will feel free of complex terminology.

The book employs real-life examples, case studies, and exercises to demonstrate to readers the practical application of theoretical concepts. The book provides research methods for business scenarios, demonstrating the importance and usability of research skills in professional settings.

Further, the book's focus on ethical issues and research integrity is praiseworthy. It emphasizes the significance of conducting research ethically and responsibly, providing readers with the requisite information and skills to deal with ethical challenges in their research endeavors.



Moreover, the pedagogical characteristics of the book, including summaries, key terms, and review questions, promote learning and memory. These elements allow readers to do a self-check and reinforce the main points, enabling them to consolidate the principles of research methods.

Further, this book embraces different research methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches. Hence, it is helpful to readers with varied research interests and purposes. Whether the readers are trying to conduct surveys, interviews, experiments, or observational studies, they will find relevant help and practical advice in the book.

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