Lecture Note

Course Title: HIM 3309 Research for Hotel Business

Credits: 3(2-2-5)

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Program: Hotel Management

Week 1

Unit 1: Some Basics about Research

Topic

- What is research? And the research paradigms
- Principal components of research
- Linking the components together

Objectives

After the completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Describe definition of research and the research paradigms.
- Recall the principal components of research.
- Identify the components of given studies.
- Explain how all research components are linked.

1. What is research? And the research paradigms

1.1 Definitions

Oxford English Dictionary defines research as "the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions". A tourism research described the word as an organized (research is planned, intended) and systematic (there are methods and procedures) process of gathering information relating to particular issues[1]. Therefore, research is a process that helps us discover new knowledge and to prove our assumption (s).

A survey generally is a simpler way of gathering information. Surveys are a method of gathering information from individuals. They have several purposes and can be done in many ways. Information can be gathered with a printed questionnaire, over the telephone, by mail, in person, by diskette, or on the web[2].

1.2 Research paradigms

Research can be in many fields such as scientific and social science research. Tourism research is considered as that in the social science field. Social science research is the activity of gathering, analyzing and interpreting information for a variety of social, economic, educational and political purposes.

Research in tourism is categorized into the following:

(1) *Post/ positivist paradigm*: this paradigm views 'the world or reality as very organized by universal laws and truths, or structured and based on rules that guide actions in both the natural and the social world. It asserts that human behavior is predictable because it is governed by external force (the universal laws and truths that explain causal relationship). Generally, research studies in this paradigm are testable facts and can be generalized, which therefore can be used in developing theories that explain behavior or relationships in the natural and social worlds. Some potential areas of research paradigm include the following:

- Consumer behavior studies
- Environmental impact studies
- Tourism forecasting and modelling
- Social impact studies
- Marketing research studies

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[1] Šimkova(n.d.), http://www.wseas.us/e-library/conferences/2011/Drobeta/TED/TED-38.pdf

[2] http://www.hr-survey.com/WhatIs.htm

- Hospitality satisfaction studies

These areas of tourism research concern causal relationship that can be empirically tested in the real world or using models of the real world. Most studies use quantitative methodology and statistically tested. Therefore, results of these kinds of tourism research can be generalized to all other similar sets of behavior, events or tourism phenomena.

(2) *Interpretative social sciences paradigm or constructivism paradigm*: this research paradigm asserts that:

- There are multiple explanations or realities to explain a phenomenon rather than one causal relationship or one 'theory'.
- The research process should be subjective rather than objective.
- The use of a qualitative methodology instead of a quantitative methodology
- Empirical materials rather than data are collected from an insider's perspective rather than from an outsider's perspective
- Empirical materials rather than data are collected in their real world or natural setting as opposed to being collected under 'experimental' conditions.

From this, it is therefore researchers will need to become part of social groups being studied. Examples of this kind of research are:

- The cruise ship experience, by studying the workers' perspectives or the travelers' perspectives by either working aboard the cruise ship or becoming a cruise ship passenger—also, empirical material would be gathered using participant observation as well as in-depth interviewing with colleagues or passengers
- Host- guest interactions, by becoming part of the host community and observing and gathering empirical materials through in-depth interviews or focus group studies
- Consumer service evaluation, by becoming a customer in the various sectors of the hospitality industry, and supplementing this participant observation with in-depth interview of other customers.

Being part of particular social groups being studied and using qualitative methodology help researchers to understand the material (things happening there) and construct knowledge based on (inter) subjective interpretation.

(3) *Critical theory paradigm*:this paradigm portrays that the world is complex and involves oppression, subjugation, and exploitation of minority groups who lack any real power. The world is contrived by people and institutions in power positions who try to maintain the status quo and subsequently their positions of power. The critical theory paradigm asserts that research should cause some changes. As a consequence, the research process involves interaction between the researcher and minority group being studied. Knowledge gained from this research paradigm should lead to positive changes for marginalized and oppressed groups and people. The researcher need to get below the surface to get the real meaning of social interactions and the power plays that are implicit in social interactions. Therefore, the methodology used in gathering data for this kind of research is mixed between quantitative and qualitative (mixed method), for example using participant observation, in-depth interviewing, focus groups, Delphic panels and action research in order to expose the oppression, subjugation and exploitation of the minority group being studied. Some possible research studies applying this paradigm in tourism include the following:

- Host- guest interactions, particularly where the hosts are the minority and are being overwhelmed by tourism numbers so much that they feel their location is becoming a tourism precinct rather than an integrated community

- The negative social impacts of tourism on the host community, particularly where the negative impacts are being overlooked by those in positions of power such as governments and tourism developers and operators

- The relationship between those in power, such as tourism developers and/ or governments, and those without power, such as local business operators or resident groups, particularly in regards to tourism planning and development

- Indigenous hospitality workers and their working conditions in developing nations

- The exploitation of children in sex tourism

- Social pathologies (pathology = relationship of causes and effects) resulting from tourism developments upon minority groups such as the unemployed, women, or children

- The impacts of vertical integration by overseas companies within host nations and their impacts on Indigenous companies

- The impacts of mega- events such as the Olympic Games on various sectors within the host community and their living conditions.

In summary, this critical theory research paradigm is concerned with undertaking research that will affect transformational change for minority groups who would be unable to change the practices of those in power. The critical theory paradigm research also uses qualitative methodology (with quantitative methodology), therefore, the relationship between the researcher and the minority group (s) being studied is subjective and knowledge is generated from the real world. The difference is that this paradigm does not see that all 'realities' as equal, instead, that there are oppressed, subjugated or exploited groups, and therefore the researcher in this paradigm works to advocate and overcome the causes of those oppressions, subjugations and exploitations.

(4) *Participatory paradigm*: this paradigm is different from the other paradigms already mentioned, in that the paradigm supports co-creation of knowledge via participation in experiences and collective interactions among researchers and co-researchers (participants). This paradigm creates and values experiential and practical knowing which results from collective and inter-subjective constructions. Experiential knowing is the knowing acquired via direct participation and embodied living. Practical knowing is action- based knowing— that is knowing how to do something without necessarily knowing the theory or principles behind such action. Experiential and practical knowing, which leads to cooperation, change and development, as well as empowerment are valued as well as transactional knowledge—that is, knowledge generated via dialogue. Participatory ethnics are value laden (rich in value), since all participants are subjectively and inter-subjectively involved. Some potential areas of tourism research under this paradigm include:
- Improving residents' quality of life in tourism precincts
- Developing tourism experience providers' collective experience packages
- Reviewing a tourism attraction's reputation with regards to corporate social responsibility
- Developing an Indigenous tourism experience
- Changing tourism businesses' practices to more sustainable ones
- Developing tourism training packages

- Public participation in tourism planning and development

From the examples of tourism research topics above under this paradigm, the use of participatory research would be instigated with the inclusion of various stakeholders (that is co- researchers and co- participants) to involve and co- create in the topics being studied, which is related to facilitating change, engendering collective ownership of and commitment to plan, processes, strategies and evaluation practices and their practical applications.

2. Principal components of research

Generally, the principal components of research done around the world comprise the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Literature review
- Background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

Introduction chapter sets the scene of research and it outlines the basic scope for the research. In this chapter key ideas are proposed, central concepts are defined, and some initial background information is provided. The introduction chapter has 3 purposes. First, it sets out rationale for the research. This means, the reasons why the work is important and why the research should be conducted, as well as the contribution or benefits it will make to studies of tourism. Second, it tells the aim (s)/ and objectives of the research to be conducted. Third, it alerts the reader to the structure of the text by providing a kind of 'roadmap' through each of the chapter.

2.2 Literature review

The purpose of the literature review is to examine extent work on a topic area. It sets out to establish the 'intellectual case' for the research more fully (much more

than in the introduction chapter). By doing this, it helps you justify the choice of aim (s)/ and objectives to be more specific. By studying more on the previous studies, you will know who already conducted similar research that you are going to do, or what were already studied and in which areas, and what suggestions and limitations those previous researchers proposed or mentioned. By this, literature review informs and positions the work you are going to study and it helps to establish the originality and likely contribution of a research. Moreover, literature review can be in the form of identifying theories, conceptual or thematic ideas or trends. Methods of studies and strategies for data collection and analysis can be part of the review of literature as well. Finally, the literature review will help you work on your research in the chapter of discussion after you get the findings.

2.3 Background

Background is the chapter that provides information more specifically of the case you are conducting the research. In other word, this chapter describes the context of the studies site (s).

2.4 Methods

This chapter sets out the methods and techniques that you will use in collecting and analyzing data in order to answer the aim (s)/ and objectives of the research. The method chapter covers type of approach such as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed or multiple methods, and the particular methods and technique, population and sample size, tools for analysis, which normally depends on what type of approach the data is collected, such as statistics, content analysis, tools used for scientific test. Use of different research methods depends on the complexity and objectives of your research.

2.5 Results

This chapter describes the results of your study (what you have found from the research fieldwork). It presents the outputs of data analysis as well as interpretations of the data in the form of findings. Report of results or findings must cover all answers to your research objectives.
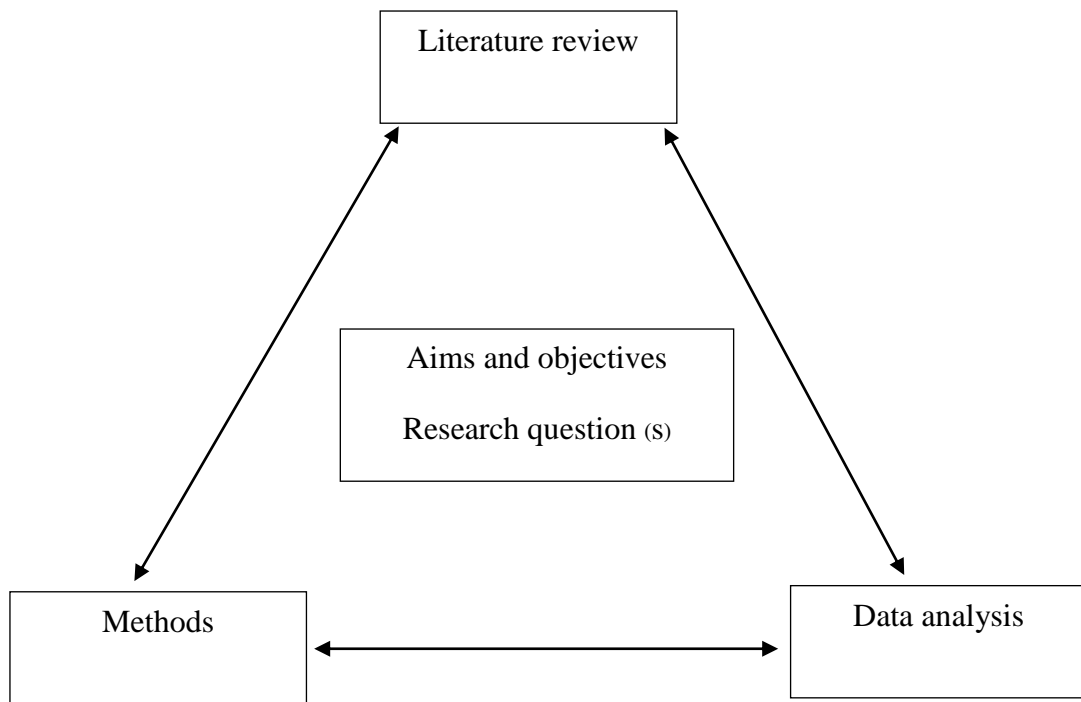
2.6 Discussion

This chapter offers space and scope to address issues based on results or findings. Discussion can be made in order to compare or to points out similarities or differences of your results and previous studies, as well as raising issues. You will be able to discuss your findings in this chapter freely and usefully when you have good literature review.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter provides a summary of the main findings from the research as well as the limitations of the study and its implication for further research on the topic or in the field. The conclusion is an opportunity for researcher to reflect on the research process.

3. Linking the components together

All chapters are equally important. Writing of your research is like writing a novel where every chapter is associated and connected, and readers can be cross read back and forth to understand this interaction (how each chapter affects one another and how all chapters are developed). There must be a continuity, logic and argumentation through the research report. A good research will provide readers to see connections between each chapter, for example between the literature review, the methods chapters and your data analysis. These linkages are facilitated through the aim (s)/ and objectives you first articulate in the introduction as a preview to the rest of the study. Picture 1 below shows the connections within your research (connections between literature review, methods, data analysis, all which facilitate the research aim (s)/ and objectives as the core.

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     ╱   ┌──────────────────────┐   ╲
    ╱    │  Aims and objectives │    ╲
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┌───────────────┐          ┌───────────────┐
│    Methods    │←────────→│  Data analysis│
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│ Picture 1: Connections within your research │
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3.1 The literature review helps you to locate and contextualize your topic in the existing thematic body of knowledge on the subject. Your review of the current situations and related issues (i.e. recent stage in the development of a product, the newest ideas and the most up-to-date features) on your subject helps you to refine as well as justify your aim (s)/ and objectives.

3.2 Your choice of methods has to be entirely appropriate to your aim (s)/ and objectives.

3.3 Your choice of analytical techniques, processes and measures has to be appropriate to the types of data you collected, and the methods you have used to generate the data. They must allow you to address your aim (s)/ and objectives directly. Backwards linkages are important. The comparison of your data with those revealed in previously published studies must be significant and relevant, and contribute to an explanation of the real situation or context within the topic or area that you studied, and that are reflected in your findings.

Learning Activities and Medias

- Lecturer explains about the course.

- The class starts with KWL activity.

- <u>Homework (Individual Study and Presentation):</u> Find a research paper (English one) in tourism (not longer than 4-6 pages). Read and do the following:

    - Explain what the research paper is about.

    - Identify what kind of the paradigm of that research paper.

    - Explain the connection between each component in that research paper.

    - Prepare a power point presentation to share the above to the class next week.