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Editorial Ann Brown

This issue comprises research originally submitted to the 14th European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies. The eight papers introduce an extra-ordinary range of issues on four key aspects of research methods –

1. Research process (3 papers)
2. Action Research (1 paper)
3. Mixed Methods (2 papers)
4. Qualitative Research (2 papers)

1 Research process

The three papers on research process cover a wide ground! Anthony Storey addresses the vexed question of data fabrication and falsification. He is severe in his judgement as to the adverse consequences that this behavior entails, but shows us how easy it is for large scale research projects to fall into such errors through an uncritical handling of the data collection process. The examples of data falsification detection he presents, are fascinating. But perhaps the most significant part of his paper is the research protocol he proposes to militate against falsification and fabrication. Any business research student who is wrestling with the literature review for the first time will find the paper by Kambidima Wotela valuable. It not only explains how the results of the literature review process are embedded in all aspects of a research project, but offers a detailed guide to carrying out the literature review for students, new to the business discipline. The third paper by Lesley Gill, Philip Ramsey, Sarah Leberman and Stephen Atkins focuses on the issue of trust. Creating the trust of colleagues, interviewees and fellow trainees is an important ingredient of success for research projects and this paper presents the concept of a World Café as a technique for building trust.

2 Action Research

The paper by Gertjan Schuiling and Derk Jan Kiewiet describes an important and significant development made by the Dutch universities of applied sciences in applying Action Research methods. The concern that research should have both rigour and relevance has led to an intense focus on the Action Research process. The proposed triple process structure presented in the paper offers a promising way to achieve both, although it makes major demands on the various groups likely to be involved in the research project.

3 Mixed Methods

Two papers illustrate how effective a Mixed Methods approach can be. Razali Rozilawati, Fares Amwar Marfizah Abdul Rahman and Fatin Filzahti Ismail show us it's value for researching the Requirements Engineering (RE) step of systems engineering (SE), while Udeni Salmon makes the case for using this method when investigating innovation in family run manufacturing SMEs in the UK. Both papers present empirical case research to illustrate and support their claims.

4 Qualitative Research methods

Qualitative Research methods present challenges at all stages of the research. These two papers offer guides to two separate stages - the methodology stage (Tar Rooney, Katrina Lawlor and Eddie Rohan) and the data elicitation stage (Efrider Maramwidze-Merrison). Tar Rooney and colleagues make a good case for story-telling as a methodology, distilled from their own experience in the consumer banking sector. Efrider Maramwidze-Merrison focuses on the knotty problem of getting access to interviewees in the business elite. The paper makes interesting reading as the methods presented are based on the author's PhD work in obtaining interviews with the business elite concerned with investment in the South African banking sector.