

Villa College

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VC Research Digest provides updates on current and ongoing research projects of Villa College staff and students, and provides fresh research ideas and snippets to help expand the horizon of research and inquiry.

EDITORIAL

Tackling the Writer's Block

You badly wanted to write your research paper, but simply couldn't - you just don't have the energy to start. Maybe you managed to start, but words never come to your mind. You spend minutes and hours in front of your computer/laptop screen with hardly any thoughts being transferred to the document. Your fingers are simply frozen. You regret that you even bothered to write. Voila! That's called the 'Writer's Block'. If you've been afflicted with the writer's block, it can seriously impede your writing and creative process. There may be a number of underlying psychological reasons for the writer's block, but I will not dwell on them - I'd rather leave them to psychologists to enlighten us. But I suppose it would help many of us, writers and researchers, if any useful and handy tips are available to overcome this ubiquitous affliction.

Here are some tips that seem to have credibly helped many writers.

1. Write often - develop a routine

You are a product of habit. The more you do something, the better you can become at doing it. This rule applies to writing as well. Therefore, the best medicine for writers' block is undoubtedly to write more often. Develop a routine and write every day. Sometimes, you may not have ideas to write about, but it is still worth it to try and get some ideas on paper. Some people use 'random writing' or 'free writing' techniques to stay afloat. Using this method, you can write about anything that comes to your mind and not worry too much about its substance and style. Refinement can happen later. I can assure you this is not going to be a waste of your time. It helps you to develop your habit of writing, which will eventually ameliorate your writing skills (and creativity too).

2. Pay attention to the process - output will follow

Writing something 'perfect' in the first instance is probably beyond human capabilities. When you read some great research or literary works, you'd definitely be awed by the quality of those writings. But what you don't appreciate is the amount of time the authors must have spent writing and perfecting them. It is well-known in writers' circles that some of the famous authors write up to 10 drafts (yes, that many) before the manuscripts are ready for publication. The moral here is that perfection comes through multiple iterations, therefore, you must write, write and write more. Pay attention to the process and the end-result is bound to be good, if not perfect.

3. Read, think, and do not be afraid

If you want to write, you must be a voracious reader first. You must be hungry and thirsty for new ideas. As academic writers, it is essential that you read widely and are on top of the most recent literature in your subject area. Because academic writers always build on existing knowledge, you can do so only if you have mastered the scholarly landscape. Be critical of what you read and do not be afraid to develop your own line of thinking. After all, academics love to build their own little niche of intellectual territory. Develop this personal niche without hesitation. As you critique the work of other authors, understand that others will also critique your work. That is the beauty of being in academia.

Taking the above advice can, hopefully, help you become intellectually more productive and a more prolific writer.



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Google' is not a
synonym for 'research'.

Stan Brown

A Guide to Conducting a Narrative Systematic Review

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A systematic review is a well-defined rigorous method of reviewing and synthesizing primary studies in a specific area of interest (Ryan, 2010; Siddaway, 2014; Zurynski, 2014). Hence, a systematic review is a well-organized, comprehensive and transparent way of synthesizing data from number of studies that are relevant to the review questions (Munn et al., 2014). Some of the advantages of systematic reviews include; a) rigor in the methods of reviewing suitable studies for the review, b) providing empirical consistent evidence to a selected research review question by analysing number of studies and c) data can be combined using meta-analysis, meta-aggregation and narrative synthesis (Denison et al., 2013; Siddaway, 2014).

Apart from the stated advantages there is tremendous need to conduct a systematic review. For example, systematic reviews facilitate in identifying gaps in current research thus, providing a framework to build and develop further research in the area of interest. Further, the rigour and strategic approach to literature search reduce bias, add scientific value and improve confidence in the conclusions made on the review studies (Denison et al., 2013). This article is a quick guide to conduct a narrative systematic review. The main purpose of the article is to provide guidance to students on the features of a good narrative systematic review and to act as a starting point to those new to reviewing detail information. Figure 1. illustrates steps to conducting a systematic review (Khan et al., 2003; Ryan, 2010; Siddaway, 2014; Strech & Sofaer, 2012).

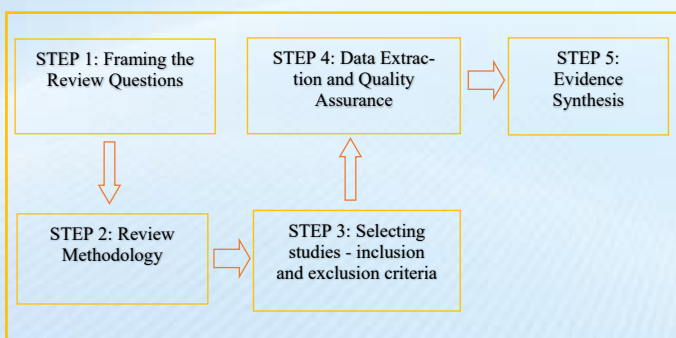


Figure 1. Steps to conducting Systematic Review

Step 1: Framing the Review Questions

The first step of the review is to formulate a review question that is feasible, interesting, relevant and ethical. Just like any other research, a clearly defined unambiguous research question is vital to systematic reviews. Questions sorting to seek a scholarly definition of a research term, a collective consensus of the main topic, the potential theories underpinning a specific topic, methodological intricacies are all helpful in reviews. The answers provided through the review questions will enable in understanding the epistemological, practical and theoretical gaps about the topic.

Step 2: Review Methodology

A search for the literature begins with determining what to look for and where to look for. Databases such as EbscoHost, PubMed, Springer, Elsevier, Jstor, Science Direct, Wiley, SAGE and google scholar are a good place to begin search for primary sources. Additionally, internet search such as ResearchGate and Academia may provide additional references. Once the potential databases are identified, search strategy need to be set. Boolean operators, filters, iterative process needs to be determined. Record of a search detail with subheadings and key words used, number of articles searched and number of identified articles from the search will provide insight into the methods of the study selection.

Step 3: Selecting Studies - Inclusion and Exclusion

Making inclusions and exclusion criteria explicit is to avoid any biases in selecting studies from selecting studies to including the review. There are two stages to this process, firstly to select articles sifting through abstracts and secondly reading the full text. A PRISMA flow diagram of literature search is useful to map this process.

Step 4: Data Extraction and Quality Assurance

Data extraction sheet is helpful in summarizing the findings from across the selected articles. Data extraction sheets can include information such as title of the study, year, where the study was conducted, population, size and characteristic of the sample, hypothesis, theories, independent and dependent variables, control variables, study design, instruments, study measures and findings. This can be in relation to review questions which are helpful in examining whether some findings emerge in specific settings, conditions and whether it occurs when used with specific measures. Study appraisal of quality assessment is useful to gauge the quality and strength of the reviewed studies. To evaluate the quality of the selected studies, Standard Quality Assessment Criteria for Evaluating Primary Research Papers from variety of Fields and the quality assessment tool from National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools are helpful. A review needs to address; selection bias, study design, confounders, blinding, data collection methods and withdrawals and drop outs. Based on these component ratings indicating strong, moderate or weak is given as a global rating for each study.

Step 5: Evidence Synthesis

Evidence from the generated table can be synthesized using various structured methods such as content analysis and thematic analysis. To structure narrative synthesis of the findings from the articles. Additionally, short paragraphs that summarize the evidence in relation to the research questions, and list the studies from which the evidence statement is derived. Evidence statements can report direct effect,



FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Engaging College Students in the Transition to Sustainability Through Design-Based Approaches

Najla Mouchrek

ABSTRACT

To achieve social change towards sustainable ways of living, it is essential to promote a culture of sustainability among young people. Universities have a very important role, as sustainable education on college campuses has the potential to achieve long-term results by promoting the development of awareness and skills for youth engagement in order to face complex challenges, now and in the future. This study investigates the application of design-based thinking and participatory design to support a culture of sustainability among youth. It aims to bridge the value-action gap and to develop sustainable competencies. Design-based strategies integrated within educational experiences promote dealing with change and complexity, as well as offering a range of potentialities and interfaces for innovative action in the transition to sustainability. This research used a qualitative multi-method approach which consisted of a literature review, context analysis, ethnographic observation, and application of participatory design in educational settings in Brazil and the United States. This paper summarizes preliminary findings, including guidelines for engagement strategies. These reinforce the importance of understanding values and challenges of youth development, exploring dimensions of sustainability connected to student realities, building contexts for transformation, stimulating empowerment and autonomy, and using mediation to facilitate change processes conducted by young people. These findings also demonstrate that design-based participatory approaches in educational settings offer excellent opportunities for intervention to both engage youth in sustainability and support their positive development.

Mouchrek, N., 2018. Engaging College Students in the Transition to Sustainability Through Design-Based Approaches. *Consilience*, 20(20), pp.88-103.

Read on...

https://www.jstor.org/stable/26760104?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents



moderated effect, mediated effect and potential adverse effects. Such statements are succinct and provides a basis to narrate the findings in simple language.

Here are few exemplars of narrative systematic review articles

- [Narrative systematic review of clinical utility of cycle threshold values in the context of COVID-19 \(Rao et al., 2020\)](#)
- [Narrative systematic review of life skills education](#) (Nasheeda et al., 2019).
- [High-heeled shoes and musculoskeletal injuries](#) (Barnish & Barnish, 2016)

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Saving Tourism from Itself

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In 2019, a whopping 1.5 billion travelers were recorded worldwide (Statista, 2020). Compared to the number of travelers in 1970, this was an 89% increase in the number of international travelers just within a span of the last 50 years (Roser, 2017). However, the events that unfolded in 2020 took us back in time to what was 30 years ago, costing a loss more than US\$1.1 trillion in tourism receipts (UNWTO, 2020). The global pandemic, COVID-19 declared on 30th January 2020 by WHO (2020), showed how volatile the global tourism industry is to external influences caused by anthropogenic activities.

What led to the current situation? The rapid development of tourism since 1970 till 2019 has shown a frightening fault in perspective of its growth. There is no point at which the development stopped much like the 'big bang'. The concept of sustainable tourism, while theoretically empowers communities, the hard truth about it, is that the concept has become a promotional tool that is being 'imitated' among destinations all across the globe.

Between 2015 and 2019, the Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) three-folded to US\$ 61.7 million. Certainly, this indicates that tourism is lucrative but also raises the question if this results in the most sustainable outcomes. Just as a two-sided coin, the inflow of money into such destinations through tourism is used to alleviate the socio-cultural implications of tourism. But the literal down-side of it, is somewhat ignored by societies as a whole and the negative implications of a limitless expansion of tourism is not considered within the political spectrum. This raises another question. Has the society forsaken their hope for the political neoliberalism to be present within their community or are they not reasoning with what is happening.

This rapid development has actually reached a literal tipping point in which

these destinations are overflowing with tourist travelers. Mass tourism has created a domino effect, where if one chip weighs more than the other then it collapses the set of values created or believed upon. Marketing a destination as sustainable, and focusing on mass tourism have led beaches to be closed down and ecosystems to be destroyed. The ideology behind how sustainable tourism is perceived by politicians, industry elites and the academics are vastly contrasting from one another.

Nonetheless, the surge in tourism activities and its heavy reliance have created the result that we see today. Heavy environmental cost is visible, not only in the destruction of virgin habitats with very little human encroachment, causing unexpected wildlife-human interactions including pandemic proportion infectious diseases. Although not related to overtourism, in the last 6 years the Great Barrier reef has gone through a third mass bleaching (Regan, 2020). On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought fauna and flora back to Venice and cleared up the waters because of less density of travelers there (Brunton, 2020). Bondi Beach in Australia was on the track of becoming a mass tourism attraction just like the Barcelona and Venice, till the pandemic came about (Lindsay, 2019). At New Delhi, forests were cut down to make way for golf courses, and to hide the evidence the trees were buried underground at the now established New Delhi Golf Club back in 2018 (Press Trust of India, 2018). In 2017, Miami discovered that one of the outfall sewage waste pipe was leaking in shallow waters for more than a year (Staletovich, 2017).

All of these have been summed up by academics as 'overtourism'. Over the years, the concept of it has been taught in many different disciplines however, there are certain misconstrues that need to be addressed regarding the concept. First, the

basic understanding of overtourism denotes that one or more factors overweighs the others. For example, if a hotel is catering an evening gala night for a fundraiser event. Suppose the inventory utilized is lower than the number of guests being served then would that mean, in that situation, that the hotel is 'overguested'? Referring to it as unbalanced tourism is more appropriate and makes more sense. It certainly implies that there are actions that are used to fix the problems occurring. So, what can be done to save tourism? Simple.

- Protect quality of life for locals.
- Maximising the local economic impacts.
- Elevate the visitor experience.
- Protect key assets.

Tourism without a purpose has become the breadwinner for many destinations but at an atrocious cost. The need for mass tourism being sought by Small Island Destinations (SIDs) is showing this devastation that will be the inevitable doom for destinations such as Maldives. The heavy reliance on tourism and being promoted as a destination to visit rather than being managed, shows the incapacity of SIDs to administer such a designed management. Nonetheless, this is the result of heavy reliance on FDIs and due to the dominance of internal local elites over the industry parameters at any SID. (Burns & Holden, 1995; Mowforth & Munt, 1998; Mowforth & Munt, 2009; Scheyvens, 2011).

This does not mean however that we cannot make it purposeful to travel for tourism. Tourism growth needs to be redesigned. It needs to be innovative in being the advocating form for inclusive growth, as well as the governing agent that supports other sectors in building up and sustaining a local economy. If not built around other sectors, then tourism would

just be lucrative for the foreign investors and the few local elites within the industry. In the Maldives, we refer to the tourism industry as the 'golden-egg laying' industry. But for what it is worth, if we look at the market value of 1 ounce of gold it amounts to US\$1800. Is the industry really creating a trickling down effect across the 400,000 or so Maldivians?

The looming question we need to ask ourselves is, have we really gone beyond regulatory capture? Are we so far beyond recovery that we are in an era of state capture?

Food for thought.

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FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Inclusive growth versus pro-poor growth

Martine Bakker and Hannah R Messerli

ABSTRACT

Inclusive growth and pro-poor growth are terms embraced but not fully understood in the tourism community. This paper discusses the main concepts of inclusive growth and their implication for tourism development across the developing world. Is inclusive growth simply another term for pro-poor in tourism? Discussion of current approaches utilized by the development community and its institutions highlights differences and notes a shift from pro-poor thinking to inclusive growth efforts. Within that context, the authors suggest the need for an improved understanding of the inclusive growth approach in tourism development, particularly for emerging countries.

Bakker, M. and Messerli, H.R., 2017. Inclusive growth versus pro-poor growth: Implications for tourism development. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 17(4), pp.384-391.

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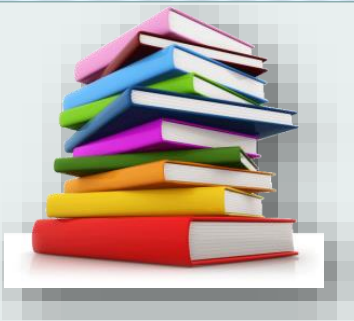


Research is formalized curiosity.
It is poking and prying
with a purpose.

— Zora Neale Hurston



AZ QUOTES



FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Approaches to ICT-enhanced teaching in technical and vocational education: a phenomenographic perspective

Md. Shahadat Hossain Khan and Lina Markauskaite

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of a study undertaken from a phenomenographic perspective, which examines teachers' approaches to information communication technology (ICT)-enhanced teaching in vocational tertiary education. Twenty-three teachers from three Australian Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions participated in semi-structured in-depth interviews about their ways of experiencing the use of ICT various vocational courses. The findings revealed two strategies with five main orientations to ICT-enhanced teaching distributed along a continuum from teacher-focused approaches: comprising information-oriented, feedback-oriented and practice-oriented to student-focused approaches: consisting of activity-oriented and industry-oriented teaching. The identified strategies and orientations extend the frameworks of teachers' approaches ICT-enhanced teaching revealed in the previous phenomenographic studies in tertiary education. The paper discusses theoretical and practical implications of these findings for TAFE sector and tertiary education in general.

Khan, M.S.H. and Markauskaite, L., 2017. Approaches to ICT-enhanced teaching in technical and vocational education: a phenomenographic perspective. *Higher Education*, 73(5), pp.691-707.

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FROM THE EDITORS PUBLISHING IN AMERICAN MANAGEMENT JOURNAL –PART 7: What's Different About Qualitative Research?

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The difference between qualitative and quantitative research is very difficult to articulate, in fact some may take meaning both of these as the same (Mehrad & Zangeneh, 2019). It is therefore essential to understand research approaches when applying it to their own research. This article reviewed is "From the Editors" seven-part series of *Academy of Management Journal (AMJ)*, which mainly talks about ways to make effective submissions in the AMJ journal. In this issue the authors take us through the different aspects which make qualitative research unique by giving a holistic view. This series will be useful for those researchers who are trying to publish qualitative papers for the first time and for those who are already publishing qualitative research in a refined manner.

In a qualitative study the method used for should be clearly described and regularly applied throughout. Data are examined descriptively to notice similarities and differences in the data.

In order to grab the attention of the readers, the researcher should establish the theoretical gap in the front end of the article and also should be able to establish a clear justification for the importance of research question.

Qualitative evaluation is mainly through inductive reasoning. The general inductive approach provides a convenient and efficient way of analyzing qualitative data for many research purposes (Thomas, 2003). In a qualitative research, themes are identified from the observed data that emerge without any hindrance from the structured methodology.

There should be a link between the data that is analyzed and the advancement in the theory. The novel contributions to the existing literature and this connection should be described in the discussion section. Qualitative research may yield results that affirm, contradict, add complexity to, or offer new and novel findings unmentioned in the prior literature (Drisko2005, n.d.). The discussion section should also explicitly state the limitations of the current study

which the readers should be cautious of while applying the theory.

Categories, patterns, and themes that are then described and sometimes interpreted is used to provide a rich description of the experience as-lived (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009). Qualitative researchers need to give a list of sources from where they collected data as they cannot apply any statistical tests. Owning one's perspective entails authors' detailing their personal frames of reference in conducting the studies. Specifically, authors should specify their theoretical orientations and personal connections to the topic and study (Ponterotto & Grieger, 2007).

As an emerging approach in narrative inquiry, qualitative story completion can offer an exciting and compelling way of collecting qualitative data. Story completion offers a very different approach to data collection than traditional self-report techniques, such as interviews, focus groups, and diaries. Self-report approaches give access to first-person accounts of personal experience or perspectives. Story data cannot be understood within the familiar framework of self-report as representing personal views or experiences.

One analytic approach that has yet to be used to analyses story completion data but nonetheless seems particularly apt is narrative analysis (e.g., Riesman 1993, 2007; Smith 2016). Through the two data and theory narratives, qualitative articles tell a compelling story.

Further exploration of narrative approaches for analyzing story completion data, as the value of narrative techniques for identifying narrative types, genres, and metaphors around our lives is well established (e.g., see Frank 2004; Plummer 1994; Smith & Sparkes 2004). A narrative analytic orientation, focusing on structures, styles, or narrative types, could expand well beyond Braun and Clarke's (2013) initial story mapping technique with exciting outcomes.

From that first moment on, through the next million tiny tasks that your study may involve, you will produce reams about

how the study changes and sharpens and moves into the public sphere.

The highly iterative process is often sustained through the review process for a submitted paper. Reviewers often become co-creators (but should not become anonymous co-authors) because the true scope of an inductive study's theoretical implications cannot be fully understood until reviewers have provided the feedback. In this way, qualitative researchers can be thought of as like sculptors: they use an array of tools to work and rework their materials to form their composition. Critics and reviewers expose new ways of seeing the composition, which sometimes forces a significant reworking. Qualitative researcher cannot finalize the front end of a paper until the back end has been finalized; both will continue to be revised during the review process all the way until the final draft is accepted.

Writing a strong scholarly article is a challenging yet rewarding undertaking, regardless of the type of data one reports. Crafting evidence-based interpretation of implications, possible causes and diversities of thought and experience based on your data. These requires a different skillset, including tasks like writing with confidence, writing with evidence and writing to address reader's potential doubts.

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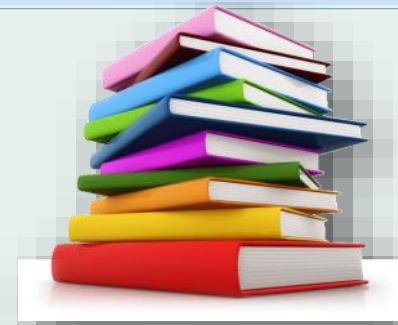
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FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

The Influences of the 2D Image-Based Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality on Student Learning

Hsin-Hun Liou, Stephen J. H. Yang, Sherry Y. Chen and Wernhuar Tarng

ABSTRACT

Virtual reality (VR) learning environments can provide students with concepts of the simulated phenomena, but users are not allowed to interact with real elements. Conversely, augmented reality (AR) learning environments blend real-world environments so AR could enhance the effects of computer simulation and promote students' realistic experience. However, AR-based learning environments had a lot of dynamic real objects which may increase learners' mental effort. Moreover, paucity of research compared AR with VR and other mature technologies. Thus, the aim of this study is to compare the influence of the 2D image-based VR and AR in an inquiry-based astronomy course. The findings of this study suggested that the real objects presented in the AR system could reduce the mental load because students could take the real objects of the AR system as the reference objects of the movement of the moon. Furthermore, the sense of the immediacy is increased due to the fact that peers appear on the AR system. Accordingly, the real objects and the sense of the immediacy not only enhance the learning motivations, but also encourage the students to keep conducting the tasks.

Liou, H.H., Yang, S.J., Chen, S.Y. and Tarng, W., 2017. The influences of the 2D image-based augmented reality and virtual reality on student learning. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 20(3), pp.110-121.

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https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26196123?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents



Teaching Tips—Part 1

David Mingay

Visiting Lecturer, Faculty of Educational Studies, Villa College

I've spent half my 30-year career teaching undergraduate psychology, and the other half teaching A level psychology and training school teachers.

When I'm training teachers, one of the things I emphasise is that pupils will get bored unless you make your lessons varied and interesting, and that they'll be more engaged if you show a personal interest in them.

I was reflecting on this recently, and was shocked to learn that, while I do these things in my own school teaching, my undergraduate courses have followed pretty much the same format since I started lecturing. The last time I updated my university delivery skills was when I bought a book (an actual book — remember them!) in the 1990s.

I decided to do something about it by looking up research on modern higher education teaching methods, and I'd like to share what I discovered with you, just in case you fancy spicing up your lectures too. This is the first of a three-part article; part two will have more ideas for lectures, and the final instalment has some interesting ways to check student learning.

Before the start of lectures

I know some lecturers suffer from public speaking anxiety, so the minutes before a lecture are spent pacing up and down outside the lecture room, sometimes anxiously puffing on a cigarette. Luckily, I stopped being nervous at the point in my very first lecture when I got to the joke...and the students laughed! I still waste valuable time before a lecture worrying about how to operate the equipment and whether everything is laid out the way I want it, though.

Here are some things I could do that are more useful:

- get to know the students. A little chat with one or two of them before each lecture begins (different ones each time, of course) helps build a positive working relationship, which then makes whole-group discussions livelier.
- display an agenda to help students see what the structure of their learning in that session is going to look like.
- build suspense by putting up a quote or a photo or playing some relevant music to stimulate curiosity.
- put up something on the non-topic-related global academic skills and concepts I want them to leave with — meta-cognitive skills or study skills or whatever.

So, learn the layout of the room and how the equipment works well in advance, and use the time immediately before lectures to do something more educational. And stop smoking!

Starting lectures

It's easy to get into the habit of starting sessions with administrative tasks like recording attendance or handing back essays. Or, even worse, writing a list of Learning Objectives on the board. Students' minds are still wherever they were before the lecture, so grab them with something interesting:

- display some “big” questions which the lecture will address, and which they can come back to at the end.
- ask them to give you a summary of what they learned in the last lecture
- get them to tell you what they already know — or think they know — about the topic they're about to cover.
- disorient them! I sometimes start a lecture with the incomprehensible ramblings of a person who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia, or the counter-intuitive findings of heroin addiction research on rats (heroin isn't addictive, it turns out).

Once you've got them hooked, the rest is easy. (The students, that is, not the rats!)

Ending lectures

Looking back at my lectures, I realise I've got into the habit of trying to cram in a few more 'interesting' points at the end, or reminding people about when their assignment is due. What a terrible way to end a great performance!

Instead, leave them with a happy ending (“And it turns out that all the evidence suggests that 95% of people with panic disorder can be cured by a short course of cognitive behavioural therapy!”) or a cliffhanger (“...and then they voted to leave the European Union...”).

Sometimes, you might give them a minute or two to address, in writing, the following questions:

- What was the most important thing you learned today?
- Was there a position taken in today's class that you strongly disagreed with?
- What question still remains in your mind?

If you ask to see their answers, it will give you an idea of whether students are attaching importance to the things you want them to,

and it will also inform you as to what you might have to re-explain more clearly.

Making learning relevant

I think there's an overemphasis these days on teaching people about what they already know. Education should be also about introducing people to things outside their experience. I know an expert in medieval European recorder music who only teaches her pupils in London, who are mainly of Afro-Caribbean heritage, music made by Londoners of Afro-Caribbean heritage. Tell them something they don't know. Then make it relevant: get them to relate the new things they've learned to their own lives to bring the knowledge to life and make it even more memorable.

To this end, you might try devoting ten minutes at the end of your lectures to getting students to do the following, and then perhaps share some of them with the group:

- Identify something from the lecture which really matters to them or to society.
- Identify one way in which the day's content manifests itself in college or in their home lives.
- Identify a television show, film, or book that illustrates a concept from the lecture.
- Describe how today's material connects to last week's.

Spreszatura

I learned this Italian word just last year (thank you, lockdown, for giving us the time and boredom to fill our heads with more and more trivia!). It's an Italian word from 1528, referring to courtiers, which means "a certain nonchalance, so as to conceal all art and make whatever one does or says appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it".

In other words, if you put enough behind-the-scenes effort into your teaching, students will be impressed by how easy it all is for you. And apparently they find this sort of thing reassuring and inspiring!

More details and readings at: <http://thejoyofconcrete.org/lectures>



FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

What's the Harm? The Coverage of Ethics and Harm Avoidance in Research Methods Textbooks

Shane Dixon and Linda Quirke

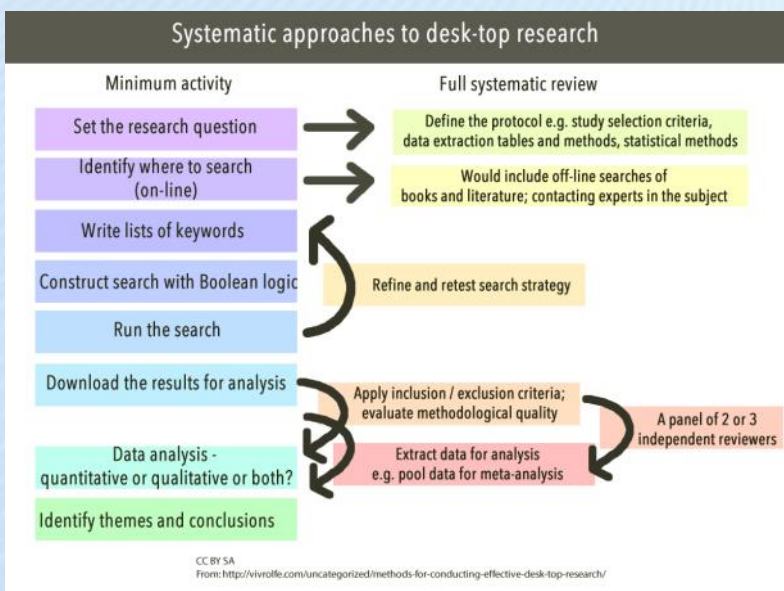
ABSTRACT

Methods textbooks play a role in socializing a new generation of researchers about ethical How do undergraduate social research methods textbooks portray harm, its prevalence, mitigate harm to participants? We conducted a content analysis of ethics chapters in the 18 undergraduate textbooks used in sociology research methods courses in the United States 2013. We found that experiments are portrayed as the research design most likely to harm Textbooks overwhelmingly referred to high-profile, well-known examples of harmful research. primarily characterize participants as at risk for psychological and physical harm. Textbooks detailed discussions of how to avoid harm; informed consent figures prominently as an essential mitigate risk of harm. We conclude that textbooks promote a procedural rather than nuanced to ethics and that content in ethics chapters is out of step with scholarly research.

Dixon, S. and Quirke, L., 2018. What's the harm? The coverage of ethics and harm avoidance in research methods textbooks. *Teaching Sociology*, 46(1), pp.12-24.

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<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26429253>



A situational analysis of the occupational gender segregation in the tourism industry of the Maldives

Hashma Adnan

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Synopsis of research proposal

This research aims to determine the ratio of gender segregation in the tourism industry of Maldives and address the issues of occupational gender segregation. This study will employ a mixed method choice, whereby a quantitative survey will be conducted to identify the ratio of occupational gender segregation in the tourism industry of Maldives. Moreover, interviews and focus group sessions will be carried out to explore the reasons behind gender segregation. The findings of this research are expected to be the basis of formulating a national framework to resolve occupational gender segregation issues and to develop proactive measures for the future.

Research objectives

Objectives:

1. Determine the ratio of men and women working in the tourism industry of Maldives.
2. Analyse occupational gender segregation evident from the global tourism industry literature.
3. Examine the reasons behind occupational gender segregation evident within the tourism industry of Maldives.
4. Propose a national framework to ensure occupational gender equality.

Rationale and expected outcomes

Maldives, being one of the leading holiday destinations, is the economic breadwinner of the country by contributing to 20 per cent of the Maldives' total GDP, indicating a large workforce being employed in the industry (ADB, 2019; Government of Maldives, 2019; Ministry Tourism, Arts & Culture, 2013). However, out of the total number of employees working in tourism, only 10 per cent represents women, of which, only 3 per cent are locals (NBS, 2019). This indicates the presence of occupational gender segregation within the industry. Although this topic has been discussed in the past, there has been no published literature regarding occupational gender segregation here in the Maldives.

Therefore, this research aims to examine the issues in occupational gender segregation and build a national framework to ensure gender equality to be transparently managed throughout the largest industry of the Maldives.

Relevance to priority sectors

Establishing a sustainable gender equality strategy is one of the key determinants in ensuring economic development. The inequality of job opportunities across sectors is one of the factors hindering the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (UN, 2010). To nurture and prosper a sustainable economy, it is imperative to address the occupational gender issues. This can result in improving the quality of life towards balancing a healthy, tourism-led economy. Therefore, this research will act as a platform in strategizing the outcomes reflected in achieving the Strategic Action Plan, focusing on creating conducive working environments for women within the tourism industry (Government of Maldives, 2019).

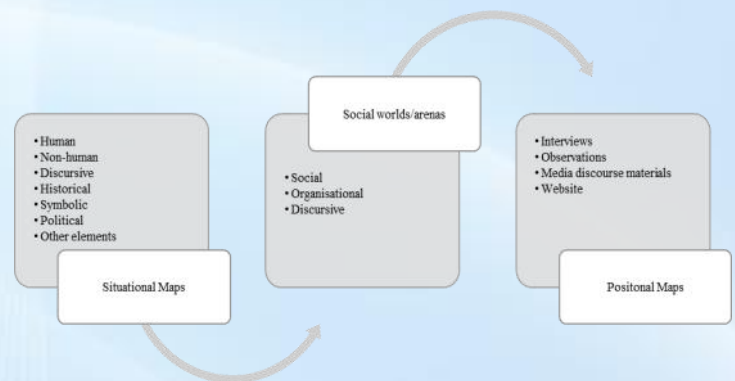
Literature review

Tourism industry is perceived as the largest economic sector in the Maldives (ADB, 2019; Government of Maldives, 2019). While the

contributions of tourism to the socio-economic development of the country have been explored, little significance has been given to the relationship between tourism and occupational gender equality. Although tourism offers promising prospects for women, they are commonly engaged in low paying and low skilled areas of the industry, as well as unpaid family operations in hospitality establishments (UNWTO, 2019). The employment statistics show that the number of women employed in the industry is significantly low (NBS, 2019). However, these statistics do not consider other businesses in the tourism industry such as travel agencies and tour operators, transportation, food and beverage sector, and hospitality sectors. Thus, the overall picture of gender segregation in the industry is yet to be determined. Although only few studies have been conducted to understand the reasons behind gender segregation (Shakeela, Ruhanen and Breakey, 2010; Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM), 2009; Dayal and Didi, 2001; Kobilarev, n.d), it is questionable whether these publications have been utilised in formulating and enacting the strategies and policies of tourism regulatory institutes and actors in the Maldives.

Conceptual framework – situational analysis mapping

This research will adapt situational analysis mapped with grounded theory proposed by Clarke, Friese and Washburn, in 2005. This model suggests three phases of mapping: the situational maps, social world or arena maps, and finally positional maps. Situational maps investigate human, non-human, discursive, historical, symbolic, cultural, political, and other elements relevant to the research area. This stage helps to draw out meaningful relationships between the dimensions. Social world or arena maps



offer a wider interpretation of all the social actors within the discipline and how they react with the social, institutional, and discursive dimensions. Lastly, the positional maps analyse the varying and controversial data (interviews, observations, news, websites, and such) and how the information has been utilised (or not utilised for that matter!) to consider major positions (Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015).

Research methodology

Pragmatism under ontological philosophy will be employed to gauge the realities faced by female employees. Grounded theory as a strategy will be used to methodically collect and analyse the data, using mixed method as a choice, and will employ a cross-sectional study. Data collection will be through secondary data analysis, surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus group sessions. The primary data collected through surveys will be analysed using SPSS

software, and thematic data analysis will be applied using NVivo, for the qualitative data collected.

Significance of the research to Potential Outcomes

The findings of the research will be the basis of developing a nation-wide framework and policies to ensure occupational gender equality in the tourism industry of Maldives. Upon completion of the programme, the researcher will work closely with the relevant state and government agencies, tourism industry stakeholders, and the local community to develop the framework, and work towards implementation.

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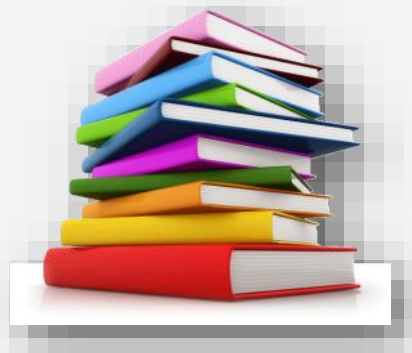
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FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Social Networking Sites as Formal Learning Environments in Business Education

ABIDA ELLAHI

ABSTRACT

The central objective of this study is to investigate the extent to which social networking sites can affect learning effectiveness, and to what amount this technology can be used as supplementary elements for existing pedagogy methods prevailing in a developing country. The study used a teaching case research method to investigate the effects of Social Networking Sites (SNS) usage on learning outcomes of students in higher education setting in Pakistan. The central hypothesis developed in this study was that, using social networking sites in higher education enhance students' interest, which ultimately increases their satisfaction and perceived learning performance. These effects are further boosted in the presence of instructor's support. The results confirmed that Social Networking Sites (SNS) hold a place in teaching and learning in higher education. The study provides a way to maximize the impact of the existing technologies, by providing an understanding of how the different technological tools and learning can impeccably be incorporated in higher education.

Ellahi, A., 2018. Social networking sites as formal learning environments in business education. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 21(4), pp.64-75.

Read on...

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26511538>



STEPS TO CARRY OUT YOUR DESK RESEARCH

Define the objective of your research

01
STEP

Define your research plan

Conduct the research

02
STEP

03
STEP

04
STEP

Conclude and verify the information



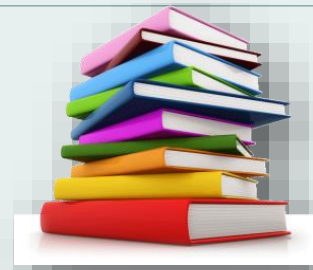
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Submissions to the VC Research Digest should meet the following guidelines:

- Be between 700-850 words in length
- If a completed research project, it must at minimum include:
 - ◇ Research title
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 - ◇ Aims and Objectives
 - ◇ Research question/hypothesis
 - ◇ Methodology
 - ◇ Findings
 - ◇ Conclusions
- If an ongoing research project, it must at minimum include:
 - ◇ Research title
 - ◇ Research background and problem statement (including lit. review)
 - ◇ Aims and Objectives
 - ◇ Research question/hypothesis
 - ◇ Methodology
 - ◇ Expected findings and implications
- Articles on research methods should focus on any one (or few) aspects of high quality research and provide in-depth and practical insights
- Contributors can also forward links or details of significant research articles published in refereed journals to be included in the Research Mesh section.
- Submissions can be in either English or Dhivehi.



FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

From “What is Reading?” to What is Literacy?

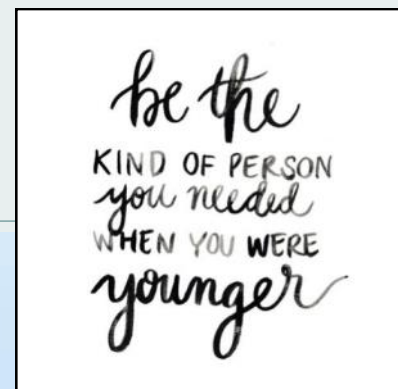
Katherine K. Frankel, Bryce L. C. Becker, Marjorie W. Rowe and P. David Pearson

ABSTRACT

In their 1985 report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson defined reading and proposed five principles that guide its successful enactment: (1) reading is a constructive process, (2) reading must be fluent, (3) reading must be strategic, (4) reading requires motivation, and (5) reading is a continuously developing skill. In this article we revise the definition from reading to literacy and rethink the principles in response to theoretical and empirical developments in the intervening years with regard to the processes of, and contexts for, reading. Our updated principles include: (1) literacy is a constructive, integrative, and critical process situated in social practices; (2) fluent reading is shaped by language processes and contexts; (3) literacy is strategic and disciplinary; (4) literacy entails motivation and engagement; and (5) literacy is a continuously developing set of practices. We redefine each principle and offer new explanations in light of what we now know.

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