



UNIVERSITY OF RUHUNA
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

No. of Pages : 04

No. of Questions: 06

Total Marks :70

ACC 41123 – Research Methodology

Academic Year 2024/2025

BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION HONOURS DEGREE

4000 LEVEL FIRST SEMESTER END EXAMINATION – AUG/SEP 2025

Three Hours

Instructions: Answer any five (05) questions.

01.

- A. Saunders et al.(2019) state that the interplay between research methodology, methods, and techniques creates a systematic framework for which philosophical approaches translate into practical research designs through carefully selected procedural tools.

Define the terms research methodology and research methods, and critically examine the association between these concepts with appropriate examples.

(03 Marks)

- B. The scientific method in research is a systematic process in acquiring knowledge through observation, experimentation, and logical reasoning, ensuring objectivity and reliability in research findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

State the key steps of the scientific method in research, and explain each step with suitable examples to demonstrate its application in real-world research.

(04 Marks)

- C. Distinguish between natural science research and social science research providing suitable examples for each to illustrate the differences.

(03 Marks)

- D. State six key characteristics of research, and briefly explain any three of them, illustrating each with suitable examples.

(04 Marks)

(Total Marks 14)

02.

- A. Compare positivism and interpretivism as research paradigms, illustrating with suitable examples.

(04 Marks)

B. ABC PLC, a manufacturing company, has recently adopted Integrated Reporting (IR) to strengthen corporate transparency and accountability. The management seeks to determine whether companies adopting IR disclose more transparent financial and non-financial information to stakeholders than those using traditional reporting practices. To address this issue, the company's research team collected annual reports from 60 listed companies over the past five years. The companies were categorized based on their adoption of Integrated Reporting (IR). Corporate transparency was measured using disclosure scores, which capture both the quality and the extent of financial and sustainability information disclosed.

Answer the following (i) to (iii) questions based on the above case study.

(i) Identify the most appropriate research paradigm for this study and justify your choice.

(02 Marks)

(ii) State whether this study should adopt an inductive or deductive reasoning approach, justifying your choice.

(02 Marks)

(iii) Identify the most appropriate research method for this study with justifications.

(02 Marks)

C. Differentiate between the nominal scale and the ordinal scale of measurement, providing suitable examples.

(04 Marks)

(Total Marks 14)

03.

A. Differentiate between parametric and non-parametric tests using appropriate examples, and outline two advantages and disadvantages of each type of tests.

(04 Marks)

B. Consider a study that examines the relationship between firm size (measured by logarithm of total assets) and financial performance (measured by return on equity-ROE), using data from 100 companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange for the year 2024. The average ROE is 18.7% with a standard deviation of 9.5%. The ROE distribution has a skewness value of 1.3 and a kurtosis of 4.2. The firm size variable (logarithm of total assets) ranges from 4.99 to 5.78, with a mean of 5.3908 and a standard deviation of 0.16909.

Interpret the descriptive statistics given above, and explain what they reveal about the shape and characteristics of the ROE distribution and firm size.

(06 Marks)

- C. As a research student, explain the key factors that researchers should consider when selecting an appropriate statistical test.

(04 Marks)

(Total Marks 14)

04.

- A. Critically evaluate qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method research approaches, providing suitable examples for each approach.

(04 Marks)

- B. Discuss the importance of research philosophy in social science research.

(03 Marks)

- C. Briefly explain the difference between a concrete concept and an abstract concept using suitable examples.

(03 Marks)

- D. Once developing a general research idea, the next step is to refine it into a specific and manageable research topic.

Briefly explain the major factors that researchers should consider when selecting and refining a research topic.

(04 Marks)

(Total Marks 14)

05.

- A. During the next semester, you are required to prepare and submit your dissertation, a comprehensive piece of scholarly work. Academic writing is most often distinguished from other forms of writing methods by its distinctive style. Your dissertation will therefore demand higher standard of academic writing, characterised by accuracy, coherent structure, and a scholarly tone.

Describe how you would systematically develop your academic writing skills for your dissertation with suitable examples.

(04 Marks)

- B. Resnik (2020) claims that ethical issues in research involve ensuring honesty, integrity, and respect for participants, while avoiding practices that may cause harm or misrepresentation.

State six ethical issues commonly encountered in research, and explain any two of them with suitable examples.

(04 Marks)

C. Identify four strategies for ensuring the protection of research ethics, and briefly explain any two of them, highlighting the specific actions required to uphold these ethical principles.

(03 Marks)

D. State five key reasons for citing sources as a practice in academic writing, and briefly explain any two of them, providing suitable examples.

(03 Marks)

(Total Marks 14)

06.

A. "Sampling is the process of selecting a subset (sample) from a larger group (population) for analysis or study, with the goal of drawing conclusions about the entire population. The choice of sample size within this compromise is governed by different factors".

Briefly explain the major considerations in deciding the sample size for a study.

(03 Marks)

B. Briefly discuss two probability sampling techniques and one non-probability sampling technique, outlining their major characteristics and illustrating situations in which they can be applied, with suitable examples.

(05 Marks)

C. Briefly describe the key activities involved in each step of the three-stage process required to conduct a successful interview.

(03 Marks)

D. Outline the types of data that can be obtained through observations, and explain five situations where observation is most suitable as a method of data collection.

(03 Marks)

(Total Marks 14)

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