

Methodological Issues in **Management Research**

**ADVANCES, CHALLENGES
AND THE WAY AHEAD**



Edited by

Rabi N. Subudhi
Sumita Mishra

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2020

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-78973-974-9 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-78973-973-2 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-78973-975-6 (Epub)



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Dedicated to

Two lovely daughters,

**SRUTI
&
SHREYA**

*(daughters of
Madhumati & Rabi
and
Sumita & Susruta,
respectively)*

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Foreword

Prof. Rajendra Nargundkar

I have had the pleasure of knowing the editors for a decade now, and their enthusiasm toward Research Methods training has been remarkable. I have also been a small contributor at one of the workshops organized by the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) School of Management, KIIT-Bhubaneswar, for faculty members.

In a way, this enthusiasm toward research methods is also a hallmark of what a doctoral student or a research-oriented faculty member needs. These are the two major segments that this book will serve the most, I believe.

Many research students are confused, and rightly so, because the most difficult part of research is not the data collection or analysis, but what precedes these – the formulation of a problem, or the conception and operationalization of constructs, variables, relationships, and so on, in a form that is testable.

Our educational system under-emphasizes formulation and thinking about potential hypotheses. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are little – understood for their optimal and adequate use in research – more so, the qualitative methods, after the proliferation of software that addressed quantitative research analysis.

I am glad that the authors have taken up these issues, as a challenge and elaborated on each one of these in a chapter or more. Particularly, the grounded theory approach and mixed methods research has not been covered adequately as options in doing research, and these are fast gaining currency in our changing world.

The purpose of research is also an important topic. In academic research, the purpose may be quite different from that in commercial research (e.g., marketing research). Covering this in detail is, I think, a very good idea.

Similarly, literature review remains one of the least-understood areas in academic research for a novice. Many Ph.D. students struggle to do a literature review. The many facets of why it should be a major component of doctoral research or in general, publishable research, needs elaborate coverage, and I am happy to see a chapter dedicated to the topic.

Hypothesis formulation is another topic that needs different treatment when doing academic research. A testable hypothesis is the heart of empirical research, but formulating it and testing it later, is an art that is hard to learn, and even harder to teach. This is where literature already published comes in, by helping

identify gaps in work already done, and helping the reader (better) understand what hypotheses are testable, by using appropriate methods.

Appropriate methods are of course, the crux to solving any research problem, assuming it is formulated correctly. Whether they are qualitative, quantitative, or a mix of the two, they determine the credibility of your research findings.

Given the variety of topics, it is understandable that various people have contributed to the making of this book. I think it is timely that a contextual book is being published. It is my feeling that many doctoral students and faculty members will be thankful to the editors, and all other contributors, of this wonderful book for making this effort.

I wish the publishers and all the authors all success.

.....
Dr Rajendra Nargundkar, who did his Ph.D. in Management from Clemson University, USA, in 1989, is a well-known author in the field of Marketing Research, with some best-selling books, to his credit. He has served many leading b-schools like IIM Lucknow, IIM Indore, XIM Bhubaneswar, IIM Kozhikode, Lander University, SC, USA, and Clemson University, SC, USA.

Acknowledgments

Research Methodology (RM), as a paper, has been our passion, not the core subjects, where we are first known for. RM is the paper, where you mostly interact with very senior people, for their doctoral level course work and subsequent research stages, thereby getting a chance to learn new things, new insights with every single research scholar, with every research topic, which has to be unique, as desired. The passion and challenges often required consulting and taking help from fellow experts in this interesting field of RM, informally and also formally, in the form of “Workshops on Research Methodology,” conducted by us, every year, at our institute. During such interactions and deliberations among scholars and invited experts, there was a common feeling and agreement, on the necessity of having a compilation, like the present book, keeping in view the specific need of Indian scholars in the field of Management. This paved the way for this RM-Book project.

We thank all our fellow colleagues, from the field of RM, and our beloved doctoral scholars, for inspiring us to go for such a book. We both fondly remember many students of our RM-paper, who could successfully convert their mini-projects (of RM-paper) to publish as research articles in reputed journals.

We are highly indebted and thankful to all our chapter contributors, for preparing contents for specific chapters allotted to them, and completing it within stipulated time. They are the main architect of this book.

We are thankful to all the anonymous reviewers of this book (proposal), who were unanimous in accepting the importance and strength of this work.

We are very much thankful to the entire editorial and publication team members of Emerald Publications, and particularly the constant support of Ms. Sophie Darling is really unforgettable.

We, both the editors, are indebted to our respective family members, for their constant support and encouragements, which are the main ingredients for successful completion.

Lastly, despite our best possible efforts, there might be some deficiency or inadvertent errors in this edited book. We shall appreciate and welcome suggestions and feedback, on possible improvement of this book. We sincerely hope to come out with updated and extended version this book, and shall try to incorporate such suggestion.

R. N. Subudhi & Sumita Mishra, Editors