BUSINESS RESEARCH METHODS

Fifth Edition

Emma Bell Alan Bryman Bill Harley



DETAILED CONTENTS

Abbreviations	xxvii
About the authors	xxviii
About the students and supervisors	XXX
Guided tour of textbook features	xxxii
Guided tour of the online resources	xxxiv
About the book	xxxvi
Acknowledgements	xlii
Editorial Advisory Panel	xliii

milQQJoNE	THE RESEARCH PROCESS	1
Chapter 1	The nature and process of business research	3
	Introduction	4
	What is 'business research'?	4
	Why do business research?	4
	Business research methods in context	5
	Relevance to practice	6
	The process of business research	8
	Literature review	8
	Concepts and theories	8
	Research questions	9
	Sampling	11
	Data collection	11
	Data analysis	12
	Writing up	12
	The messiness of business research	13
	Key points	15
	Questions for review	15
Chapter 2	Business research strategies	17
	Introduction: the nature of business research	18
	Theory and research	19
	What is theory?	19
	Deductive and inductive logics of inquiry	20
	Philosophical assumptions in business research	25
	Ontological considerations	26
	Objectivism	26
	Constructionism	27
	Epistemological considerations	29
	A natural science epistemology: positivism	30
	Interpretivism	30
	Research paradigms	34

	Developing a research strategy: quantitative or qualitative?	35
	Other considerations	37
	Values	37
	Practicalities	39
	Key points	42
	Questions for review	42
Chapter 3	Research designs	44
	Introduction	45
	Quality criteria in business research	46
	Reliability	46
	Replicability	46
	Validity	46
	Research designs	48
	Experimental design	48
	Cross-sectional design	58
	Longitudinal design	61
	Case study design	63
	Comparative design	68
	Level of analysis	71
	Bringing research strategy and research design together	72
	Key points	73
	Questions for review	73
Chapter 4	Planning a research project and developing	
	research questions	75
	Introduction	76
	Getting to know what is expected of you by your university	76
	Thinking about your research area	76
	Using your supervisor	77
	Managing time and resources	79
	Developing suitable research questions	80
	Criteria for evaluating research questions	85
	Writing your research proposal	86
	Checklist	87
	Key points	88
	Questions for review	88
Chapter 5	Getting started: reviewing the literature	89
	Introduction	90
	Reviewing the literature and engaging with what others	
	have written	91
	Reading critically	92
	Systematic review	92
	Narrative review	97
	Searching databases	98
	Online databases	98
	Keywords and defining search parameters	100
	Making progress	102
	Referencing	103
	The role of the bibliography	104

	Avoiding plagiarism	105
	Checklist	107
	Key points	107
	Questions for review	108
Chapter 6	Ethics in business research	109
	Introduction	110
	The importance of research ethics	112
	Ethical principles	114
	Avoidance of harm	114
	Informed consent	118
	Privacy	123
	Preventing deception	123
	Other ethical and legal considerations	124
	Data management	124
	Copyright	125
	Reciprocity and trust	126
	Affiliation and conflicts of interest	127
	Visual methods and research ethics	129
	Ethical considerations in online research	130
	The political context of business research	132
	Checklist	135
	Key points	135
	Questions for review	136
Chapter 7	Writing up business research	137
	Introduction	138
	Writing academically	138
	Writing up your research	140
	Start early	141
	Be persuasive	141
	Get feedback	142
	Avoid discriminatory language	142
	Structure your writing	143
	Writing up quantitative and qualitative research	147
	An example of quantitative research	147
	Introduction	148
	Role congruity theory	148
	Goals of the present study	148
	Methods	149
	Results	149
	Discussion	149
	Lessons	150
	An example of qualitative research	152
	Introduction	152
	Loving to labour: identity in business schools	153
	Methodology	153
	Research findings	153
	Discussion	153
	Summary and conclusion	154
	Lessons	155

Reflexivity and its implications for writing	156
Writing differently	156
Checklist	157
Key points	158
Questions for review	159

TWO QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH 161

Chapter 8	The nature of quantitative research	163
	Introduction	164
	The main steps in quantitative research	164
	Concepts and their measurement	167
	What is a concept?	167
	Why measure?	168
	Indicators	168
	Dimensions of concepts	169
	Reliability of measures	172
	Stability	172
	Internal reliability	173
	Inter-rater reliability	173
	Validity of measures	174
	Face validity	174
	Concurrent validity	174
	Predictive validity	174
	Convergent validity	175
	Discriminant validity	175
	The connection between reliability and validity	175
	The main preoccupations of quantitative researchers	175
	Measurement	176
	Causality	177
	Generalization	177
	Replication	178
	The critique of quantitative research	180
	Criticisms of quantitative research	181
	Is it always like this?	182
	Reverse operationism	182
	Reliability and validity testing	182
	Sampling	183
	Key points	183
	Questions for review	184
Chapter 9	Sampling in quantitative research	185
	Introduction	186
	Introduction to sampling	187
	Sampling error	189
	Types of probability sample	191
	Simple random sample	191
	Systematic sample	191
	Stratified random sampling	192

Detailed contents

	Multi-stage cluster sampling	192
	The qualities of a probability sample	193
	Sample size	195
	Absolute and relative sample size	195
	Time and cost	196
	Non-response	196
	Heterogeneity of the population	197
	Types of non-probability sampling	197
	Convenience sampling	197
	Quota sampling	198
	Limits to generalization	201
	Error in survey research	202
	Sampling issues for online surveys	202
	Key points	204
	Questions for review	205
Chapter 10	Structured interviewing	207
	Introduction	208
	The structured interview	208
	Reducing error due to interviewer variability	208
	Accuracy and ease of data processing	210
	Other types of interview	210
	Interview contexts	212
	More than one interviewee	212
	More than one interviewer	212
	In person or by telephone?	212
	Computer-assisted interviewing	214
	Conducting interviews	215
	Know the schedule	215
	Introducing the research	215
	Rapport	216
	Asking questions	216
	Recording answers	217
	Clear instructions	217
	Question order	217
	Probing	219
	Prompting	220
	Leaving the interview	221
	Training and supervision	221
	Other approaches to structured interviewing	222
	The critical incident method	222
	Projective methods, pictorial methods, and photo-elicitation	223
	The verbal protocol approach	226
	Problems with structured interviewing	226
	Characteristics of interviewers	226
	Response sets	227
	The problem of meaning	228
	Key points	229
	Questions for review	229

Detailed contents

Chapter 11	Self-completion questionnaires	231
	Introduction	232
	Different kinds of self-completion questionnaires	232
	Evaluating the self-completion questionnaire in relation to	
	the structured interview	232
	Advantages of the self-completion questionnaire over the	
	structured interview	233
	Disadvantages of the self-completion questionnaire in	
	comparison to the structured interview	234
	Steps to improve response rates to postal and online	
	questionnaires	235
	Designing the self-completion questionnaire	237
	Do not cramp the presentation	237
	Clear presentation	237
	Vertical or horizontal closed answers?	238
	Identifying response sets in a Likert scale	239
	Clear instructions about how to respond	239
	Keep question and answers together	240
	Email and online surveys	240
	Email surveys	240
	Web-based surveys	241
	Comparing modes of survey administration	242
	Diaries as a form of self-completion questionnaire	245
	Advantages and disadvantages of the diary as a method	
	of data collection	247
	Experience and event sampling	248
	Key points	251
	Questions for review	251
Chapter 12	Asking questions	252
	Introduction	253
	Open or closed questions?	253
	Open questions	253
	Closed questions	254
	Types of question	256
	Rules for designing questions	258
	General rules of thumb	258
	Specific rules when designing questions	258
	Vignette questions	263
	Piloting and pre-testing questions	265
	Using existing questions	265
	Checklist	268
	Key points	269
	Questions for review	270
Chapter 13	Quantitative research using naturally occurring data	272
	Introduction	273
	Structured observation	273
	The observation schedule	275
	Strategies for observing behaviour	275

	Sampling for structured observation	276
	Sampling people	276
	Sampling in terms of time	276
	Further sampling considerations	276
	Issues of reliability and validity	278
	Reliability	278
	Validity	278
	Criticisms of structured observation	279
	On the other hand	280
	Content analysis	280
	What are the research questions?	281
	Selecting a sample for content analysis	282
	Sampling media	282
	Sampling dates	282
	What is to be counted?	283
	Significant actors	283
	Words	283
	Subjects and themes	284
	Dispositions	284
	Images	284
	Coding in content analysis	285
	Coding schedule	286
	Coding manual	286
	Potential pitfalls in devising coding schemes	288
	Advantages of content analysis	290
	Disadvantages of content analysis	290
	Key points	291
	Questions for review	292
Chapter 14	Secondary analysis and official statistics	294
	Introduction	295
	Other researchers' data	295
	Advantages of secondary analysis	296
	Limitations of secondary analysis	301
	Accessing data archives	302
	Archival proxies and meta-analysis	304
	Official statistics	306
	Reliability and validity	308
	Official statistics as a form of unobtrusive measure	308
	Key points	308
	Questions for review	309
Chapter 15	Quantitative data analysis	310
	Introduction	311
	A small research project	311
	Missing data	313
	Types of variable	316
	Univariate analysis	318
	Frequency tables	318
	Diagrams	319

	Measures of central tendency	320
	Measures of dispersion	320
	Bivariate analysis	321
	Relationships, not causality	321
	Contingency tables	322
	Pearson's r	323
	Spearman's rho	324
	Phi and Cramer's V	325
	Comparing means and eta	325
	Multivariate analysis	326
	Could the relationship be spurious?	326
	Could there be an intervening variable?	326
	Could a third variable moderate the relationship?	326
	Statistical significance	327
	The chi-square test	328
	Correlation and statistical significance	330
	Comparing means and statistical significance	330
	Key points	331
	Questions for review	331
Chapter 16	Using IBM SPSS statistics	333
	Introduction	334
	Getting started in SPSS	335
	Beginning SPSS	335
	Entering data in the Data Viewer	335
	Defining variables: variable names, missing values,	
	variable labels, and value labels	337
	Recoding variables	338
	Computing a new variable	340
	Data analysis with SPSS	341
	Generating a frequency table	341
	Generating a bar chart	342
	Generating a pie chart	342
	Generating a histogram	343
	Generating the arithmetic mean, median,	
	standard deviation, range, and boxplots	343
	Generating a contingency table, chi-square,	
	and Cramer's V	343
	Generating Pearson's rand Spearman's rho	344
	Generating scatter diagrams	345
	Comparing means and eta	346
	Generating a contingency table with	
	three variables	346
	Further operations in SPSS	347
	Saving your data	347
	Retrieving your data	351
	Printing output	351
	Key points	351
	Questions for review	352

myjTHREE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH		353
Chapter 17	The nature of qualitative research	355
	Introduction	356
	The main steps in qualitative research	357
	Theory and research	360
	Concepts in qualitative research	361
	Reliability and validity in qualitative research	362
	Adapting reliability and validity for qualitative research	362
	Alternative criteria for evaluating qualitative research	363
	Overview of the issue of criteria	365
	The main preoccupations of qualitative researchers	366
	Seeing through the eyes of people being studied	366
	Description and emphasis on context	367
	Emphasis on process	368
	Flexibility and limited structure	369
	Concepts and theory grounded in data	369
	Not just words	369
	The critique of qualitative research	374
	Qualitative research is too subjective	374
	Qualitative research is difficult to replicate	374
	Problems of generalization	374
	Lack of transparency	375
	Is it always like this?	376
	Contrasts between quantitative and qualitative research	376
	Similarities between quantitative and qualitative research	378
	Researcher-participant relationships	379
	Action research	379
	Feminism and qualitative research	381
	Postcolonial and indigenous research	384
	Key points	385
	Questions for review	386
Chapter 18	Sampling in qualitative research	388
	Introduction	389
	Levels of sampling	390
	Purposive sampling	391
	Theoretical sampling	391
	Generic purposive sampling	394
	Snowball sampling	395
	Sample size	397
	Not just people	399
	Using more than one sampling approach	400
	Key points	401
	Questions for review	401
Chapter 19	Ethnography and participant observation	403
	Introduction	404
	Organizational ethnography	405

	Access	407
	Overt versus covert?	410
	Ongoing access	411
	Key informants	413
	Roles for ethnographers	413
	Active or passive?	414
	Shadowing	415
	Field notes	416
	Types of field notes	417
	Bringing ethnographic fieldwork to an end	418
	Feminist ethnography	419
	Global and multi-site ethnography	420
	Virtual ethnography	421
	Visual ethnography	425
	Writing ethnography	426
	Realist tales	426
	Other approaches	428
	Key points	431
	Questions for review	431
Chapter 20	Interviewing in qualitative research	433
	Introduction	434
	Differences between the structured interview and the	;
	qualitative interview	435
	Asking questions in the qualitative interview	436
	Preparing an interview guide	439
	Kinds of questions	441
	Using an interview guide: an example	443
	Recording and transcription	445
	Non-face-to-face interviews	450
	Telephone interviewing	451
	Online interviews	451
	Interviews using Skype	452
	Life history and oral history interviews	454
	Feminist interviewing	455
	Merits and limitations of qualitative interviewing	457
	Advantages of qualitative interviews	457
	Disadvantages of qualitative interviews	458
	Checklist	459
	Key points	460
	Questions for review	460
Chapter 21	Focus groups	462
	Introduction	463
	Uses of focus groups	464
	Conducting focus groups	465
	Recording and transcription	465
	How many groups?	466
	Size of groups	468
	Level of moderator involvement	468
	Selecting participants	470

	Asking questions	470
	Beginning and finishing	471
	Group interaction in focus group sessions	472
	Online focus groups	473
	The focus group as an emancipatory method	476
	Limitations of focus groups	478
	Checklist	479
	Key points	480
	Questions for review	480
Chapter 22	Language in qualitative research	482
	Introduction	483
	Discourse analysis	483
	Main features of discourse analysis	484
	Interpretive repertoires and detailed procedures	486
	Critical discourse analysis	488
	Narrative analysis	489
	Rhetorical analysis	491
	Conversation analysis	493
	Overview	496
	Key points	497
	Questions for review	497
Chapter 23	Documents as sources of data	499
	Introduction	500
	Personal documents	500
	Public documents	503
	Organizational documents	504
	Media outputs	506
	Visual documents	507
	Documents as 'texts'	510
	Interpreting documents	511
	Qualitative content analysis	511
	Semiotics	512
	Historical analysis	512
	Checklist	514
	Key points	515
	Questions for review	515
Chapter 24	Qualitative data analysis	517
	Introduction	518
	Thematic analysis	519
	Grounded theory	521
	Tools of grounded theory	521
	Outcomes of grounded theory	522
	Memos	524
	Criticisms of grounded theory	525
	More on coding	530
	Steps and considerations in coding	531
	Turning data into fragments	531
	The critique of coding	533

	Secondary analysis of qualitative data Key points Questions for review	534 537 537
Chapter 25	Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis: using NVivo	538
Chapter 25	Introduction Is CAQDAS like quantitative data analysis: using NVivo Is CAQDAS like quantitative data analysis software? No industry leader Limited acceptance of CAQDAS Learning NVivo Coding Searching data Memos Saving an NVivo project Opening an existing NVivo project Final thoughts Key points	538 539 539 539 541 542 550 552 553 553 553 553
	Questions for review	553
FOUR	MIXED METHODS RESEARCH	555
Chapter 26	Breaking down the quantitative/qualitative divide	557
	Introduction	558
	The natural science model and qualitative research	558
	Quantitative research and interpretivism	560
	Quantitative research and constructionism	561
	Epistemological and ontological considerations	561
	Problems with the quantitative/qualitative contrast	562
	Behaviour versus meaning	562
	Theory tested in research versus theory emergent from data	562
	Numbers versus words	562
	Artificial versus natural	563
	Reciprocal analysis	564
	Qualitative analysis of quantitative data	564
	Quantitative analysis of qualitative data	565
	Quantification in qualitative research	565
	Thematic analysis	565
	Quasi-quantification in qualitative research	566
	Combating anecdotalism through limited quantification	566
	Key points	566
	Questions for review	567
Chapter 27	Mixed methods research: combining quantitative	
	and qualitative research	568
	Introduction	569
	The arguments against mixed methods research	569
	The embedded methods argument	569
	The paradigm argument	570
	Two versions of the debate about quantitative and	
	qualitative research	570

Detailed contents

The rise of mixed methods research	571	
Classifying mixed methods research in terms of priority		
and sequence	571	
Different types of mixed methods design		
Approaches to mixed methods research		
The logic of triangulation	574	
Qualitative research facilitates quantitative research	576	
Quantitative research facilitates qualitative research	576	
Filling in the gaps	576	
Static and processual features	578	
Research issues and participants' perspectives	579	
The problem of generality	579	
Interpreting the relationship between variables	579	
Studying different aspects of a phenomenon	581	
Solving a puzzle	583	
Quality issues in mixed methods research		
Key points		
Questions for review		

Glossary	589
References	599
Name index	623
Subject index	629