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KIRIRI WOMENS' UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION, 2022/2023 ACADEMIC YEAR
FOURTH YEAR, FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION
FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
(BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION)

Date: 20th April, 2022
Time: 2.30pm –4.30pm

KBA 400 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

ANSWER QUESTION ONE (COMPULSORY) AND ANY OTHER TWO QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE (30 MARKS)

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow:

ISABELLE'S RESEARCH DILEMMA

Isabelle was very thoughtful. She had a puzzled look on her face. The dilemma she had was one experienced by many students in conducting research for a dissertation. Her research was concerned with managers and how they coped with pressure in the workplace. Her target population was 1000 managers. She particularly wanted to find out the coping strategies they used. This required consideration of theory and method and whether the research would have practical relevance. After her preliminary reading around the topics, she decided that it was necessary to engage in both the world of theory and the world of practice and that the problems addressed would develop out of the interaction between these two worlds.

Theory in management could be seen as problematic, because for some researchers' management is not a discipline. It is perceived as multidisciplinary with many of its early practitioners receiving their training in the social sciences. Isabelle thought this could be advantageous in that it enables management research to gain new insights that may not be obtained through a number of disciplines separately. She also considered that a topic on pressure and coping could be understood at a number of levels of analysis from an individual to a structural level. In doing this she would be considering theoretical ideas and attempting to perceive them in a pragmatic way. It also meant looking at them anew which would provide some imaginative and original insights for her dissertation.

Isabelle found that more traditional research on managing pressure focused on positivistic approaches with an emphasis on being scientific and rigorous. This approach often uses quantitative methods with an emphasis on measuring and the use of factor analysis. Researchers hope this allows them to find statistical correlations between two variables and demonstrate some relationship between sources of pressure and possible physical, psychological or even physiological outcomes, if coping strategies were not successful.

Isabelle decided she would not use this approach. She felt that a number of students' dissertations had already used this approach and she wanted to get away from statistical analysis and examining pressure on managers using a positivistic approach.

She also thought that this traditional research ignored the managers' biography which could prove to be important in understanding how the manager coped with pressure. The more traditional approach seems to perceive the individual as passive and playing little part in making and constructing his/her reality. It was as if the researcher with questions asked in the questionnaire had already structured the reality.

However, people working in organisations do have histories, futures and expectations and pursue their individual goals. For example, long-term sources of a person's distress may be traced back to experiences at work many years before. To study this would require Isabelle to use a different method. She decided to adopt in-depth interviews as primary sources so that she could study the turning-points in the lives of her participants over a period of time. This may indicate why they took particular decisions and the consequences of making those decisions. In terms of method Isabelle decided that the approach she would adopt would be qualitative rather than quantitative or descriptive research. This would involve using in-depth interviews.

She would also use life stories and family histories because this kind of biographical approach was more holistic. This holistic viewpoint manifested itself in two ways. Firstly, biographical data range across time. Hence, 'a biographical approach is indicated where the area of interest is either the effect of change across time, historical events as these events have impinged upon the individual, or his or her movement along their life course'. Secondly, the biographical approach is a bridge between social structure and the individual. Social structure is a complex concept in which there was some disagreement among social scientists. She felt she had the emotional maturity to manage the process. Most importantly she felt that the research was rigorous, systematic and relevant to managers in the workplace.

- a) In conducting research, Isabelle knew she had to deal with complex issues with the subject-matter and the method she wanted to adopt. Identify appropriate research topic that Isabelle can adopt.
(2 marks)
- b) Highlight characteristics of a good research philosophy.
(6 marks)
- c) Isabell has good research idea. She is planning to draft her statement of the problem. She has approached you to guide her. State the features of a good statement of the problem.
(6 marks)
- d) Using examples from the above case study, identify the Isabell's source of research problem
(4 marks)
- e) Isabell has mentioned some research designs that she can adopt. Describe any three research designs.
(6 marks)
- f) Isabell's target population is 1000 managers. Use Slovin's formulae to compute the sample size and the possible number of questionnaires to be used in pilot test. Assume that she is happy with a margin of error is 0.05.
(6 marks)

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain the methods that you can adopt in collecting primary data.
(10 marks)
- b) Researchers are expected to observe ethical, professional standards and values when conducting any research. In relation to this statement, discuss professional values and ethical aspects you would consider before and during the process of conducting research in your area of interest.
(10 marks)

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain the content of Chapter One of a good research proposal. (10 marks)
- b) Discuss the probability sampling techniques that you can adopt in your study. (10 marks)

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

- a) Using a well labelled diagram, explain the research process. (12 marks)
- b) Examine the qualities of a good research. (8 marks)

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

- a) Analyse the various types of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics that you can adopt in your study so as to produce correct and comprehensive results. (10 marks)
- b) Explain the various types of variables that you can adopt in a study, that attempts to investigate a causal relationship of association. (10 marks)