



M506

**Research Method and Scientific Work:**  
*Research Questions and Literature Review*

*Week 2, January 2023*

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# Online Teaching and Learning

GISMA

BUSINESS  
SCHOOL



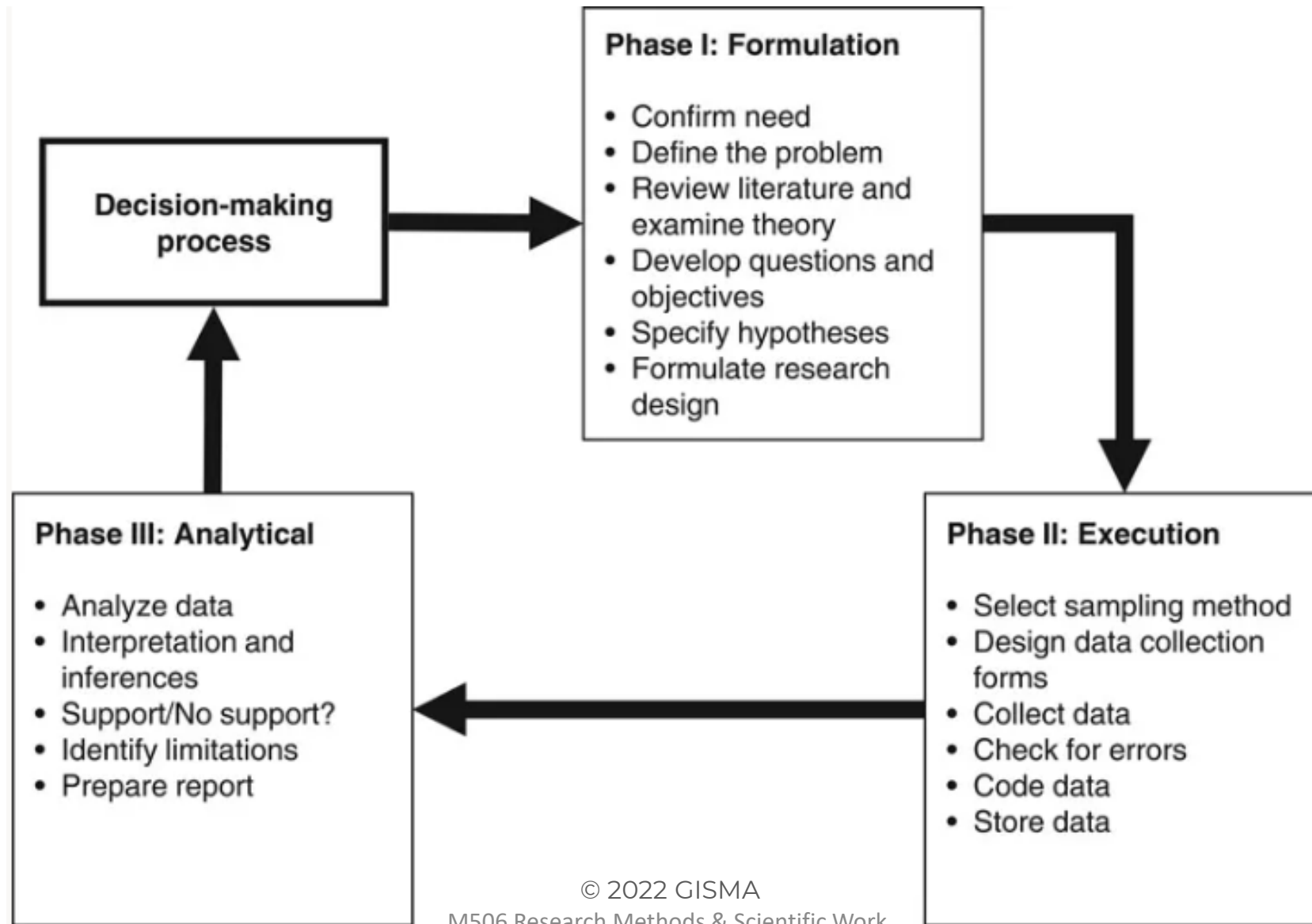
- Camera On
- Microphone Off please
- If you need to save on bandwidth, switch off camera
- Sessions will be recorded
- If you have something to say – feel welcome – unmute and chip in

# Group Task No. 1: Group Set-Up



- Who has already a group? → Please sit together / chat together
- Who has not? → Group finding  
(online participants: contact your lecturer by teams or email if you have difficulties)

# The Research Process



# How to find Research Ideas?

What are you *interested* in? If so, why?

**a) From your own work experience, e.g.**

- Work life balance
- Diversity in organisations / Discriminatory behaviour at workplaces
- Management / leadership styles
- Team work challenges
- Motivation at work (monetary vs. non-monetary)
- Etc.

**b) From your study in a specific subject area, e.g.**

- Marketing – market entry strategies / marketing standardisation and localisation
- HRM – recruitment & selection / performance management / appraisals
- Global economy - international trade / FDI (foreign direct investment)
- Etc.

**c) *Something that is societally or industry-wise pressing*, e.g.**

- Intercultural workforce in German corporates
- Managing in times of crises
- How does AI change the rules of the competitive game.
- Etc.

**d) Etc.**

# Group Task No. 2: Find One Industry for Your Group To Do Research About



Did you define already an industry for your group?

*→ If yes, discuss what is especially of interest in this industry for you? (Write a list of topics)*

*→ If no, choose an industry for further research that is interesting to all of you.*

# A Framework for Research Problems

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		Research problem
Management objective	Research objective	Research questions
To improve the customers' waiting experience, customer satisfaction and service evaluations.	The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to identify the factors that influence the passengers' waiting experience and (2) to investigate the possible impact of waiting on customer satisfaction and service evaluations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What are the factors that affect the perceived waiting experience of airline passengers and to what extent do these factors affect the perception of waiting times?</li><li>2. What are the affective consequences of waiting and how does affect mediate the relationship between waiting and service evaluations?</li><li>3. How do situational variables (such as filled time) influence customer reactions to the waiting experience?</li></ol>

***Managerial Interest  
of Research***

***Scientific / Academic  
Purpose of  
of Research***

***Actual research questions  
to work on***

(Sekaran and Bougie, 2020)

# Moving from General Research Ideas to a Specified Research Problem

Specify your thinking from a loose research idea to a concrete question as soon as possible!

- **Research Ideas (loose beginnings):**

- “I am interested in Corporate Social responsibility in the Arab World”
- “I want to learn more about Human Resource Management”
- “I want to do my thesis on Multinational Enterprises from developing countries”

- **Specified, personal Research Topic:**

- “My interest is in MNEs from developing countries. I assume that they are operating in more or less traditional industries, in which their home countries have traditional competitive advantages, like coffee and textiles. Knowing their growth process has important implications for companies in other developing countries.”

- **Specified, well-defined Research Problem:**

- To what extent can MNEs from developing countries home-country generate and utilise competitive advantages for their international growth process?





# What Factors should Influence your Choice?

## Appropriateness

- Does the research topic fit the specifications of the university?
- Does the research topic have clear links to theory and academic literature?
- Are you able to state your research question clearly?
- Will the proposed research provide new insights into the subject?

## Capability

- Can the project be done in the given time?
- Do you have the necessary skills to undertake the research?
- Does the project require additional financial resources? Will you have them available?
- Can you gain access to the data necessary to conduct the proposed research?

## Personal Fulfilment

- Does the research topic really interest and motivate you?
- Will the research topic help towards the achievement of your future aspirations?

# Challenge 1: How to Produce Something “New”?



- How to write something “new” in a thesis/dissertation? How to find a research question that truly expands on existing literature or addresses real gaps in research?
- Sometimes this problem makes students copy and paste a good dissertation. There is no need for that! A student who has passed all the modules is capable of writing a reasonable and genuine thesis.
- How to do it? Two advises:
  1. **Look for something that interests you** and where you have **accumulated some knowledge over the years**. Which questions have not been sufficiently answered? Does an initial literature lead to sufficient insights? Search more! If you have not found the answer yourself, make it your research question!
  2. **Combining existing sources, theories and research results with something else** that has not been research yet in this combination. This happens automatically when you apply knowledge from existing sources to your knowledge about something new (an industry, a hobby, a company, a country, a technology, etc.)
- See it as a chance to invest in your personality; don't just consume information passively in the course of your studies, but engage with and produce knowledge actively!

# Challenge 2: How to be academic / scientific in your writing?



- How to make a thesis/dissertation “academic” or “scientific”?
- Remember both our discussions on positivism / interpretivism and quantitative / qualitative research. A positivist approach would see the answer mainly in the scrupulous application of (mostly) quantitative research methods and a careful interpretation of the results. A interpretivist approach would see the answer (mostly) in the application of qualitative research methods and well-balances argumentations.
- Arguments are found in what other people have published. How you present arguments, who has made the arguments, how you line up arguments is decisive.
- How to develop solid argumentations?
  1. Always look at phenomena from more the one side (at least two). There is always “the other side of the coin”.
  2. Choose and quote source that are of conflicting views or that look from different perspectives on the same phenomena.
  3. Choose sides only at the end, with careful justification why to choose this from different alternatives.
  4. Show that you understand the discussion by quoting the basics (old sources) and brand new sources (recent developments).
  5. You are scientific by quoting/paraphrasing other people; not by pushing your opinion.

# Recap: A Framework for Research Problems

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# Group Task No.3: Formulate Initial Research Problem

Start thinking about / formulating a research problem that you may want to investigate in your research project.

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# What now? – Deepen your Knowledge

- Ideally, write down a list of research topics / research questions that are relevant to you
- Research each topic thoroughly:
  - Google the topics for general overview
  - Use open academic search engines and databases for more detailed research
    - ✓ Google Scholar
    - ✓ SSRN.com (free registration)
    - ✓ researchgate.net (free registration)
  - Use closed academic search engines also:
    - ✓ Ebsco.com (university license)
    - ✓ Perlego (University Online Library)
- For your searches, use combinations of different keywords and synonyms

# Group Homework:

## Deepen your Knowledge



- Write down at least three key search terms mentioned in / implied by your research problem
- Use the databases shown and search them out with these terms
- Identify as a group at least three articles or book chapters for each search term that give you deeper, relevant understanding about them.
- Screen the articles for deeper understanding and share your insights with the group members

... thank you for your attention!