

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER

MAY 2005

TITLE PAPER : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

COURSE TITLE : COM 400

TIME ALLOWED : THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS :**
- (1) TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN THIS PAPER IS FIVE (5)**
 - (2) THE PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTION A AND SECTION B.**
 - (3) ANSWER SECTION A WHICH IS COMPULSORY AND ANY TWO (2) QUESTIONS IN SECTION B.**
 - (4) THE MARKS AWARDED FOR A QUESTION /PART OF A QUESTION ARE INDICATED AT THE END OF EACH QUESTION / PART OF QUESTION.**
 - (5) WHERE APPLICABLE, ALL WORKINGS MUST BE CLEARLY SHOWN.**

NOTE: MAXIMUM MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD QUALITY LAYOUT, ACCURACY, AND PRESENTATION OF YOUR WORK.

THIS PAPER MUST NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

!!!GOOD LUCK!!!

SECTION A (COMPULSORY)

CASE STUDY

Introduction

Research done on the skills of business people has recently shifted to an examination of entrepreneurs' cognitive styles and innovative abilities in terms of problem solving. It also focused on the differences in management styles of managers and entrepreneurs.

Begley and Boyd (1986) found for example that entrepreneurs exhibited higher risk-taking propensity than small business managers. In a comparison of the decision-making approaches used by entrepreneurs and managers of larger firms, Smith, Gannon, Grimm and Mitchell (1988) found that the managers used a more rational approach than did entrepreneurs. Swayne and Tucker (1973) argued that entrepreneurs are more innovative than managers in seeking ways to expand their business or start new ones.

Research by Sexton and Bowman-Upton (1986) shows that entrepreneur-ship students tend to be more innovative than other Business Administration students. Similarly Chaganti and Chaganti's (1983) research suggests that entrepreneurs will be more innovative than managers. A theoretical framework for identifying problem-solving styles is the KIRTON ADAPTION-INNOVATION (KAI) theory (Kirton, 1987). Kirton (1976) developed a measuring instrument (KAI scale) based on the above-mentioned theory.

The purpose of the current study was to compare the innovative problem-solving styles, as measured by the KAI scale, of entrepreneurs and managers of big businesses.

Method:

Respondents

A sample of 222 business people was used in the research project. They were located in the following way:

A sample of 300 respondents (entrepreneurs) located in Gauteng and the Western Cape was selected randomly from two entrepreneurial networking groups. An introductory letter was sent to each respondent inviting him/her to participate in the research project. Hundred and sixty respondents returned the response forms indicating their willingness to participate in the research project. The KAI measurement questionnaires were mailed to the 160 respondents and 112 completed questionnaires were returned. The 112 respondents (entrepreneurs) consist of: 100 males and 12 females.

The average age of the entrepreneurial group was 28.

A sample of 300 respondents (managers) of 30 large companies located in Gauteng and the Western Cape was also selected randomly and an introductory letter was sent to each respondent inviting him/her to participate in the research project. Hundred and thirty respondents returned the response forms indicating their willingness to participate in the

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research project. The KAI measurement questionnaires were mailed to the 130 managers and 110 completed questionnaires were returned. The 110 respondents (managers) consist of: 70 males and 40 females. The average age of the group of managers was 42.

Measuring instrument

The measuring instrument used in the project to measure the difference in the innovative problem-solving styles of the respondents is the KAI scale. The KAI is a 32-item self-report measuring instrument with scores ranging from 32 (lowest level of innovation) to 160 (highest level of innovation)

Results

For the purpose of the study, the mean KAI score for the entrepreneurs was compared with the mean KAI score of the managers. The KAI scores for the two groups are as follow:

	<u>Mean Scores on KAI</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Managers	96.0	13.0
Entrepreneurs	113.9	13.2

The results of the t-test comparing the means of the two groups indicated that the entrepreneurs were significantly more innovative than the managers.

Read the above case study and answer the following questions:

- Formulate the *research hypothesis (hypotheses) or research question(s)*. (5marks).
- Does the investigation in this case involve an experimental research design or a survey research design? Give brief reasons for your answer. (10marks).
- To what extent does the research design used make provision for threats to internal and external validity? Explain your answer in terms of the aim of the study and refer critically to sampling? (15marks).
- Complete the case study by writing the last section, namely *Conclusion and Discussion*. Pay particular attention to the possibility of causal aspects in the study. Do the results answer the research questions of the investigation; support or reject the research hypothesis (hypotheses) which you formulated in 'a'? (20marks).

TOTAL: 50 MARKS.

SECTION B (ANSWER ANY TWO QUESTIONS).

Question 2.

“All progress is born of inquiry. Doubt is often better than overconfidence, for it leads to inquiry, and inquiry leads to invention”. This statement is a famous Hudson maxim in the context of which the significance of research can be well understood.

Discuss the significance of research. (25marks).

Question 3.

Discuss the characteristics of formal research. (25marks).

Question 4.

What are the major intrinsic factors that might invalidate a causal interpretation given to research findings? (25marks).

Question 5.

(a). Informed consent involves four basic aspects. What are these aspects? (15marks).

(b). How can we protect the privacy of individuals when dealing with sensitive research topics? (10marks).