

# Research strategy essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

According to Jankowicz (1999) the aim of the research strategy is to establish a plan on how the study is going to be undertaken by the researcher. It helps to find answers to the stated question, supporting it with the different types of collecting data, objectives and research questions (Saunders et al. , 2000). In this section the information from the research question will be clarified, and the limitation for the data collection will be set, as well as the main reason for the choice of the particular participants. For phenomenological methodologies the most common strategies between the authors are: case studies, surveys, experiment and exploratory (Saunders et al. , 2000; Blaxter et al.

, 2001; Collis and Hussey, 2003; Jankowicz, 2005). Considering the present investigation, the most appropriate approach for this research is case study because the variables that are going to be measure are: responses, reasons, experiences and influences that Hong Kong omen managers face. In this case, “ case study methods involve systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, social setting, event, or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how the subject operates or functions” Berg (2004, p. 251). From the above mentioned, it can be said that the purpose of this research is to find out what are career barriers to Hong Kong women managers and how Hong Kong women managers face the challenge of career barriers.

Hence, a case study strategy provides an in-depth understanding about career obstacles by, for example, in-depth interviews which involve personal discussion, mutual interaction, observation, or review of existing documents, being these some of the various data sources use to conduct a research in

the case study method. It explains the various aspects of a study that on the contrary, a survey or any other research strategy may be unable to exhibit (Saunders et al. , 2000; Berg, 2004). Furthermore, according to Collis and Hussey (2003, p. 68), there are four types of case study: descriptive, illustrative, experimental and explanatory.

As stated in the aim and objectives, career obstacles for Hong Kong women managers will be identified. Thus, the present study will be described as illustrative research, because “ the research attempts to illustrate new and possibly innovative practices adopted by management”. An important part of a research and mainly seeing it from the perspective of its objectives, is to identify the purpose of it, which according to some authors can be classified as exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and predictive (Kumar, 1999; Saunders et al. , 2000; Collis and Hussey, 2003).

Whereas, the exploratory study is carried out to explore areas, identify variable and look for hypothesis instead of confirming hypothesis, the predictive study forecasts the result of an event and anticipate the outcomes of that event which is under study. On the other hand, an explanatory (analytical) study focuses on studying a situation or a problem in order to discover and measure the relationship between variables, while a descriptive study identifies, describes and provides information of a particular issue (Kumar, 1999; Saunders et al. , 2000; Collis and Hussey, 2003). Therefore, the purpose of this research, taking into account its objectives is exploratory due to the fact that it tries to examine the challenges that Hong Kong women managers face to succeed in their careers and to find out how these women managers confront with these challenges. Hence, it would lead to

find strategic recommendations for the women managers involve in this investigation.

An important factor to have in mind in any research is to choose which time horizon fits better to the investigation, which can be cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. Researches that analyse a particular phenomenon at a particular time are known as cross-sectional studies, identified by Saunders et al. (2003) as a “snap shot”. In contrast, longitudinal studies are developed during a long period of time, which are described as a “diary” and it is frequently used to analyse change over that period of time. Thus, it is not the focus of this study to analyse the changes in the attitudes towards women managers over time, but to understand the phenomena in the exact time.

Therefore, given the nature of the study and the limitation of time, this study is presented as a cross-sectional study. The time given to undergo this investigation limited the ability to examine the data at different moments of time. 3. 6. SAMPLING To answer the research question and achieve the objectives of the research there is the need to collect data, and to attain this, there are some sampling techniques which provide a range of methods to select a sample of the data that is needed to fulfill the aim of the research (Saunders et al. , 2000).

In this case, a sample is made up of some of the members of a population. A population may refer to a body of people or to any other collection of items under consideration for research purposes. (Kumar, 1999; Collis and Hussey,

2003; Jankowicz, 2005). The sampling techniques are divided into two types, probability and non-probability.

The former has a characteristic that each element in the population has an equal and independent chance of being chosen in the sample (Kumar, 1999); the latter, is mainly use when there is no need for statistical inferences about the characteristics of the population. This technique is generally use in a case study research and the sampling size is determined by the researcher, since there is no given rule for this (Saunders et al. , 2003). Therefore, a non-probability sampling was considered to be an appropriate sampling method because as Saunders et al. (2000) and Collis and Hussey (2003) point out, the non-probability sampling technique is the most practical and useful for an exploratory research project, as well as to carry out an in-depth study which focuses on a small sample selection in order to answer the research question.

Due to the interpretivism philosophy of this research, the data to be investigated was selected due to the relevance of the participant's position with the subject of this project. Therefore, the population is represented by women working at the position of managers or even higher in Hong Kong. As the whole population would be inaccessible, a sample needed to be selected in a manageable size, which could represent significantly the complete population's opinion. There are a variety of non-probability sampling techniques which can provide the rationale to answer the research questions and accomplish the objectives of the research.

For the interviews, purposive sampling was used in order to select the most suitable members for this study. According to Saunders et al. (2000, p. 174), “ purposive or judgemental sampling enables you to use your judgment to select cases that will best enable you to answer your research question(s) and meet your objectives.” Owing to this, participants for the interviews was identified and chosen considering their management background with the intention of having a relevant sample that could contain an appropriate people from the wanted segment.

Saunders et al. (2000) mention that the logic to select the correct sample is of vital importance based on the comment of Patton (1990 cited Saunders et al. , 2000) who highlight that “ the validity and understanding that you will gain from your data will be more to do with your data collection and analysis skills than the size of your sample”. In this case, the data of this research was collected using interviews (further details in the following section), and the intention was to interview a small sample of 3 women managers working in Hong Kong in order to analyze the obstacles these women managers face in their career pathway. The group consisted of Hong Kong Chinese, mainland Chinese and an overseas Chinese came from Philippines.

Maggie is a Hong Kong Chinese and she had an experience of total 10 years to study and work in North America. Emmy is a mainland Chinese and she had an experience of over eight years to study and work in Hong Kong. The third woman interviewed is an overseas Chinese from the Philippines and her name is Anna; she has an experience of over 10 years to work and study in Hong Kong. All of them have two children whose ages are from 2.

5 to 13. 5 years. Their husbands are also working in the same fields at the same high positions. All the participants need help in their house work so all of them have at least one foreign domestic helper who is living with them. Some of the participants also have foreign driver who is also living in.

It is important to access the chosen sample in order to collect the data which will depend on the research question and objectives (Saunders et al. , 2000). With the aiming of reaching the sample, and given the time limitations of this study, the sample selection was based on the total population of women managers in Hong Kong. Firstly, access to the three women managers was made by going through the announcement of the local universities of their MBA graduates in the English Language Newspaper. Access limitations are an important issue in relation to the sampling during the research process.

According to Saunders et al.(2000), there are some problems and difficulties that arise associated with access, such as the lack of perceived value and credibility of the research project, the confidentiality of the information, and others. In this case, no particular difficulties in gaining access were encountered due to the availability of women managers' information on the Newspaper. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that due to the nature of this research; difficulties may have been come upon in convincing women managers in giving information about their experiences of working in a gender specific working environment. In order to overcome this, anonymity and confidentiality was promised as well as to let them know that the obtained findings would be use only for academic purposes.

In addition, a limitation may have also been encountered when conducting the interviews because it is time consuming and the availability of the women managers in participating for the interview might be low. The way to overcome this limitation was to convince the participants by explaining the importance of this research and that it might bring benefits to the business environment in Hong Kong.