



**THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
BACHELOR OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAMME -
LEVEL 05
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY – MCU 3205
ASSIGNMENT TEST - 2012**

DURATION: TWO (02) HOURS

DATE: 01st Dec. 2012

TIME: 02 .00 PM TO 04. 00 PM

Instructions:

Answer question number one (01) in Part A and any two (02) questions from Part B.

Part A

01. The new paradigm in social research that has arisen during the last half century, largely in reaction to the application of positivism to the social sciences, stems from the view that the **world and 'reality' are not objective and exterior, but that they are socially constructed and given meaning by people** (Husserl, 1946).

As Easterby-Smith, Thrope and Lowe (1991) relating this new paradigm to management research states...reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. Hence the task of the social scientist should not be to gather facts and measure how often certain patterns occur, but to appreciate the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience. One should therefore try to understand and explain why people have different experience, rather than search for external causes and fundamental laws to explain their behaviour. Human action arises from the sense that people make of different situations, rather than as a direct response from external stimuli (Easterby- Smith, Thrope and Lowe, 1991: 24).

Critically analyse these statements. Your answer should consist of: a theoretically informed discussion of the positivist and post positivist paradigms as applies to management research; the strengths and weaknesses embedded in each of these philosophical stands as argued by different theorists and a statement of where *you* stand in this theoretical debate with appropriate justification.

(50 Marks)

Part B

02. "...Observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place. As such it is one way of collecting primary data in relation to a chosen research problem".

"...Data gathered through observation can be recorded in many different ways. Each of these methods has its own advantages and disadvantages. As such selection of a method of recording depends upon the purpose of observation".

- (a) Identify two different types of observation that you know of and briefly explain each.

(10 Marks)

- (b) Name three ways in which you may record data gathered through observation. What are the advantages and disadvantages inherent in each of these methods? Briefly explain.

(15 Marks)

03. "The choice between a questionnaire and an interview schedule is important and should be considered thoroughly as the strengths and weaknesses of the two methods can affect the validity of the findings".

Identify the criteria to be considered in selecting between an interview schedule and a questionnaire. Elaborate your answer drawing in practical examples of research designing.

(25 Marks)

04. Write short notes on the following.

- a) Focus Group Interviews
- b) Purposive Sampling
- c) Likert Scale
- d) Construct Validity
- e) Unstructured interviewing

(25 Marks)

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