



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

(A Constituent College of Kenyatta University)
University Examinations for 2015/2016 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
SCIENCES**

**FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR DEGREE IN DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

BMS 901: BUSINESS RESEARCH METHODS

Date: 10/8/2016

Time: 11:00 – 1:00 PM

INSTRUCTIONS:

Answer Question One and any other Three Questions

QUESTION ONE

THE HOUSING SECTOR IN KENYA

A meeting convened recently to discuss the urban housing problem in Africa was presented with facts about the demand and supply situation in Kenya as an example from which to draw inference to guide policy. The experience is such that, as middle income group in African countries grows, more of these African cities experience a surge in foreign inhabitants which is also a contributing factor to the current strain and push for affordable housing (UN-Habitats, 2011; Arvanitis, 2013). However the current provision of formal housing by both public and private sector in Kenya lies at a deficit of 30,000 units per year. The gap between supply and increasing demand of housing is therefore met by the informal housing sector which has over the decades transformed to slum area with over 30% of the country's population living there (world Bank, 2011). According to Odhiambo (2012) most ownership research finds that an individual's housing tenure choice depends on that individual's personal preferences; his or her own economic characteristics as well as market conditions, and determines whether to own or rent a

house. This therefore implies that consumer preferences such as nearness or mobility to workplace; availability of physical amenities such as educational, medical and health facilities or retail services all contribute to the consumer decision on choice of rental housing. Market and income conditions on the other hand, may include factors such as increased concentration of rental housing in one particular locality; issues relating to insecurity, which as a result determine cost and value of such housing.

At the end of the meeting, it was observed that a balance needs to be maintained between the demand and supply for urban housing. However such a balance remains a challenge given that most planners fail to factor consumer based preferences into decisions to address both demand and supply. There is however a consensus that from the set of issues identified in the rental housing sector in Kenya, that there is need for provision of adequate and affordable formal rental housing by developers in the housing sector, among them the government so as to realize the expectations of Kenya Vision 2030. The bridging of the gap between supply and demand of formal housing is therefore heavily dependent on satisfying consumers' needs and wants which encompass their buying behaviour.

REQUIRED:

- i. Briefly describe the management problem depicted in this case (4 marks)
- ii. What is the research problem that requires investigation? (4 marks)
- iii. Suggest a suitable conceptual framework for solving the research problem (4 marks)
- iv. Identify four research questions that need to be answered and state their corresponding hypotheses in the null form. (8 marks)
- v. Design the suitable data collection instrument for obtaining primary data (12 marks)
- vi. Describe the population for the problem in this case and suggest an appropriate sampling method for reaching respondents (8 marks)

QUESTION TWO:

- a) Decision making in organizations entails gathering relevant information as part of problem analysis. However, managers give excuses based on costs, time requirements and unpredictability of business environments as reasons for not embracing research

Required:

- i. Describe the importance of scientific research to business organizations. (4 marks)
 - ii. Discuss the characteristics of science that make business research attractive (4 marks)
 - iii. Provide a justification for use of the scientific approach in business research as opposed to other competing approaches for advancing knowledge (4 marks)
- b) Briefly discuss key ethical and political issues surrounding social sciences research and suggest how they can be mitigated. (8 marks)

QUESTION THREE

- a) Research is undertaken with an aim of generating knowledge to enhance understanding suitable to solve identified problems, thus basic aspects of the philosophy of knowledge need to be observed.
- i. Distinguish between the concepts of ontology and epistemology as used in scientific research and explain their role in research. (5 marks)
 - ii. Explain the various epistemological orientations and clearly show how they influence the methodology for research (8 marks)
- b) Scientific research requires that researchers ensure both representativeness and randomization in selecting study samples.
- i. Distinguish between randomization and representativeness (3 marks)
 - ii. Explain the major sampling methods (4 marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Researchers in the behavioral sciences would be more comfortable with a cross sectional design for research while those in finance would prefer a longitudinal design.
- i. Distinguish between cross sectional and longitudinal research design. (4 marks)
 - ii. Considering the nature of business problems, justify the choice of designs for the two areas of specialization. (6 marks)
- b) Some researchers hold the view that theory is the epicenter of scientific research. With regard to the nature of theory:

- i. discuss the role of theory in scientific research (3 marks)
- ii. discuss using appropriate philosophical viewpoints whether a theory should come before or after research (7 marks)

QUESTION FIVE

- a) The results of research must to the best possible extent provide credible information that must not mislead decision makers.
 - i. What is the role of validity and reliability in achieving this goal of research. (2 marks)
 - ii. Discuss the various forms of validity and clearly indicate how they are addressed in research (6 marks)
 - iii. Describe the various levels of measurement of variables and their implications for questionnaire construction and research generally. (4 marks)
- b) Postgraduate researchers in most universities are required to make presentations of their research findings in a number of ways and fora.
 - i. Discuss why it is important for researchers to make oral presentations. (4 marks)
 - ii. Explain in what other ways postgraduate researcher disseminate findings of their research besides oral presentations. (4 marks)