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## Featured researcher: Prof Nevan Wright

Professor J Nevan Wright is the Academic Head of Postgraduate Programmes at AIS. He has had three careers:

- nine years with the Royal New Zealand Air Force
- 18 years in commerce as General Manager and Director of several large multinational companies
- for the last 24 years, as an academic in New Zealand and overseas

He has lectured on MBA programmes in 21 countries, is the author/co-author of 12 books, and is a member of several editorial boards. His qualifications are:

- Bachelor's degree completed after part-time study when he was 23
- Master's degree when he was 53
- Doctorate (Brunel, London) when he was 61

He says you are never too old to study. Professor Wright believes very much in the motto of the RNZAF, *Per ardua ad astra* ("By hard work to the stars"). He also believes that he is living his old school motto *Lumen accipe et imperti* ("Receive the light and pass it on").

Many lecturers claim that they prefer to teach and are not interested in being a researcher. Nevan argues that, if you are a teacher, you must believe in – and will be pushing your students to – a lifetime of learning. He says teaching is a vocation, not a vacation. Once you have chosen teaching as a vocation – to achieve personal fulfilment, to satisfy your own desire to continuously improve – where better than at a learning institution such as AIS? The AIS library, although rather tired in appearance, nonetheless is blessed with an enthusiastic library manager who is anything but tired, and who has updated the databases available (ProQuest, EBSCO MegaFILE, online encyclopaedias, IT books, articles and videos). Likewise, AIS faculty are collegial and, under the leadership of the newly created Director of Research, a strong research community is emerging.

Some might be daunted by the fear of failure or of the effort required. However, no one is going to admit that they might fail, or that it will be too hard, or that they are just plain lazy. Rather they will offer feeble excuses such as age, family responsibilities, lack of time, and perhaps the

more honest might say they don't know where to start. Nevan does not accept any of this as being valid. He accepts getting started is the hardest part.

So how did he start as a researcher after leaving commerce when he was 50 to become a teacher, initially at the Open Polytechnic (TOPNZ)? He started by enrolling at Massey University for his Master's. His thought at the time was, "If I am going to be a teacher, I'd better bring myself up-to-date." He realised that there was a new language to learn, new theories and concepts. Once started, he couldn't believe how much knowledge was available and how helpful the lecturers at Massey were (although sometimes he thought they were a little removed from what actually happened in "the real world").

Once he completed his Master's, he wrote his first book *Total Manufacturing Solutions* (Oxford: Butterworth and Heinemann, 1997) followed by *The Management of Service Operations* (London: Cassell, 1999). He freely admits that both these books were based on his lecture notes. He adds that he wasn't impressed with the books on offer, and felt he could do better.



### ***Prof Nevan Wright (cont)***



Brunel University

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*“you are never too old  
to study”*

After this, the PhD was a breeze; he enrolled in 1999 at Brunel University in London and graduated in 2001. All he needed was a research question and the guidance of a supervisor. The choice of supervisor is crucial; your supervisor must be interested in your topic, but more importantly in you. However, no matter how helpful your supervisor, the driving

force should be yourself. It is up to the student to push the supervisor, not the other way round. Nevan says researching and writing his thesis was more fun than writing a book, and he would strongly recommend the experience to anyone, no matter how long they have been away from study. He says if he can do it, anyone can.

At 74, he is still writing and teaching and enjoying every moment of it. *Potius sero quam numquam* (“Better late than never”)!

Among his other interests are that he has been a Justice of the Peace for 21 years; is, by his own estimation, a mediocre golfer; and enjoys wining and dining with Joy, his wife of 34 years.

### **Juggling the demands on a researcher’s time**



Saida Parvin

It sounds fancy when someone calls you an “up-and-coming researcher” or a “researcher”, but the path you tread as a researcher is neither fancy nor easy. In addition, being an Asian woman, I am struggling every moment in my life to sustain my commitment as a researcher. Juggling my personal and professional commitments to find time for research activities is the single most difficult challenge that I face all the time.

Often I wonder whether it is my ethnic background or my gender that creates a universal problem for all females who have to play their role as the family coordinator on top of their professional commitments. A women is not only a professional, but they also have to play their role as a wife, a mother and in many cases as a daughter too, before they can commit their focus on any other obligations such as research.

I suppose the problem is more common in Asian cultures because of the power dynamics that exist

between the genders. The male vs female distinction establishes unequal roles in families that result in more time demands for the female members. This creates a problem in committing to activities such as research that demand total devotion and time commitment. I suppose that is why we find fewer established female researchers in the academic world.

Once I was told by a male colleague who is also from Asia, “When I do my research, my wife makes sure there is a conducive research environment, as well as taking care of my other needs. But your case is different, Saida.” Yes, my situation is that when I intend or have to do research, I have to find suitable time to do so. After completing all household duties and responsibilities, fulfilling everyone’s needs, then I might get some time for myself. It is not that the unequal treatment or undue responsibilities are inhibiting my research scopes but I guess it is the concept of prioritisation that limits my ability to commit. But still my

aspiration and will to succeed keep me going and need my extra efforts in planning my life around all these commitments that I need to attend to being a woman. I suppose this is the most effective advice that I can offer to the readers of this article. You keep motivated and you shall find your way around to commit enough time for a good quality research.

So, in such circumstances, I am surviving, carrying out research, producing publications and attending conferences. All this is happening because I am not a person who will give up her dream. As a Social Science student, I believe in the “survival of the fittest”, so I’m surviving on the ocean called research with the help of my willpower that I consider to be my lifeboat. With limited resources and unlimited opportunities, I have to make the best use of my time and efforts. I shall continue to support my dream and continue with my endeavour to contribute towards the knowledge base as a researcher.

## Sampling

A major challenge that researchers face in investigating research questions is to measure the generalisability of their answers. This is a challenge, because major statistical concepts are applied in order to claim the repeatability of the results. In order to establish valid and reliable relationships with the results and the probabilities of actually repeating the events in the future, researchers often resort to a technique known as sampling. To understand better this technique, we need to first grasp the concepts of population and sample.

Population is defined as the total representatives in a group or category that share common characteristics. When we study a population to identify a particular trend or a phenomenon within that population, it is difficult to observe and

study every individual who is a member of that group. It is difficult simply because of the limitation in available time and resources. This is why we apply the concept of sampling in understanding the trends within that population. Samples are groups of individuals who are able to provide us with behaviour in the study that is representative enough to generalise for rest of the group members. The key question that we come across in choosing a sample is, "What is the number out of a population that we should select as a representative sample?"

Estimation concepts are used in research to identify a subset of a population that considers variances in behaviour (standard deviations) in generalising a finding for the population. But we should be aware that no sample can exactly represent any

behaviour of any other members of the population. It is a matter of chance that the sample size is large enough to capture the probable behaviour of any other members of the population. The other reason why we use a sample for studying a group or population is that it reduces the possibilities of errors in a study, as we are limiting the number of representatives that we are studying.

There are many different methods of sampling that have been used by researchers who attempted to generalise their findings. A major categorisation of sampling techniques includes *Probability sampling* and *Non-probability sampling*. The following table prepared by Sekaran (2003) summarises different types of sampling methods



A subset of the population.

Sampling design	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Probability sampling</b>			
<b>Simple random sampling</b>	All elements in the population are considered and each element has an equal chance of being chosen as a subject.	High generalisability of results.	Not as efficient as stratified sampling.
<b>Systematic sampling</b>	Every <i>n</i> th element in the population is chosen starting from a random point in the population frame.	Easy to use if the population frame is available.	Systematic biases are possible.
<b>Stratified random sampling</b>	The population is first divided into meaningful segments, then subjects are drawn in proportion to their original numbers in the population.	Most efficient among all the probability designs. All groups are adequately sampled and comparisons among groups are possible.	Stratification must be meaningful. More time consuming than simple random sampling or systematic sampling.

Sampling design	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cluster sampling	Groups that have heterogeneous members are first identified; then some are chosen at random; all the members in each of the randomly chosen groups are studied.	In geographic clusters, costs of data collection are low.	The least reliable and least efficient among all probability sampling designs since subsets of clusters are more homogeneous than heterogeneous.
Area sampling	Cluster sampling within a particular area or locality.	Cost effective. Useful for decision relating to a particular location.	Takes time to collect data from an area.
Double sampling	The same sample or subset of sample is studied twice.	Offers more detailed information on the topic of study.	Original biases, if any, will be carried over. Individuals may not be happy responding twice.
<b>Non-probability sampling</b>			
Convenience sampling	The most easily accessible members are chosen as subjects	Quick, convenient and less expensive.	Not generalisable at all.
Judgement sampling	Subjects selected on the basis of their expertise in the subject being investigated.	Sometimes the only meaningful way to investigate.	Generalisability is questionable; not generalisable to the entire population.
Quota sampling	Subjects are conveniently chosen from targeted groups according to some predetermined number or quota.	Very useful where minority participation in a study is crucial.	Not easily generalisable.

Researchers also need to decide on the size of their sample in order to capture a representative result that reflects on the trend of the population that they are studying. This is in most of the cases a difficult decision, as the number that they decide on should

be balanced against their availability of resources and the population size. Krejcie & Morgan (1970) in their seminal paper provide us with a guideline for acceptable sample sizes by calculating the probability of representation (see page 5).

Sampling is a key decision within research methods. Good sampling decisions provide us with valid and reliable results that can be generalised for any population. Researchers need to take extra care in reaching an effective decision for sampling with their studies.

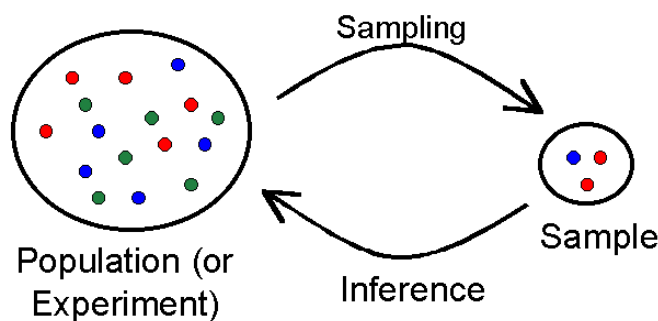
### References

- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurements*, 30(3), 607-610. Retrieved from [opa.uprrp.edu/InvinsDocs/KrejcieandMorgan.pdf](http://opa.uprrp.edu/InvinsDocs/KrejcieandMorgan.pdf)
- Sekaran, U. (2003), *Research methods for business: A skill building approach* (4<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: Hermitage Publishing Service.

TABLE 1  
 Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size.  
*S* is sample size.



## The AIS research awards



In order to promote research within AIS, it has been decided to present an annual research award. In fact, there will be two awards: one for an established researcher (someone with a PBRF ranking), and one for an emerging researcher (someone without). The awards will be presented at the annual graduation ceremony in September.

In July each year, staff will be invited to submit an application for the award, listing outputs that have appeared within the previous 12 months (July in the previous year to June in the current year). In a similar way to PBRF, a points system has been devised to rank the value of outputs (books, chapters, articles, presentations, etc), and the applicants with the

highest overall scores will win the awards.

Recipients will not be informed before the graduation ceremony, so that it is a nice surprise, in the same way as top scholar awards and enterprise awards for students. Details of "honourable mentions", that is staff not winning awards but nevertheless making substantial contributions to the AIS research environment, will also be announced at the ceremony.

The award carries no financial prize. Teaching staff carry out research because they are curious, they do background reading, they enjoy researching, they appreciate that research improves teaching, they enjoy working with others,

they like writing, they enjoy seeing their name in print, etc. It is also an NZQA requirement for staff lecturing on degree programmes.

The staff winning the awards will have photos of them receiving the award hung in the AIS foyers. These photos and write-ups of the award-winners will be used for AIS promotional activities, in the research newsletter, etc.

A subcommittee of the AIS Research Committee has been established, comprising Nevan Wright, Adam Brown and Hamish Small, who will consider applications and decide the winners. (Members of this subcommittee will not be potential award-winners.)

## What is research?

A broad definition of research is given by Martyn Shuttleworth (2008): "In the broadest sense of the word, the definition of research includes any gathering of data, information and facts for the advancement of knowledge."

Another definition of research is given by Creswell (2008) who states that "Research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue". It consists of three steps: Pose a question, collect data to answer the question, and present an answer to the question."

What the definitions have in common is (i) collection of data, (ii) enhancement of our knowledge about a subject, and (iii) a methodical set of stages of stating research question(s), collection of relevant data, analysis of data, drawing reasonable conclusions, answering the original question(s).

Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson.

Shuttleworth, M. (2008). *Definition of research*. Retrieved from Explorable.com.



**Local conferences**

10 – 13 July 2014

CLESOL (Community Languages and English to Speakers of Other Languages)

*“Essentials for Learning and Teaching: Ko te Pū, ko te Ako”*

Victoria University, Wellington

[www.clesol.org.nz/index.html](http://www.clesol.org.nz/index.html)

10 – 15 August 2014

17th World Congress of the International Applied Linguistics Association (hosted by the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia)

*“One world, many languages”*

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Australia

[www.aila2014.com](http://www.aila2014.com)

21 – 22 August 2014

New Zealand International Education conference

*“Think new in action”*

Education NZ

[conference.educationnz.org.nz](http://conference.educationnz.org.nz)

24 – 25 September 2014

Vaka Pasifiki Education Centre Conference

*“Weaving Theory and Practice in teacher education for Oceania”*

Nukualofa, Tonga

Contact: [moale.otunuku@usp.ac.fj](mailto:moale.otunuku@usp.ac.fj)

8 – 10 October 2014

ITx: New Zealand’s conference of IT

Institute of IT Professionals (IITP), Computing and Information Technology Research and Education New Zealand (CITRENZ), and Computer Science Association of New Zealand (CSANZ)

Auckland

[www.itx.org.nz](http://www.itx.org.nz)

27 – 29 November 2014

DevNet (Development Network) conference

*“From vulnerability to resilience: partnerships for development”*

University of Otago

[www.devnet.org.nz/content/2014-devnet-conference](http://www.devnet.org.nz/content/2014-devnet-conference)

8 – 9 December 2014

World Business, Finance and Management Conference

World Business Institute of Australia, London Academic Research and Publication, UK and American Research and Publication International, USA

Rendezvous Hotel, Auckland

[www.newzealandconfo.com](http://www.newzealandconfo.com)

9 – 12 December 2014

New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference

*“Tourism in the Asia Pacific Region”*

University of Waikato, Hamilton

[gce.orbit.co.nz/ei/images/NZ\\_Tourism\\_Hospitality\\_Research\\_Conference\\_Call\\_for\\_Papers.pdf](http://gce.orbit.co.nz/ei/images/NZ_Tourism_Hospitality_Research_Conference_Call_for_Papers.pdf)

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[www.ais.ac.nz](http://www.ais.ac.nz)

We're also on Facebook!

14 – 17 December 2014  
International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS)  
“Building a Better World through Information Systems”  
University of Auckland Business School  
[icis2014.aisnet.org](http://icis2014.aisnet.org)

2 – 5 February 2015  
CAUTHE (Council for Australasian University Tourism and Hospitality Education)  
2015  
“Rising Tides and Sea Changes: Adaptation and Innovation in Tourism and Hospitality”  
Southern Cross University’s School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Gold Coast campus  
[www.cauthe.org/services/conferences](http://www.cauthe.org/services/conferences)

12 – 13 February 2015  
3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Management, Leadership and Governance  
AUT, Auckland  
[academic-conferences.org/icmlg/icmlg2015/icmlg15-home.htm](http://academic-conferences.org/icmlg/icmlg2015/icmlg15-home.htm)

## **About Auckland Institute of Studies ...**

Auckland Institute of Studies is a unique tertiary institution with a distinctive international focus. Since its inception, this developing institute has attracted students and staff from countries around the world and has now developed a number of close relationships with leading educational institutions internationally.

### **Our programmes**

Master of Business Administration  
Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration  
Postgraduate Certificate in Business Administration

Graduate Diploma in International Business  
Bachelor of International Business  
Diploma in International Business (Level 6)  
Diploma in International Business (Level 5)

Graduate Diploma in Information Technology  
Bachelor of Information Technology  
Diploma in Information Technology (Level 6)  
Diploma in Information Technology (Level 5)

Graduate Diploma in Tourism Management  
Bachelor of Tourism Management  
Diploma in Tourism Management (Level 6)

Diploma in Tourism Management (Level 5)  
National Certificate in Hospitality (Cafés) (Level 3)

Graduate Diploma in Hospitality Management\*  
Bachelor of Hospitality Management  
Diploma in Hospitality Operations Management (Level 6)  
Diploma in Hospitality Operations (Level 5)

English as a Foreign Language  
English for Academic Purposes  
IELTS Preparation  
Cert TESOL

\* Subject to NZQA approval

The AIS research newsletter (ISSN 2357-2426) aims to establish and foster collegial partnerships in common research interests, through high quality research outputs and sharing research ideas and resources. Correspondence about the newsletter should be sent to Christine Edwards at the above address, or email [christinee@ais.ac.nz](mailto:christinee@ais.ac.nz). The editors are Dr Adam Brown ([adamb@ais.ac.nz](mailto:adamb@ais.ac.nz)), Dr Ershad Ali ([ershada@ais.ac.nz](mailto:ershada@ais.ac.nz)), and Rubaiyet Khan ([rubaiyetk@ais.ac.nz](mailto:rubaiyetk@ais.ac.nz)).