Week 2 - Discussion 1

Qualitative Methodologies

Qualitative methodologies involve collecting non-numerical data, usually through interviews or observation. There are many approaches to qualitative research and no fully agreed upon “list” of methodologies. The text (Malec and Newman, 2013) describes six approaches in Section 3.1. The Frank and Polkinghorne (2010) article also describes three main qualitative approaches. The best way to learn about a variety of qualitative research methods is to read reports or articles of research around a topic you are interested in.

**Instructions**:

For your initial post, choose two articles that use a qualitative research method to answer a research question on your topic of interest. Remember that qualitative research is exploratory in nature, and is used to go deeper into issues of interest and explore nuances related to the problem at hand. Common data collection methods used in qualitative research include group discussions, focus groups, in-depth interviews, and uninterrupted observations. Data analysis typically involves identifying themes or categories, or providing in- depth descriptions of the data. Use the Anderson (2006) and Lee (1992) articles to obtain a better understanding of what qualitative research includes.

* Briefly describe the particular qualitative research approach/methodology utilized in each of the two articles you selected (e.g. case study, ethnographic study, phenomenological study, etc.).
* Refer to the week’s readings (or recommended articles) to help you explain.
* Compare and contrast the two qualitative methods used:
  + What is the same and what is different and why?
  + Does either methods seem a good fit to explore your topic of interest?
  + Why/why not?

Post should be at least 300 words. Respond to at least two of your classmates’ postings.

Introduction: Qualitative Research Methodologies

In Week 2, you will be reading about various methodologies that fall under the category of qualitative research. Basic qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data, such as data collected through interviews or observations. One of your assigned articles for this week (Polkinghorne, 2005) gives a good introduction to generalized qualitative methods. Many times a qualitative researcher uses a particular research design such as ethnography, phenomenology, or grounded theory. It can be challenging to try to define particular qualitative methods because working with non-numerical data is much less prescriptive than working with numeric data in a quantitative design. However, the insights we can gather from qualitative studies are often more nuanced and in-depth that what we can garner from a statistically oriented quantitative design. In this week, you will review and search out studies from a variety of qualitative methodologies. We will also be looking at various qualitative and quantitative research articles.

You should consider the following questions before and during the reading and assignments this week:

1. What is the same and what is different about the various qualitative methodologies?
2. How do you go about deciding if a qualitative study is valid?
3. What sorts of research questions can be answered in a qualitative study?
4. What differentiates qualitative research methods from quantitative research methods?

Resources

Required Text

Malec, T. & Newman, M. (2013). *Research methods: Building a knowledge base.* San Diego, CA: Bridgepoint Education, Inc. ISBN-13: 9781621785743, ISBN-10: 1621785742.  
*Section 1.6 Writing a Research Proposal  
Chapter 3: Qualitative and Descriptive Designs – Observing Behavior  
Section 5.3: Experimental Validity: A Note on Qualitative Research Validity and Reliability  
Appendix: Example of a Research Proposal*

Required References

Anderson, J. D. (2006). *Qualitative and quantitative research*. Available at [*http://web20kmg.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/82037432/QualitativeandQuantitativeEvaluationResearch.pdf (Links to an external site.)*](http://web20kmg.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/82037432/QualitativeandQuantitativeEvaluationResearch.pdf)

Conway, A. (2014). *Circuit court involved youth in Virginia: A descriptive, cross-sectional, quantitative research study.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/978144627305014535709

Frank, G., & Polkinghorne, D. (2010). Qualitative research in occupational therapy: From the first to the second generation.*OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health, 30*(2), 51-57. (ProQuest Document ID: 2021456651).

Freeman, M., deMarrais, K.,  Preissle, J.,  Roulston, K., &  St Pierre, E. A. (2007). Standards of evidence in qualitative research:  An incitement to discourse. *Educational Researcher, 36*(1), 25-32.  doi:10.3102/0013189X06298009.

Park, J., & Park, M. (2016). [*Qualitative versus quantitative research methods: Discovery or justification?*](https://ashford.instructure.com/courses/74817/files/14027525/download?wrap=1)*[Preview the document](https://ashford.instructure.com/courses/74817/files/14027525/download?wrap=1)* *Journal Of Marketing Thought, 3*(1), 1-7.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research.*Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(2), 137-145. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.137    [Retrieved from EBSCOhost]

Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects.*Education for Information, 22*(2), 63-75.