Week 2 - Discussion

Qualitative Validity

Many researchers, particularly those from the hard sciences like mathematics or physics, consider quantitative research, with the ability to determine “statistical significance,” as more rigorous than qualitative research. Qualitative research does not lend itself to such mathematical determination of validity, rather it is highly focused on providing descriptive and/or exploratory results. However, this does not relieve the qualitative researcher from designing studies that are rigorous and high in “trustworthiness,” often the word used to describe validity in a qualitative study. There is no agreed upon set of criteria for ensuring a quality qualitative study, but there are a number of models of quality criteria.

**Instructions**:

* After reading the assigned articles by Shenton (2004) and Freeman, deMarrais, Preissle, Roulston, and St. Pierre (2007), discuss at least three things a qualitative researcher can consider increasing the validity of a study’s results.
* Give at least one example from one of the qualitative study articles you have found on your own topic of how a claim (reported result) is supported.
  + How does that article report on the validity of the study’s results?
  + Do the authors do a good job of demonstrating validity? If not, what could/should they have done differently?

Post should be at least 300 words.

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.