



HANDOUT #7

EM200 Methods of Research
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Summer 2020
CED Building

HOW TO DEFINE YOUR RESEARCH STUDY/PROJECT?

SUMMARY

- You *must* take time to think about your research as this will save you problems later.
- When you're thinking about your research, ask yourself the five 'Ws':
 - *What* is my research?
 - *Why* do I want to do the research?
 - *Who* are my research participants?
 - *Where* am I going to do the research?
 - *When* am I going to do the research?
- Sum up your research project in one sentence.
- Discuss your sentence with your tutor or boss and revise if there is any confusion.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SUMMARY

- The research *methodology* is the philosophy or general principle which guides the research.
- *Research methods* are the tools you use to gather your data.
- *Qualitative research* explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences.
- Examples of qualitative methodologies include action research, ethnography, feminist research and grounded theory.
- *Quantitative research* generates statistics through the use of large-scale survey research.
- Neither qualitative nor quantitative research is better – they are just different. Both have their strengths and weaknesses.
- Your own intuition and the words you use will give pointers to whether qualitative or quantitative research is more appropriate for your chosen project.
- The term '*triangulation*' is used when a combination of qualitative and quantitative forms of inquiry are used.

RESEARCH METHODS

SUMMARY

- Research methods are the tools that are used to gather data.
- Three types of interview are used in social research:
 - Unstructured or life history interviews.
 - Semi-structured interviews.
 - Structured interviews.
- Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or over the telephone.
- Focus groups are held with a number of people to obtain a group opinion.
- Focus groups are run by a moderator who asks questions and makes sure the discussion does not digress.



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- Questionnaires can be closed-ended, open-ended or a combination of both.
- Participant observation is used when a researcher wants to immerse herself in a specific culture to gain a deeper understanding.
- The chosen research methodology should help to indicate the most appropriate research tools.
- Research methods must be chosen within budget and time constraints.
- The purpose of the research will provide an indicator to the most appropriate methods.
- You should think about your personality, strengths and weakness, likes and dislikes when choosing research methods.

Source:

Dawson, C. (2009). *Introduction to Research Methods, A Practical Guide for Anyone Undertaking a Research Project*, 4th Edition, UK: How to Content. Retrieved from <https://www.pdfdrive.com/introduction-to-research-methods-a-practical-guide-for-anyone-undertaking-a-research-project-d157725135.html>

Required Readings:

Chapter 1: How to define you Project

Chapter 2: How to Decide Upon a Methodology

Chapter 3: How to Choose your Research Methods

Chapter 4: How to Conduct Background Research

Chapter 5: How to Choose Your Participants

Chapter 6: How to Prepare a Research Proposal