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**20-Day – Content Questions**

A. Define and give an example(s) of each of the following keywords and phrases:

1. Research Methodology, Research Design

2. Purpose Statement, Problem Statement, Thesis, Significance

3. Dependent Variables, Independent Variables

4. Validated Instruments

5. Hypotheses

6. Data Collection

B. Aligning the Elements

1. Which elements in “A” above need to be aligned?

2. Using the Research Design Funnel, illustrate an example of alignment

C. Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research

1. Describe Quantitative Research

2. Describe Qualitative Research

3. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of each research method

4. Identify the research methods approved for OGS students in the doctoral program

D. Using the Research Design Funnel, document A2-A3

E. Upload the Word-based document (assignment) to DIAL, using a screenshot of #D (the funnel) on a separate page at the end of the document for inclusion in your uploaded assignment

F. Email the Research Design Funnel PowerPoint to Course Professor

A. Define and give an example(s) of each of the following keywords and phrases:

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6. Data Collection

1. Research Methodology, Research Design

**Research Methodology and Design** are closely related and can be confusing. However, the difference is that the design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher to conduct a study. Creswell (2018) states, “The researcher not only selects a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods study to conduct; the inquirer also decides on a type of study within these three choices. **Research designs** are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). **Research Designs include research methodologies**, tools, and plans to conduct the research. There are four main types of research designs: Descriptive, Correlational, Experimental, and Diagnostic. Research Design is outlined following Operational Definitions in Chapter 3 of the dissertation.

2. Purpose Statement, Problem Statement, Significance

The **purpose statement** is clear and precise. The purpose statement encapsulates what one intends to do in the study. It may begin like this: “The purpose of this quantitative study is to determine the relationship between measures of […] and […One or two questions are typically formed from one purpose statement, but there may be more. It should serve as a guide for what you address in your Literature review. It should also be the first statement in Chapter 2 and uses identical words from Chapter 1. The **purpose statement** will appear in all five chapters of your research study (Kornuta & Germaine, 2019).

The **problem statement** is an explanation in research that describes the issue that needs to be researched. It will contextualize the problem to include what we already know. It will also show the problem’s relevance and the need to learn more about it. A clearly defined problem will make writing a laser-sharp purpose statement much more straightforward, guiding the whole of your study (Kornuta & Germaine, 2019).

The **Significance** of the Study describes the study’s importance or ‘so what?’. It clarifies why the research is necessary and to whom it is important. It will outline who will benefit from the results of your study and why it would be essential to carry it out. It may also include what will happen if nothing is done (Kornuta & Germaine, 2019).

3. Dependent Variables, Independent Variables

Once a straightforward research question is stated, the question leads to specific variables. The **dependent variable** in an experiment is the outcome variable, or what the researcher looks at to see whether any change has occurred as a function of the treatment that has taken place (Salkind & Frey, 2019, p. 105). The **independent variable** is the treatment variable that is manipulated or the predictor variable in a regression equation (Salkind & Frey, 2019, p. 465).

4. Validated Instruments

When a test or measurement is “**validated**,” it simply means that the researcher has come to the opinion that the instrument measures what it was designed to measure. In other words, validity is no more than an expert opinion (*What Is a Validated Test Instrument or Survey? - Ask Us!*, n.d.).

5. Hypotheses

A **hypothesis** is an if-then statement of conjecture that relates variables to one another an is used to reflect the general problem, statement or question that is the motivation for asking a research question (Salkind & Frey, 2019, p. 465).

6. Data Collection

**Data Collection** is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. The data collection component of research is common to all fields of study including physical and social sciences, humanities, business, etc. While methods vary by discipline, the emphasis on ensuring accurate and honest collection remains the same (Depart of Health, Human Services, n.d.).

B. Aligning the Elements

1. Which elements in “A” above need to be aligned?

All of them.

2. Using the Research Design Funnel, illustrate an example of alignment

* Problem Statement
* Purpose Statement
* Background of the Problem
* Significance of the Problem
* Research Question
* Research Methodology
* Theoretical/Conceptual Framework
* Instrumentation
* Research Design
* Population and Sampling
* Hypotheses (Quantitative Only)
* Data Analysis Plan

C. Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research

1. Describe Quantitative Research

2. Describe Qualitative Research

3. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of each research method

4. Identify the research methods approved for OGS students in the doctoral program

1. Describe Quantitative Research

Creswell (2018) defined quantitative research as an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures. The final written report has a set structure consisting of an introduction, literature and theory, methods, results, and discussion. Like qualitative researchers, those who engage in this form of inquiry have assumptions about testing theories deductively, building protections against bias, controlling for alternative or counterfactual explanations, and being able to generalize and replicate the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

2. Describe Qualitative Research

Creswell (2018) defined qualitative research as an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The research process involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of each research method

Of course, there are advantages and disadvantages to both research methods. Especially where objectivity and subjectivity are concerned. However, there are clear advantages to a Qualitative research method. First, it helps researchers understand humans and events on a deeper level. It forces the interpreter to look deeper and gain a more meaningful understanding of social context. Consequently, because the interpretation is human, it is subjective and open to multiple interpretations. In addition, it makes replicating the study or verifying the findings difficult.

On the other hand, the first advantage of using a Quantitative research method is that the data is analyzed based on statistics. The relationship between an independent variable and one or more dependent variables is without bias due to the experimental design. As a result, the results can be generalized on a larger scale or population and lend themselves to a larger scale of validity and reliability. In addition, the research can be easily replicated for other groups or subgroups, saving time for future research. The second advantage of using a Quantitative research method is its objective analysis, and findings are deemed more reliable. However, one of the drawbacks to using this method, especially in “social research,” is the inability to measure a person’s intentions, attitudes, or experiences.

Moreover, both methodologies are essential, although each has advantages and disadvantages. They allow social researchers to contribute significantly towards the positives and negatives in our society. They help us to correct and learn from our mistakes and make meaningful contributions to our future.

4. Identify the research methods approved for OGS students in the doctoral program

OGS approves quantitative and qualitative research methods for the students in the doctoral program.

D. Using the Research Design Funnel, document A2-A3

**DECIDING FACTORS IN SCHOOL CHOICE AMONG PARENTS IN THE SOUTHWEST UNITED STATES**

By Shawna L. Della Cerra

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Northern Arizona University

May 2021

**Statement of the Problem**

Too many children are leaving their neighborhood public schools to attend a “choice school” (Prensky, 2011, p. 2). In Arizona alone, the traditional public school system has evolved dramatically. What once was a choice between public and private education, can now be categorized into several different types of schooling options, including, but not limited to: traditional public school and charter, magnet, virtual or online, traditional private, boarding, language immersion, Montessori, private special education, and parochial schools (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 3).

It is unknown how parents describe the factors influencing the choice to move their children from traditional public schools to traditional charter schools. To explore and fill the gap in current educational research, reasons parents choose schools other than assigned neighborhood public schools, and the value parents place on charter schools will be studied (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 4).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to explore the reasons why parents choose schools other than assigned neighborhood public schools. The study is intended to identify what common values parents hold about charter schools that lead them to choose charter schools over their assigned public schools.

The study will determine why parents are choosing not to send their children to a neighborhood public school. To evaluate the reason(s), this study will look at the history of school choice and conduct interviews in an effort to acquire commonalities, trends, and themes (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 4).

**Research Questions**

1. Why are parents sending their children to “choice schools” rather than have them attend their neighborhood public school?

2. What are the positive attributes of the choice school that influenced parents to enroll their children there?

2a. How satisfied were parents with their decision to enroll their children in the choice school?

3. What are any consequences parents have faced following enrolling their children in a choice school (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 4)?

**Significance of the Study**

Traditional public school district and site-based leaders want to keep students in their school buildings. This study will focus on reasons families leave heterogeneous diverse schools to surround themselves with a homogenous group. Once the researcher discovers the reason(s) families are attending “choice school”, traditional school district administration can strategically develop programs, procedures, and marketing strategies to recruit and retain these students in the neighborhood public school, by way of relating to these students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and ethically. By doing so, “public education can best fulfill its obligations to the public world and to the individual” (Bullough, 1988 p. 136) (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 6).

**Restatement of the Problem and Purpose**

In Arizona, parents may elect to have their children attend charter schools versus their neighborhood traditional public school. Today, Arizona continues to lead the nation in charter school growth. Public school districts have seen a decline in enrollment since the inception of charter schools. In Maricopa County, Arizona, not all students in the same neighborhood attend the same assigned public school (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 59).

The purpose of this study was to explore the reasons parents are voluntarily leaving assigned neighborhood public schools for charter schools. By identifying what common values parents hold about charter schools, that caused them to choose these schools over their assigned public schools, the school choice body of literature was enriched (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 59).

**Restatement of the Research Questions**

1. Why are parents sending their children to “choice schools” rather than have them attend their neighborhood public school?

2. What are the positive attributes of the choice school that influenced parents to enroll their children there?

2a. How satisfied were parents with their decision to enroll their children in the choice school?

3. What are any consequences parents have faced following enrolling their children in a choice school (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 60)?

**Research Methodology**

Interviews were conducted to generate data on choice schools and used to evaluate the reasons parents choose traditional charter schools other than assigned neighborhood public schools. Specifically, the value education consumers place on connections to interactions and affiliations when deciding to enroll students in traditional charter schools was analyzed (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 60). The goal of this study was to determine the reasons why parents made a particular choice, hence the choice of the qualitative inquiry (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 60).

**Research Design**

Qualitative research methods were chosen for this study with the intention of providing detailed descriptions of the common essence of all members of the same group, values group members hold about charter schools that caused them to choose these schools over their assigned public schools, and to understand how feelings of conformity and need for affiliation impacted their school choice decision (Della Cerra, 2021, pp. 61–62).

**Population and Sample**

This study was an exploration of the lived experiences and perceptions of these parent participants who send their children to a choice school rather than to the neighborhood public school. The sample of parents interviewed was from three separate choice schools within Maricopa County, Arizona. Data collection was accomplished via the purposive sampling method, where participants for this study met the necessary research criteria to participate in the one-on-one Zoom interview (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 62).

**Findings**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the qualitative data to identify what common values parents hold about choice schools that lead them to choose charter schools over their assigned public schools. The researcher explored the values group members hold about choice schools and how those values impact their school choice decisions (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 71).

**Recommendations for Future Studies**

Although this research revealed reasons parents enrolled their child(ren) in choice schools versus the traditional neighborhood public school, there are other opportunities for future studies (Della Cerra, 2021, p. 165).

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