Research Design and Methodology I

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Professor

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Assignment

### *Developmental Readings*

Review Assignment #3, the course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

* Refer to the “[Student Guide to Developmental Readings](https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V_FaYR2BnNGCSFUlWPjUSIQzcH04Hq/view?usp=share_link)” for updated information on sample comments, rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:** Knappertsbusch, F., Schreier, M., Burzan, N., & Fielding, N. (2023). Innovative Applications and Future Directions in Mixed Methods and Multimethod Social Research. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 24*(1)

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Quantitative and qualitative research logic are very distinct. However, the differences can be the strength of research by thoughtfully combining them in a mixed methods approach as complementary aspects of the research rather than compensating for the weakness of either the quantitative or qualitative data. (Knappertsbusch et al. 2023)

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the Methodology Distinction essential element where it deals with research methodology approaches, particularly the mixed method approach.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This idea of mixed methods being a strength in research if appropriate given the study is additive to my understanding of the possible benefit of combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a particular research project to yield different insights yet complementary from the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research.

**Contextualization:**  Quantitative and qualitative research both have their pros and cons to uncovering findings in social research. If one could use them both in research, they could be complementary to each other, and could bring in a more holistic approach to understanding the social phenomena than would be otherwise using one or the other methodological approaches. Using mixed methods provides us with additional context to understand the research findings in the context of the quantitative data of informing us of the ‘what’ is taking place and then with the qualitative data we can gain insights into perhaps the ‘why’ or the reason for given attitudes or actions that may be undiscoverable in the quantitative data alone.

**Source Two:** Newman, I., & Covrig, D. M. (2013). Building Consistency Between Title, Problem Statement, Purpose, & Research Questions to Improve the Quality of Research Plans and Reports: New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development. *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development*, *25*(1), 70–79. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nha.20009>

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Consistency is about the logical alignment of the title, purpose, problem, and research question. This process begins when a researcher clearly identifies the concepts or constructs of interest and focuses on these constructs when reading literature to help formulate the topic, problem, and purpose of the work” (Newman & Covrig, 2013, p. 71).

**Essential Element:** This comment is related to the course's essential element Research Design Alignment and Dissertation Structure, where this quote refers to the importance of alignment of the title, purpose, problem, and research question.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The concept of research design alignment with the logical consistency title, purpose statement, problem statement, and the research question are additive to my current understanding of research design. Where there needs to be consistency through these elements so that it serves as a guide for the researcher and flows for the reader of the research.

**Contextualization:** It has been a while since I have been in a research course, and the focus on research design alignment in this course has been so very helpful to help focus the student on these key elements so they could keep the scope of the research in focus that will serve as guide for them as they carry out the research. OGS’s template in the dissertation research of Title, Problem Statement, Purpose Statement, Background of the Problem, Significance, and Research Question, helps guide and promote the logical alignment of the research design.

**Source Three:** Walshe, C., & Brearley, S. (Eds.). (2020). *Handbook of Theory and Methods in Applied Health Research: Questions, Methods and Choices*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The first step in the process of conceptualizing the research is to take the initial research idea- the catalytic departure point- and turn it into a research problem. A research problem is a short description of the idea which captures what you want to research and why” (Walshe & Brearley, 2020, p. 40).

**Essential Element:** This quote relates to the essential element of Problem Formulation. The problem statement is a statement about the concern of issue that needs to be researched and providing a context to the issue of concern.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote is additive to my understanding of the process of developing a research problem. The research problem comes from the researcher’s interest in understanding more about a topic than that has already been researched. There is something about the topic that has not been fully studied, a gap in the research and the researcher is interested in filling that gap in the research by conducting their own research.

**Contextualization:** Informing the reader of the research problem is important to establish the need of the research. The research question establishes the overall context of the issue that is being researched along with the background of the problem. The research problem should establish a gap in the current research and thus the need for the current research. There is a continuation of social research, social settings and society continually changes thus there are many things that need to be researched and uncovered that have not been captured in current research. To identify the gap in research a person must read the existing literature (journal articles and books) surrounding the topic of interest and develop ideas on where additional research will help bring about a greater understanding of the research topic.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “A research question is a focused question which expresess the research intention (the action) about the research focus (the phenomenon of interest) to address the research problem. The question should be able to be answered through the analysis and interpretation of data” (Walshe & Brearley, 2020, p. 48).

**Essential Element:** This quote relates to the essential element ofResearch Questions. The Research question is what will be answered in conducting the research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding of the process of the development of the research question. The research question is developed from the problem statement, purpose statement, and the findings from the literature review, the gap in the research of the given topic area.

**Contextualization:** The research question stems from the problem statement and the literature review. The research question must have an alignment with the problem statement, the purpose statement the background of the problem and the significance of the problem, where there is a logical flow from introducing the topic to defining the what the research will be about. The research question states the specific issue your research will address, such as what the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable in your research. From examples of research questions, I am learning how to write a research question appropriately.

**Source Four:** Mukherjee, S. P., Sinha, B. K., & Chattopadhyay, A. K. (2018). *Statistical Methods in Social Science Research*. Springer Singapore.

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**In social science research scales are used to evaluate a composite score based on several questions asked. For compatibility purposes scaling techniques may be used to standardize values of the questions to account for the varying raw scores of the different questions” (Mukherjee, et al, 2018).

**Essential Element:** This quote relates to the essential element ofMethodology Distinction. Scales/indexes are used in social research and are part of the methodological approaches to social research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The concept of using scales/indexes in social research is additive to my knowledge of tools used in social research in trying to get to the essence of answering a question using responses from a single question with multiple responses, such as the Linkert scale, or using several different questions to yield a composite score such as social economic status.

**Contextualization:** It is difficult to uncover the social dynamics of a social phenomenon, this is a challenge in social research. A way to approach this challenge is to ask multiple questions that relate to each other that could be used to combine a score as an index. Or one could quantify the responses of one question to yield a composite score for the participants. These tools are a good approach for social researchers to use in condensing related concepts into a single score to use as a measurement. In geographical research these indexes are used to show the multiple factors that are taking place in a geographical location with one value.

**Source Five:** Scott‐Arthur, T., Brown, B., & Saukko, P. (2021). Conflicting Experiences of Health and Habitus in a Poor Urban Neighbourhood: A Bourdieusian Ethnography. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, *43*(3), 697–712. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.13255>

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The first author spent time in the fieldwork site talking to residents in places accessible to the public, such as the pub, community centre, library, food bank, church and nearby gyms and took part in meetings of various community groups, such as the patient group at the GP surgery, the church, Slimming World and the community centre. The observation also consisted of walking around and familiarising oneself with the neighbourhood and visiting the corner shop and other services and included taking pictures and making drawings to characterise the physical and social landscape” (Scott‐Arthur, et al, 2021, p. 701).

**Essential Element:** This quote relates to the essential element ofMethodology Distinction. Where the fieldwork in this research is referring to a qualitative methodology of ethnography.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The concept of qualitative fieldwork is addictive to my understanding of qualitative methods. Fieldwork means going into the “field” of your research participants, where they live and work to understand the context that they exist within.

**Contextualization:**  This quote helps us see the need to learn the context of the people, place, and time that we may be studying in our research. Doing limited area analysis, it is necessary to get a sense of the lives of people in that area so that you can gain a sense of trust from the participants knowing something about the life they may live. When doing participant interviews the researcher will have the context of the participant’s responses by doing the observational fieldwork. Qualitative methods, whether in a qualitative study or a mixed method, the researcher needs to take on the context of the participants to understand their responses and report their input accurately.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The interviews were transcribed verbatim, anonymised and analysed for emergent categories using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This drew our attention to three distinctive styles of habitus, corresponding to groups identified above, which characterised distinctive orientations to health, to self and others and to the neighbourhood” (Scott‐Arthur, et al, 2021, p. 701).

**Essential Element:** This quote relates to the essential element ofResearch Design Alignment and Methodology Distinction.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote about the interview process is additive to my understanding of qualitative methods.

**Contextualization:** The qualitative method of utilizing interviews to collect information from the participant is an effective way to collect insight into a social phenomenon. The interview information needs to be analyzed like quantitative data to uncover the insights. Using mixed methods is an effective way to gain insight from research from different angles, some insights you may not get from quantitative data alone. Though the research in this article is not a mixed method, it is a good example of the process of collecting and processing qualitative data.

**Source Six:** Guessabi, D. F. (2020). How to Write a Dissertation. 09(02). *Dirassat Journal 09(02)* 65-72

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The word dissertation in a Latin word ‘dissertate’ means ‘to debate, it answers a particular research question and can either report on an empirical study or on a literature-based study. Dissertation is original research that shows mastery of both subject and methodology by the candidate” (Guessabi, 2020, p.66).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the course essential element of Dissertation Structure.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of what a dissertation is and means. The dissertation is an original research project carried out by Doctor of Philosophy Students as a means of verifying they have a mastery of their field in becoming a producer of knowledge within that field.

**Contextualization:** The quote stood out to me where we as PhD students at OGS are part of this long world history of academics who are training to be knowledge producers in our given field of study. At OGS in particular this position of knowledge producer is also closely tied to action orientated knowledge, where the knowledge we pursue is for a purpose, “for constructive social change”. The idea of obtaining a PhD is not that you have learned everything you need to know, but that you have learned how to learn to become a student of yourself and the instructor as well.

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “It is a good idea that the student reads the acknowledgements in other dissertations in his field to have an idea of the ways in which different kinds of help have been appreciated and mentioned” (Guessabi, 2020, p.69).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the course essential element of Dissertation Structure.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of parts of the dissertations which includes the acknowledgements section. The acknowledgements section may tend to be overlooked the importance by students, but they holders of knowledge because of others who supported them on the journey.

**Contextualization:** In the dissertation outline of OGS has an acknowledgements section, I really have not thought much about this section in writings. However, I am glad that I have come across this quote, to start thinking about it as part of the dissertation process. This section does seem minimal compared to the introduction, literature review, design and methodology, results, and conclusion/recommendation, however, there were other people who got you to all those things, though you were the one doing the research, we as PhD students are built by a team of OGS professors and ourselves.

**Source Seven:** Garofalo, M. (2022) The Dissertation Proposal Process to Dissertation Defense: A Guide for Students. *General Research.* 11. <https://digitalcommons.kean.edu/general_research/11>

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Your mentor will be the proverbial “coach” of your dissertation process and will advise you on everything from process, to writing, and to giving you permission to move from one stage of the process to the next. Your relationship with your mentor is exactly that, mentor, and apprentice. You will not like everything that your mentor says or tasks you with, but you have to trust them- because they hold the keys to your successful defense. They have guided students across the dissertation finish line and are an integral part of your learning experience” (Garofalo, 2022, p. 1).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the course essential element of Dissertation Structure.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of the dissertation process and structure. This quote displays the importance of the dissertation committee to the student for guidance. The student must choose the committee that holds support of their research interests as well provide the constructive criticism.

**Contextualization:** This quote helps me understand that I am not alone on this journey of a dissertation, a mentor will guide and challenge me to produce a high quality and meaningful dissertation. This article helps me zoom out on the dissertation process and take a more holistic view of the dissertation process and thus the dissertation structure.

**Source Eight:** Eleje, G. U. (2022). Forty Rules of Proposal and Dissertation Writing. *Tropical Journal of Medical Research 21(01)* <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.6881537>

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Proposals or dissertation proposals must be written in future tense, eg 'will' should be seen frequently throughout the proposal. Do not use present tense or past tense in proposal writing” (Eleje, 2022, p.19).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the course essential element of Dissertation Structure.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of the dissertation proposal process. The dissertation research proposal is a ‘road map’ of what, where, how, and whom the student intends to produce the research. It covers the problem statement, purpose statement, background of problem, the significance of the research, research question, research methodology, theoretical framework, instrumentation, research design, population and sample, hypothesis, and data analysis plan (OGS).

**Contextualization:** The dissertation proposal is what the student will submit to their committee as the prospective dissertation research to gain approval to conduct the dissertation research. I need to investigate the dissertation proposal process further. It almost seems that to complete the dissertation proposal the research needs to be conducted to address the items on the research proposal. I am sure I am mistaken, it is merely the proposed direction of the research, a plan that is meant to guide the dissertation research.

**Source Eight:** Plichta, S. B., & Kelvin, E. A. (2013). *Munro’s Statistical Methods for Health Care Research.*

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “A study plan starts with a clear explanation of the purpose of the study and the significance of the problem to be studied. This explanation should include the reasons why the study is important and how the study fits into the existing body of research” (Plichta & Kelvin 2013, p. 8).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the course essential element of Problem Formulation and Research Design Alignment.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of the importance of a study plan and the development of the problem statement. The study plan in this text covers ten steps from the purpose statement to dissemination plan. This provides a guide for the researcher to follow and ensure the research design alignment throughout the elements and sections of the research.

**Contextualization:** This concept of thinking through the process of the elements of the research is important to gain a beginning to end perspective. This will help the researcher stay focused on the core of the research. As learning in this course that research alignment is vital for a good research project and publication. Alignment needs to be throughout the problem statement, background of the problem, setting of the research, thesis statement, research hypothesis, scope of research, research assumptions and the significance of the research. This will ensure the consistency of the flow for the researcher to follow as well as the readers.

**Works Cited**

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