

May 20, 2019

Conducting Research:
Where Do I Begin?
Determining the What?
When? and Why? of a
Research Project.



Conducting Research

SO WHAT?



What do men know about the child support system and the “pass-through” policy?



Theory: Neo-Classical Economic Theory and Culture of Poverty



Method: Interviews and Observations, Historical Documents, Court Data (Online)



Content Analysis and Narrative Analysis

My dissertation (policy focus)

THINK!

What type of quantitative/qualitative research question are you trying to answer?

What variables are you trying to measure, manipulate and/or control.

How should you structure your research question?

Should you use quantitative research questions or research hypotheses?

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THEORY

RESEARCH QUESTIONS



Explains the purpose of the research.



In other words, what issue or problem is the research trying to answer?



Research questions guide decisions about research design and research methods.

Research Hypothesis

Explain the **predictions** being made (or otherwise) by the researcher based on specific hypothesis statements.

These hypothesis statements set out what problem or issue the research is trying to answer, as well as their directionality, which help to explain the predictions being made (or otherwise) by the researcher.

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Qualitative research can offer insights into the question of “why” people engage in particular actions or behaviors.

Qualitative Methods

Ethnography
model

Narrative model

Phenomenological
model

Grounded Theory

Case Study

Historical model

Relevance

Validity

Reflexivity

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Introduction

- What? How? Why?
- Research Question and Summary of Proposal

Literature Review Why? or How?

Methodology How?

Preliminary Data

- What?
- Informs Methodology

Statement of Limitations What your research will do?

Conclusion

- What? How? Why?
- Contributions and Importance

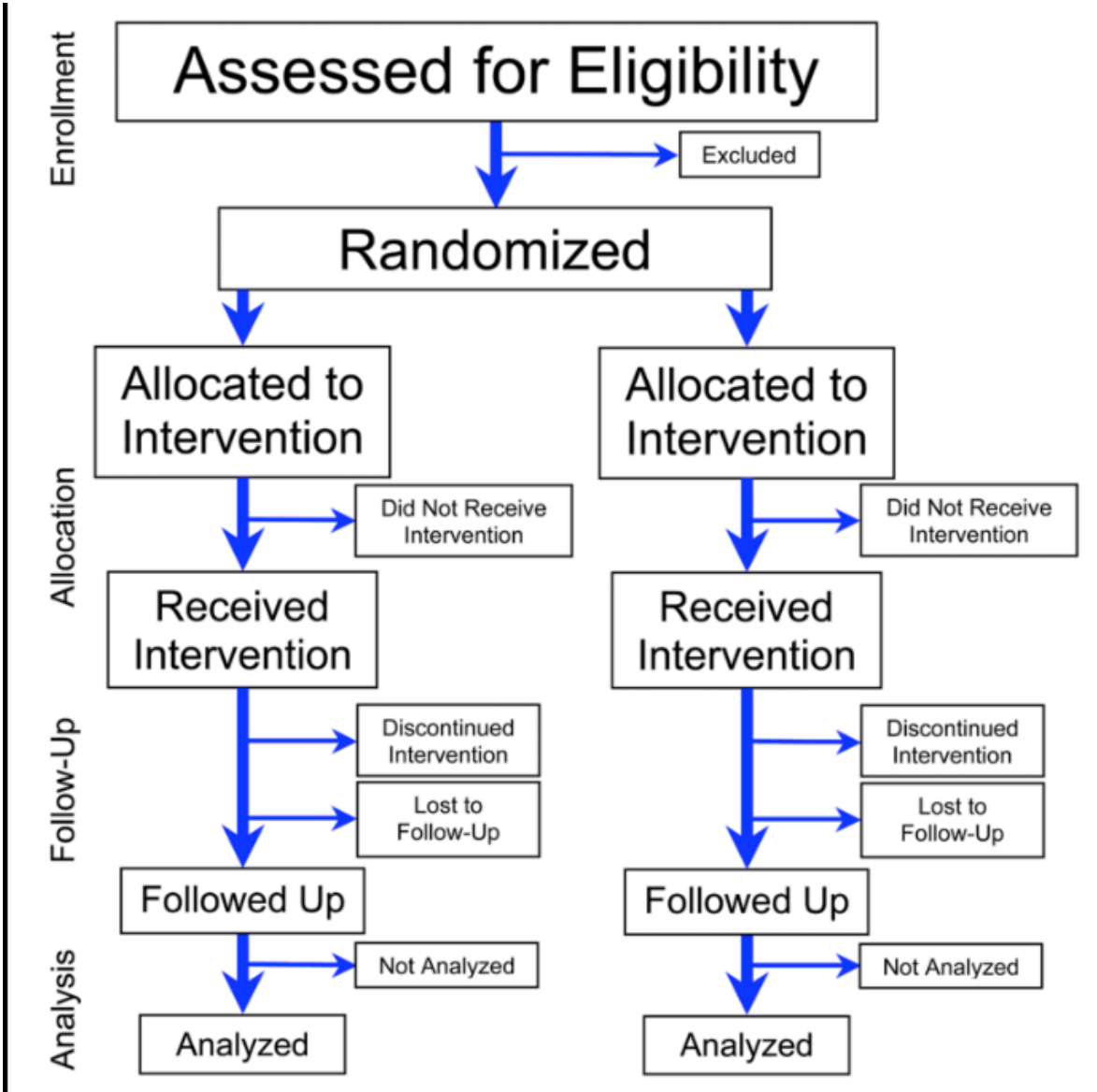
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Quantitative Research

Descriptive

Observational


Casual



RANDOM CONTROLLED TRIALS

Descriptive Research Questions

Aim to describe the variables you are measuring.



When we use the word describe, we mean that these research questions aim to quantify the variables you are interested in. Think of research questions that start with words such as "How much?", "How often?", "What percentage?", and "What proportion?", but also sometimes questions starting "What is?" and "What are?". Often, descriptive research questions focus on only one variable and one group, but they can include multiple variables and groups.

EXAMPLE

Question:	How many calories do American men and women consume per day?
Variable:	Daily calorific intake
Group:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. American men2. American women

RCT or Random
Controlled Trials
Research Questions

interested in the causal relationships, associations, trends and/or interactions amongst two or more variables on one or more groups.

Use of the word relationship in statistics, generally refers to a particular type of research design, namely experimental research designs where it is possible to measure the cause and effect between two or more variables; that is, it is possible to say that variable A (e.g., study time) was responsible for an increase in variable B (e.g., exam scores)

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Question:	What is the relationship between study time and exam scores amongst university students?
Dependent variable:	Exam scores
Independent variable:	Study time
Group:	University students

Casual Research Questions

Comparative research questions aim to examine the differences between two or more groups on one or more dependent variables (although often just a single dependent variable). Such questions typically start by asking "What is the difference in?" a particular dependent variable (e.g., daily calorific intake) between two or more groups (e.g., American men and American women

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Question:	What is the difference in the daily calorific intake of American men and women?
Dependent variable:	Daily calorific intake
Groups:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. American men2. American women

research design

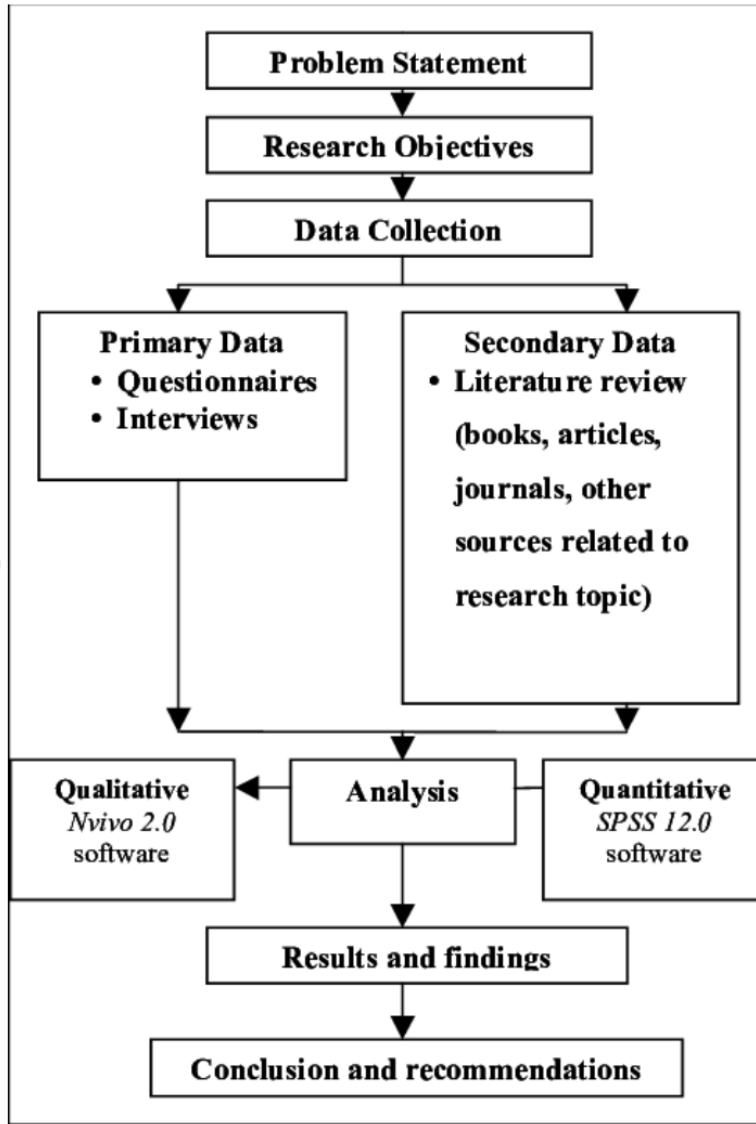
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graph TD; RD[research design] --- CD[conceptual design]; RD --- TD[technical design]; CD --- CO[research objective]; CD --- CRF[research framework]; CD --- CRQ[research questions]; CD --- CCM[conceptual model]; CD --- CDfn[definitions]; TD --- TRS[research strategy]; TD --- TRM[research material]; TD --- TRP[research planning];
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conceptual design

- research objective
- research framework
- research questions
conceptual model
- definitions

technical design

- research strategy
- research material
- research planning



Research Methodology Flow Chart

Structure of **descriptive research** questions

- Identify and name the dependent variable
- Identify the group(s) you are interested in
- Decide whether the dependent variable or group(s) should be included first, last or in two parts
- Include any words that provide greater context to your question
- Write out the descriptive research question

Construct a **comparative research** question

- Identify and name the dependent variable
- Identify the groups you are interested in
- Identify the appropriate adjoining text
- Write out the comparative research question