

Comparing and Contrasting Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Name

Institution

## Comparing and Contrasting Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

### Introduction

Research methods are ways through which a researcher carries out their investigations. They are categorized as quantitative and qualitative methods of research. A researcher selects the technique to use in undertaking the study depending on the research question, research philosophy, skills, and preferences. This essay aims at comparing and contrasting qualitative and quantitative research methods. The differences will be addressed based on several points, including understanding or defining constructs of interest, data collection procedures, data analysis approaches, the criteria for judging validity, and the role of the researcher. The assignment will also reflect on the topic selected for research in this course. Then, propose a qualitative research question, provide an explanation of the type of data to collect in answering the question. Finally, the paper will assess the sampling method that will be most appropriate for use based on the topic area.

### Comparing and Contrasting Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Research Method	Constructs of Interest	Data Collection Procedures	Data Analysis Approaches	Validity Criteria	Role of the Researcher
Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To answer questions concerning people's behavior, how and why they behave in a certain way.</li> <li>- It explores how and why this occur (Soiferman, 2010)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conducting interviews</li> <li>- Discussing an issue using focus groups</li> <li>- Use of focused questions</li> <li>- Obtain secondary data by searching diaries, written literature on a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structuring and coding data into themes and groups</li> <li>- Content analysis</li> <li>- Discourse analysis (Allwood, 2012)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No numerical data collected</li> <li>- Data can be in words, pictures, language, and observations (Creswell, 2012)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The researcher comes up with a new hypothesis and grounded theory after collecting data in the field to describe, explore and discover behavior.</li> </ul>

		<p>topic and company reports (Soiferman, 2010)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One can also observe participants on site or a laboratory condition</li> </ul>			
<b>Quantitative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To explain a phenomenon by obtaining numerical data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct surveys by asking questions to respondents.</li> <li>- Doing observations of the number of times a specific event occurs (Creswell, 2012)</li> <li>- Obtaining secondary data such as company accounts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data is analyzed using statistical as well as mathematical methods (Soiferman, 2010).</li> <li>- It involves the use of graphs, cluster analysis, and hypothesis testing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Obtained data must be numerical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The researcher tests hypothesis and theory using data to explain, describe and predict behavior</li> </ul>

**Reflection**

My topic of interest for my capstone project is ‘Childhood Obesity.’ It is an important issue of research because it is a problem facing children and their families all over the world. In the US, childhood obesity is a primary health challenge (Cunningham, Kramer, & Narayan, 2014). Children between the ages of six and eleven years are experiencing an increased BMI year after year. Researching this crucial topic will help in coming up with insights about the incidence and nature of the healthcare problem, the ages that are vulnerable as well as the groups that have the greatest risk of developing obesity. The study will also provide information that

people can use in preventing and treating childhood obesity. The capstone will aim at answering the following question.

### **Research Question**

What are the views of parents on childhood obesity? The above question is general and broad enough to help the researcher to seek an understanding of the topic in a wider perspective. The question is also direct and not complicated to allow participants understand the subject quickly.

### **Type of Data/ Information Needed**

The kind of information required in answering this research question is qualitative data. It will involve soliciting views and opinions from participants regarding childhood obesity. By answering several interview questions, the respondents will provide the necessary insights that the researcher will be looking for concerning the topic. In this case, the researcher will develop forms with questions for the participants to give answers to the set of questions. Using an interview protocol, the researcher can collect notes on the views of the participants about childhood obesity. The interviews will also help the researcher in probing for more information, clarification as well as the elaboration of participant responses.

The kind of data that answers this question is also secondary data. Here, the researcher can search for past researches on this topic to solicit relevant data about what other authors found about childhood obesity. Text, picture, visual, and audio recorded data will be generated on what the researcher has collected from the past literature and interviewees opinions. From these exercises, the researcher could develop a database of words and pictures to form a qualitative database. The text database of information collected will enable the researcher to group the data into segments so as to determine the meaning of every group of texts.

### **Sampling Method**

Based on the topic area, the most appropriate sampling technique to use is purposive sampling. It is a type of sampling method that researchers use in qualitative research. The intention of purposive sampling when doing qualitative research is to select a small and not necessarily sample that is representative so as to acquire an in-depth understanding of the topic under investigation. The researcher will engage in making various strategic decisions regarding the objectives of the study. The researcher aims at achieving several objectives within the context of the research (Palys, 2008). Purposive sampling will be suitable for the study, since the researcher only aims at understanding the thoughts of the parents regarding the childhood obesity. The sampling method will help to provide views of why the respondents think in a particular way concerning the topic under investigation. The sampling method will assist the researcher in advancing the research by interviewing one informant to the next on childhood obesity. It means that purposive sampling is a useful technique to ensure that the participants are not created equally like in other sampling methods. Parents with and without children with obesity will be recruited to provide their views and opinions on childhood obesity. Purposive sampling will provide a heterogeneous group of respondents for the study. It will afford the researcher maximum opportunity to achieve a comparable analysis (Creswell, 2012).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, qualitative and quantitative research methods are primary research techniques widely used by researchers to carry out their investigations. It is important for researchers to know the differences between these methods of research to enable them to make the right choice of the research method that best suits their topic of study. Qualitative research was the most appropriate research method for my topic of interest. The research question raises

several objectives to be achieved after undertaking the investigation. The data that will be collected to answer the research question is text data both primary and secondary. The sampling method most suitable for the research topic is purposive sampling.

## References

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