

Converting Research into Practice

DBA

Doctor of Business Administration
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

What we have covered on Day 1

Overview of the module

Differences between PhD and DBA

What is expected from a Doctorate Research

Research Ethics Process

Dos and Don'ts in the Research Trajectory

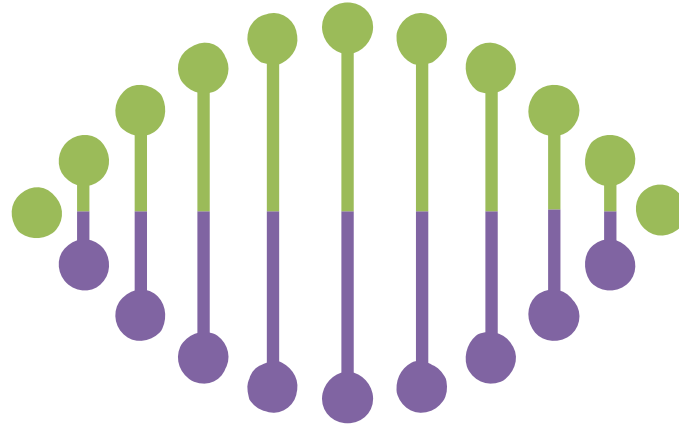
Day two: Jan 5

Conceptualize, design and implement a Research Project

How to write a Research Proposal and its Assessment

How to do Qualitative Research

Homework – think about YOUR interested area of Research



1. Conceptualize, design and implement a Research Project



How to conceptualize a Research



What is a concept?



What is a construct?



What is a variable?

A Concept

- an **abstract idea** or notion used to represent a general understanding of a phenomenon
- broadly encompass a range of related ideas or characteristics, representing a category or class of things
- provide a **conceptual framework** for understanding and organizing knowledge in a particular field

Example:

Organizational culture is a concept that represents the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices within an organization.

It captures the overall atmosphere, attitudes, and behaviors exhibited by employees and shapes the organization's identity.



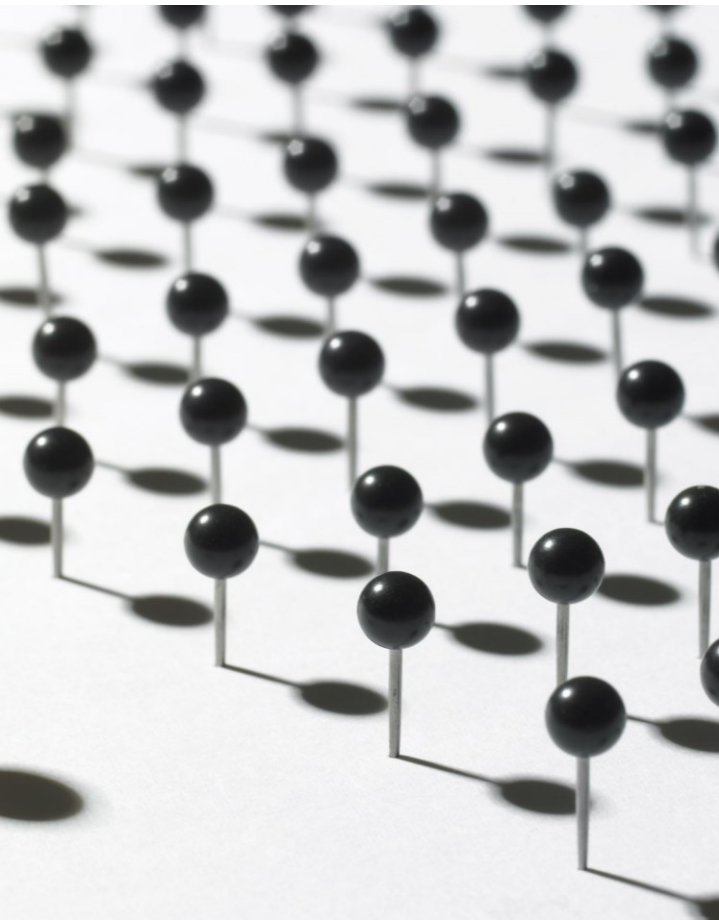
A Construct

- a more specific and **refined** representation of a **concept**
- a theoretical concept created by researchers to explain or measure specific aspects or dimensions within a broader concept
- constructs are often developed based on theoretical frameworks and are used to **operationalize concepts** for empirical research

Example:

Employee engagement is a construct derived from the **concept** of **organizational behavior**. It represents the psychological state of employees characterized by their dedication, enthusiasm, and involvement in their work.

Researchers develop **measurement scales** to assess the **level of employee engagement** within organizations.



A Variable

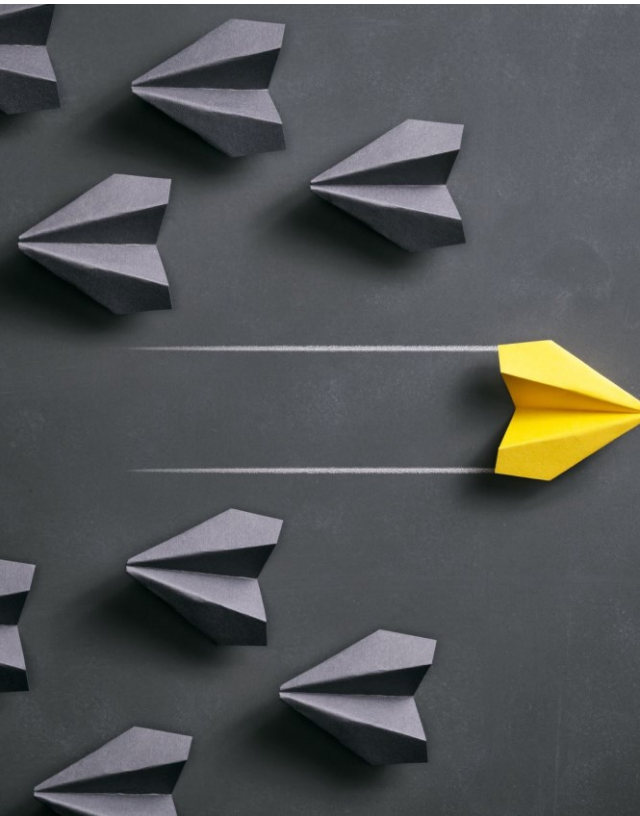
- a measurable characteristic or attribute that **can vary** or take on different values
- used to **operationalize constructs** in empirical research
- can be observed, manipulated, or **measured**
- often categorized as **independent** variables (predictors) or **dependent** variables (outcomes)

Example:

Leadership style is a variable that represents the approach a manager or leader adopts when directing and influencing their subordinates.

It can be categorized into different styles such as autocratic, democratic, transactional, servant, transformational leadership.

Researchers can measure this variable using surveys or observations.





- To summarize, a **concept** is a broad and abstract idea, a **construct** is a refined and specific representation of a concept, and a **variable** is a measurable attribute used to operationalize constructs in empirical research.
- These terms are **interconnected** and help researchers develop theoretical/conceptual frameworks, design studies, and analyze data in various fields, including business and management.



What doesn't count as a Research

Can we add to our state of knowledge
and improve things through:

- ❑ If I write an **autobiography** of my experiences as a successful entrepreneur, can this be considered research?
- ❑ If I write an autobiography of my experiences as a successful entrepreneur and **theoretically analyse** it, can this be considered research?
- ❑ If I write an autobiography of my experiences as a successful entrepreneur and theoretically analyse it, but the methods are **not** replicable and findings are **not** verifiable, can this be considered research?

Minimum requirement for a piece of work to be counted as “Research”



1. A Question



2. Data



3. Analysis and Interpretation



Research is carried out in order to ...

1. “a process of steps used to collect and analyse information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue” (Cresswell, 2005:3)
2. “systematic enquiry made public” (Stenhouse, 1979:7)

contribute to the **advancement of knowledge**

- Research adds to our knowledge
- Research improves practice
- Research informs policy debates

All research is Subjective and Partial!!!



All researchers begin with some instincts, ideas and frameworks from **past experiences** and **readings**



The researcher's **background** and knowledge, theories and **values** will always influence what is observed

Fundamental terms

Onotology

+

Epistemology

: about our beliefs about **reality** and **knowledge**

Nature of **Reality**

- What is the nature of reality/existence?

Nature of **Knowledge**

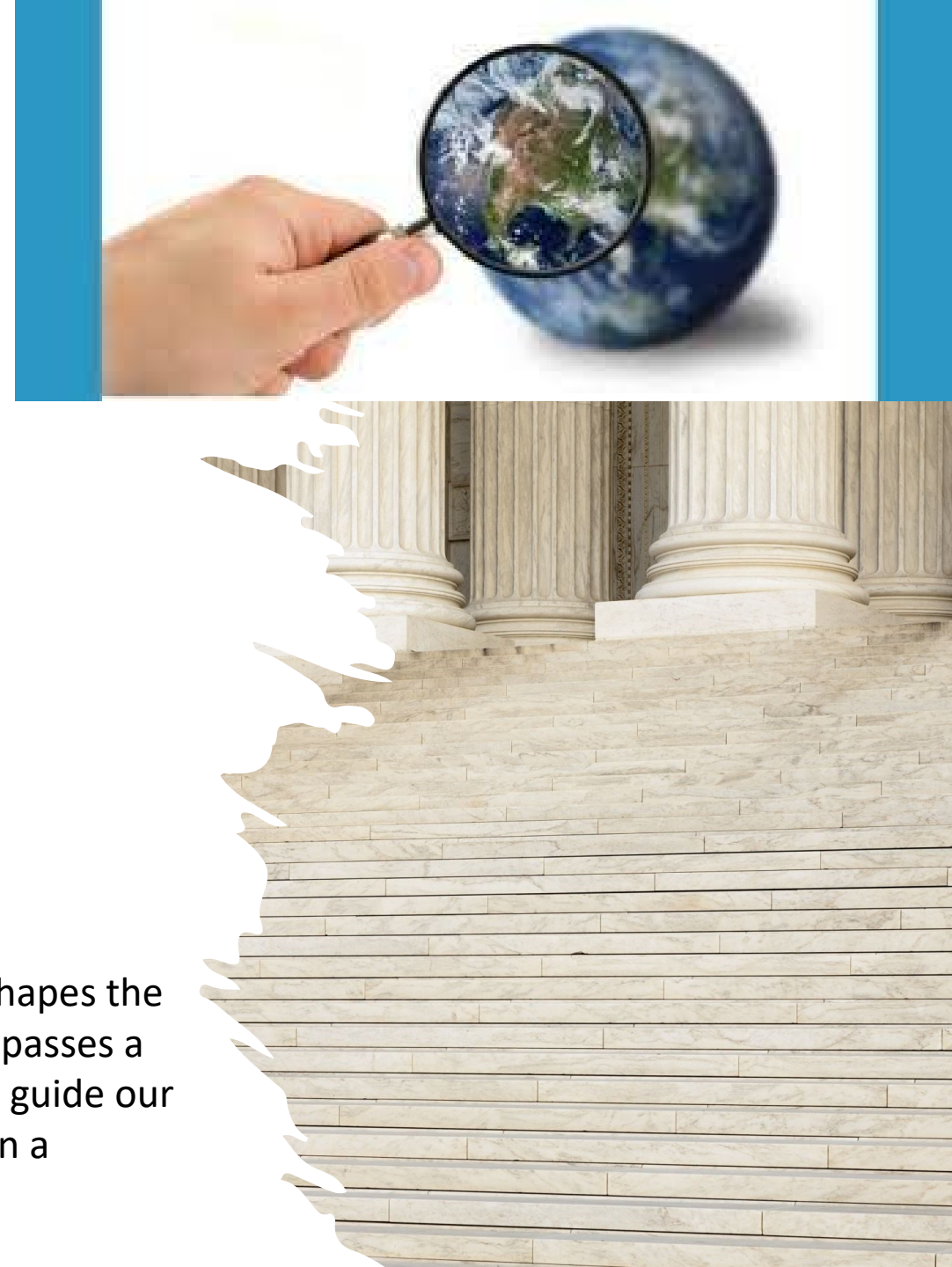
- How do we know what we know?
- What do you count as “knowledge”?
- What is the relationship between the researcher and the researched?

Perspectives/Paradigms /Traditions/Worldviews

- What kind of researcher are you?
- Set of **basic beliefs**, a world view that guides your inquiry
- “The beliefs are basic in the sense that they must be accepted simply on faith (however well argued); there is no way to establish their ultimate truthfulness”

(Guba and Lincoln, 1994:107)

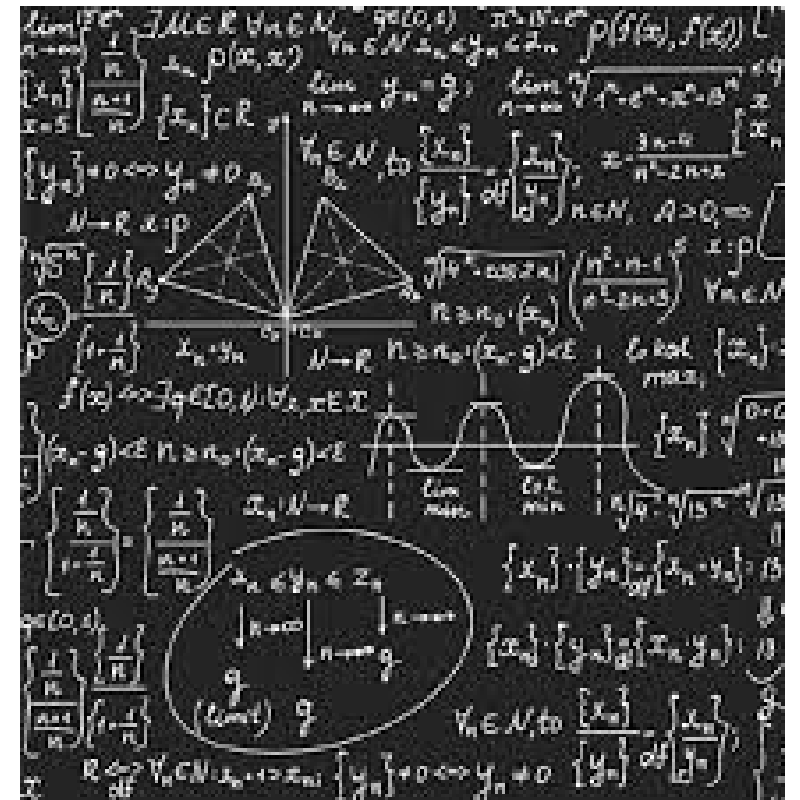
Paradigm is a framework or model that defines and shapes the way we perceive and understand the world. It encompasses a set of beliefs, values, assumptions, and practices that guide our thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving within a particular field or discipline.



Positivism Worldview (objective)

- ✓ **One Reality**: knowable within probability, meaning is already inherent in the objects it considers
- ✓ **Objectivity** is important: researcher observes in dispassionate objective manner
- ✓ Direct experience, not speculation, claims need to be **testable** (verifiable irrespective of researcher)
- ✓ Truth is **discoverable**, verifiable and **objective**, no statement is meaningful unless it can be verified

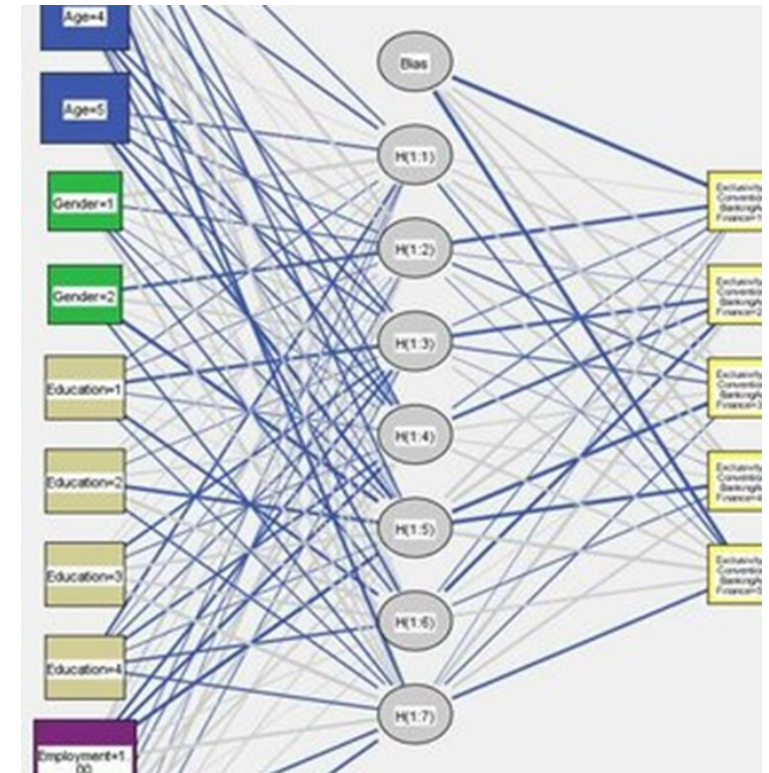
Quantitative research (primarily)



Post-Positivism Worldview (objective)

- ✓ A form of positivism, one that talks of **probability** rather than certainty, claims a certain level of objectivity rather than absolute objectivity, and seeks to approximate the truth
- ✓ Assess **causes** that influence outcomes
- ✓ Reduce ideas to a small set of ideas to test out as **variables**
- ✓ Research is governed by research hypothesis in **testing a theory**

Quantitative research (primarily)



Interpretivism Worldview (subjective/constructivist)

- ✓ Reality is **socially constructed** rather than discovered – there is a strong link between the researcher and participants
- ✓ Knowledge is located in social, economic and cultural **contexts**
- ✓ Researcher seeks **insights** and understanding
- ✓ Truth is partial and relative

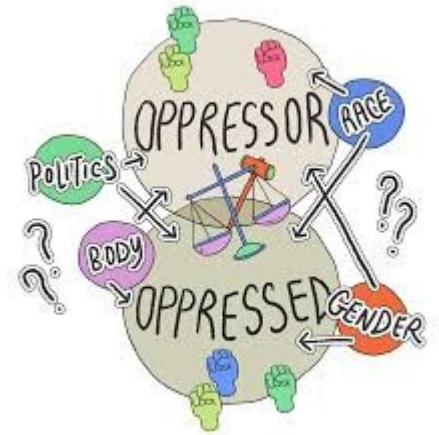
Qualitative research (primarily)



Emancipatory Worldview (critical/post-constructivist)

- ✓ Reality is a **social construct** structured by **unequal power** relationships
- ✓ Knowledge is located in social, economic and cultural contexts and imbued with **power**
- ✓ Researcher seeks to understand/uncover **social inequalities** and act to eliminate them.
- ✓ Researcher actively engages with the world and **seek to change** the world
- ✓ Truth is partial relative, and imbued with power

Qualitative research (dialogic), **Quantitative**



Basic beliefs associated with the major paradigms

Basic beliefs	Positivism/ Post-positivism	Interpretative/ constructivist	Emancipatory
Ontology (nature of reality)	One reality ; knowable within probability	Multiple, socially constructed realities	Multiple realities shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender & disability values
Epistemology (nature of knowledge, relation between knower and would be-known)	Objectivity is important Researcher manipulates & observes in dispassionate, objective manner	Interactive link between researcher & participants ; values are made explicit , created findings	Interactive link between researcher & participants; knowledge is socially & historically situated
Methodology (approach to systematic inquiry)	Quantitative (primarily); interventionist; decontextualized	Qualitative (primarily); hermeneutical; dialectical; contextual factors described	More emphasis on qualitative (dialogic) but quantitative design; contextual factors described



Critical issues

- Why (do you do) research?
- What **kind of knowledge** will you produce?
- What is the possible **impact** of your research (or the knowledge that you'll produce), for whom, and in whose interest?

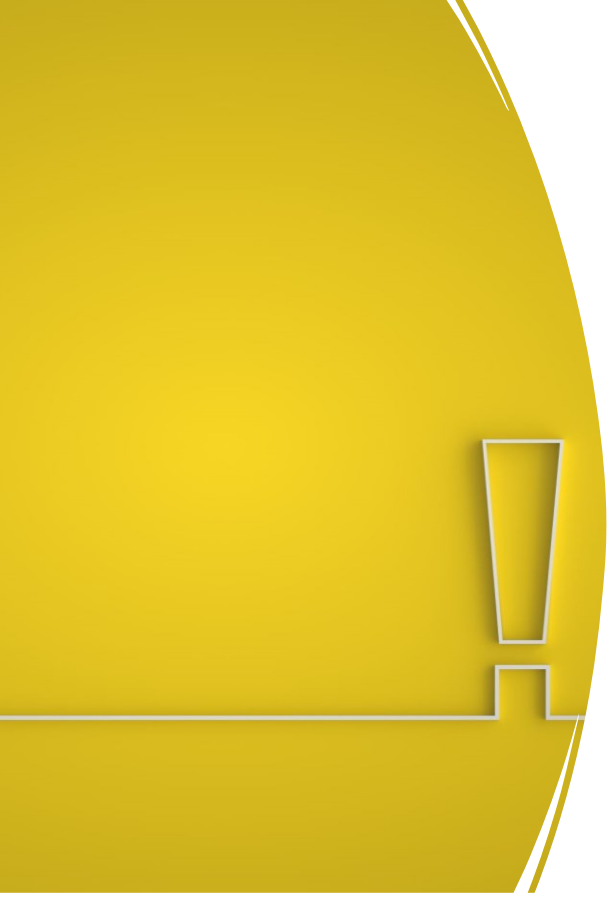
Kinds of Human Interest

Three kinds of interest which produce three different types of knowledge:

- A **technical interest** concerned with the control and prediction of the physical environment, which generates knowledge of causal relationships.
- A **practical interest** concerned with understanding the meaning of human action and communication, which generates communicative knowledge of sociocultural norms and meanings.
- An **emancipating** interest concerned with working for change and transformation, which generates critical (self-) knowledge exposing the ideologies of taken-for-granted “common sense”, conditions of domination, inequality and social injustice.

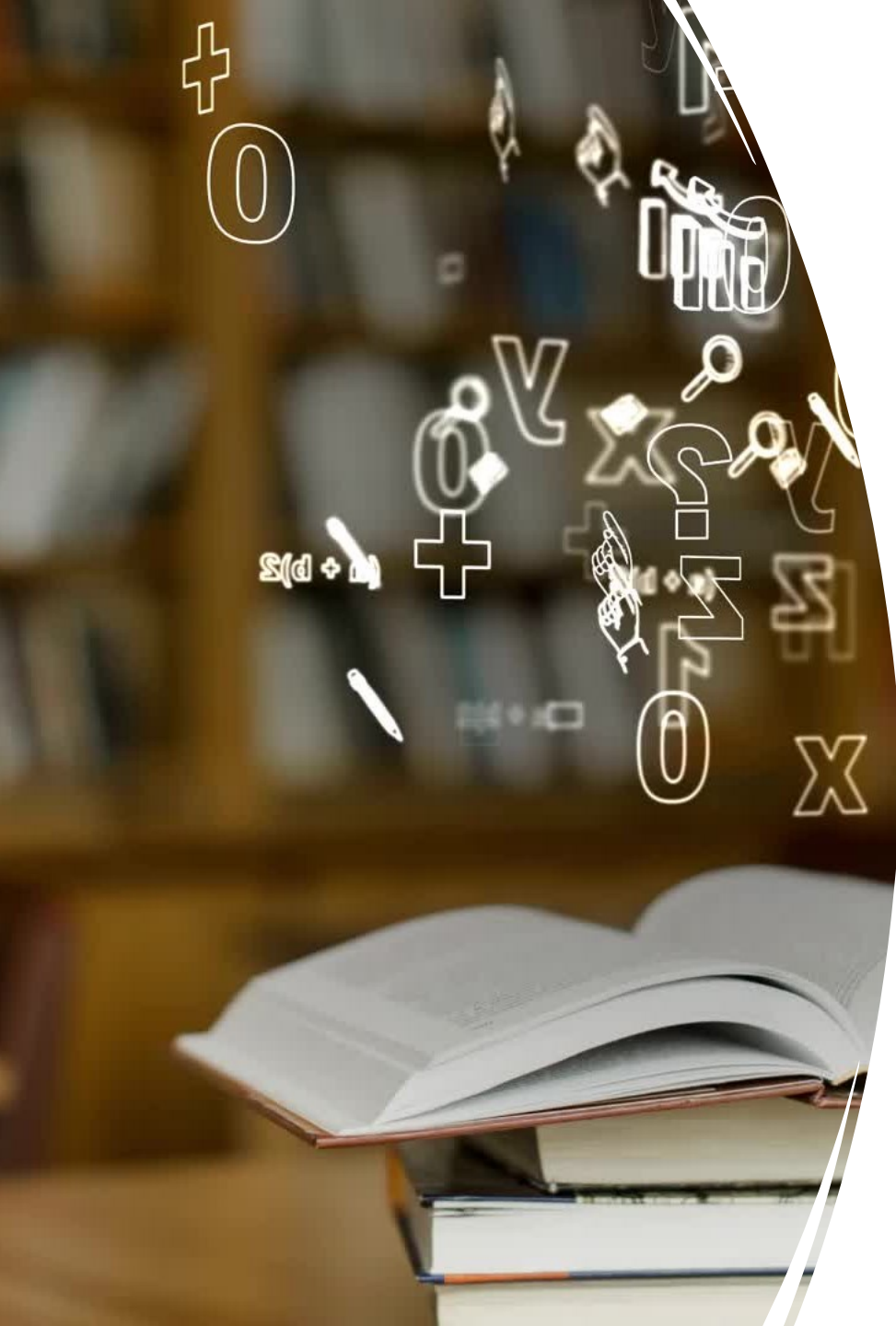
Human Interest, Knowledge and Research Paradigms

Types of Human Interest	Kinds of Knowledge	Research Paradigm
Technical (Work)	Instrumental / Descriptive (cause-effect regularities)	Positivist e.g., natural sciences, experimental psychology, cognitive science
Practical (Communicative)	Practical / Descriptive (sociocultural understanding)	Interpretive e.g., ethnography of communication, interactive sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, discourse analysis
Critical (Emancipatory)	Emancipatory / Reflexive / Transformative (self-knowledge, transformed consciousness/practice, ideological critique)	Critical e.g., critical ethnography, critical sociolinguistics, critical literacies, critical pedagogy



One ultimate issue: What is the “Positionality” of the Researcher?

- Which (socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political) **position** am I speaking from as a researcher?
- What kind(s) of **interest** do I have (primarily, explicitly / implicitly)?
- What kind(s) of **knowledge** do I want to produce (or will I produce), with what kind(s) of **impact**, and for whom? Whose voice(s) will be heard?
- What kind(s) of **research paradigms** (and associated research methods) do I need?



Positionality Statement

- A positionality statement makes clear how the **identities of the authors** relate to the research topic and to the identities of the participants, and how these identities are represented.

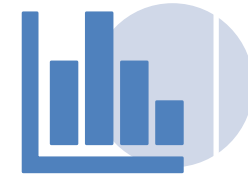
Minimum requirement for a piece of work to be counted as “Research”



1. A Question



2. Data



3. Analysis and
Interpretation

1. Develop a Question



For **quantitative** research

- begin with the word **why** so as to suggest probable cause-and-effect relationships
- use action verbs such as **affect, relate, compare, determine, cause, and influence**



For **qualitative** research

- begin with the word **how** or **what**
- ask question that use neutral, exploratory language and not conveying an expected direction
- use action verbs such as **generate, discover, understand, and explore**

Develop a Purpose Statement

What is the purpose of your study? Why should anyone have interested in it?

- The purpose of this **quantitative** study is to (compare/determine) what the _____ differences between _____ and _____
- The purpose of this **qualitative** study is to (explore/discover/understand/describe) (the central phenomenon) for (participants) at (research site).

2. Data → Methodology



For **Quantitative** research

- Surveys
- Observations
- Experiments
- Factual account, outcome report

**validity, reliability,
generalizability, objectivity**



For **Qualitative** research

- Observations
- Field notes
- Audio/video recordings
- Narratives
- Interviews
- Focus group discussions

**credibility, transferability,
dependability, confirmability**

Systematic research should:



1. Link to and **build on existing knowledge** in the literature, thus adding to the body of language



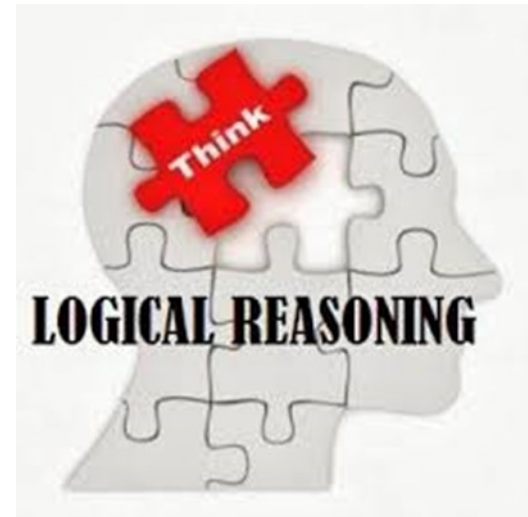
2. Use **organized processes** of enquiry: use systematic methods of research, linked to existing methodology, providing a justification for knowledge **claims**



3. Engage in **theory building** – resulting in the construction of some systematically organized body of reflective knowledge, and a systematic text or communicative form

Logical reasoning

- Reasoning is the process of using existing **knowledge** to draw **conclusions**, make **predictions**, or construct **explanations**.
- Three methods of reasoning: deductive, inductive & abductive.



1. Deductive reasoning

- start with the assertion of a **general rule** or principle and proceed from there to a **guaranteed specific conclusion**
- apply established theories, principles to reach the logical conclusion
- if the original assertions are true, then the conclusion must also be true (**conclusion guaranteed**)

Math is deductive; e.g.

If $X = 4$,

and if $Y = 1$,

then $2X + Y = 9$

1. Deductive reasoning

A classic example:

- All men are mortal.
- Socrates is a man.
- Socrates is mortal.

(Ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates)

Example:

- A medical technology ought to be funded if it has been used successfully to treat patients.
- Adult stem cells are being used to treat patients successfully in more than sixty-five new therapies.
- Adult stem cell research and technology should be funded.

2. Inductive reasoning

- begin with **observations** or examples that are specific and limited in scope, to **broader generalizations** or conclusion, that is likely, but not certain, in the light of accumulated evidence
- move from the specific to the general
- draw conclusions based on patterns, trends, or evidence from specific instances (**conclusion is merely likely**)

Example

Every cat I have seen has fur, so all cats must have fur.

2. Inductive reasoning

- scientific literature itself uses cautious language: inductively reached probable conclusions

Example 1

What we have seen is the ability of these cells to feed the blood vessels of tumors and to heal the blood vessels surrounding wounds. The findings suggest that these adult stem cells may be an ideal source of cells for clinical therapy. For example, we can envision the use of these stem cells for therapies against cancer tumors ...

2. Inductive reasoning

- cannot yield an absolutely certain conclusion, but it can actually increase human knowledge
- can **make predictions** about future events or not yet unobserved phenomena

Example 2

Albert Einstein observed the movement of a pocket compass when he was five years old and became fascinated with the idea that something invisible in the space around the compass needle was causing it to move. This observation, combined with additional observations (of moving trains, for example) and the results of logical and mathematical tools (deduction), resulted in a rule that could explain his observations and predict events that were not yet unobserved.

3. Abductive reasoning

- typically begin with an **incomplete set of observations** and proceed to the likeliest possible or best explanation for the set
- made **educated guesses** or inferences based on incomplete or limited information
- it yields the kind of **daily decision-making** that does its best with the information at hand, which often is **incomplete**;
- can be creative, intuitive, even revolutionary (**taking your best shot**)

Example

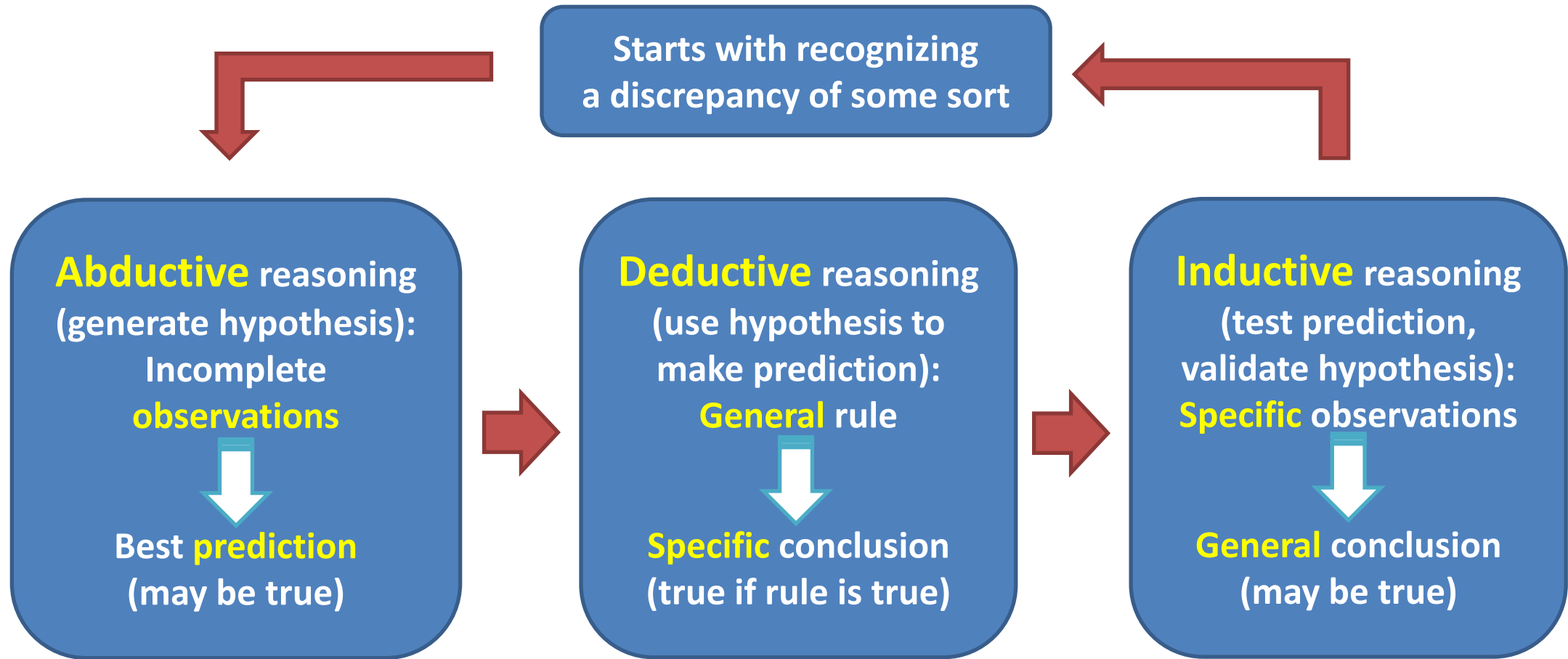
The grass is wet, and there are dark clouds in the sky. It is likely that it rained.

3. Abductive reasoning

Examples

1. The patient has a fever, cough, and fatigue. It is possible to have a viral infection.
2. Another patient may be unconscious or fail to report every symptom, for example, resulting in incomplete evidence, or a doctor may arrive at a diagnosis that fails to explain several of the symptoms. Still, he must reach the best diagnosis he can.
3. When jurors hear evidence in a criminal case, they must consider whether the prosecution or the defense has the best explanation to cover all the points of evidence. While there may be no certainty about their verdict, since there may exist additional evidence that was not admitted in the case, they make their best guess based on what they know.

Three methods of reasoning



- These forms of reasoning are **not mutually exclusive**, and they often work together in various ways to support problem-solving and decision-making.
- Each type of reasoning has its own strengths and limitations, and they are used in **different contexts** depending on the nature of the problem or inquiry at hand.

Three other Paradigms in a research

An example

- You intend to 'explore' the nature of **staff induction** provided by an organization for newly appointed staff at your place of work.
- You may '**see**' this research topic in three different paradigms, range from deductive to inductive in the **assumptions**.
- It decides which **methodology** you would like to adopt.

Three paradigms to investigate new staff's induction

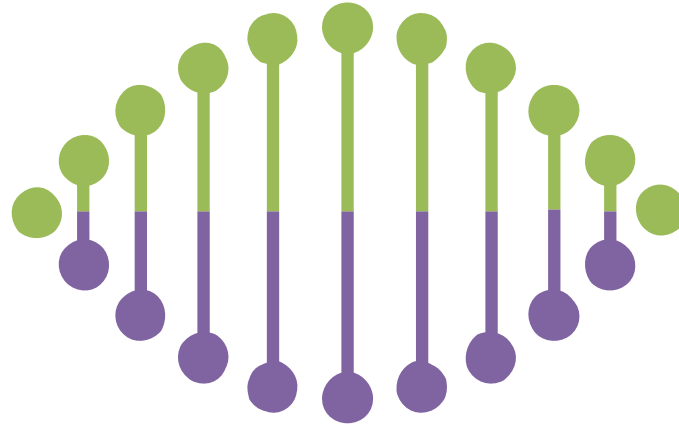
	Economic Paradigm	Development Paradigm	Social Paradigm
What do staff mean to the organization	Full economic value to the organization only when the staff can operate at an optimal value of performance	Professional value of new staff should be nurtured and supported so that they can contribute to the collective professionalism	To incorporate new staff with the 'ways of doing things around here' so that they can ' fit in ', make them ' belong '
Assumptions	Staff induction is a means which should be shortened; increase the new staff's productivity	Staff induction is for development so that new staff become familiar with the existing professional ethic; share expectation & norms of colleagues	Staff induction acquaints new staff with the history, culture, procedures, norms and values of the organization
Investigatory approaches	deductive economic modelling surveying respondents reliable, generalizable	deductive/inductive multi-disciplinary multiple methods	inductive observational, multiple methods



How to **Design** a Research Project

- Critical evaluation of the **topic** chosen
- With clear application of criteria including **significance, appropriateness, practicality, manageability** and academic and practical **contribution**

To start off from writing the Research Proposal



2. How to write a Research Proposal and its Assessment

Research Proposal serves a Triple Goal

01

**Justify why
there is a need
for your
research**

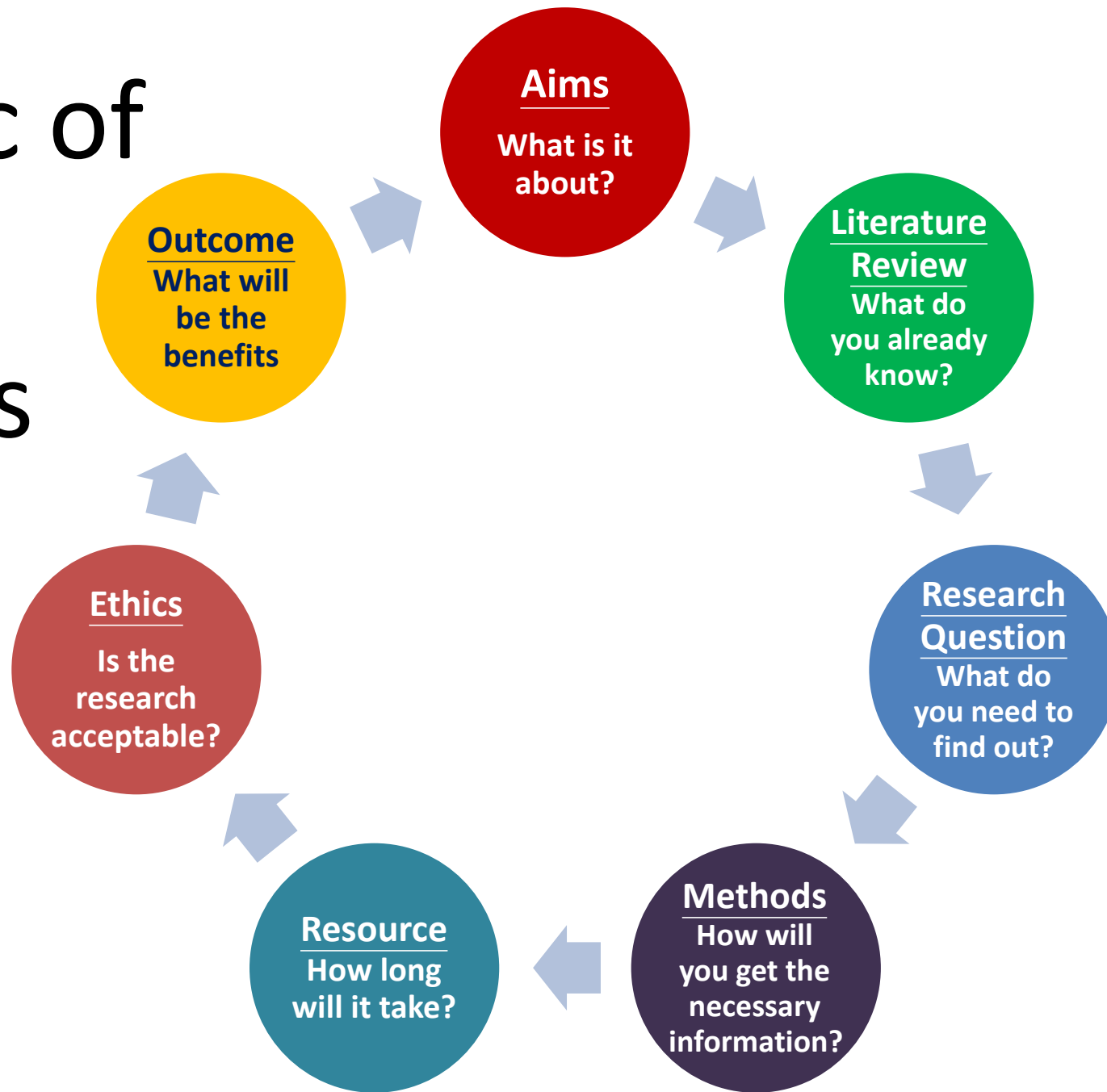
02

**Elaborate why
your research is
feasible**

03

**Explain the
perspectives of
your research**

The Logic of Research Proposals



The Structure of Research Proposal

Typical Headings/Sections	Basic Questions	Characteristics
Title	What is it all about?	Clarity, accuracy, concise Can be written last
Keywords		Specify key concepts, search engine
Aims		Original, significant
Background		Set the scene – problem statement
Literature Review	What do you already know ?	
Research Questions	What do you need to find out?	
Methods	How will you get the necessary information?	
Planning and Resources	How long will it take and cost?	
Ethics	Is the research ethically acceptable?	
Outcomes	What will be the benefits?	Originality, significance

Research Aims

Scope and scale of Research Aims

Example

- To investigate the impact of leadership styles on organizational performance: This research aim focuses on exploring different leadership styles (e.g., transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) and their effects on various organizational performance indicators such as productivity, employee satisfaction, and financial performance.

--- Is it too general?

- Specify what type of industry, what types of organization, what country/city? What else?



Research Aims



Example

- To explore the factors influencing employee engagement in the digital era: This research aim involves investigating the role of technology and digitalization in employee engagement.
 - **How to refine?**
- It could focus on identifying factors such as remote work, virtual collaboration tools, and flexible work arrangements that influence employee engagement in the digital workplace.

Background

- **Historical** context – Post covid pandemic
- **Policy** context – change in policies, laws, regulations
- **Economic** context – financial crisis
- **Social-cultural , technological** context ...
- Practical problems – does the research arise in response to certain particular problems?

Key ideas

- are there particular theories, authors or opinion leaders whose ideas form a backdrop to the proposed research?
- introduce the key concepts and place the research topic in the contemporary academic context
- explain why the research topic is **significant**



Let's discuss

- In your opinion, what are the features of a good **literature review**?
- How will you do it?



Literature Review

Why need?

To develop **new knowledge**, you need to show an understanding of what **has gone before**

... hence the literature review ...

... locating your study in its field and **borrowing, adapting** (or critiquing) existing ideas/concepts

Role of Literature Review

- Focus and clarify your **research problem**
- Expose you to **theories** and **methods** in your topic area
- Highlight key terms, concepts and debates in your topic area
- Assist you in **identifying a 'gap'**



Literature Review

- What **strategies** will you use for developing your literature review?
- What **key challenges** do you anticipate and how might you tackle them?

Five Steps

1. Identify **key Search terms**
2. Locate literature
3. Select literature for review
4. Organise the literature
5. Write literature review

Creswell, 2012



Literature Search



Five ways to identify main published material on a **specific** topic

1. **Expert** advice – **key authors**
2. **Internet** searches – keyword search, Google Scholar, Google Scholar **Alerts**, ResearchGate, ChatGPT
3. References in textbooks, articles
4. Online databases
5. Review articles – **literature review articles**
6. **AI tools?**

Some Academic Journals in Management

- Academy of Management Journal
- Academy of Management Perspectives
- Academy of Management Review
- Business Perspectives and Research
- Business Research
- California Management Review
- European Journal of Management and Business Economics
- Harvard Business Review
- Human Relations
- International Journal of Management Reviews
- Journal of Business Research
- Journal of Management
- Journal of Management Studies
- Long Range Planning
- Management and Organization Review
- Management Learning
- MIT Sloan Management Review
- Organization Studies
- Strategic Management Journal

Practical Tips

1. Find a thesis with **similar or related topics** as yours
– look at its Literature Review & References

2. Follow **Key Authors' publications**
in Google Scholar Alerts

- 1 new citation to articles by Anthony Welch



• Google Scholar Alerts www.google.com >

寄件人 : scholaralerts-noreply@google.com

收件人 : aliceteyc@yahoo.com.hk



15/12

China's Response to globalization and higher education reform: Challenges and Policy Implications

KH Mok, G KE, Z Tian - The Oxford Handbook of Education and Globalization, 2023

With a strong conviction to transform the country and prepare its people to cope with the growing challenges of the globalizing market, the Chinese government has actively increased more opportunities for higher education. The higher education system in China has experienced the processes of massification and transnationalization, especially when the Chinese government has tried to diversify its higher education provision through non-state sector providers, including overseas ...

- Cites: Government innovation policy and higher education: the case of ...

Practical Tips

3. Go to Specific Journals and sign up the Alerts

 **Wiley**
wiley.com

• Early View Alert: Higher Education Quarterly

WILEY

• **Higher Education Quarterly** [wiley.com](#) >

寄件人: wileyonlinelibrary@wiley.com
收件人: aliceteyc@yahoo.com.hk

 14/1

View newly published Online Version of Record articles before inclusion in an issue.

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Higher Education Quarterly



Higher Education Quarterly

Early View

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• Alice, new research is available from a journal you follow

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• **ResearchGate**  [researchgate.net](#) >

寄件人: no-reply@researchgatemail.net

收件人: aliceteyc@yahoo.com.hk

 20/12 (週三) 下午6:30 ☆

ResearchGate

Alice, here's the latest research from journals you follow

Deployment of academic staff and disciplinary contexts in strategies for curriculum internationalization: a dynamic resource-based view of organizational change

Practical Tips

4. ResearchGate – see what other scholars you follow recommend

- Yingxin Liu recommended this article

Yahoo/收件箱



• ResearchGate  researchgate.net >
寄件人：no-reply@researchgatemail.net
收件人：Alice Te



26/12 (週二) 下午1:31

ResearchGate

This week's research from your network



[Yingxin Liu](#) · a researcher you follow
recommended this article

**Exploring the impact of organizational characteristics on
research agendas across scientific fields**

Article Dec 2023

Practical Tips

5. Others - <https://www.academia.edu/>

-  "Increasing professionalization and vocationalization of continuing education in Hong Kong: Trends and Issues" by Maureen Tam

Yahoo/收件箱



• PDF By Maureen Tam www.academia.edu >

寄件人：updates@academia-mail.com [取消訂閱](#)

收件人：alicyetec@yahoo.com.hk



26/12 (週二) 下午10:22

ACADEMIA

From your Reading History:

[Increasing professionalization and vocationalization of continuing education in Hong Kong: Trends and Issues](#)

Some resources for your references or self-learning

- [HKU Scholars Hub: Home](#)
- [Theses and dissertations | Bodleian Libraries \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)
- [HBS Theses and Dissertations \(harvard.edu\)](#)
- [Video Resources for Doctoral Students \(ied.edu.hk\)](#)
- [NUS: Quantitative and Qualitative Research for Beginners | edX](#)

Literature Review

1. How much?

Number of sources to be cited in the proposal?

2. Which ones?

Relevant to your research aims, key concepts, main theories, the influential scholars

3. What types?

Academic journals, books, conference proceedings, practitioner journals, official publications, reference materials (encyclopedia)



How do I 'review' the publications

Mapping out the area:

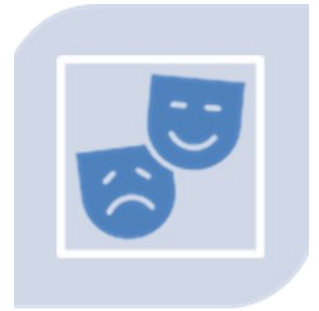
- What are the **key studies**?
- Who are the **main authors** in the area? – classic, contemporary, list at least three each
- What are the **core issues** and **problems** addressed by the literature?



How do I 'review' the publications

Taking an overview of the area:

- What are the common areas of **agreement** among the authors?
- What are the **overall findings** from their research?
- Where are the areas of **disagreement**, contradictions, and gaps in the material?
- What **new research** might be valuable to move things forward?



Top Tips

- **Don't just list** what others have said and done
- Literature review is NOT a catalogue or inventory of items

Develop an **Argument**

- Avoid too much “He Says, She Says”
- Avoid too many references in brackets for a single point (A, 2003; B, 2005; C, 1999; D, 2004; E 2011; F, 2022)
- ✓ Good Literature contains **synthesis**, summing-up and shows linkages to your research
 - ✓ The idea is to **compare & contrast** the works, and to look for common elements, and to note what **strengths & weaknesses** there are in the works.

Top Tips

Be critical



How to be critical?

“ What are the **claims** of the authors?

” Are the authors' claims warranted? Are they backed up by sufficient evidence & reasoning?

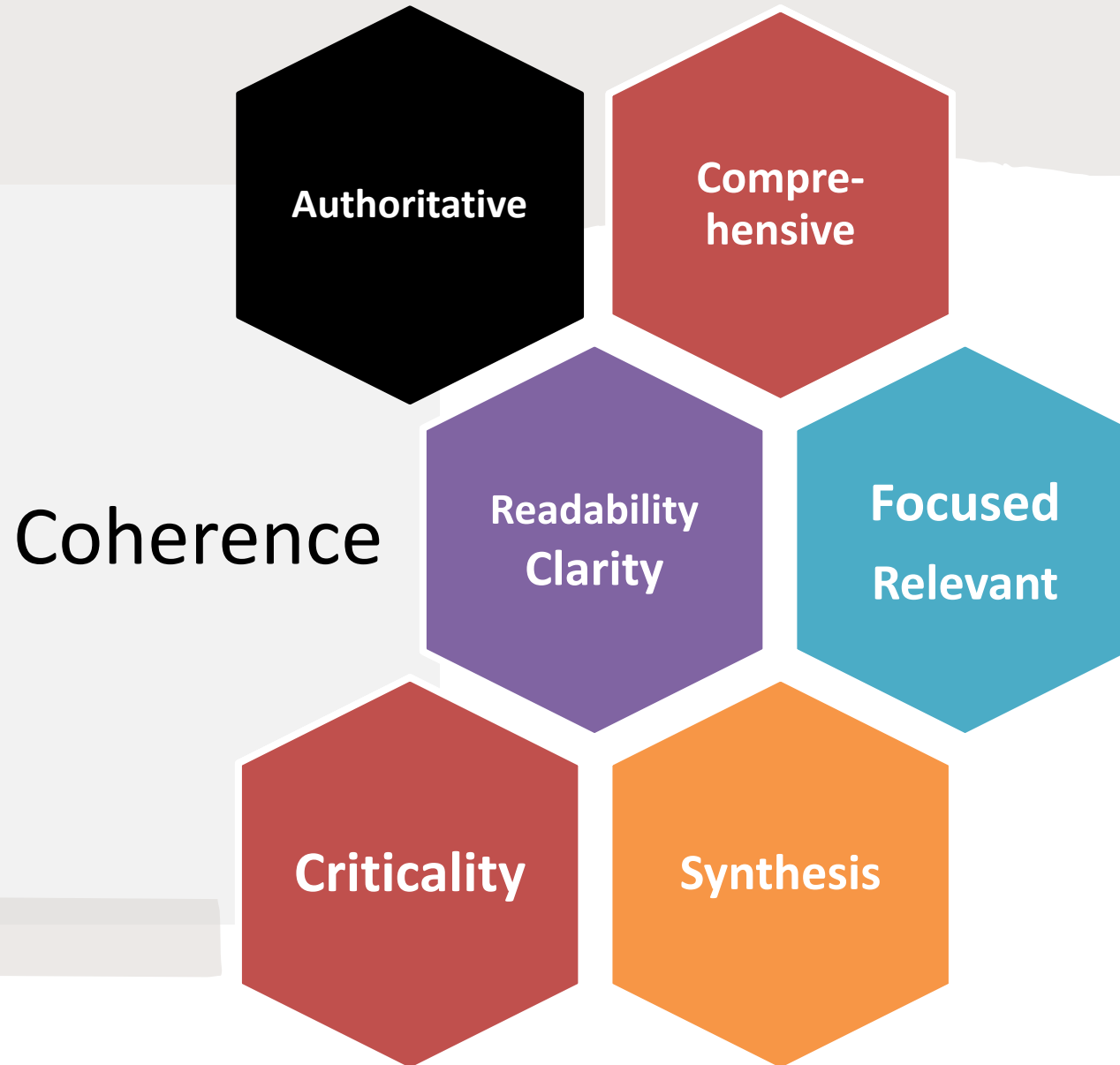
🖨 Is enough information given about the **methods** used to collect & analyse their data?

⚖ Are the authors impartial & objective? How far do their values shape their conclusion?

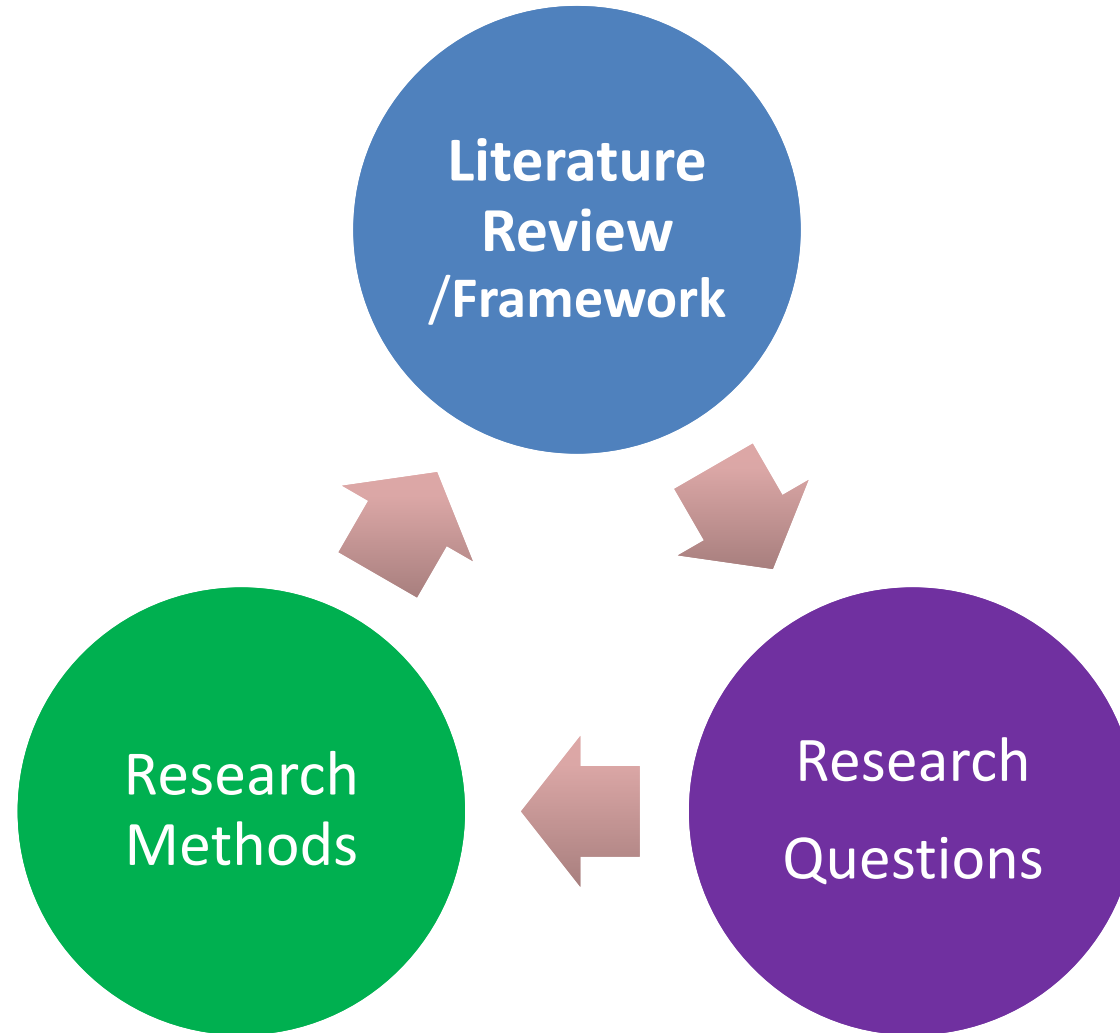
⚠ How recent is the work & how relevant are its findings on **today's** circumstances?

✓ How far is it reasonable to **generalize** from the particular findings?

Quality Literature Review should be:



Coherence



After literature review

Show there is a need for your proposed research



**Build Upon
Existing
Knowledge**



**Fill A Gap In
Existing
Knowledge**

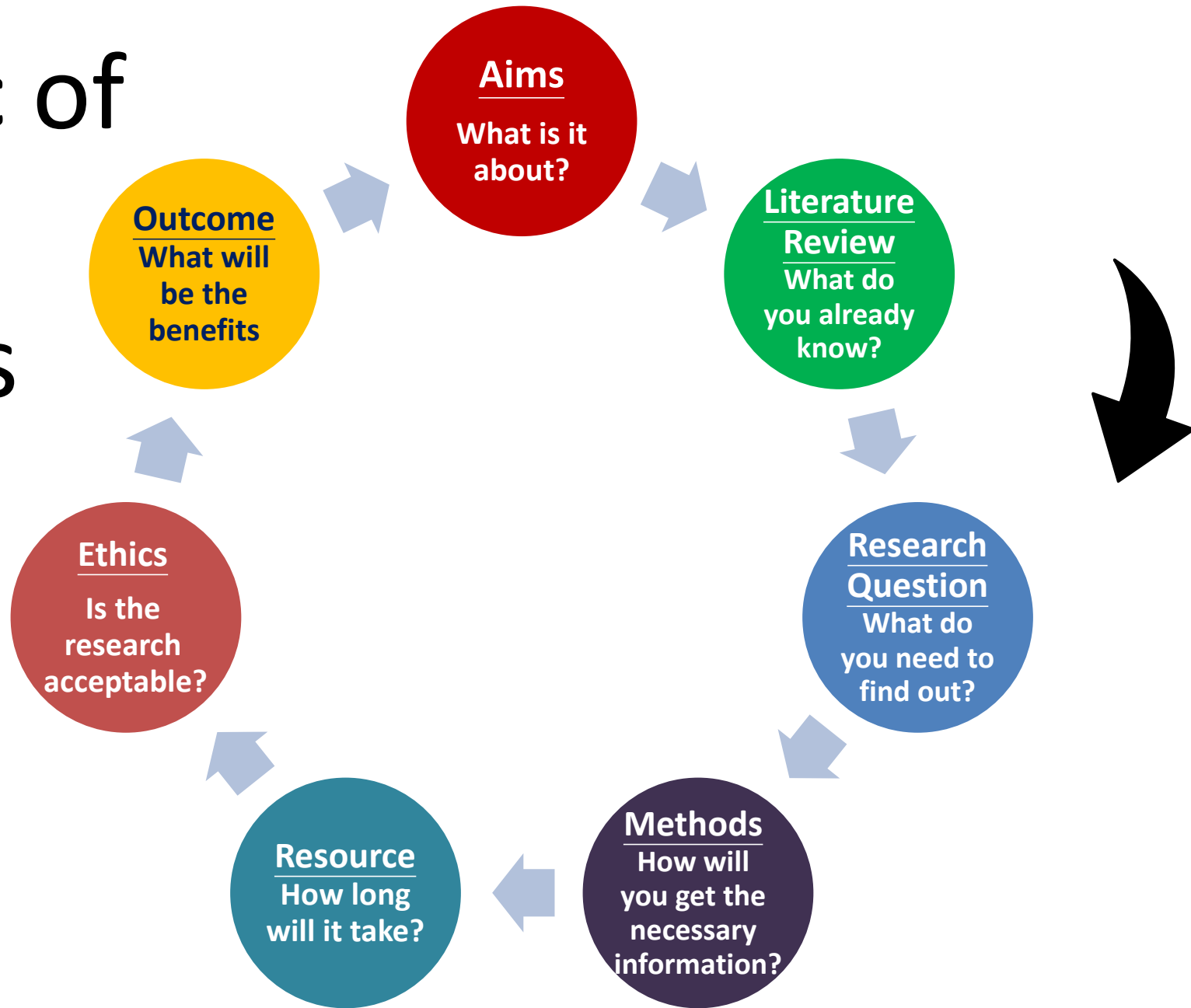


**Adopt A
Critical
Stance**



**Tackle A
Problem**

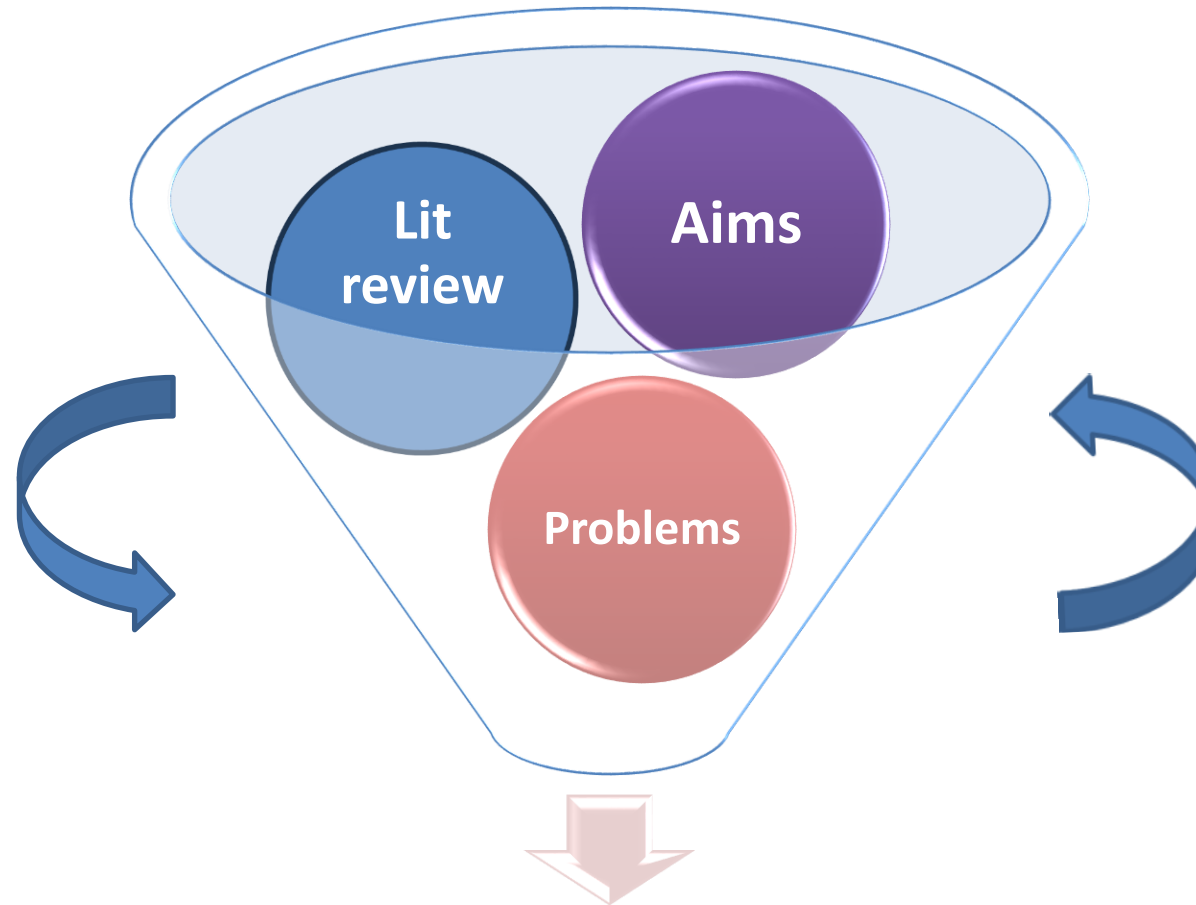
The Logic of Research Proposals



Narrowing the Focus of Research



Iterative process of formulating Research Questions



Research Questions

What, when, where, who, why



Formulation of Research Questions

Good Questions:

- ✓ Are the research questions consistent with each other, and linked to each other? Do they add up to a sensible whole?
 - ✓ Are they **coherent** and transparent? Can someone other than the researcher understand them?
 - ✓ Do they make possible, and probable, intellectually interesting answers or arguments?
 - ✓ Are they **original** and worth asking, as well as grounded in an understanding of the relevant background literature?
- 

Framing Research Questions

- Research is the pursuit of knowledge through **Questioning**
- Generated from your “gap”
- Address the research aims and objectives
- Guide the Methodology

Example of a Quantitative Study

Title of thesis: A Study of the Relationships between Listed Companies' Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Reporting, Company Value and Investment Risk in Hong Kong

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Do the board attributes affect ESG performance of listed companies in Hong Kong?

Hypothesis 1A: ESG score is positively related to the board size

Hypothesis 1B: ESG score is positively related to the proportion of independent non-executive directors

Hypothesis 1C: ESG score is positively related to the separation of the roles of chairman and chief executive officer

Research Question 2: Does ESG performance affect the company value of listed companies in Hong Kong?

Hypothesis 2: The price-book value ratio is positively related to ESG score

Research Question 3: Does ESG performance affect the investment risk of listed companies in Hong Kong?

Hypothesis 3: The annual share price volatility is negatively related to ESG score

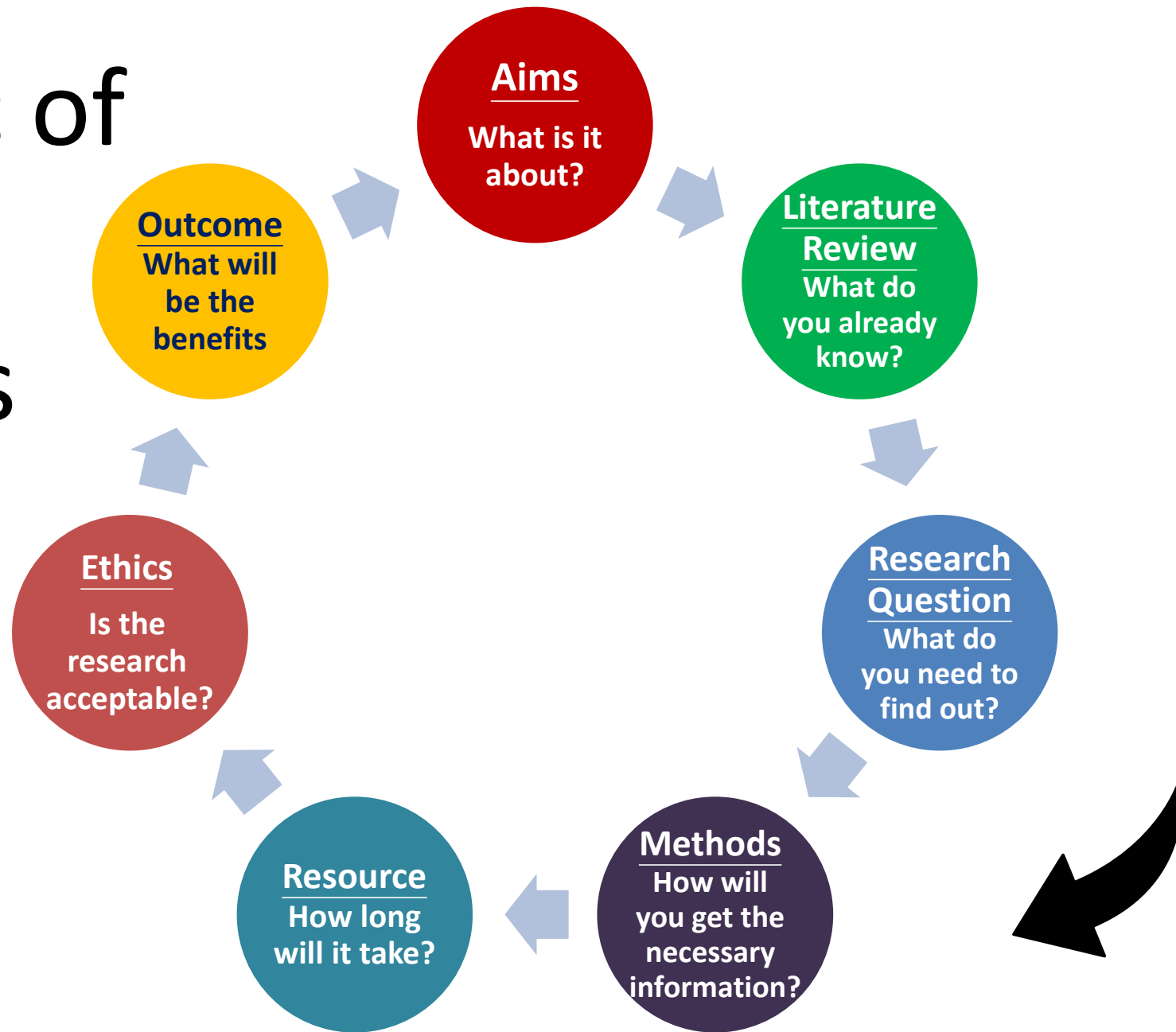
Example of a Mixed method Study

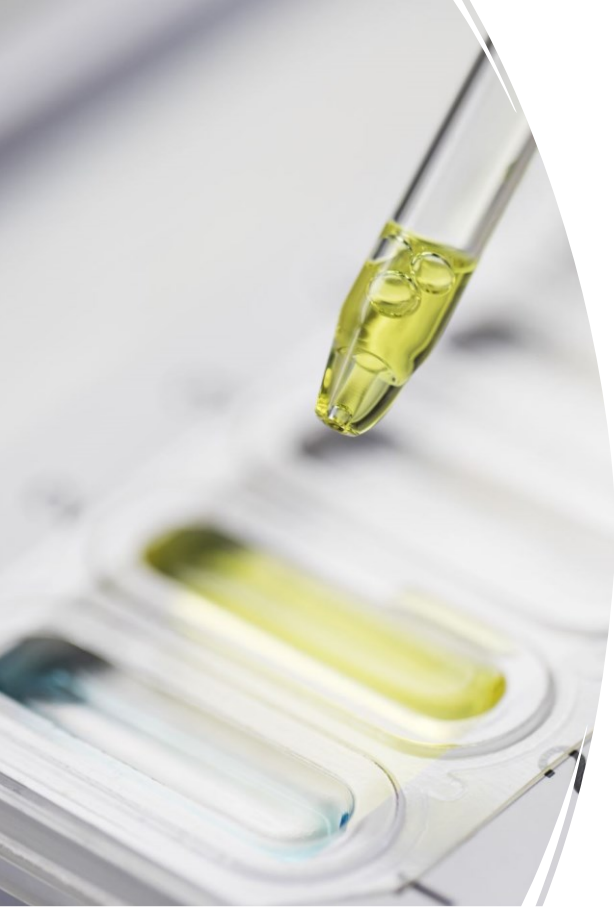
Research Objectives	Research Questions
(1) To explore police officers' perception and satisfaction with the process of strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation carried out in the Force.	(1) What is the perception of frontline police officers on Force strategic management practices, including strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation? (2) What is the relationship between “Force Vision, Common Purpose and Values” and strategic management?
(2) To explore what critical factors and conditions that impact on the Force strategic management process.	(3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the strategic management practice in the Force? (4) Is strategic management of value to the Force, i.e., can it help the Force succeed in a VUCA world? And how? (5) What are the critical success and failure factors that contribute to an effective strategic management process in the Force?
(3) To test the applicability and usefulness of the 3H framework (Heart, Head and Hand dimensions) towards building a holistic strategic management model in the Force.	(6) How is the 3H framework (Heart, Head and Hand) being applied in building a holistic strategic management model in the Force?

Table 1.1 – Research objectives and research questions

Source: Cheung, H.Y. (2022) Towards developing a holistic strategic management in the Hong Kong Police Force, doctoral dissertation, The University of Wales, TSD

The Logic of Research Proposals





Research Methods

To answer the Research Questions:

-
- What research **strategy** will be used?
 - **How** will the data be collected?
 - **Who, or what**, will be included?
 - How will the data be **analysed**?

Unit of analysis

– individuals, groups, or institutions?

Sources of data?

Connections between Research Questions and Research Methods

How does each method or data source assist you in addressing different types of research questions?

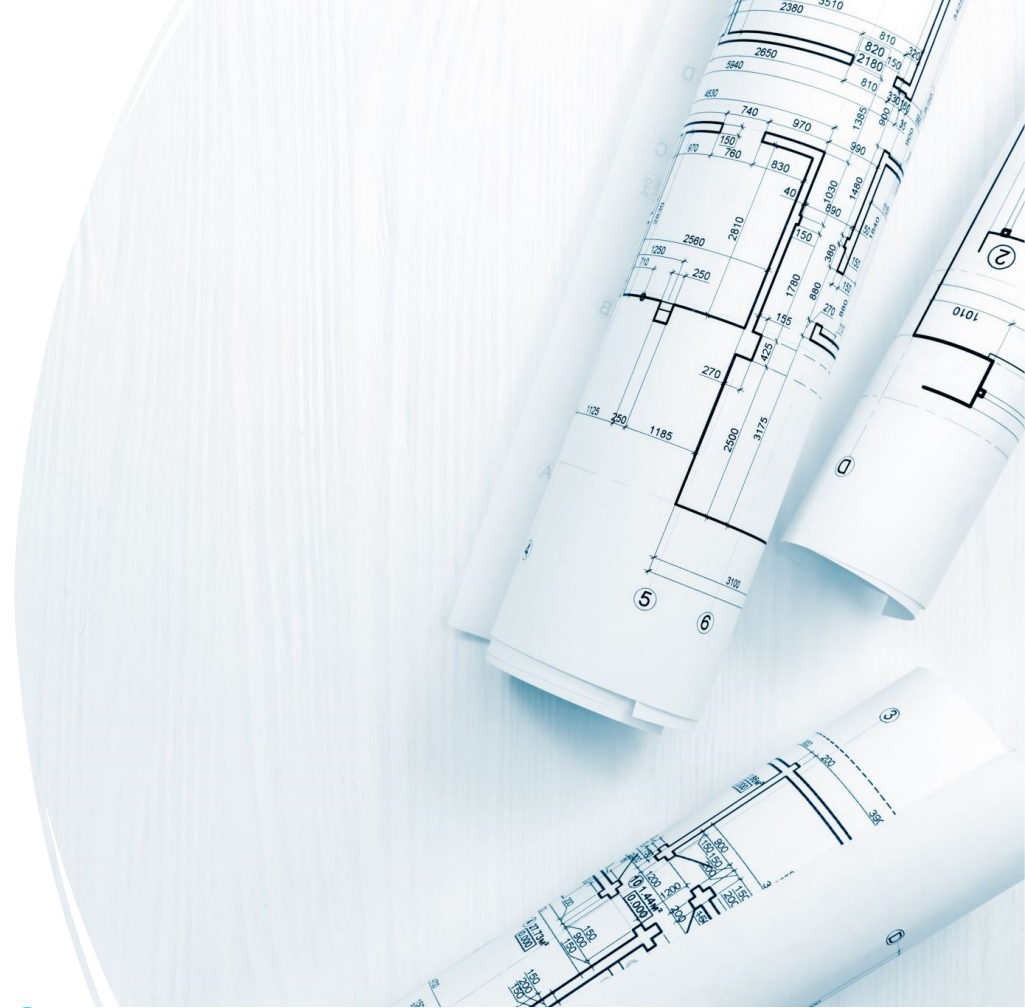
Questions

- What **data sources** and **methods** of data generation will be used?
- What can these methods and sources tell you? Which phenomena and components can these data sources and methods help you to address (ontologically)?
- What kinds of **warrants** (e.g. what counts as evidence, interpreted from data) will be used to **support your claims** (epistemologically)?
- Which research questions will different kinds of data help you address?

Planning and Resources

- Plan the time and schedule for each phase
- Scale of the project – **pilot study**
- Costs – e.g. incentive for participants

Practicality, manageability



Ethics

Approval
procedure

Documentations

Outcome/ Contributions



Theoretical contribution

develop new theories/concepts
enhance existing theories/models
apply theories in new context



Professional/practical

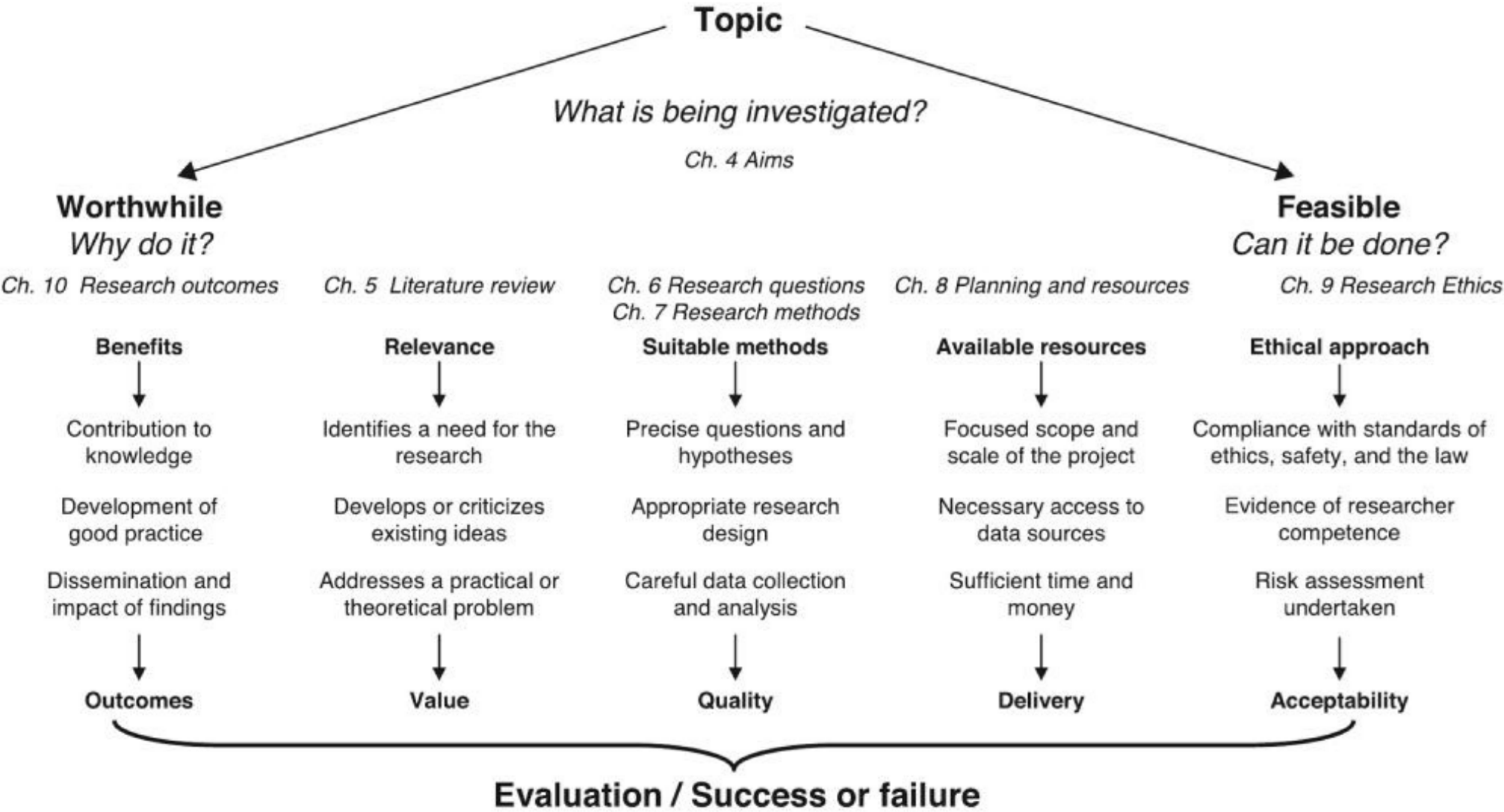
supply new information; make
recommendation for industry &
organisations; develop Guidelines
for Good Practice



Policies implications

make recommendations to
government and public bodies

FIGURE 2.1 The essential elements of a research proposal



Assessment of a Research Proposal

Seek advice and support
from your supervisors



Can your Proposal meet...

Research Significance:

- ❑ clearly demonstrate the significance and relevance of the research topic
- ❑ address a gap in the existing literature
- ❑ contribute to theoretical knowledge, practical implications for the specific field

Research Aims, Objectives and Research Questions:

- ❑ outline clear research aims, objectives and specific research questions that the study aims to answer
- ❑ achievable and aligned with the scope of the programme

Methodological Rigor:

- ❑ describe a robust research methodology appropriate to address the research questions
- ❑ include details on the research design, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, and any ethical considerations



Can your Proposal meet...

Literature Review:

- ❑ include a comprehensive review of relevant literature on the research topic
- ❑ demonstrate a thorough understanding of the existing knowledge and theories in the field and highlight the research gap that the study aims to fill

Feasibility and Resources:

- ❑ demonstrate the project is feasible within the time frame and available resources
- ❑ outline the data sources, access to participants, and potential challenges or limitations that may arise during the research process

Contribution to Practice:

- ❑ articulate how the research findings will contribute to practical implications and provide actionable recommendations for professionals or organizations

Clarity and Organization:

- ❑ well-written, logically structured, and free from grammatical errors
- ❑ effectively communicate the research aims, objectives, and methodology



Let's discuss - Example 1

Title: **Enhancing Organizational Agility through Digital Transformation: A Case Study of XYZ Company**

Abstract

This research investigates the **role of digital transformation** in enhancing **organizational agility** within the context of XYZ Company, a leading global technology firm. The study aims to explore how the integration of digital technologies and agile practices can drive strategic flexibility, operational responsiveness, and innovation capabilities in a complex and rapidly changing business environment.

The research employs a **qualitative case study** approach, utilizing interviews, observations, and document analysis to gather rich and in-depth data.

The findings will highlight the **key drivers, challenges, and success factors** associated with digital transformation initiatives and their impact on organizational agility.

The research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing **practical insights and recommendations** for managers and executives seeking to leverage digital technologies to foster agility and competitive advantage in their organizations. The study also highlights the broader implications of digital transformation for business strategy, organizational change, and leadership practices.

What is the key concept? Is it clear enough?

Any literature review?

Any theories/framework?

What is the aim(s)?

Are the contributions adequate?

Example 2

Title: **Science Academic Achievement of Chinese Secondary Students: The Role of Parental Involvement, Students' Academic Tenacity, SES and Gender**

Abstract (part 1)

Science education has been taken more and more seriously by policy makers and educators, since many countries aim to improve citizens' science literacy, expand science workforce, and cultivate science talents and innovators through education. **Science academic achievement** is one aspect to reflect the quality of science education.

Previous studies have revealed that **parental involvement** plays an important role in promoting students' science academic achievement. In addition, motivational factors have been emphasized more and more in students' science learning. One's motivational characteristic is not only influenced by himself/herself, but also by the surroundings like school, peer, and family. Therefore, studies have examined the direct and indirect relationships of parental involvement and science academic achievement through motivational factors, such as utility value towards science, self-efficacy, self-concept and so on.

However, although there are several studies focusing on the effect of parental involvement and motivational factors on students' science achievement, but few focus on a Chinese context, and **rare focus on academic tenacity** proposed by **Dweck et al (2014)**. How Chinese parents involve in students' science learning through students' motivational characteristic is not fully understood.

In addition to parental and motivational factors, **SES and gender** are two important factors to students' science academic achievement. Since many countries face the SES gap and gender gap in science education, the study **examines what the relationships between demographic factors (SES and gender) and students science academic achievement**.

Cont'd

Example 2

Title: **Science Academic Achievement of Chinese Secondary Students: The Role of Parental Involvement, Students' Academic Tenacity, SES and Gender**

Abstract (part 2)

The current study has **two research aims**: (1) investigate the relationship between parental involvement and students' science academic achievement via students' academic tenacity; (2) examine the influence of demographic factors (SES and gender) on students' science academic achievement.

The current study adopts a **quantitatively driven mixed-methods design**, which includes three phases: **pilot** quantitative study, main **quantitative** study, main **qualitative** study. Quantitative method helps examine the relationships among variables, qualitative method helps **give insight into the patterns** how the key variables influence students' science learning and provide complementary interpretations of the quantitative findings.

This study will make **three contributions**. Methodologically, it will use the qualitative method to have a deeper understanding of how students' science learning is influenced by parental, motivational, and demographic factors. Theoretically, it will investigate the **application of the existing theories** and framework in Chinese context and science context. Practically, it will provide recommendations for educators and parents for promoting students' science academic achievement by considering parental involvement, academic tenacity, SES and gender.

Example 3

Title: **Hong Kong students pursuing undergraduate education in Mainland China: choice and motivations**

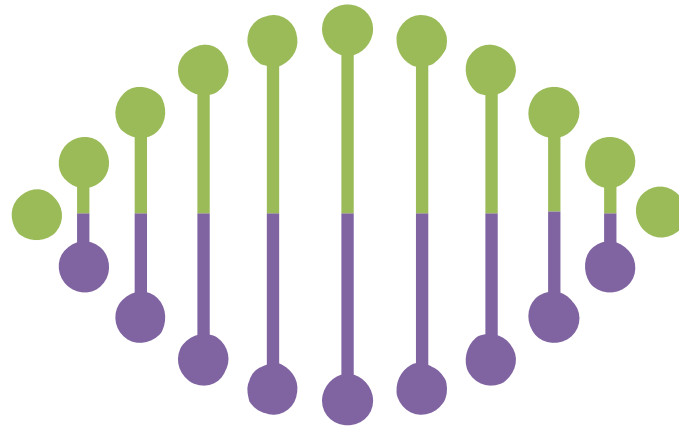
Abstract

With the growing economic power of Mainland China, it has attracted influx of international students and become the world's third most popular study destination after the US and the UK. Hong Kong has long history of sending students to study in the western countries for elite education, predominantly by the upper classes. A new phenomenon emerges since 2012 under the "Scheme for Admission of Hong Kong Students to Mainland Higher Education Institutions" through which Hong Kong students can be admitted to undergraduate programs in Mainland universities based on their Diploma of Secondary Education results. It is a unique case of **cross-border student mobility** under specific economic, sociocultural and policy context.

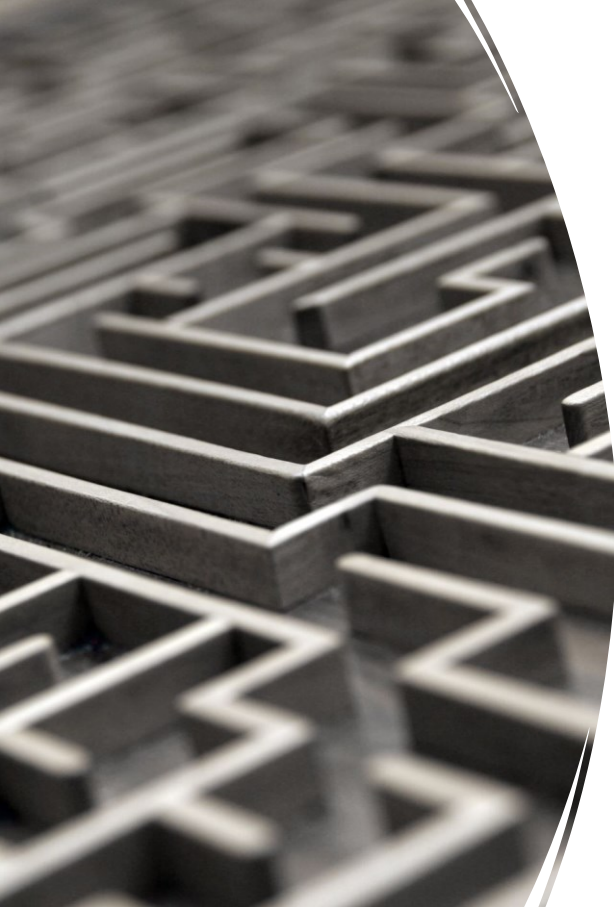
Literature on the choice and motivations of international students studying in Mainland China based on the most extensively adopted **push-pull model** have identified some new pull factors, such as optimistic view of China's development. **However**, such approach neglects the individual factors which interplay with the external elements and shape the ultimate choice of the students, which could be socially constructed.

This **qualitative study** will fill this research gap by adopting a **process approach** from college choice theory to examine the choice and motivations of Hong Kong students studying in Mainland universities under the Admission Scheme. The main **research questions** are: (1) What are the motivations of these Hong Kong students studying in Mainland universities; (2) How do these students make the decision of studying in Mainland universities; and (3) How do the individual factors (parental influence, socioeconomic status, social origins, etc.) influence the choice and decisions of the students.

Individual case approach is well suited in order to have in-depth understanding of the students' perceptions and experiences. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted on students in two tiers of universities, Project 985 and 211 in various cities from different disciplines of study. Preliminary findings from **pilot study** have shown that their choice is the result driven by multiple factors after undergoing a complicated process of evaluation. It is hoped to **develop an integrated model** of student choice and motivations under process approach for students studying cross the border.



3. How to do Qualitative Research



What is Qualitative Research

- Useful for answering “**why**”, “**what**”, “**how**” questions
- Used when the researcher wants to formulate questions through **exploration**, rather than starting with specific research hypotheses (Rowland, 1986)
- Exploration of **patterns** in behaviour provides the opportunities for generalizations which, although “not as specific and precise as those in normal science”, give a picture of the “wholeness” of a problem. (Peters & Robinson, 1984:120)

- Qualitative research typically starts with a **social or practical** problem rather than a theoretical question (Peters & Robinson, 1984)

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

1. An iterative process

- A process whereby early data collections and analyses inform subsequent sampling and analytical procedures - theoretical sampling.
- The analysis always remains **open** to new emerging possibilities.
- This process necessitates concurrent involvement in data collection and analysis phases of the research.

What is Theoretical Sampling

- commonly used in the **grounded theory approach**
- the selection of participants or data sources is based on **emerging** theoretical concepts or categories
- not guided by a predetermined sampling plan but **occurs iteratively and dynamically**
- researchers **purposefully choose new participants or data sources** to deepen understanding and refine theories
- the goal is to explore, test, and develop emerging theories or concepts
- the process involves the interplay between data collection, analysis, and theory development

Benefits

- help validate assumptions, identify patterns, and expand theoretical understanding
- ensure that the gathered data is relevant and informative in relation to the emerging theoretical framework
- allow for a flexible and adaptive research process that responds to evolving research questions and theoretical concepts

Convenient Sampling

- a **non-probability** sampling method commonly used in qualitative research
- participants are selected based on their **accessibility** and convenience to the researcher
- choosing individuals readily available, easily accessible, or located in close proximity
- employed when practicality and efficiency are prioritized over representativeness or generalizability
- where time, budget, or logistical constraints make it difficult to employ other sampling methods
- For example, recruit participants from a nearby workplace or using online platforms to gather data

Issues

- may introduce **selection bias** and **limit the generalizability** of findings
- researchers should be cautious when drawing broad conclusions or making generalizations
- suitable for exploratory research or when initial insights are sought, but it may not be appropriate for studies requiring representative samples or strong statistical inference

Purposeful Sampling

- a **non-probability** sampling method commonly used in qualitative research
- participants selected based on **specific characteristics** or attributes that align with the research objectives
- purposefully choose individuals or cases that can provide **valuable and relevant insights**
- aim to select participants who possess desired knowledge, experience, or perspectives related to the research topic
- researchers use their **expertise and judgment** to identify and recruit participants who can contribute rich and informative data
- different techniques within purposive sampling include **maximum variation** sampling, **typical case** sampling, and **expert** sampling
- allow researchers to focus on specific subgroups or individuals who can provide in-depth and nuanced information
- may limit generalizability and introduce selection bias

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

2. Sampling aimed as **theory generation**

- all sampling decisions made are a function of the research question and the ongoing theoretical development

3. Creating **analytical codes** and **categories** from the data itself

- the analytical process through which **concepts** are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in the data
- should be representative of the data itself and cover a wide range of observations

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

4. Advancing theoretical development throughout

- all range of techniques can be used to advance theory development during each step of data collection and analysis
- the choice of techniques depends on the epistemological and theoretical stance of the researcher

5. Making systematic comparisons

- making comparisons at every stage of the analysis (**within** and **between** cases or over time) helps to establish analytical distinctions by identifying variations in the patterns to be found in the data

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

6. Theoretical density

- commonly accepted that there must be evidence of theoretical density or **depth** to the observations presented, resulting in the presentation of a theory from which hypotheses can be generated
- should also include evidence of theoretical **saturation** (when new data reveals no new theoretical insights)

Strengths of Qualitative Research (1)

- ✓ attention to **detail**
- ✓ ability to embrace both verbal and non-verbal behaviour
- ✓ discover meanings, reveal the subtlety and **complexity** of cases or issues
- ✓ portraying perspectives and conveying feelings and experiences
- ✓ encompassing processes and natural environments
- ✓ actions are **contextualised** within situations and time
- ✓ theory is generated from the empirical data, and consequently there is “**closeness of fit**” between theory and data

Strengths of Qualitative Research (2)

Although this kind of research is sometimes criticised for not being generalisable, there are two ways in which it is

- a) through the theory that is generated. Such theory then becomes **available to others to test and apply**
- b) though it might be only a single case study, it might contribute to **an archive of studies** on a particular issue which then become re-interpreted

Strengths of Qualitative Research (3)

- ✓ with close researcher involvement, the researcher gains an **insider's view** of the field. Allows the researcher to find issues that are often missed (such as subtleties and complexities) by the scientific, more positivistic enquiries
- ✓ qualitative descriptions can play the important role of **suggesting possible relationships**, causes, effects and dynamic processes
- ✓ statistics are not used, but with a more descriptive, narrative style, enable researcher to examine forms of knowledge that might otherwise be unavailable, thereby gaining **new insight**
- ✓ add flesh and blood to the analysis

Weaknesses of Qualitative Research (1)

- (has been argued) single qualitative studies **cannot** provide grounds for generalising across cases
- lead to either or both “going native” and “macro blindness”, the researcher might offer explanations in terms of the situation under observation, not aware of more powerful forces operating on the situation from outside
- can be a **high-risk, low-yield** enterprise; can take time to negotiate access, assemble a sample, develop trust and rapport, find out what is “going on” or what people are thinking
- often accused of being impressionistic, subjective, biased, idiosyncratic and lacking in precision

Weaknesses of Qualitative Research (2)

- problem of adequate **validity or reliability** is a major criticism; because of the subjective nature and in single contexts, it is difficult to apply conventional standards of reliability and validity
- contexts, situations, events, conditions and interactions **cannot be replicated** to any extent, nor can generalisations be made to a wider context than the one studied with any confidence
- **time** required for data collection, analysis and interpretation is lengthy
- researcher's presence has a profound effect on the subjects of study
- issues of **anonymity** and confidentiality present problems when selecting findings
- viewpoints of both researcher and participants have to be identified and elucidated because of issues of bias

Major types of Qualitative Research

Interviews



- allows researchers to engage in detailed **conversations** with participants to explore their perspectives, experiences, beliefs, and opinions related to the research topic
 - **structured** (predefined set of questions)
 - **unstructured** (more open-ended discussions)
 - **semi-structured**
- normally one-on-one interview
- mode – face to face, phone, video-conferencing

Interviews



Interviews

- ✓ allow you to develop rapport and trust
- ✓ provide you with rich, **in-depth** qualitative data
- ✓ allow for non-verbal as well as verbal data
- ✓ are **flexible** enough to allow you to explore tangents (saying something offtrack)
- ✓ can be **structured** enough to generate standardized, quantifiable data

How to plan and conduct an interview

A. Planning

Population and **sample** respondents/participants

Access – feasible within certain time frame

Your role – presenting yourself, striking a balance between formality and rapport, etc.

Considering and addressing potential **ethical** dilemmas

Deciding exactly **what data** you want to elicit from your respondents, e.g. memories, descriptions, feelings, thoughts, opinions

Details including interview time, location, recording methods, etc.

How to plan and conduct an interview

B. Developing an interview schedule/recording system

- For a structured interview, draft and re-draft your questions.
- For an unstructured one, think about the **themes** you want to cover and whether you will put any boundaries on the conversation.
- Review each question to check if any questions might be confusing, leading, offensive, or problematic for the interviewees.
- Consider and develop any **instructions, prompts** or probes you feel are appropriate to the interview.
- Decide on recording methods: if note-taking, consider developing a form to aid this process. If audio or video recording, consider the implications of using this equipment (e.g. subject self-consciousness).

How to plan and conduct an interview

C. Piloting

- Have a run-through/mock interview
- Reflect on difficulties encountered
- Seek feedback from the interviewees
- Review notes and transcribe data to be sure you can make sense of notes and that transcription is doable

How to plan and conduct an interview

D. Implementing – conducting your interview

- Take care of preliminaries
- Make your interviewees as **comfortable** as possible
- Ease into main questions/themes – it can be easy to offend when you jump straight into controversial areas. Need to **build rapport**
- Keep a balance between keeping on track and/or exploring interesting tangents
- Wind down and close the interview – make sure you show your **gratitude** and attempt to keep the door open for **future interaction**

E. Managing and analyzing – keeping track and making sense

- Organize/collate your data as soon as possible
- Thematic analysis

Major types of Qualitative Research

Focus Groups Interviews

- bring together a small group of participants (typically 6-10) to discuss a specific research topic
- the **group dynamic** allows for interactions and exchange of ideas, providing rich qualitative data
- particularly useful for exploring **shared experiences**, perceptions, and group dynamics



Focus Groups Interviews

Advantages

- ✓ an **economical** way to tap the views of a number of people
- ✓ provide information on '**dynamics**' of attitudes and opinions through observing the interactions between participants
- ✓ may encourage more spontaneity than other methods
- ✓ can provide a '**safe**' forum for expression of views
- ✓ participants may feel supported and empowered by sense of group membership /cohesiveness

Focus Groups Interviews

Challenges

- data need to be collected not only on what participants say but also on **how they interact** with one another
- quotations need to be attributed **accurately** to individual group members
- process of data collection should not interfere with or detract from the coordination of the group
- method of recording data should not itself have reactive effects upon the group participants
- the moderator has to generate interest in and discussion about a particular topic but **not** lead the group **to reinforce** existing expectations or confirm a prior hypothesis
- the moderator must be involved in the group sufficiently to fulfill the role of facilitator, but **not so dominant** as to bias or inhibit discussion



Types of Qualitative Research

Observations

- systematically observing and recording behaviors, interactions, and phenomena in real-world settings
- can be done through direct observation or by using video or audio recordings
- observations can provide valuable insights into organizational processes, behaviors, and social dynamics

Types of Qualitative Research

Content Analysis



- systematic analysis of **textual** or **visual** data, such as documents, reports, websites, social media posts, or other forms of media
- researcher identifies **themes**, **patterns**, and **trends** in the data to derive meaningful interpretations and insights

Types of Qualitative Research

Grounded Theory

- an iterative and **inductive** approach to data analysis
- involves systematically analyzing data to develop theories or concepts that **emerge from the data** itself
- researcher continuously **compares and refines** data to generate new insights and theories

Grounded



theory

Storytelling

Narrative –

means a spoken or written account of connected events



- refer to the ways in which researchers present and convey their findings using **narrative** techniques
- instead of presenting data solely through statistical analysis or technical language, storytelling formats emphasize the use of **narratives, anecdotes, and personal stories** to communicate the richness and depth of the research participants' experiences

Storytelling

Narrative Analysis (biography)

- examine the stories, narratives, or accounts provided by individuals or groups
- researcher vividly portrays the experiences, events, and contexts surrounding their research participants
- provide detailed descriptions of settings, characters, and actions to immerse readers in the narrative
- analyze the structure, content, and meaning of narratives to understand how individuals construct and interpret their experiences
- often refer to the collection of people's stories about experiences that have a significant impact on their lives

NARRATIVE RESEARCH



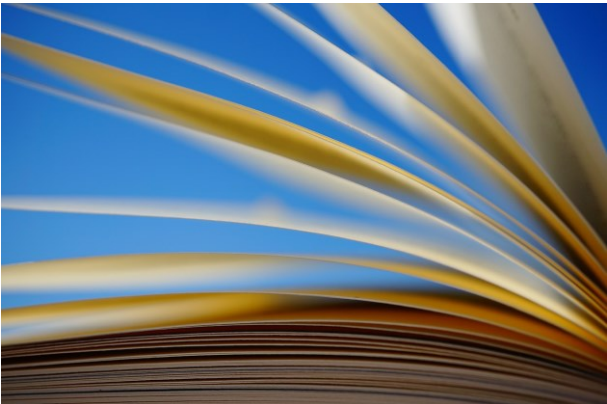
Storytelling

Participant Stories

Researchers may directly incorporate participants' stories, anecdotes, and quotes to highlight their perspectives and lived experiences. These firsthand accounts add authenticity and depth to the research findings, giving voice to the participants' unique viewpoints.

Composite Stories

In some cases, researchers may create composite stories based on multiple participants' experiences. By synthesizing different narratives, common themes, and shared patterns, composite stories can provide a holistic perspective while protecting participants' anonymity.



Storytelling

Ethnography

- anthropological approach of becoming a **part of a culture** through immersing the researcher in a particular social setting or culture to gain a deep understanding of the context
- researcher engages in participant observation, interviews, and document analysis to explore the social, cultural, and organizational dynamics within the setting



Storytelling

Autoethnography

- the researcher sharing their **personal experiences** and **reflections** as part of the research process
- by blending personal narratives with theoretical analysis, researchers can provide a **unique** and **subjective** understanding of cultural phenomena or social issues



Storytelling – Case Studies



- in-depth investigation of a specific **individual, group, organization**
- can be one single case, a comparison of two, or multiple cases
- present a comprehensive **narrative** of the case, including background information, key events, and the outcomes of interest
- focus on understanding the **full scope** of the problem
- often used to explore **real-life business problems** or to gain insights into complex organizational issues

Storytelling – Case Studies



- **thick description** - involve providing rich and detailed accounts of the research context and participants' experiences
- go beyond surface-level observations and delves into the **nuanced cultural, social, and emotional** aspects of the research setting
- allow for a deeper exploration of complex phenomena and provide rich, context-specific insights
- collect data from **multiple sources**, such as interviews, documents, observations, and archival records, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the case(s)

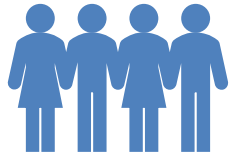


Multiple methods

- researchers often combine **multiple methods** to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and to **triangulate** the findings
- choice of method(s) depends on the research objectives, research questions, and the nature of the phenomenon being studied

Qualitative Sampling and Data Collection Methods

Sampling



- exploratory nature of research — not always possible to achieve representative sampling
- sometimes necessary to select a sample that meets a particular need
- sample size: **no “hard and fast” rules**
- usually not appropriate to generalize data to wider populations



Sampling Size

“An appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is

- one that **adequately answers** the research question.
- For simple questions or very detailed studies, this might be in single figures; for complex questions large samples and a variety of sampling techniques might be necessary.
- **In practice**, the number of required subjects usually becomes obvious as the study progresses, as new categories, themes or explanations stop emerging from the data (**data saturation**).”

(Marshall, 1996)



Saturation

The idea is to collect data until **no new perspectives** are being obtained. This means that the sample size cannot always be predetermined.

Three Common Types of Sampling

1. Purposeful sampling

- select a sample with the intention of collecting an adequate range of responses by sampling across those factors likely to influence outcomes

2. Convenience sampling

- driven by the feasibility and convenience of the selection process
- criticize that it does not have a place in “credible research” (O’Leary, 2010), but it may be the only option for a small study or a pilot

3. Snowball sampling

- assume relevant respondents are connected so that we can use those connections to construct a sample from a small initial sample
- build a sample through referrals, as each respondent recommends others



Validity and Reliability

Ensuring validity and reliability is crucial to maintain the **credibility** and **trustworthiness** of the findings

- **Reliability** is often discussed in terms of dependability, which refers to the consistency and stability of the data collection and analysis process.
- **Validity** is often evaluated through strategies such as **credibility** (ensuring the findings are believable and supported by the data), **transferability** (the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts), **dependability** (the consistency of the findings over time), and **confirmability** (the ability to trace and verify the research process and interpretations).

Nine Strategies

Triangulation	Use multiple sources of data (e.g., interviews, observations, documents) and multiple perspectives to corroborate findings Help validate the findings by ensuring consistency and convergence across different data sources
Reflexivity	Critically reflect on your own biases, assumptions, and preconceptions that may influence the research process and findings Maintain a reflexive journal (diary) to document your thoughts and reflections throughout the research process
Member Checking	Share the findings or interpretations with participants to ensure accuracy and validate the data Seek participants' feedback and input can provide additional insights and help confirm the validity of the findings

Nine Strategies

Peer Debriefing

Engage in discussions and debriefing sessions with **fellow researchers** or classmates who are familiar with qualitative research methods

External review can help identify potential biases, provide alternative interpretations, and enhance the overall validity of the research

Thick Description

Provide detailed and **rich descriptions** of the research context, participants, data collection, and analysis procedures

Allow readers to assess the transferability and applicability of the findings to other contexts and enhances the trustworthiness of the research

Sampling Strategies

Employ **purposeful** and strategic **sampling** techniques to ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives and relevant cases

Clearly justify and document the sampling decisions to enhance the transparency and reliability of the research

Nine Strategies

Saturation

Aim for **data saturation**, where no new themes or insights emerge from the data

Demonstrate that the research has reached a point of theoretical saturation and ensure that the findings are based on comprehensive understanding of research topic

Audit Trail

Maintain a **detailed audit trail** documenting the research process, decisions made, data collection procedures, coding schemes, and analytical decisions

Allow for transparency and enable others to assess the reliability and validity of the research

Peer Review

Seek external peer review of your research findings and methodology

Involve experts in qualitative research or members of the research community to provide critical feedback and suggestions for improving validity and reliability

Three ways of Data Analyses

1. Content analysis

Count the number of times a particular word or concept appears – categorise these quantitatively and do **statistical analyses**

2. Thematic analysis

Find all units of data (e.g. sentences or paragraphs) referring to a **concept**, code them and look for **patterns** (e.g. certain times)

3. Theoretical analysis (e.g. grounded theory)

This goes further to develop **theories** from the patterns in the data. It may include data that contradict the theory. Gradually the theory is built and tested.

Analysis can take the form of:

- **descriptive** and **analytical** accounts of items
- **counts** of characteristics of items
- **measures** of amounts of characteristics of items



Steps to be taken in Data Analysis

1. Line-by-line examination of all data sources

- Look for **words** that are repeated (key words in context) and make note of their context/meaning
- Constantly compare your notes for similarities and disparities
- Deductively uncover **themes** you expect from your review of the literature, experience or research question
- OR inductively look for **concepts** emerging from your data without any preconceived notions
- Consider the **non-verbal cues** you have recorded to enrich your understanding of the concepts/themes



— Steps to be taken in Data Analysis

2. Looking for **patterns and interconnections**

- Explore the relationships between and among various themes (e.g. are certain words/concepts correlated with the use of other words/concepts?)
- Are certain words/concepts associated with certain non-verbal cues?
- Do individuals with particular characteristics vary on any of these dimensions?)

3. Mapping and building **themes**

- Especially when building themes inductively – build a map to illustrate the range and interconnections of patterns



— Steps to be taken in Data Analysis

4. Developing theory

- Rich mapping may lead to an emerging theory

5. Drawing conclusions

- Pull together all the significant/important findings
- Consider how/why they are significant/important



Tips

Coding qualitative data is “not fundamentally a mechanical or technical exercise. It is a **dynamic, intuitive and creative** process of **inductive reasoning**, thinking and theorizing”

Basit, 2003:143



Reporting of Qualitative Data

A common weakness in qualitative studies is a **lack of rigour and quality** in write-up

Tips

- Written up as words and narrative
- Any modifications to the study methodology should be dealt with as preliminary findings and reported at the beginning of the findings section
- Consist of a discussion of the **major themes** that were identified and descriptions of any diverse cases or minor themes
- More than simply reporting what was found; it requires the researcher's **interpretation**; the account of what the researcher learned throughout the research process is a part of the analysis

Reporting of Qualitative Data

- Relevant, interesting **quotations** from the data should be included to illustrate the themes/findings (to illustrate common responses, minority responses, negative responses or a noteworthy idea)
- A **concept map** may be used to show the interpretation or relationship of themes emerging



4. Homework

Homework

think about YOUR interested
area of research

Key Questions

1. Which **area** or **field** are you interested in and capable to do?
2. What is the main **purpose** of your research?
3. Where is the research **field**? E.g. in an organization, community.
4. Would it likely to be a **qualitative** or **quantitative** study? Or mixed method?
5. What is the **unit of analysis**? E.g. individuals, groups, organizations



What we have covered today

1. Conceptualize, design and implement a Research Project
2. How to write a Research Project and its Assessment
3. How to do Qualitative Research

