

Welcome to Qualitative Research

SBPD7002

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Psychological contract for Professionals!

RIGHTS

- Effective and engaging lectures
- Supportive seminars
- Submission of draft assignment (one occasion)
- Formative feedback (one occasion)

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Silence & Phones off
- No in & out except emergency
- Full engagement
- Full participation

Getting started with Research

What is research?

1. What research is
2. What research is not
3. Research versus consultancy
4. The consultancy process
5. The structure of research
6. The research process
7. What researchers should do and be

Assumptions of the main paradigms

Quantitative

- ☐ the world is objective to the researcher
- ☐ only knowledge that is observable and measurable can be regarded as knowledge
- ☐ research is unattached from the researchers and phenomenon existed prior to and following their involvement.

Qualitative

- ☐ the world is socially constructed and understood by examining human experience or perception of it
- ☐ broader more complex approach to understanding a phenomenon
- ☐ Research involved in and influences understanding

Quantitative vs qualitative

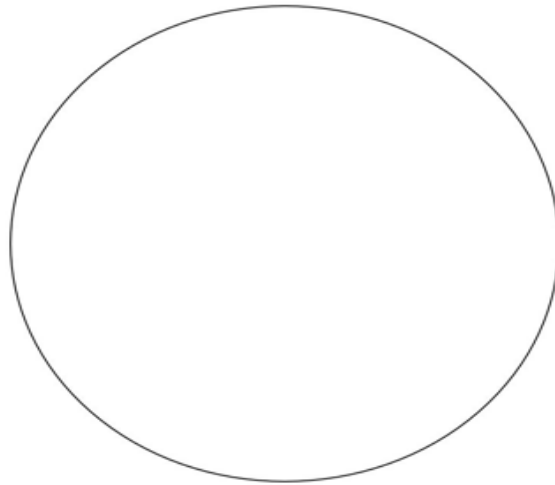
- **Quantitative research**

- systematically observe changes in the phenomena of interest while manipulating what are believed to be causal influences

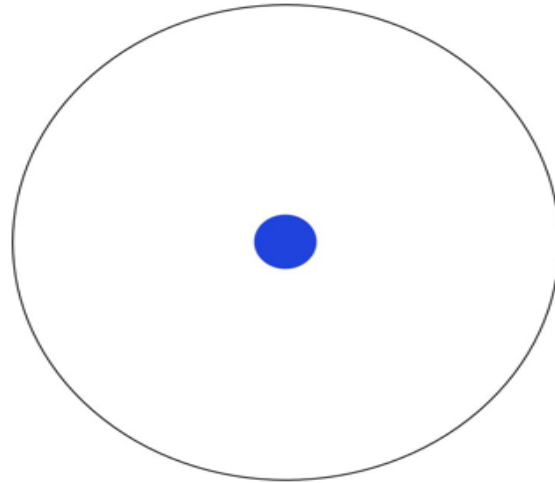
- **Qualitative research**

- may be more concerned with the individual's personal experiences of the problem under study

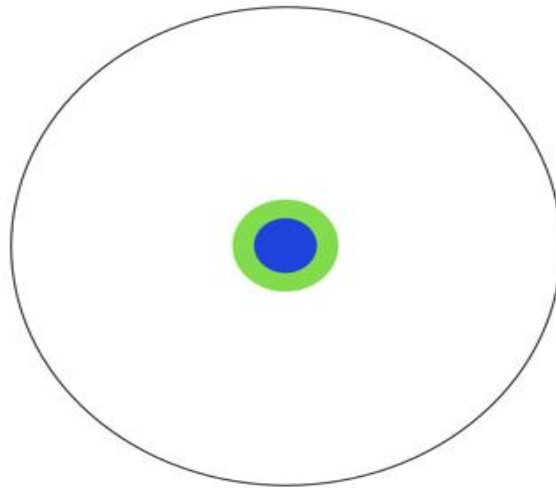
Imagine a circle that contains all of human
knowledge



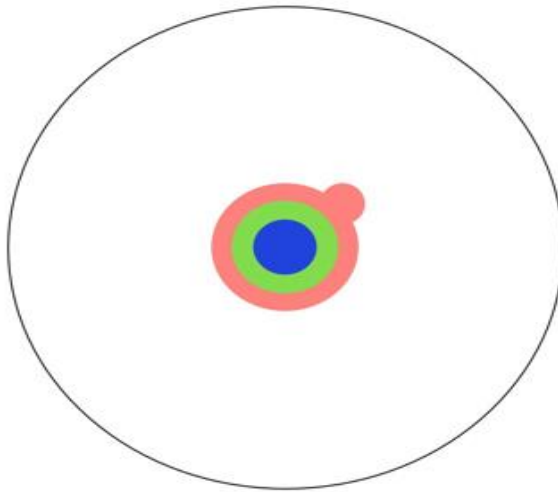
By the time we finish elementary
school, we know a little



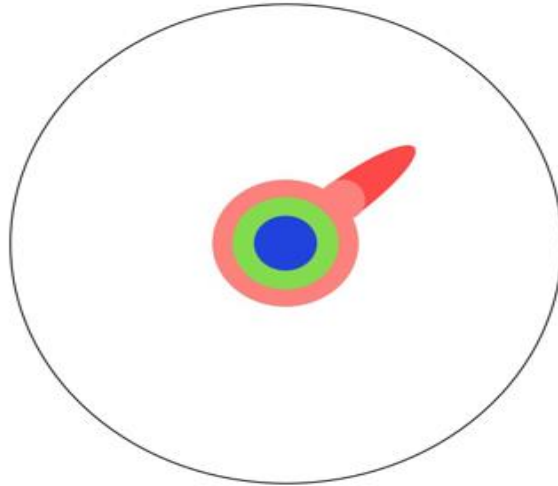
By the time we finish secondary school, we
know a bit more



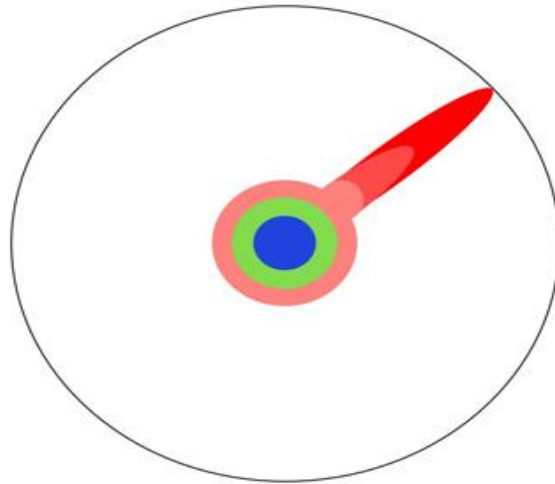
With a bachelor's degree, we gain a
specialty



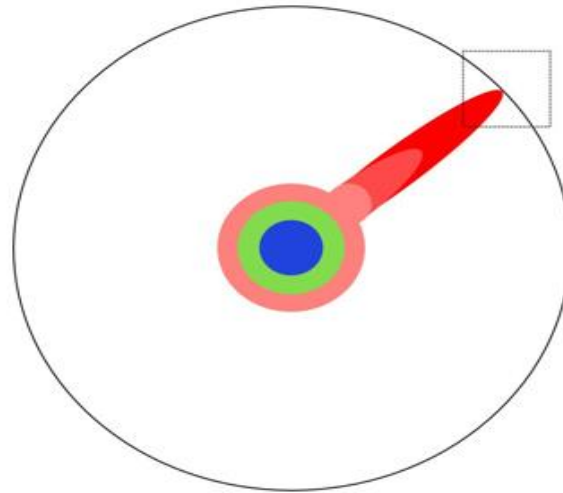
Master's degree deepens that
specialty



Reading research papers takes us to
the edge of human knowledge



Once we are at the boundary, we focus!



We then start our own RESEARCH

BUT

What is research?

Research is all about:

- 1) the systematic investigation into and study of materials, sources, etc, in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.
- 2) an endeavour to discover new or collate old facts etc... by the scientific study of a subject or by a course of critical investigation.

What is research?

- Research is what we do when we have a question or a problem we want to resolve
- We may already think we know the answer to our question already
- We may think the answer is obvious, common sense even
- But until we have subjected our problem to rigorous scientific scrutiny, our 'knowledge' remains little more than guesswork or at best, intuition.

What is research?

- Then figure out how you are going to answer it
- First priority is to formulate your question
 - How have others answered it?
 - How does your proposal fit in with what others have done?
 - How will you know when you have answered it?
- Then you can present your answer

Classical scientific method

- Observation of some phenomenon
 - Maybe systematic, occasional or accidental
- Some idea of an explanation (hypothesis)
 - Induction, conjecture, intuition, guesswork
 - Usually informed by related work
- Testing of the hypothesis
 - Test and revision cycle

Hypothesis

- Probability of research
 - Nothing is certain
 - *The exception that “proves” the rule*
 - Scientific “truth” is actually usually a statement of what is most probable given the currently known data
 - ...
 - ... within the given framework
- Statistical techniques try to help us show extent to which our results really do support the hypothesis

Hypothesis

- A hypothesis makes a prediction of the expected outcome in a given situation
- Usually: how the manipulation of the **independent variable** will influence the behaviour of a **dependent variable**
- The hypothesis is tested in an **experiment**
- Experimental design ensures that what you are doing is genuinely (and solely) responsible for the results
- **Extraneous variables** have to be **controlled**

Experiment

- If the experiment works, the hypothesis is shown to be probably correct
 - Can't prove 100% truth
- If it fails, it could be because
 - The hypothesis is wrong
 - The experimental design is faulty

Variables

- The experiment measures the “behaviour” of the dependent variable
- DV must be **operationalised**
 - Some aspect of the DV must be measurable
 - What to measure?
 - How to measure it?
 - Are you really measuring what you think you are measuring?

“Proof” by demonstration

- Intuitive alternative to the classical scientific method:
 - Build something specific and then claim that it can be seen as an example of a more general class of solutions
- High risk
 - difficult to demonstrate generalisability
 - in fact doing so entails making an *a posteriori* hypothesis
 - What can you say if it goes wrong ?
- So you still need a theoretical basis

Planning

- Statement of the problem
- Literature review
- Choice of research method
- Design of study
- Data collection
- Analysis of data
- Write-up

Qualitative Research

Questions

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?
- How much?

Qualitative Research (RQ)

- RQ provide scope to learn something not already known.
- RQ need to be based on sound principles & rationale.
- Remember! We already know a great deal about the world in which we are set

Qualitative Research

- Will my question be interesting for me & for others?
- Is there a practical value in knowing the answer to this question?
- Can I expect to answer it within the limits of the project I am going to undertake?
- Does the question suggest the kind of information I would need to answer it and how would I go about getting that information?
- Will it be feasible to get the information necessary to answer the question?

Qualitative Research

- Teaching, studying & activity
- Theory & practice of QR
- Extensive reading of QR texts
- Completion of a practical project
- Writing up of the report

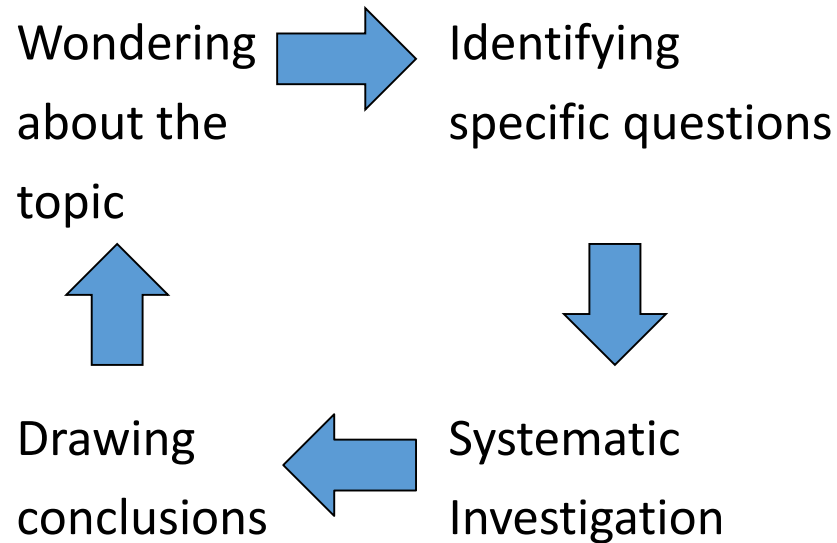
Qualitative Research

The Research Process

- Identify topic & question
- What kind of information is needed?
- What methods are best for generating the information?
- Gather data using chosen information
- Analyse data & draw conclusions
- Present conclusions in written report

Qualitative Research

The Research Process



Qualitative Research

Theory & Practice of QR

Question:

What will be a suitable method to R your chosen topic?

What theories will underpin your R method?

How will you carry out your project?

Qualitative Research

Article for Publication

- Topic
- Literature review
- Data, analysis, interpretation &
- implications of the research
- Writing up
- Publication