Capitalising on mixed methods research: Design, examples, and practice

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Overview

• Development of mixed methods research
• Benefits and challenges of “mixing”
• Different models
• Good design
• Two examples
• How to report?
• Have a go!
Development of mixed methods research

“The emergence of mixed methods as a third methodological movement in the social and behavioral sciences began during the 1980’s.” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 697)
Benefits of mixing:
• To create an opportunity to learn both methods
• To offset weaknesses of quan and qual and draw on their strengths
  ➢ To generalise with quan
  ➢ To contextualise with qual
• To corroborate quan and qual findings
  ➢ Quan justifies qual
  ➢ Qual explains quan

Challenges of mixing:
• To think through different worlds/worldviews
• To understand both quan and qual
• To spend more time and work harder
Different models

• Sequence
  - Concurrent approach
  - Sequential approach
    - Explanatory: first quan then qual
      e.g., first justify or falsify theoretical / conceptual framework quantitatively then obtain more detailed information qualitatively
    - Exploratory: first qual then quan
      e.g., first explore or contextualise a framework qualitatively then develop an instrument to generalise the framework
  - Embedded approach

• Priority
  - Equal weight
  - QUAN overweights qual
  - QUAL overweights quan
Implementation
• Identify a problem
• Review the literature
• Address the gap in the literature
• Clarify research questions
• Design the study
• Collect the data
• Analysis and interpret the data
• Report and evaluate the study

Research questions and design
• Research questions function to shape research design.
• Research design function to serve the investigation of research questions.
• When one type of research is not enough to address the research problem or answer the research questions (Complement).
• When quantitative and qualitative data together provide a better understanding of the research problem than either type by itself (Enrichment).
Example 1: How do Chinese Australians capitalise on resources (capital) and negotiate their Chineseness (habitus) through learning Chinese as a Heritage Language (practice) in Australia and beyond (fields)?

**Quan question:** Is CHL proficiency of young Chinese Australian adults influenced by their investment of capital, the strength of their habitus of ‘Chineseness’, or both?

**Qual question:** How do young Chinese Australian adults understand their CHL learning in relation to (potential) profits produced by this linguistic capital in given fields?

Theoretical framework (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 101): “[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice”
Example 2: Family support for Chinese Heritage Language learning (CHL)

Literature review:
There is emerging a rich body of thought about individual, familial and societal dynamics of CHLL in Anglophone western countries and bilingual Canada.

There is a dearth of quantitative evidence on the relationship between family support and CHL proficiency. The survey sub-study was designed to provide quantitative evidence on this under-researched topic.

Transitions from pleasure to resistance to commitment remain under-researched. The interview sub-study contributed to this field of research by extending a Bourdieusian perspective to the transition from CHL resistance to commitment – a phenomenon we term ‘habitus realisation’.

Quan question: Does family support and young Chinese Australians’ CHL proficiency have a significant correlation?

Qual question: What are the nature and dynamics of family support?

A concurrent approach with qual overweighting quan
How do you report mixed methods studies?

Work with the conventions for reporting *both* statistical and qualitative analyses

**Challenges**

- Mastering 2 trades
- Weaving the 2 components together well
- Running out of words
- Making the study accessible to a wider audience
Have a go!

• Would you like to share the mixed methods studies that you have designed?
• Would you like to design a mixed methods study?
• An empirical mixed methods study from the literature: How would you design it?
The scenario – 1

- **The social problem:** the cost of preventative health care for the most rapidly growing demographic – the oldest old (85yrs+)

- **The research problem:** how do relationships with PHPs affect the health care of the healthy and independent living oldest old?

- **The theoretical model:** patient-by-treatment-context interactive model proposes that the relationship between patient characteristic (e.g., personality, beliefs) and patient adherence (e.g., preventative cares) is moderated by the treatment context (e.g., PHP behaviour and characteristics).
The scenario – 2

- **The literature review:** “There is a lack of research examining certain oldest olds’ individual characteristics that are known to be associated with health care and health providers. Thus the current study … [will examine] the relationships between Locus of Control, resilience, and self-efficacy to participants’ opinions of their PHP.” (p. 4)

- **Participants:** 35 independent living oldest old

- **Design and data production and analysis procedures:** over to you…
References

