

- 1) 13 multiple Choice
- 2) 5 T/F
- 3) 2 Short answer /3 each
- 4) 1 long answer /6

Lecture Outline

1. Underlying Assumptions: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches
2. The research process
3. Challenging Hegemonic Euro-Centric Research Approaches
4. Identifying Research Perspectives and General Assumptions
5. Researching Generic Social processes
6. The sociological imagination
7. "Hierarchy of Credibility" and power relations in research
8. Designing a Qualitative Research Project

1.

- Our broad worldview or beliefs about reality can shape out general approach to research
- Our theories of knowledge can shape our theoretical perspectives and research questions
- Underlying assumptions of Quantitative approaches
- Dominant in Western social sciences 19th century plus
- Is marked by positivism Quote P. 229. P. 15.
- Attributes of Positivism
- 1. Takes a realist perspective = idea that there is a reality out there waiting to be discovered rather than socially constructed
- 2. Trust in casual knowledge = belief that the world is made up of causes and effects that are external to individuals, observable and measurable
- 3. Deductive reasoning= researchers puts forward a theory, develops hypothesis based on theory, collects data based on hypothesis, and performs an analysis that tests the hypothesis (All o p.15)
- But from the 1960s forward there has been renewed interest in what had been more subordinated qualitative approaches
- Social scientists began to question the assumption of quantitative approaches.

Critiques of positivism

E.g. T. Kuhn

The structure of scientific revolutions how changing theoretical paradigms shape research

- Also social psychology experiments involving human participants were revealed to be interpersonal events
- Also renewed emphasis on developing verstehen or sympathetic understanding i.e. trying to see the world through the eyes of the researched
- Theories of symbolic interactionism... human meaning, identities, realities as socially constructed
- Qualitative approaches are described as post-positivist or interpositivist
- Assumption that "the meaning...institutions" p.17
- Qualitative researchers are interested in these meanings and processes of meaning making..

2. The research process

- Ontologies and epistemologies can influence our approaches, theories, research questions
- These in turn influence our research methodologies
- Our choice and use of research i.e actual tools, techniques used to gather data.
- Approaches relevant to
- Class research topic : uni students navigating niagara
- Qualitative approach-inductive
- E.g. What are the accommodation experiences of university students in niagara
- Contrast question
- To what extent do university students experiences of accommodation in Niagara affect their academic performance
- In qualitative research there is usually more limited data collection, smaller sample sizes
- Greater emphasis on depth not breadth of research
- Research sites and participants are chosen because they illuminate phenomena of interest.. Not because the results may prove statistically different
- Qualitative methodologies also follow for emergent design
- I.e adjusting as you e.g. who and how many study, what to ask etc.
- Why might this be useful or necessary?
- Allows to role with what happening if unfamiliar with research sites
- Experiences with emergent design
- Irish traveller study
- Field work as method,,,

Borderline Canadianess

Interviewing as method

9/11 and aftermath

Shift from focus on past childhood "border kids" to present

From “debordering” of free trade to rebordering of 9/11 aftermath

- emergent design allows for changes including duration of study
- qualitative research may end when researcher reaches a stage of theoretical saturation (no longer learning anything new).

3.

- 2015 Truth and reconciliation commission
- 94 calls to action included
- Calls for researchers to conduct culturally safe research with rather than on indigenous peoples
- Recognition of and respect for indigenous ontologies, epistemologies.
- 2004 Albert and Muerdena Marshall
- Mikmaq elders from Nova Scotia
- Two-eyed seeing
- One grounded in indigenous knowledges other in westernized

Since funded by major Canadian public research funders

- Indigenous methods + western participatory action research (PAR) = a form of community based research see p.39 box 3.3
- PAR includes participants in all stages of research i.e. research questions, research design, data collection analysis, dissemination, post research action

4.

- Again.. Our abroad worldview
- “Our assumptions about social life and society influence how we approach topics and interpret data when we do research
- And again..our theories of knowledge
- We need to ask ourselves what we think we know and how we know it .
- Qualitative researchers assume we cannot do unbiased research do try to recognize this and take into account
- I.e. ontology, epistemologies.. As well as personal biases and investments in particular issues
- Qualitative researchers are expected to engage in reflexivity about their relationship to their research.
- E.g. social location or positioning vis-a-vis research topics and/or participants
- Insider versus outsider researchers
- Pros and cons, complexities of this

5

Qualitative research does not reduce generalizable findings

But does assume existence of similar social processes across different settings and explores these "generic social processes" often within a social group.

Focuses on human processes of..

1. Acquiring perspective
2. Achieving identity
3. Doing activity
4. Developing relationships
5. Experiencing emotionality
6. Achieving linguistic

6.

When selecting and then analyzing topics sociologists manifest what C. Wright Mills called the sociological imagination

7.

More powerful.. Often greater ability to define the situation than less powerful
Qualitative research goals often include giving voice to marginalized
Undermining the hierarchy of credibility H. Becker p. 37h