
Crim 321: Qualitative Research Methods

Study Questions for Hennink et al / Chapter 2

The Nature of Qualitative Research

1. How would you describe the focus and objectives of qualitative/interpretive research?
2. How are the focus and objectives of qualitative/interpretive research similar to and different from those of more quantitative/positivist research approaches?
3. What kinds of research questions are best suited for qualitative approaches?
4. The text explains the meaning of the word “paradigm” and notes that three elements that characterize a paradigm are its ontology, epistemology and methodology. Complete the following table to reflect what these are for the two paradigms noted:

	Qualitative/Interpretive Approaches	Quantitative/Positivist Approaches
Ontology		
Epistemology		
Methodology		

5. Distinguish between emic and etic perspectives. Which is more characteristic of Qualitative approaches and which is more characteristic of Quantitative approaches?
6. How does your text distinguish between “understanding” and “Verstehen”? Which is more characteristic of Qualitative approaches and which is more characteristic of Quantitative approaches?
7. What role does “context” play in both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and how is that reflected in the kinds of data that are gathered, people who are studied, methods that are used, and analyses that are performed on the data one gathers?
8. The eminent physicist Albert Einstein was quoted as saying that, “A desk is a dangerous place from which to view the world.” Who would be more likely to agree with that statement?

Someone following a qualitative approach? Or someone following a more quantitative one? Explain your response.

9. The chapter includes a story on pp.18-19 regarding the provision of latrines in a developing country. What lessons are to be learned from the story regarding the need to consider both emic and etic perspectives? Would you say the same is true for Case Study 2.2 that is described on pp.21-22?
10. What is “reflexivity” and why are those who do qualitative research concerned about it?
11. The authors talk about qualitative research being “cyclical.” Explain how that is the case (or not) in the various research phases they identify.
12. In one section near the end of the chapter the authors outline “Our approach to qualitative research.” They mention that while qualitative research typically involves a mixture of both inductive and deductive elements (which, by the way, are both terms you should know and understand), their approach emphasized more of the deductive elements during the design phase. How would you compare their approach to the one that Howie Becker follows in another of your readings in his study about “crocks”? Where does your professor stand on this issue?