Methods

Fall 2019

Designing a Research Project

**What are the Steps of a Research Project?**

1. Getting Started
   1. Your Interest
      1. What causes people to think/act a certain way?
   2. Your Idea
      1. Specific idea about the way things are
   3. Theory
      1. To test a particular theory
      2. To work toward creating a new theory
      3. To add to or modify a theory
   4. What have others said about this topic? The Literature Review
      1. shows where your research fits
      2. brings reader up-to-date
      3. may show disagreements
      4. helps you avoid pitfalls
2. Conceptualization
   1. Clarifying the Concepts You Plan to Study
   2. Specifying the Concepts
3. Choice of Research Method
   1. Direct observation?
   2. Review of official documents
   3. Questionnaires? Surveys?
   4. Interviews?
   5. Content analysis?
   6. Combination of these?
   7. Think about strengths/weaknesses
4. Operationalization
   1. For quantitative projects: how will we define and measure your concepts?
   2. For qualitative projects: what will you ask and/or observe, and what will you look for?
5. Population and Sampling
   1. Whom or What will you study?
   2. Population – that group to which we want to draw conclusions
6. The Process of Gathering the Data
7. Processing the Data
   1. Use of Computer – Quantitative
   2. Use of Memos, Coding -- Qualitative
8. Analysis
   1. Interpret the data to reflect on the interests, ideas, theories you started with
9. Application
   1. Writing Reports
   2. Telling people about it

**What Does The Completed Research Project Look Like?**

**The completed document contains:**

Cover Page

Introduction

Literature Review

Methods

Findings

Conclusion

Bibliography

Appendix A: Research Instrument (for those who collected primary data)

Appendix B: Copy of Consent Form (for those who collected primary data)