Day 7: Conclusions of Research Reports: Mixed Methods

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| Day 7 Specific Learning Outcomes |
| 1. **Identify common elements in the conclusions of research reports.** |
| 1. **Assess the rigor and interpret the conclusions of research reports.** |
| 1. **Analyze the qualitative and quantitative features of mixed methods research methods** |
| 1. **Critique the features of a mixed methods research report.** |

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| Book/Article | Author | Pages |
| *Understanding Research* | Plano-Clark & Creswell  (2015) | 381-429: 462-479 |
| An empirical study of other-oriented and rational self-interest leadership approaches. | Barrow & Mirabella | https://ezproxy.student.twu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=44097985&site=ehost-live |
| Servant leadership: A phenomenological study of practices, experiences, organizational effectiveness and barriers. | Savage-Austin & Honeycutt | https://ezproxy.student.twu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=57760063&site=ehost-live |
| The importance of context, beliefs and values in leadership development. | Hamilton & Bean | https://ezproxy.student.twu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=18893447&site=ehost-live |
| Exploring charismatic leadership in the public sector: Measurement and consequences. | Javidan & Waldman | https://ezproxy.student.twu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=9199200&site=ehost-live |
| Death of mixed methods? Or the rebirth of research as a craft. | Symonds, J. & Gorard, S. (2010) | https://ezproxy.student.twu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=51253961&site=ehost-live |
| Unpacking the relationship between CEO leadership behavior and organizational culture. | Tsui, A. S., Zhang, Z., Wang, H., Xin, K. R., & Wu, J. B. | http://ezproxy.student.twu.ca:2110/science/article/pii/S1048984305001712 |
| Defining and measuring servant leadership behavior in organizations | Sendjaya, Sarros & Santora | https://ezproxy.student.twu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=31228705&site=ehost-live |

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| Class Announcement: Transition & New Focus |
| **Today we will focus on assessing and interpreting the conclusion section of quantitative and qualitative research. Also, we will explore the first of two additional approaches to research that you will commonly encounter. The mixed methods approach has evolved as a way to utilize the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research as a particular question is investigated. Tomorrow we will look closely at action research.** |

Mini-Notes: Conclusions

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| Theme, Theorists & Concepts |
| * Research Conclusions |

We[[1]](#footnote-1) are near the end of our investigation of research designs and the interpretation of the consequent research reports. Today we will consider the reading and interpretation of research report conclusions.

The final section of a research report is the conclusion section and the back matter. Leedy and Ormrod observe, “Any research report should end by bringing closure to the interpretation of the data” (2010, p. 296). They assert that the conclusion is where loose threads are gathered together, and in particular, the author looks backward and distills into a few succinct paragraphs what the particular research has accomplished. All significant aspects of the research report are brought together in proper perspective, including relating the findings or results to the conclusions. Above all, a good conclusion makes explicit how the findings or results support the conclusions. Also, Leedy and Ormrod suggest that the conclusion should identify the weaknesses and limitations of the study, suggest practical implications of the findings or results, and make recommendations for further research (2010, p. 297).

Plano-Clark and Creswell (2015) provide a helpful chart on page 472 that provides a ready comparison of the contents of these sections for quantitative and qualitative research reports. In common, the conclusion will report a summary of the major results or findings, a statement of comparison of the study results or findings with those of similar previous studies, a statement of the implications of the results or findings with suggestions for practice, a statement of the limitations of the study, and a concluding statement as to the overall significance of the study. Significant differences are found in that quantitative studies explain the study results in terms of the predictions (hypotheses) discussed in the introductions, while qualitative studies lack such statements.

As a consumer of research, the back matter can be a valuable feature of the research report. The reference list can be useful in identifying further research reports for you to read, or theorists to investigate. Pay close attention to theorists or particular studies that are repeatedly referred to in the back matter of a number of research reports. The appendixes similarly can provide indication of data collection instruments that may be of use to you.

**References:**

Leedy, P., & Ormrod, J. (2010). *Practical research: Planning and design* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Plano-Clark, V., Creswell, J. (2015). *Understanding research: A consumer’s guide* (2nd ed.)*.* Boston, MA: Pearson.

Mini-Notes: Mixed Methods

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| Theme, Theorists & Concepts |
| * Mixed Methods |

We[[2]](#footnote-2) are near the end of our investigation of research designs and the interpretation of the consequent research reports. In this section we will briefly investigate mixed methods research design, and the closely related action research design.

**Mixed Methods Research Design**

The recognition that science is not a value-free enterprise and that our assumptions about human knowledge and about realities of our human world enter into every point of research has opened up a rich discourse regarding the philosophical foundations of research. Far from being solely esoteric explorations, these discussions provide us with the grounding necessary to select research topics with appropriate methods to answer our research questions. As we have seen, Plano-Clark and Creswell assert that the decision to engage in qualitative or quantitative research is driven by whether the research problem calls for an explanation or an exploration (2010, p. 66). A third genre—mixed methods, has developed. Mixed methods is the conscious inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative methods and so doing, seeks to mitigate some of the inherent tensions and weaknesses in both.

**Discussion:**

Refer to the following article for an overview of this terrain.

Symonds,J. & Gorard,S. (2010). Death of mixed methods? Or the rebirth of research as a craft. *Evaluation & Research in Education*, 23(2), 121-136.

**Qualitative/Quantitative Debate :** Using Symonds and Gorad as a launching point, reflect on the following questions:

• What is at the heart of the quantitative/qualitative debate?

• How has mixed methods been seen as a remedy?

• How strongly have the authors supported their conclusion?

There is growing consensus among researchers that quantitative and qualitative research methods are not in opposition to each other, but rather, complement each other (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007, p. 34). As a consumer of research, you have no doubt noticed that in your review of both qualitative and quantitative studies about a phenomenon that richer, fuller insights are gained. Just as the qualitative researcher makes effort to triangulate data coming from different streams to gain richness, similar benefit is realized when quantitative and qualitative research methods are combined. As a consumer of research, you are wise to look for studies representing these two approaches as you review literature relevant to your interests. Similarly, researchers have recognized these benefits, and consciously combined the two approaches in the same research study in what has come to be known as **mixed methods research design**.

A wide array of mixed methods research designs have been used by researchers. Plano-Clark and Creswell’s Chapter 12 discusses four of these designs, which provides sufficient detail for our purposes. It is common in mixed methods designs to see the researchers count (quantify) certain kinds of qualitative data. As well, you will encounter quantitative researchers reporting how their research participants perceived or were emotionally impacted (i.e. qualitative data) by the experimental treatment (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 97).

**References:**

Cooperrider, David. 1986. *Appreciative inquiry: Toward a methodology for understanding and enhancing organizational innovation*. (Doctoral dissertation, Case Western Reserve University). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 8611485)

Cooperrider, D. & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. In R. Woodman and W. Pasmore (Eds.), *Research in organizational change and development*. Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

Cooperrider, D., Whitney, D. & Stavros, J. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry handbook*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, W. (2007). *Educational research.* Boston, MA: Pearson.

Gay, L. (1987). *Educational research*. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Gill, J., & Johnson, P. (2002). *Research methods for managers* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Glanz, J. (1998). *Action research: An educational leaders guide to school improvement.* Norwood MA; Christopher-Gordon.

Hammond. S. (1998). *Appreciative Inquiry*. Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing

Leedy, P., & Ormrod, J. (2010). *Practical research: Planning and design* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Smith, M. K. (2007) Action research. The Encyclopedia of Informal Education, www.infed.org/research/b-actres.htm.

Stringer, E., & Genat, W. (2004). *Action research in health.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Walker, K., & Carr-Stewart, S. (2004). Learning leadership through appreciative inquiry. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 32*(1), 72-85.

Watkins, J. & Cooperrider, D. (2000). Appreciative inquiry: A transformative paradigm. *OD Practitioner: Journal of the Organization Development Network 32*: 6-12. Accessed on 15 July, 2006 the Internet at [http://www.odnetwork.org/ odponline/ vol32n1/transformative.html](http://www.odnetwork.org/%20odponline/%20vol32n1/transformative.html).

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| Assignment Instructions |
| **Immediately after class today, review the assigned readings, the instructor notes, and the PowerPoint(s) for today. Based on your reflections, prepare the following Reflection Brief.**  **Reflection Brief #4: Conclusions of Research Reports (5% of course mark)**  (NB: This assignment is due tomorrow morning at the beginning of class.)  **Prepare a brief (250-300 word) response to the following:**  **The most important thing for me about the conclusions section of a high-quality research report is . . .**  **Please post this reflective brief in the drop box under Day 7.**  **N.B. Group #4 will lead us in a discussion of Reflection Brief #4 first thing tomorrow morning (part of 10% of Individual Daily Engagement course final mark). See MyCourses for grouping details.** |

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| Assignment Grading |
| **Assignments will be graded using the general rubric posted in the course outline for LDRS 591 in MyCourses and the specific reflection brief rubric provided on MyCourses.** |

1. © David Williaume 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. © David Williaume 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)