



RES 712: Qualitative Aspects of Human Decision-Making: Past, Current, and Future

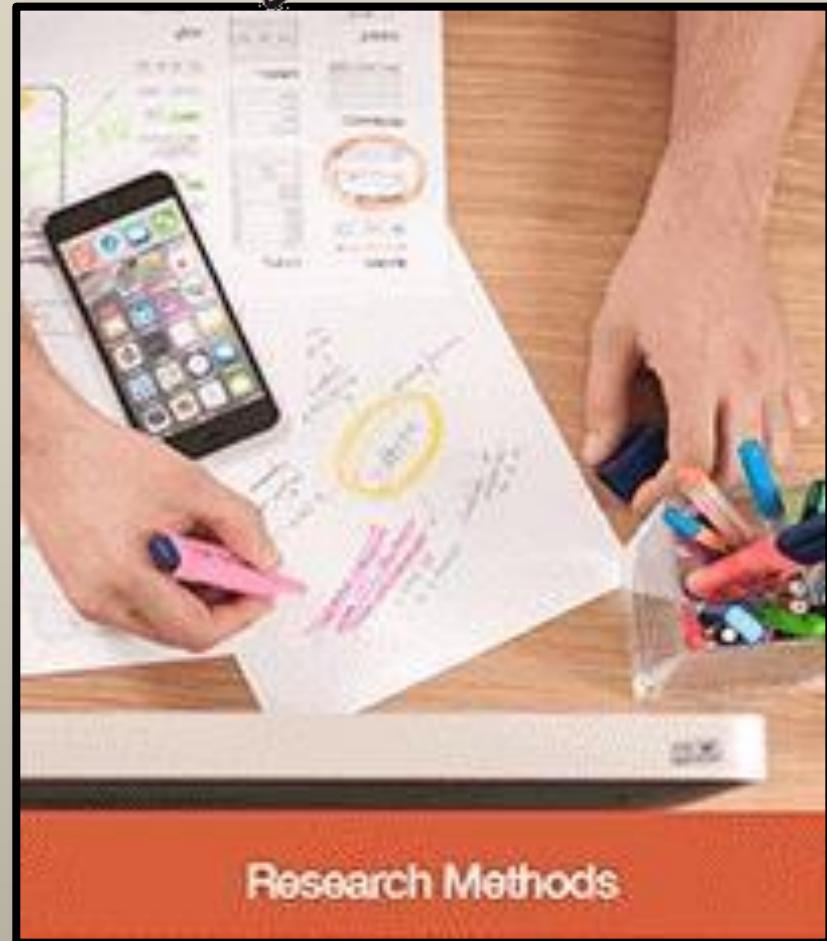
Topics—The Human Decision-Making Framework, Qualitative Descriptive Traditions, and Taking Fieldwork Notes



Qualitative Aspects of Human Decision-Making: Past, Current, and Future

- Human Subjects and the Choice/Decision-Making Process
- The Human Decision-Making Framework and the Qualitative Research Approach
- Overview of the Human Decision-Making Process and Basic Human Psychology
- The Qualitative Descriptive Traditions
 - The Bibliographic Tradition
 - The Historical Tradition
- Fieldwork Note Taking in Qualitative Research

Agenda!



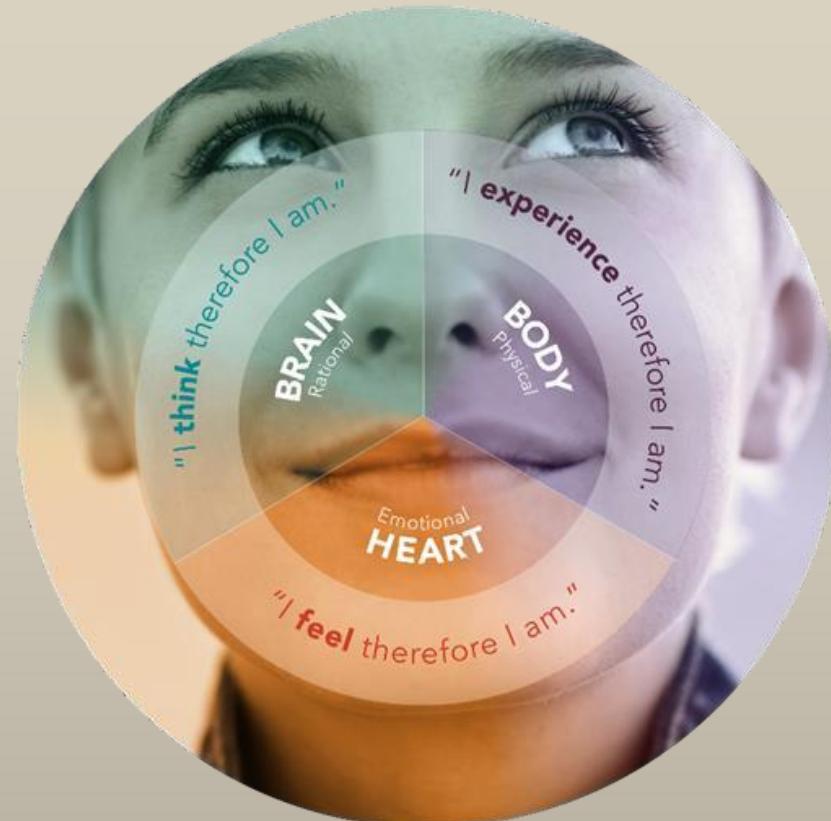
Human Subject Choice/Decision-Making and the Qualitative Research Approach

- How do human subjects/beings interpret the world and make choices/decisions/selections?
- The qualitative approach as “interpreter” of the human condition
- The quantitative approach and the human rational—the search for “why”
- The qualitative approach and the human emotional/subconscious
- Research approach “fusion” to comprehend the holistic human subject (physical, emotional, and rational)

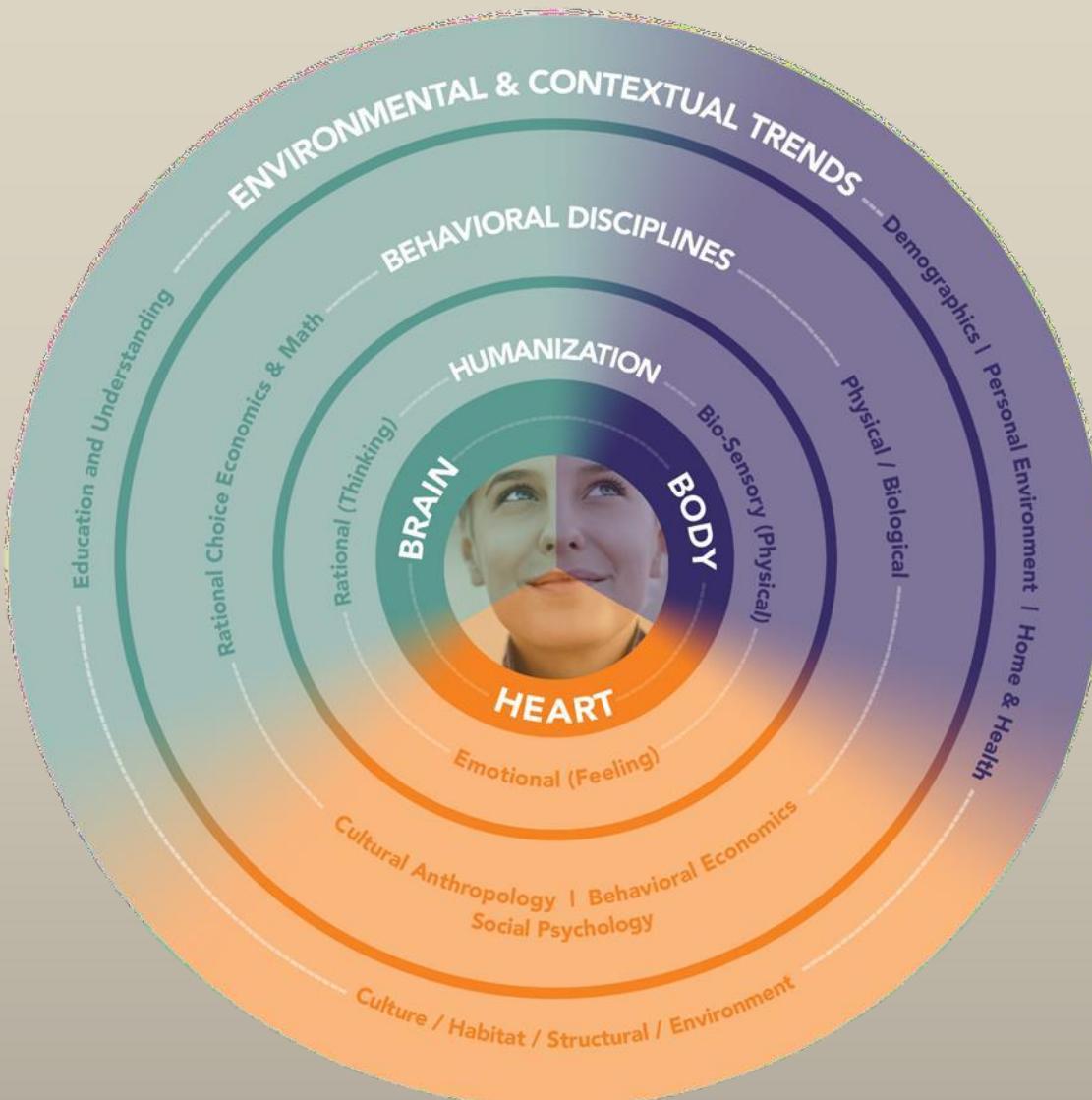


The Human Decision-Making Condition and the Qualitative Approach

- The human decision-making process (as a holistic focus of study)
- How human subjects interact with their world (contextual, cultural, and environmental)
- The three levels of human decision-making process:
 1. The Rational
 2. The Emotional
 3. The Physical
- Mirrors the psychology of human choice/thinking/decision-making
- Provides key human “inputs” not available or operational within the quantitative approach
- Driven by the sociological and anthropological disciplines

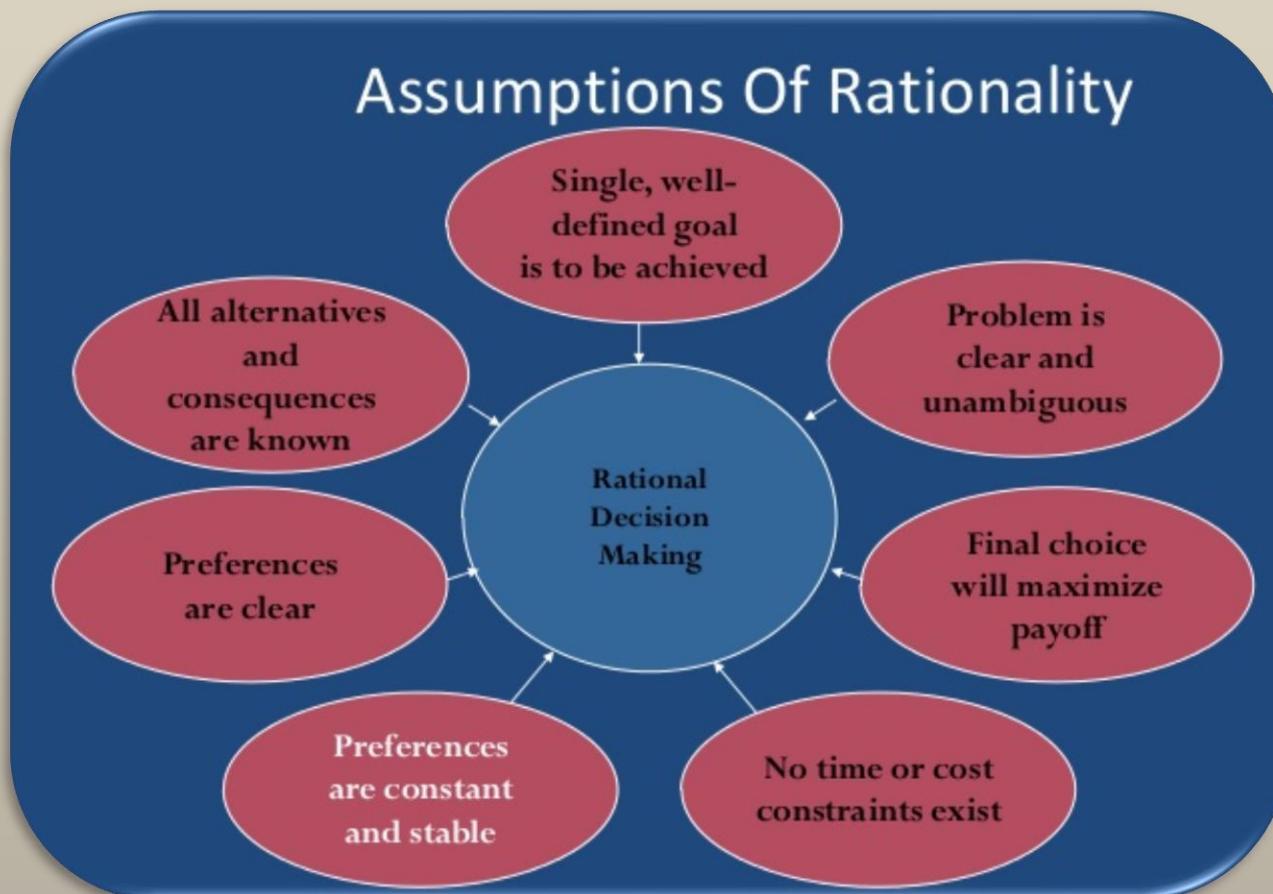


The Humanization Framework within the Business/Social Science Disciplines



The Rationality Paradigm: Key Assumptions

Rationality was Key for Social Sciences/Business Discipline



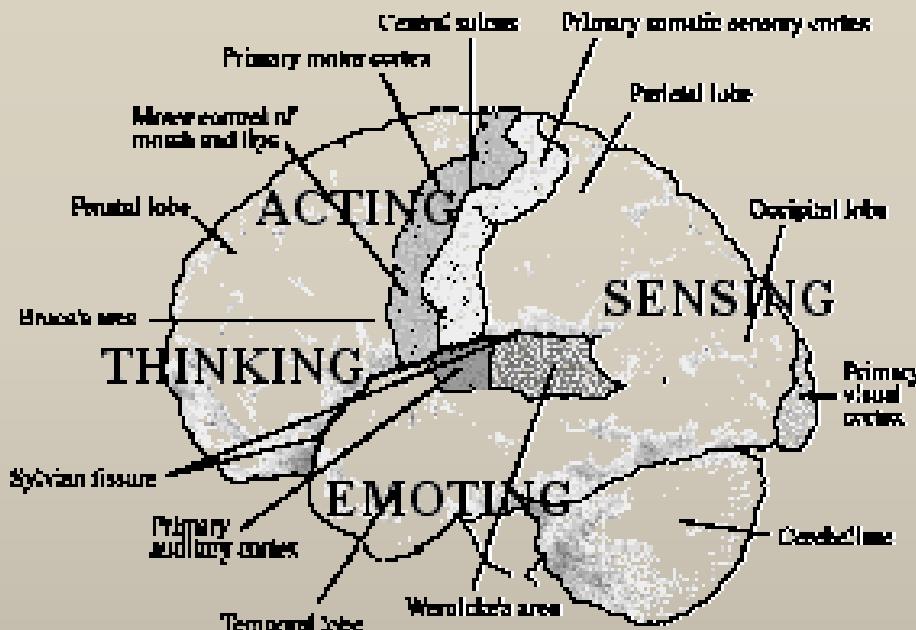
The Rationality Paradigm: Critical Limitations



- Being human, is being emotional!
- The flaws of pure logic and rationalization
- Ulterior human motives
- Humans as “social animals”
- Consistency in rationality across cultures and people—is it a given?

The Brain vs. the Mind

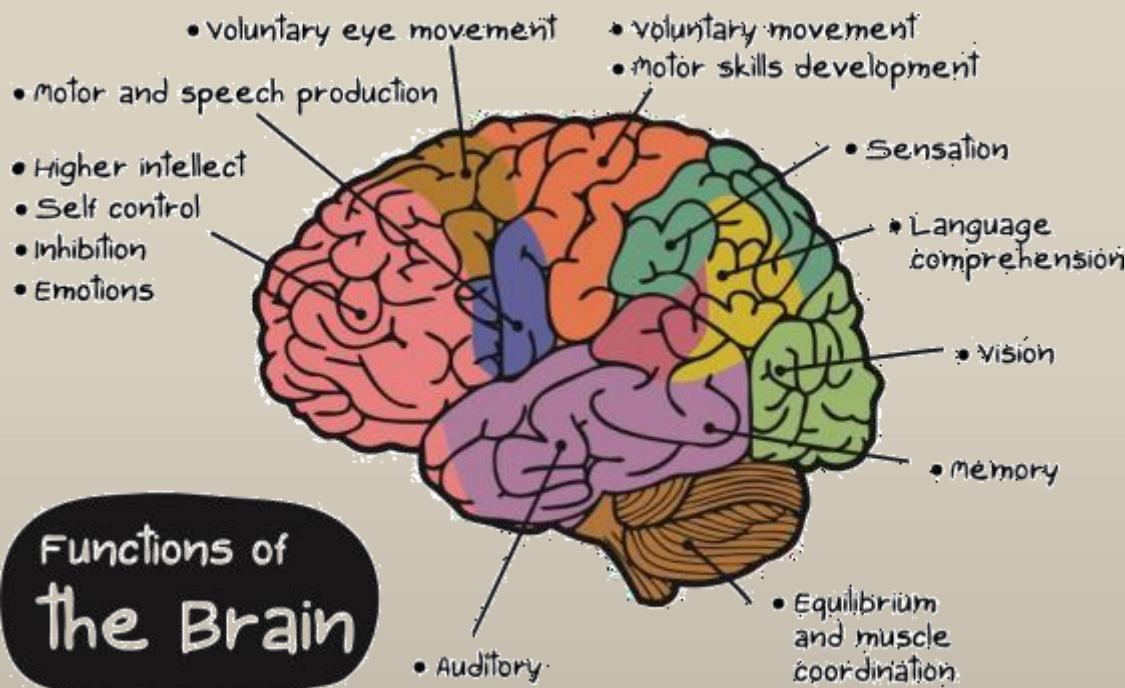
Extended Consciousness - past and future

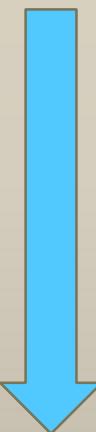


Core Consciousness - present centered

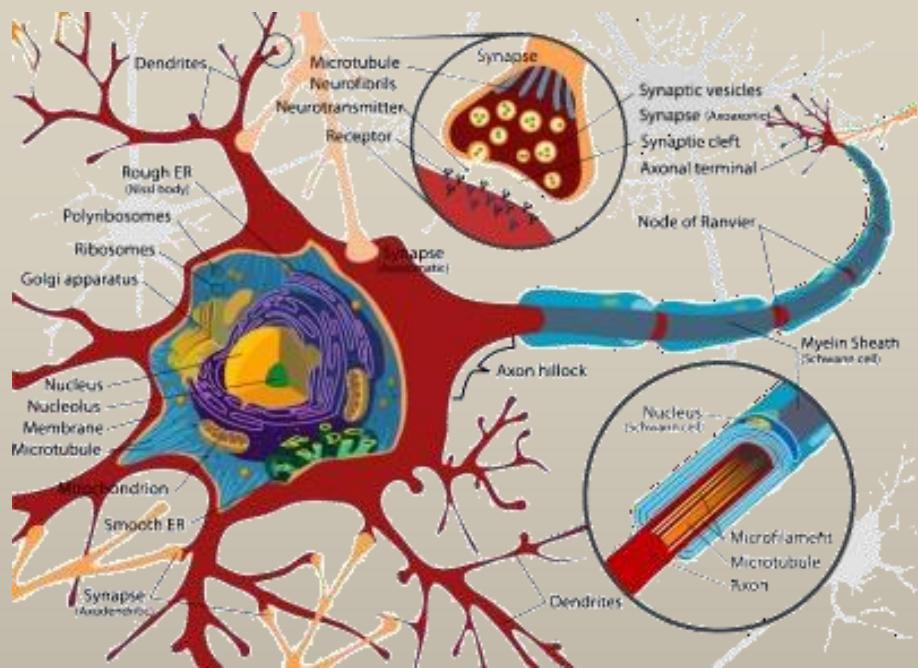
Is there a difference and why?

The Structures of the Brain

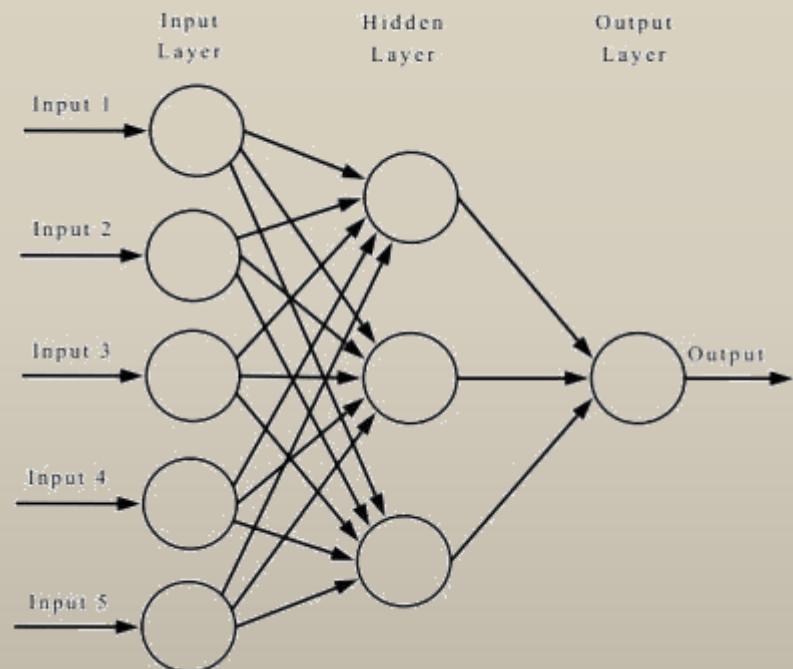


- Simple
1. Body Movement
 2. Sensations
 3. Emotions
 4. Memory
 5. Thinking
- Complex
- 

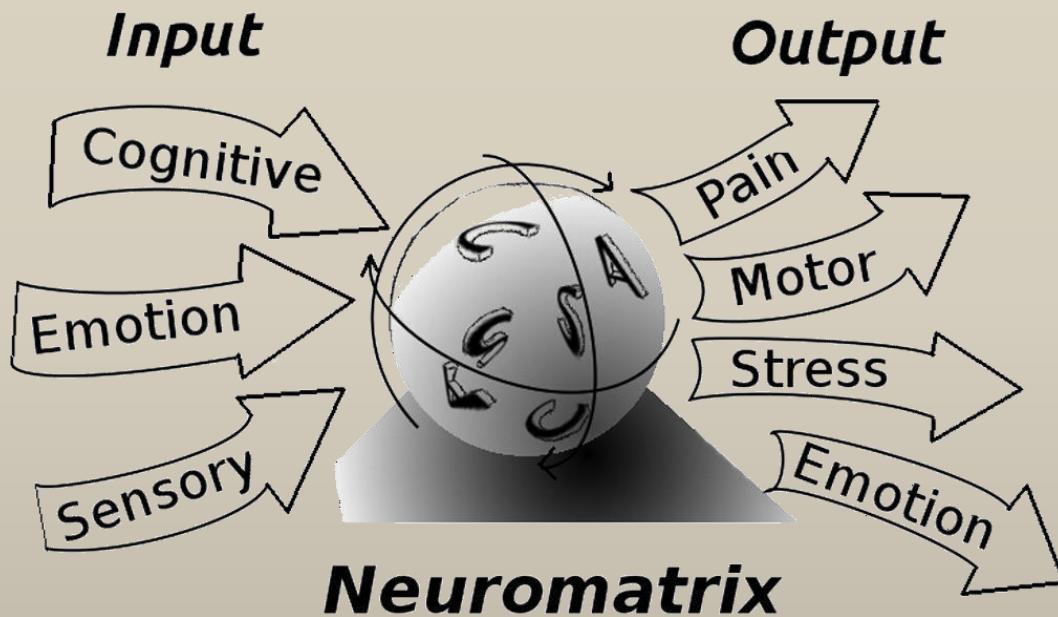
Communications within the Brain



Neural Networks: Human and Artificial (Replicating Human Thought)



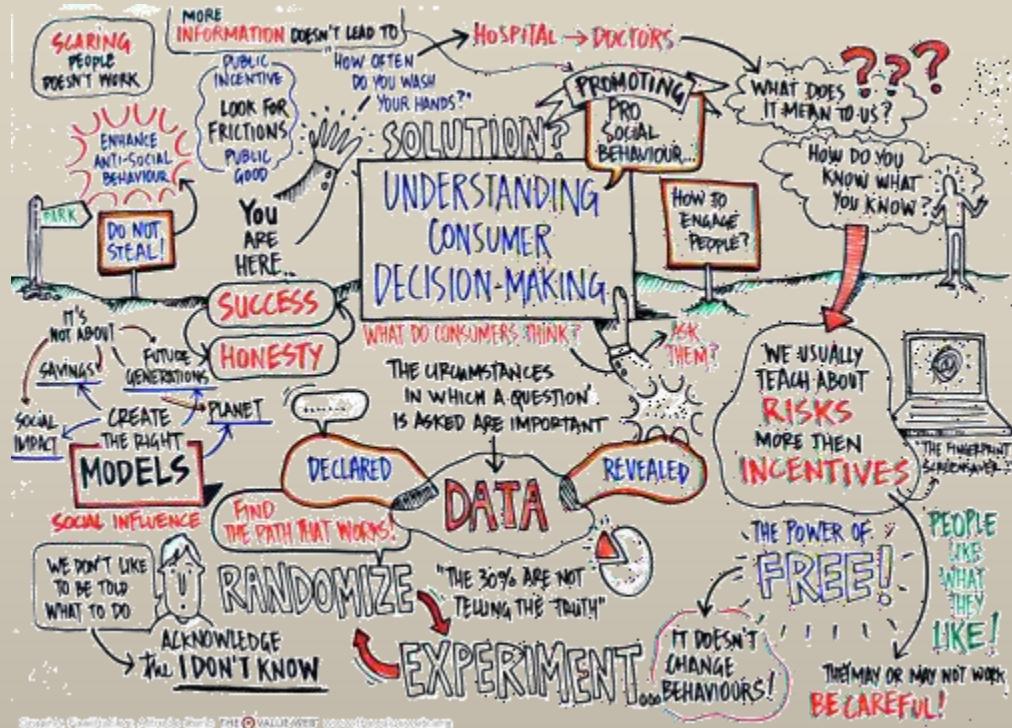
Input and Output Factors of the Brain



1. Arousal and Consciousness
2. Pleasure and Pain
3. Sensory
4. Emotions
5. Learning

Elements and Limitations of Pure Rational Thinking

1. Common thinking and processes across humans
2. Science and the decision-making process
3. The limits of laws, axioms, and rules for human behavior
4. “Control” in the environment and with humans



Descartes and the Rational-Emotional Divide



1. Emotions vs. Rationality
2. The primacy of rational actions and thought
3. Order between the two concepts
4. Superior nature of rationality

Descartes Error and Human Research



Damasio: Descartes' Error

Phineas Gage:

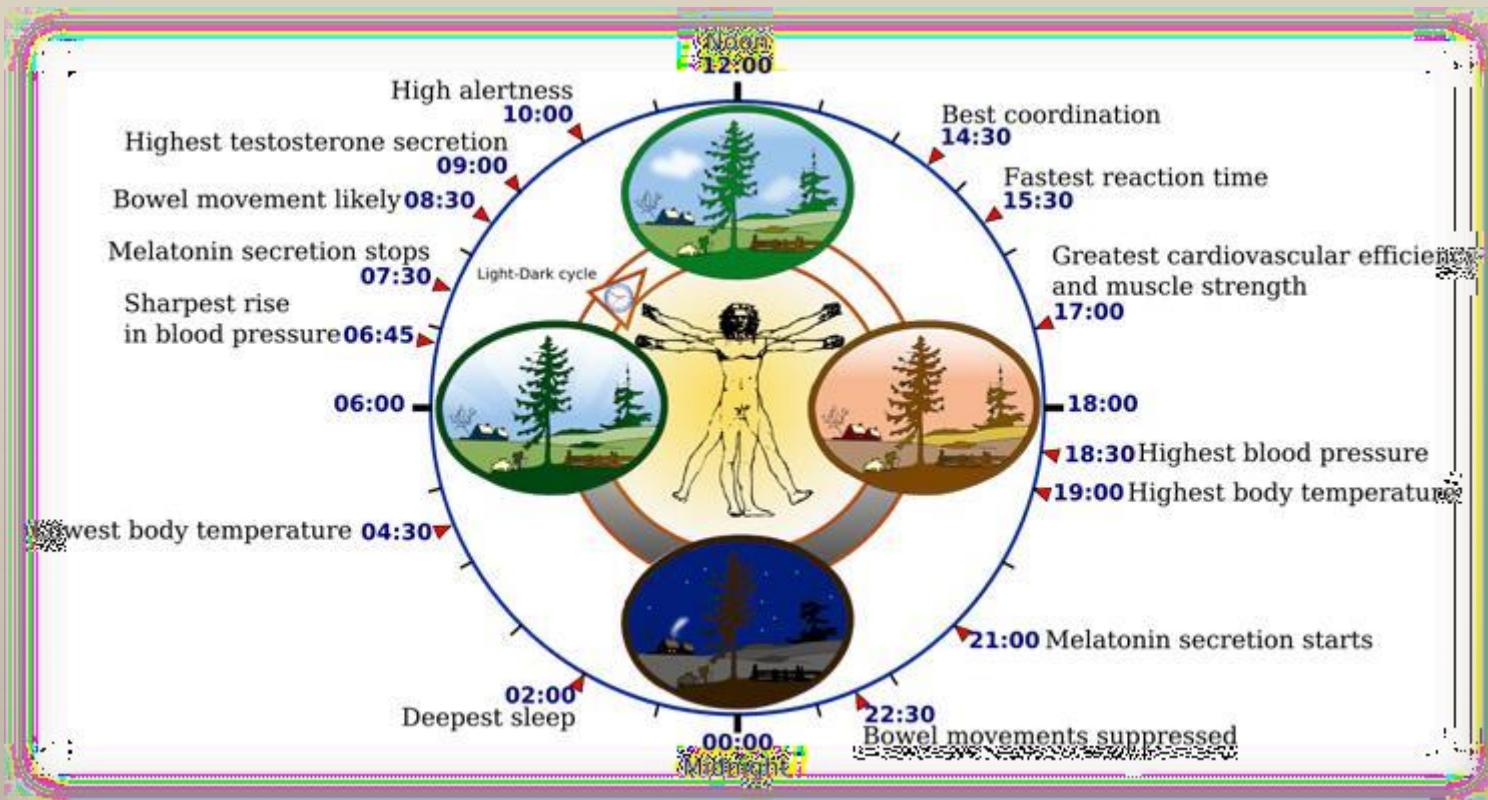
- impaired ability to feel emotion
- intelligence remained intact after the accident
- severely handicapped ability to take rational decisions

Damasio:

- emotions could no longer be engaged in the decision process
- rationality stems from our emotions
- our emotions stem from our bodily senses
- state of mind is identical to state of feeling, which is a reflection of state of body

I. The Physical Human— Semi-Automatic Functions and Decisions

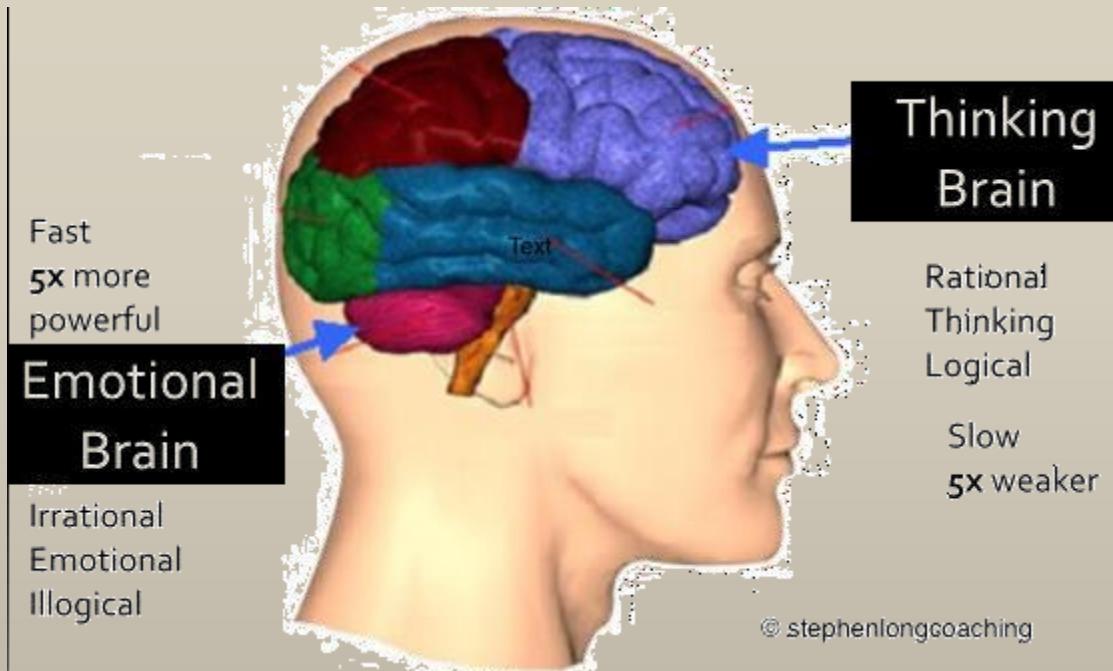
The Importance of Automated Body Functions



Why is this important in the Decision-Making Process?

II. Emotional Reaction: Acting with the Heart

The Importance of Human Spontaneity



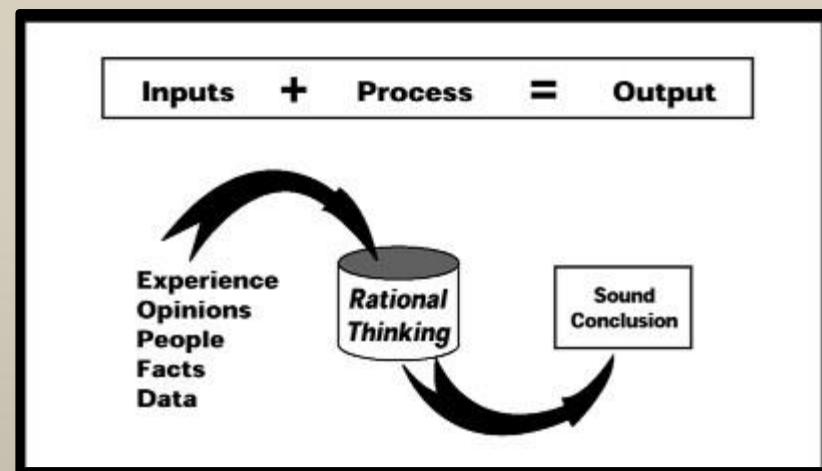
Elements of Emotional Thinking

1. Biases and emotions
2. Sensory as an influence on emotions
3. Emotions and “weighted decisions”: by person or subject
4. What about culture and society?



III. The Rational—Acting with Deep Thinking

The Importance of the Brain and Critical Thinking



Why is this important for research?

The Descriptive Qualitative Traditions



- Describes a phenomenon and its characteristics, across both time and space
- Lends support to describe a condition or subject within a particular context and culture
- Focuses on the details of what, where, when, and why of an event or experience
- Main goal: develops a detailed picture of a particular situation or specific issue

The Descriptive Qualitative Traditions: Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages of Descriptive Research

- Effective to analyze non-quantified topics and issues
- The possibility to observe the phenomenon in a completely natural and unchanged natural environment
- The opportunity to integrate the qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection
- Less time-consuming than quantitative experiments

Disadvantages of Descriptive Research

- Descriptive studies cannot test or verify the research problem statistically
- Research results may reflect certain level of bias due to the absence of statistical tests
- Most descriptive studies are not 'repeatable' due to their observational nature
- Descriptive studies are not helpful in identifying cause behind described phenomenon



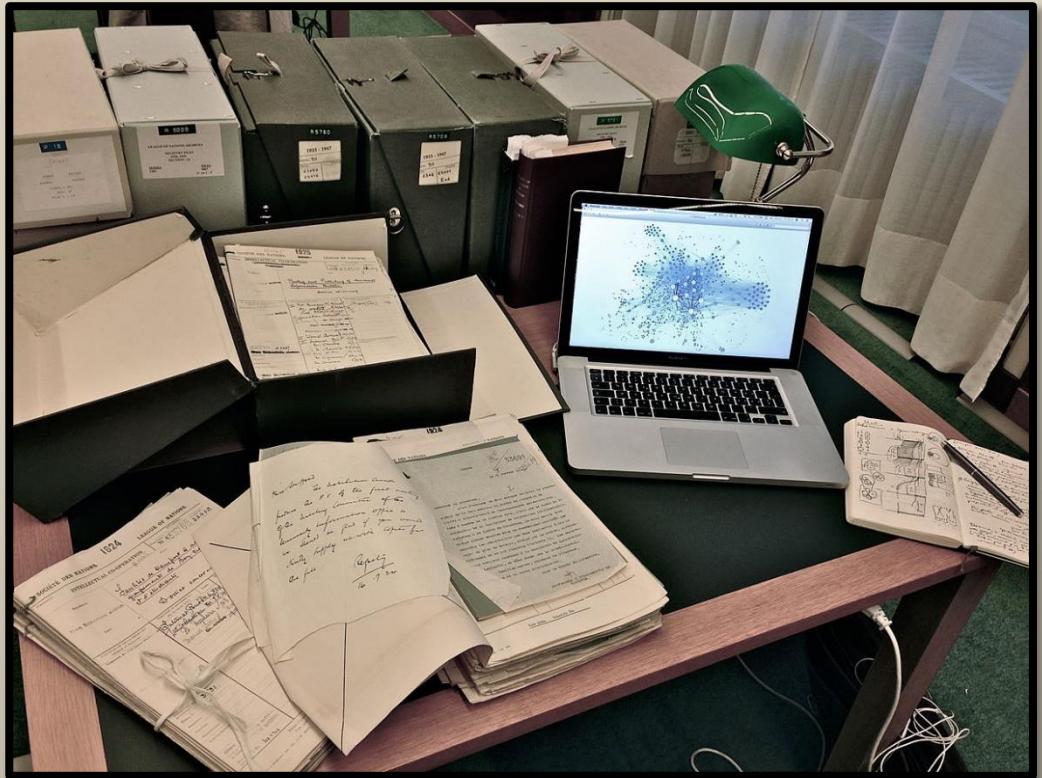
The Bibliographical Qualitative Tradition: Overview



- Research requiring information gathered from published materials
- Can be primary or secondary
- Associated with desk research
- Allows for understanding key individuals or content over time and across space
- Based on common individual and cultural traits
- Supports the understanding of themes and tendencies
- “Parts” tend to be more than the summation of the “individual content”

The Bibliographical Qualitative Tradition: Designs and Techniques

- Narrative
- Life History
- Oral History
- Autobiography
- Storytelling
- Major themes of the tradition
 - Individual
 - Context (point-in-time and across time)
 - Culture (within and across cultures, time, and space)
 - Level of environment



The Bibliographical Qualitative Tradition: Advantages and Disadvantages



Advantages of Descriptive Research

- Effective to analyze non-quantified topics and subjects within the literature and across disciplines
- Observe the phenomenon from multiple points of view
- Allows for the coding and testing of qualitative data

Disadvantages of Descriptive Research

- Cannot test or verify the research problem statistically
- Research results may reflect bias due to the absence of statistical tests and the involvement of the researcher or principal investigator
- Bibliographic descriptive studies are not 'repeatable'
- Can not identify correlation or cause

The Bibliographical Qualitative Tradition: Examples in the Business Discipline

- Business leadership trends
 - Global economic decisions
 - Marketing objectives within a sector
 - Strategic management levels
 - Various cross-national workplace environments



The Historical Qualitative Tradition: Overview



- Employs qualitative measurement with primary historical documents/interpretation for theory development and assessment
- The past to inform the present and as a guide for the future
- Researcher interpretation of the past and its evolution
- Key as a starting point for the research subject of topic
- History vs. nostalgia

The Historical Qualitative Tradition: Designs and Techniques

The History of Human Activities

- Uncover the unknown
- Address unanswered questions
- Focus on the past to the present
- Assess the record of the past
- Understand human culture

Techniques

- Qualitative techniques
- Quantitative techniques
- Content analysis (text analytics/analysis with coding)
- Oral history

Issues of validity and reliability



The Historical Qualitative Tradition

Advantages and Disadvantages of Historical Research

■ Advantages

- Permits investigation of topics and questions that can be studied in no other fashion
- Can make use of more categories of evidence than most other methods (with the exception of case studies and ethnographic studies)

■ Disadvantages

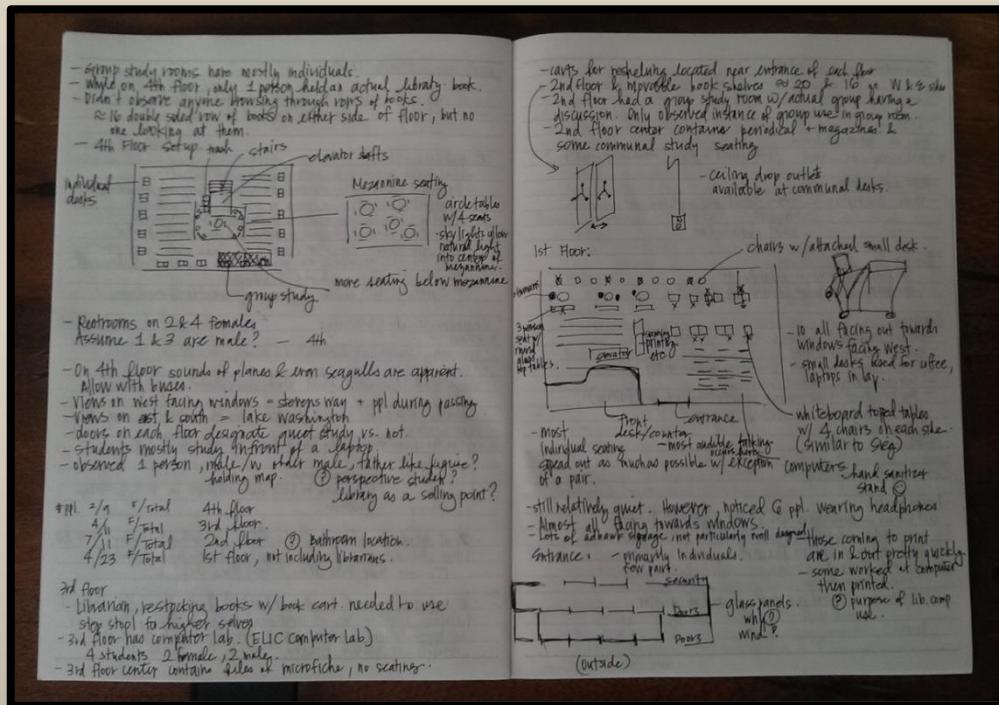
- Cannot control for threats to internal validity
- Limitations are imposed due to the content analysis
- Researchers cannot ensure representation of the sample

The Historical Qualitative Tradition: Examples in the Business Discipline

- The development of capitalism in Nepal
- The evolution of firm leadership in Germany
- The relationship of male to female employees in the US
- The relationship between the Italian government and Italian labor



Taking Fieldwork Notes: Its Importance in the Qualitative Approach



- The role of note taking in the qualitative approach
- Notes as content collection
- Notes as content interpreters (equivalent of statistics and statistical routines in the quantitative approach)
- What is the purpose of field notes?
- Produce meaning and an understanding of the culture, social situation, or phenomenon being studied
- Establish a record for review and input for analysis
- Fieldwork notes as a research technique

Taking Fieldwork Notes: Taking Notes at the Researcher's Level

- The natural setting: context, culture, the environment, and other non-individual level variables
 - Importance of audio and video recording
 - Application of content transcripts
 - The interpretation of human content—audio, text, pictures, video, and research tools
 - Working with a translator—simultaneous and static



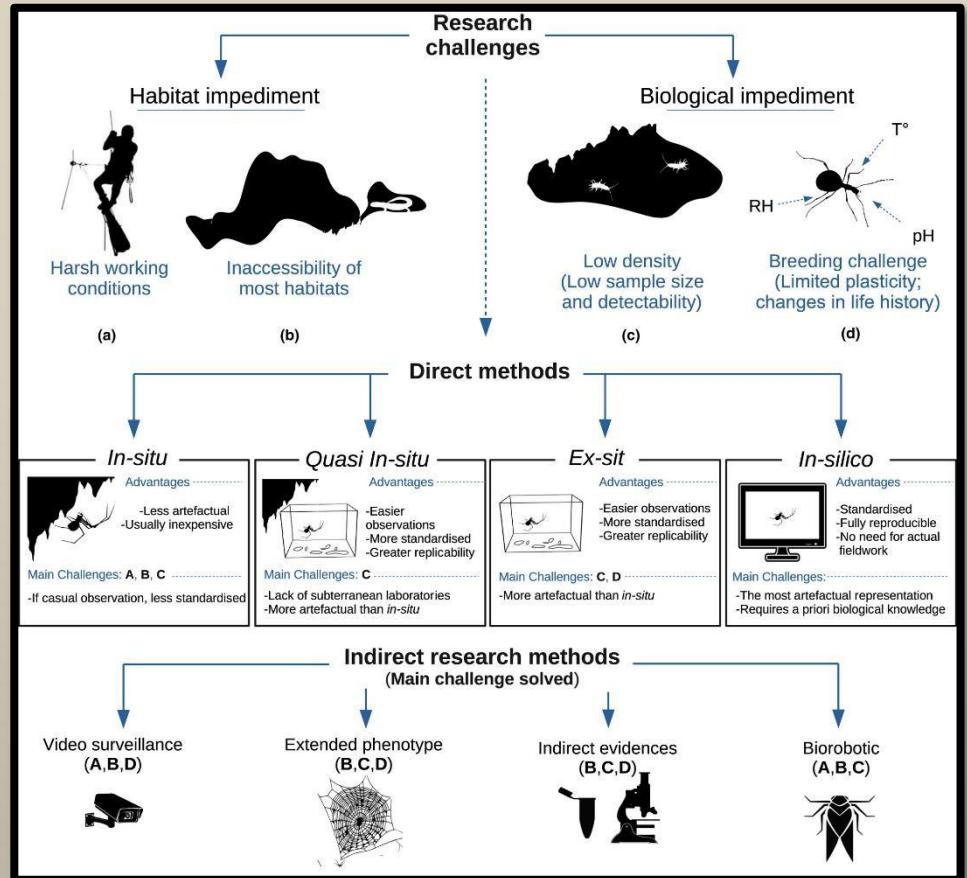
Taking Fieldwork Notes: Researcher Interpretation and Assessment



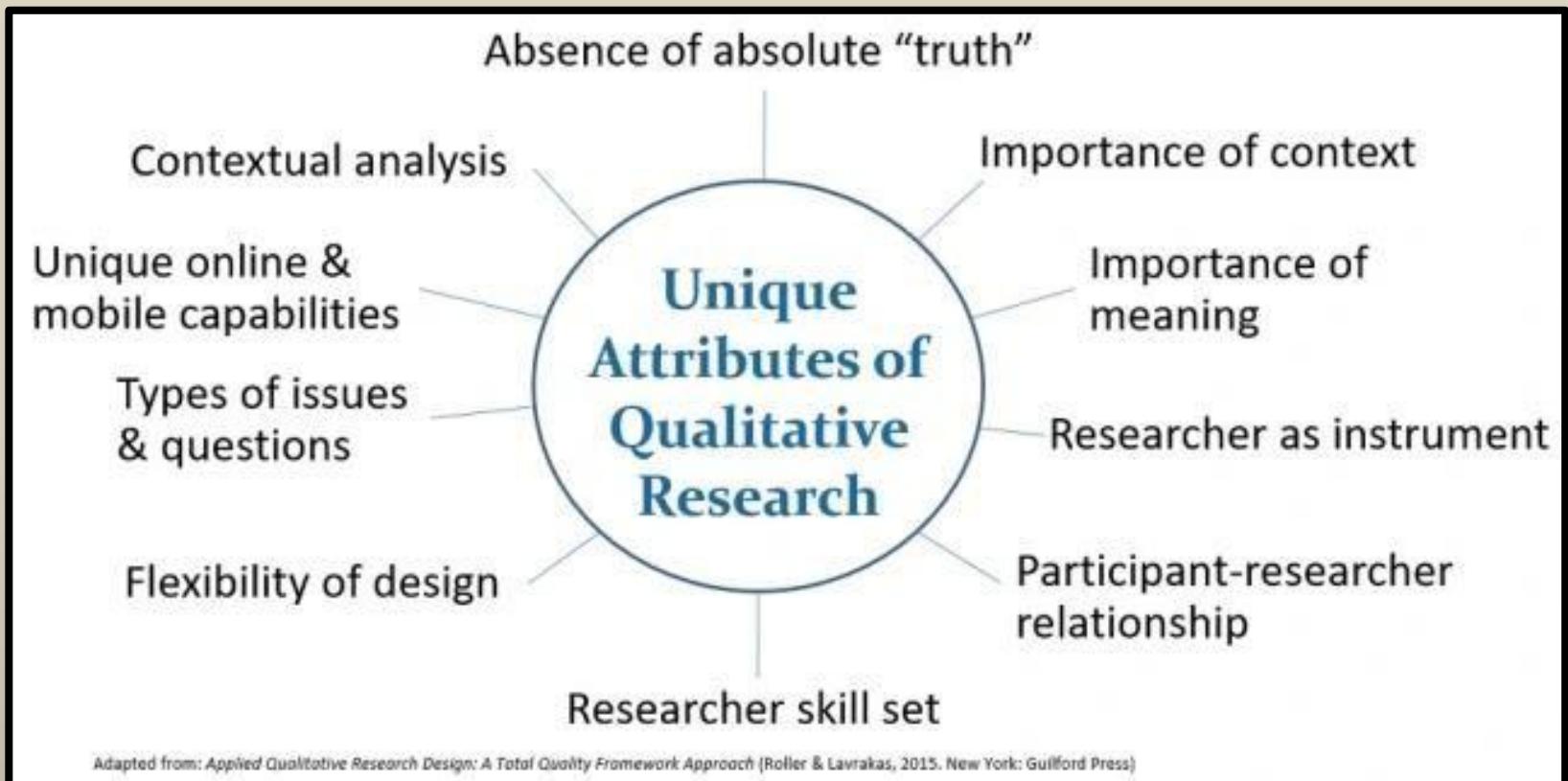
- The critical nature of researcher interpretation of the fieldwork notes
 - Integrate notes with interpretation of context (as viewed), culture, and the environment
 - Confirmation of empirical evidence
 - Review of notes in relation to the larger research problem
 - Interpretation as a context for uncovering or identifying trends and tendencies

Taking Fieldwork Notes: Uncovering “Trends” and “Tendencies” within Qualitative Content

- Trends and tendencies in fieldwork notes
- Confirmation of trends and tendencies
- Integrating fieldwork note trends with the literature
- Identifying trends and tendencies across research
- Comparing notes within and across subjects
- Reflexivity and trends (internal)
- Triangulation and trends (external)



Discussion: Understanding the Human Emotional and Subconscious



- How can the qualitative approach support our basic understanding of human subject content?