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"A quantitative research methodology is appropriate where quantifiable measures of variables of interest are possible, where hypotheses can be formulated and tested, and inferences drawn from samples to populations. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, are appropriate when the phenomena under study are complex, are social in nature, and do not lend themselves to quantification". Quantitative research is based primarily on positivistic thought and qualitative research is more constructivist in theory. Until recently, the strict scientific methods employed by quantitative analysis have been considered the best way to conduct any meaningful research. "The positivist notion that qualitative data is inherently untrustworthy and therefore to be avoided is untenable. Arguments are advanced to support the view that social research is based on 'qualitative knowing' and that

quantification extends, refines, and cross-checks qualitative knowledge". In other words, current thought holds that the two paradigms are not mutually exclusive and could very well support each other in most social science inquiry. "To disparage qualitative data as subjective is to accuse it of having high fallibility; to laud the objectivity of quantitative data is to construe it as having low fallibility".

At first glance, quantitative data might appear to be uniformly superior. For example, "There are x students in the classroom" is an instance of quantifiable research. By contrast, observing the workings of a classroom in terms of the group dynamics results in qualitative data. Is one superior to the other? Conventional wisdom holds that they are both vital to educational research.

The nature of concepts used in educational research — concepts like intelligence, reasoning, achievement, and attitudes — is such that dependence of qualitative judgments and data is required to minimize the fallibility of quantitative instruments. So long as education research remains couched in terms of such concepts (and it must to have a bearing on practice), quantitative data gathering will have to remain faithful to and parasitic on qualitative judgments and terms; the latter cannot be eliminated.

So why has quantitative research been held in such high esteem for so long? "In empirical-analytic inquiry, the aim of developing universal principles of institutional life necessitates stripping away the idiosyncrasies of the particular phenomenon studied to reveal what is generally applicable to all similar situations. The separation of the universal from the particular is accomplished through several processes". Quantitative methods of research are designed to be detached from, and independent of, a specific situation under study in a particular organization, academic department, or classroom. Objectivity is

foremost in the design of such research. In this manner, the research findings will apply to more than one population, which increases the generalizability of the research. Another reason quantitative methods are preferred is that the conclusions obtained from such studies are considered to be more reliable and statistically valid. Qualitative research, because of its subjective nature and immersion of the researcher into the context, has long been suspect in terms of validity and rigor. "Phenomenological inquiry uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings. Logical positivism, or quantitative research, uses experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypothetical generalization. Each represents a fundamentally different inquiry paradigm, and researcher actions are based on the underlying assumptions of each paradigm".

When conducting research for use in instructional design projects, which type of data collection, is more beneficial to solving the problem at hand? First of all, instructional technologists prefer to collect data prior to determining the problem to be solved. In this case, a qualitative method is called for at the beginning of the information-gathering process. "Qualitative methods, on the other hand, are appropriate when the phenomena under study are complex, are social in nature, and do not lend themselves to quantification". Until the situation is analyzed from various viewpoints, it is difficult to formulate a hypothesis to be tested using quantitative methods. "Qualitative methods are appropriate in situations where one needs to first identify the variables that might later be tested quantitatively". There is almost always a great deal of quantitative data available to the instructional designer that has already been generated by the organization under study. This information can be analyzed without

formulating a hypothesis, though, and utilized along with the more subjective data gathered during the analysis.

Once the instructional technologist has formed a hypothesis, there are instances that call for quantitative methods of research. The collection and analysis of performance reports, safety records, and employee satisfaction information is vital to the study of the situation for which instruction will eventually be designed.

SPSS •

TSP •

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STATGRAPHICS Plus v5.0 (for Windows) -- over 250 statistical analyses: regression, probit, enhanced logistic, factor effects plots, automatic forecasting, matrix plots, outlier identification, general linear models (random and mixed), multiple regression with automatic Cochrane-Orcutt and Box-Cox procedures, Levene's, Friedman's, Dixon's and Grubb's tests, Durbin-Watson p-values and 1-variable bootstrap estimates, enhanced 3D charts. For *Six Sigma* work: gage linearity and accuracy analysis, multi-vari charts, life data regression for reliability analysis and accelerated life-testing, long-term and short-term capability assessment estimates. Two free downloads are available: full-function but limited-time(30 days), and unlimited-time but limited-function (no Save, no Print, not all analyses).

SSP (Smith's Statistical Package) -- a simple, user-friendly package for Mac and Windows that can enter/edit/transform/import/export data, calculate basic summaries, prepare charts, evaluate distribution function probabilities, perform simulations, compare means & proportions, do ANOVA's, Chi Square tests, simple & multiple regressions.

Also, check out R and OX, described in the programming language.

Binomial Probability Program (BPP) is a menu driven program which performs a variety of functions related to the success/ failure situation. Given the probability of occurrence for a specific event, this program calculates the probability that EXACTLY, NO MORE THAN, or AT LEAST a certain number of events occur in a given number of trials for all possible outcomes, and will generate plots for each of these.

The program allows the user to repeatedly combine probabilities in series or in parallel, and at any time will show a trail of the calculations which led to the current probability value. Other program capabilities are the calculation of probabilities from input data, Gaussian approximation, and the generation of a mean time between failure (MTBF) table for various levels of confidence. Up to 2200 trials may be run, limited by IBM PC BASIC memory utilization. It is assumed that the user is familiar with the theory behind binomial probability distribution.

ADE-4 multivariate analysis and graphical display software package for Mac and Win 95/NT. Includes component analysis and correspondence analysis, spatial data analysis methods (analogous to Moran and Geary indices), discriminant analysis and within/between groups analyses, many linear regression methods including lowess and polynomial regression, multiple and PLS (partial least squares) regression and orthogonal (principal component) regression, projection methods like principal component analysis on instrumental variables, canonical correspondence analysis and many other variants, coinertia analysis and the RLQ method, and several three-way table (k-table) analysis methods. Graphical displays include an automatic collection of

elementary graphics corresponding to groups of rows or to columns in the data table, automatic k-table graphics and geographical mapping options, searching, zooming, selection of points, and display of data values on factor maps. Simple and homogeneous user interface.