

Understanding Research Methodology

This activity is designed to help you understand research methodology, especially the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods.

Key Question: What's the key difference between qualitative methods and quantitative methods?

Step One: Choose A Topic

Come up with a topic that you think is interesting. Make sure all of your group agrees. You can choose one below or come up with your own. It might be one you've studied in class or something you've always wanted to know but haven't learned about yet.

Examples:

- Neuroplasticity
- Parenting
- Gender
- Cultural differences in ... (insert behaviour)
- Immigration
- Drugs
- Addiction
- Violence
- Attraction



Our Topic: _____

Step Two: Devise a research question

From your chosen topic, figure out a *specific* research question that you would like to answer about that topic.

E.g. Does the amount of time on social media affect grades?

Our RQ: _____



Step Three: How would you gather data to answer your question?

Which method would you use to answer your question? Why? You could begin by choosing whether to apply quantitative methodology or qualitative methodology. After this, you can be more specific (e.g. focus group interview, natural experiment, correlational study, etc.)

Our Method: _____

Why we chose this: _____

Step Four: Evaluate

Make a list of strengths and limitations of applying your chosen method to answer the question.

Strengths	Limitations

Step Five: The Alternative

Now change your research question so that it would make more sense to apply a different methodology. For example, if you chose a quantitative method the first time, how would you alter your research question so that a qualitative method would make more sense?

New RQ: _____

Final Task: Contrast

What is the key difference between using a qualitative method and a quantitative method? i.e. when is one more appropriate than the other?