

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM - RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS (AUGUST 2018)

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Directions:

Be sure to answer **both** questions below. You have 3.5 hours to complete your work. Answers should be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins. Your answer should be written as if you were writing a paper. In other words, it should be in essay form and read well. Use headings and make connections between the sections as best you can in an exam setting. Be sure to save your work often.

Question 1

Recognizing that family violence is a complex problem, cities across the United States have established Family Justice Centers (FJCs). The FJCs are "one-stop-shops" that house service providers, legal personnel, and police under one roof. The NYC FJCs offer a variety of services including safety planning and risk-assessment counseling for victims/survivors and their children; civil legal assistance on immigration and family court matters; assistance with housing; help with police reports; language interpretation; and a wide-range of self-sufficiency services. Since opening in 2005, The NYC FJCs across the five boroughs have consulted with 352,000 persons and offered extended services to 135,000 clients.

The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) has asked you to complete a mixed-methods evaluation to determine how well the FJC model works. You have been given one year to complete this project. Assume you have access to a wide array of NYC data. Specifically, OCDV is interested in knowing if the FJCs have addressed a number of client- and system-level outcomes including:

1. Client-level outcomes:

- a. Helping victims feel safe
- b. Addressing victims' multiple needs

2. System-level outcomes:

- a. Increasing offender criminal accountability
- b. Increasing victim engagement with criminal justice system

Develop a research proposal designed to address some of the outcomes listed above. Make sure your proposal addresses the following:

1. What is the purpose of this research study? Provide a clear purpose statement.

2. Which research design is most appropriate for this study? Why? Be specific.

3. State the specific quantitative and qualitative research questions/hypotheses for your study. Include at least one quantitative question and two to four hypotheses, and at least one qualitative question.

4. Sample:

a. Discuss your sampling techniques for both the quantitative and qualitative elements of your project. Be specific and provide a justification for the selection strategy.

b. Discuss what an appropriate comparison group would look like.

5. Data collection:

a. Discuss the data and methods you are using. Be specific and discuss both qualitative and quantitative methods.

6. Measurement issues:

a. Discuss what you are measuring and how you are measuring it. There should be a fit between the research question, the data, and measurement.

7. Variables and social mechanisms:

a. Describe the variables you are using (independent variables and dependent variable).

b. Explain the contexts, processes, and/or meanings you will explore in your study.

8. Data issues:

a. Discuss issues with data trustworthiness, accuracy, consistency and richness.

9. Ethical issues:

a. Discuss the ethical issues your study raises, and any special IRB concerns.

10. Implications:

a. Finally, discuss the implications are of your study for both future research and policy.

Question 2

Self-reported fear of victimization is a reoccurring topic in the field of Criminal Justice. One area of research focuses on the impact that media coverage of high-profile crime has on the public's fear of victimization. If we look closely at existing research, however, we find that there is limited solid empirical evidence in this area. In order to address this, two different research proposals have been suggested, one taking a qualitative perspective and the other a quantitative perspective. Compare and contrast the two methods of collecting data on individual's self-reported fear of victimization in their neighborhood.

- A face-to-face survey of residents in a mid-sized city using a close-ended survey instrument. Participants must be at least 21 years of age and a resident for at least one year. Participants were selected through as a multi-stage probability sample with stages of neighborhood, street and residence.
- In-person, in-depth interviews of residents in a mid-sized city using an open-ended interview schedule. Participants must be at least 21 years of age and a resident for at least one year. Participants are selected by the interviewer.

At minimum, a) discuss some of the advantages/disadvantages of each approach **AND** b) be sure to touch on issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability as conceptualized in both quantitative and qualitative research.