

ON RESEARCH METHODS

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CIS 720: Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program Seminar

Thursday, January 22, 2009

WHAT IS A RESEARCH METHOD?

CAN WE MIX RESEARCH METHODS?

- “research methods are historically and theoretically formed contrivances designed to produce certain ends in certain ways” (Yanchar & Williams, 2006, p. 4)
- “... the possibility of a *methodological circle* where methods based on assumptions about the nature of their subject matter only produce observations which must confirm these assumptions” ((Yanchar & Williams, 2006, p. 4) quoting (Danziger, 1985, p. 1))
- “If the theoretical nature of one method precludes that of another, then no mixing can take place that does not either collapse into incoherence or involve a framework of assumptions that integrates the methods and renders their combined data coherent and interpretable.” (p.4)

Danziger, K. (1985). The Methodological Imperative in Psychology. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 15(1), 1.

Yanchar, S., & Williams, D. (2006). Reconsidering the Compatibility Thesis and Eclecticism: Five Proposed Guidelines for Method Use. *Educational Researcher*, 35(9), 3-12.

HOW TO SELECT A RESEARCH METHOD?

- Characteristics of the Research Problem & Questions
- Contingencies of the Research Project
- Capabilities and Compunctions of the Researcher
- Sociological Factors

Research method selection is the outcome of a socio-technical process

EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

- Pick your ~~poison~~ methodological paradigm
- Like your paradigm
- Know your paradigm
- Do paradigmatically rigorous work
- Apply evaluative criteria of the paradigm to your method

SOME MORE READINGS

Ruben, D. (1990). *Explaining Explanation: Routledge.*

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