

# Research Design

## Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches

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Chapter 6 - The Purpose Statement

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# The Purpose Statement - Introduction

- The most important statement in the entire introduction
  - Found in the last section of the introduction
  - Establish intent of the entire research study
  - Should be clear, specific and informative
  - Purpose statement indicates why you want to do the study
  - Also indicates your intended accomplishment
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# A Qualitative Purpose Statement

- This statement contains information about the central phenomenon explored in the study, participants and research site.
- In order to bring attention to the statement as the central controlling idea, the researcher should use words like *purpose, intent, objective*.
- It is important to focus on one idea or phenomenon
- Use action verbs or phrases to convey how learning will take place for example , *understand, develop, explore, examine the meaning of, discover*.
- Use neutral words in sentences such as “*self-expression experiences of individuals*” instead of saying “successful *self-expression of individuals*”.



# A Qualitative Purpose Statement

- Include words that denote the strategy of inquiry such as *ethnographic, grounded theory, case study, phenomenological, narrative approach*.
- Mention participants in the study – 1 or more individuals, a group of people or an entire organization
- Identify site for research – homes, classrooms, organizations
- Finally, include language that shows the scope of participation or research sites in the study.
- \*\* A good dissertation proposal should contain many of the above basic design features.

# A Qualitative Purpose Statement


Below is a script helpful in drafting a complete statement:

The purpose of this ..... (strategy of inquiry such as ethnography, case study or other) study is (was, will be? ) to .....(understand? explore? develop? discover?) the .....(central phenomenon being studied) for .....(the participants, such as the individual, groups, organization) at .....( research site). At this stage in the research, the .....

( central phenomenon being studied) will be generally defined as ..... (provide a general definition) (p.126)



# Quantitative Purpose Statements Contain

- The variables (independent, dependent, control and intervening, and their relationship).
  - The participants
  - The research site
- 



# Quantitative Purpose Statements: Include the following:

- Use words such as purpose, intent, or objective
- Identify the theory, model, or conceptual framework
- Use words to connect the independent and dependent variables such as related to or comparison of
- Position the independent before the dependent variables; other variables may go between the two or after the dependent variable
- Mention the specific strategy of inquiry
- Provide general definitions of key variables



# A Quantitative Purpose Statement Script

The purpose of this ..... (experiment? Survey?) study is (was, will be? ) to test the theory of ..... that ..... (describes outcomes) or (compares? relates?) the ..... (independent variable) to ..... (dependent variable), controlling for ..... (control variables) for participants at (the research site). The independent variable(s) ..... will be defined as ..... (definition). The dependent variable(s) will be defined as ..... (definition), and the control and intervening variable(s) ..... , (identify the control and intervening variables) will be defined as ..... (definition.) (p. 130)





## **Mixed Methods Purpose Statement**

Contains the overall intent of the study, information about both the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study, and a rationale of incorporating both strands to study the research problem.

The statements need to be identified early, in the introduction, and they provide major signposts for the reader to understand the quantitative and qualitative parts of the study.

- Begins with keywords such as “ The purpose of” or “The intent of”
- Indicates the overall purpose of the study.
- Indicates the type of mixed methods design, such as an exploratory sequential design, or an embedded sequential design, or transformational or multiphase
- It list out the reasons for both quantitative and qualitative data.



## Three examples of Mixed Methods purpose statement scripts

**Convergent Mixed Methods** design is a type of design in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then merged.

Here the qualitative data will explore the central phenomenon for the study. The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data is mixed.

**Explanatory sequential design** is to understand the quantitative database at a deeper level using follow-up qualitative data.

The study will address content aim. An explanatory sequential mixed methods involves collecting quantitative data first, then explain the results with in-depth qualitative data.

**Exploratory sequential design** is to develop measures ( or instruments) that work with a sample by first collecting qualitative data and then using it to design measures or the instrument that can be tested with a sample of a population.

This study addresses. The purpose of this exploratory sequential design will be to first qualitatively explore with a small sample and then to determine if the qualitative findings generalize to a large sample.



## Example 6.9 An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods sequential explanatory study was to identify factors contributing to students' persistence in the ELHE program by obtaining quantitative results from a survey of 278 current and former students and then following up with four purposefully selected individuals to explore those results in more depth through a qualitative case study analysis. In the first, quantitative, phase of study, the research questions focused on how selected internal and external variables to the ELHE program (program related, advisor-and faculty-related, institutional-related, student-related factors and external factors). served as predictors to students' persistence in the program. In the second, qualitative phase, four case studies from distinct participant groups explored in-depth the results from the statistical tests. In this phase, the research questions addressed seven internal and external factors, found to have differently contributed to the function discriminating the four groups: program, online learning environment, faculty, student support services, self motivation, virtual community, and academic advisor. (p.95)



# The Purpose Statement - Summary

- Purpose statement sets the objectives, intent, or the central idea of the proposal
- Qualitative - identify a single central phenomenon and tentative definition of the phenomenon, use strong action words, nondirectional language, participants and research site
- Quantitative - states the theory being tested including independent and dependent variables definitions, relationship or comparison, participants and research site for the investigation
- Mix method- includes statement of intent, type of mixed methods design, the forms of qualitative and quantitative data collection and the reason for collecting both forms of data