

Research Methods Lecture 3

Mixed methods in policy research



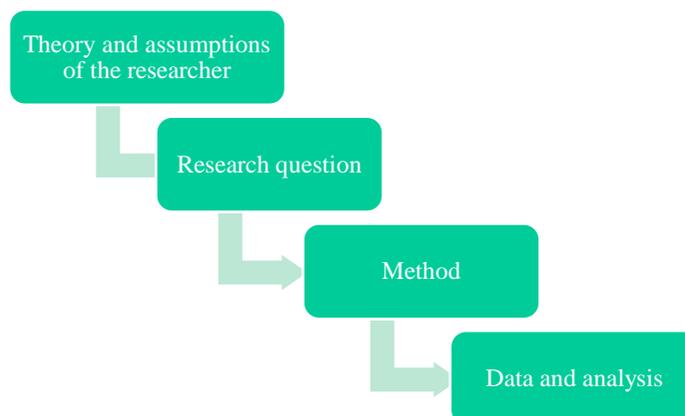
Policy research as mixed method

- Policy research has always combined statistical analysis with analysis of qualitative information
 - For example the first poverty studies in the United Kingdom at the turn of the century.
 - Demographic data with interviews, observations and social mapping
 - Chicago School of Sociology which invented urban sociology in the 1920s combined statistical analysis with case studies
- Mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative data to answer a set of questions
 - Econometric or statistical analysis
 - Combined with interviews, participant-observer methods, case studies, focus groups, mapping and more experimental methods

Why use mixed methods?

- Triangulation: approaching the same issue with different methods to see if you get the same answer
- Complementarity: Examine different dimensions of the same answer.
- Causality: Statistics often give us correlation but not causality, which we can sometimes find in qualitative methods
- New topics: Generate new research questions and explanations
- Expand the topic: Explore different facets of the same research question.

Theory and method



Quantitative analysis: Sampling

- Systematic random sample
- Stratified random sample
- Cluster sampling
- Purposive sampling

Qualitative methods

- Interviews with key stakeholders
- In-depth interviews with participants
- Focus group sessions: may include mapping exercises, role playing, free discussion
- Structured questionnaire
- Case studies
- Life histories

Sample sizes

- If you want to compare two groups using one-tailed statistical tests then you need a minimum of thirty per group, and fifty is better
- More for two-tailed tests (60 and 80 cases in each group).
- Case studies can be limited to three to five
- Qualitative interviews can be as little as twenty
- An ethnographic study will usually have at least fifty interviews

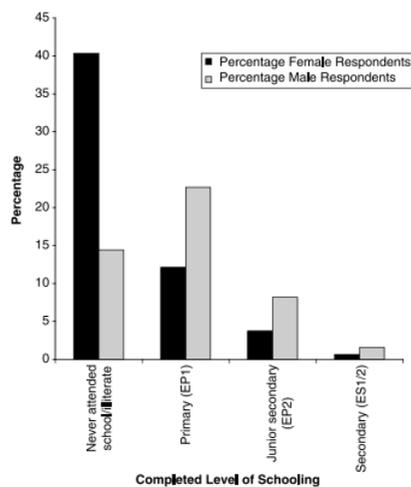
Sender, Oya and Cramer 2006

- Combines analysis of large secondary data set with information from the life histories of six female wage workers
- Life histories suggest new ways to analyze quantitative data in *dynamic* (as opposed to static) ways.
 - Events that enable poor women to emerge from poverty
 - Events that intensify poverty, and how the women cope with them

Men controlling women's labor

- Sender, Oya and Cramer uncover the importance of men's control over women's labor through qualitative methods
 - Quantitative analysis often assumes that women do not engage in wage work because they “prefer leisure” or some other unsubstantiated theoretical explanation
 - Questionnaires do not ask about domestic violence or the real reasons for women's labor allocation choices
- Women separated from and divorced abusive men to protect themselves and their children and to redirect their earnings from men to children

Completed level of schooling, men and women



Importance of education

- Access to superior jobs closely associated with some educational qualifications
 - But women less likely to be educate than men
 - Early marriage a major cause of girls leaving school
- Girls that had not been to school had more children, and more of their children died
- Superior (steady) jobs most likely to be at large and foreign-owned enterprises

Education of married and unmarried girls and women, 13-20 years of age

