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Research Methodology and Methods: The Backbone of Any Research

Having supervised 24 PhD students and examined over 70, in addition to conducting research on funded projects worth millions of pounds sterling, I feel confident addressing this very important topic.

First it is important to understand the difference between research methods and methodology. The terms "research method" and "research methodology" are often used interchangeably, but they refer to different concepts in the context of research.

Research Method: Refers to the specific techniques or procedures used to collect and analyze data, in addition to the practical steps and tools used to conduct the research.

Research Methodology: Refers to the overarching framework that guides the research process, including the rationale and theoretical underpinnings behind the chosen methods. It encompasses the philosophy of research, the rationale for selecting particular methods, and the ways in which data will be interpreted.

1. Qualitative Methods

These involve collecting non-numerical data. Techniques include interviews, focus groups, ethnography, and content analysis.

2. Quantitative Methods

These involve collecting numerical data that can be analyzed statistically. This includes experiments, surveys, and longitudinal studies.

Mixed Methods

This approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem.

4. Case Studies

In-depth investigations of a single individual, group, event, or phenomenon to explore complex issues in real-life contexts.

5. Experimental Research

This involves manipulating one variable to determine if it causes a change in another variable.

6. Longitudinal Studies

Research conducted over a long period to observe changes and developments in the study subjects.

7. Cross-sectional Studies

Observational studies that analyze data from a population at a specific point in time.

8. Action Research

A participatory approach aimed at improving practices through iterative cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

9. Survey Research

Gathering data through questionnaires or interviews to collect information from a sample population.

10. Historical Research

Involves examining past events to understand their implications and relevance to current issues.

11. Grounded Theory

A systematic methodology that involves constructing theories through the gathering and analysis of data.

Understanding various research methodologies is crucial for researchers as it allows them to choose the most appropriate methods for their specific inquiries. By employing the right methodologies, researchers can effectively address their research questions, leading to meaningful contributions to their fields.

#ResearchMethods #Qualitative #Quantitative #MixedMethods

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