

SAMPLE EDPR 7521 COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION QUESTION

An educational researcher believes that an alternative way to teach students about the conduct of research is through extensive reading of both well-designed studies and poorly-designed studies that have appeared in the research literature. That is, through extensive reading and critiques of existing studies students would have a better understanding of research design and issues related to quality in research. The researcher wants to design a study to see if that approach is a more effective method than the traditional course.

- (a) What is the researcher's hypothesis?

- (b) What are the independent and dependent variables?

- (c) The researcher will use two existing classes of EDPR 7521 to conduct the study; one will be taught using the traditional syllabus and course plan and the other will be taught only through extensive readings. What design classification is being used and why does it fit that design?

- (d) Both classes will be evaluated using midterm and final examination tests that the researcher will develop such that test items match the objectives of the course. What type of validity and reliability would be of most concern?

- (e) To whom could the results be generalized?

- (f) What are some potential confounding factors that might affect the results of the study?

Sample Comprehensive Exam Questions
EDPR 7521
Introduction to Research Methods in Education
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Research Design: Qualitative Methods

1. I am interested at exploring the learning experiences of EDPR 7521 students at University of Memphis regarding their comfort with designing research projects.
 - a. Write a qualitative research purpose and a question. You can add more contextual details in terms of number, site of research.
 - b. Detail exactly what the sources of data will be for this project, who will provide the data, and how those sources of data will benefit this research topic.
 - c. List and explain at least three ways that you could address your values, assumptions, beliefs, to make your qualitative research more rigorous and trustworthy.
 - d. Detail how will analyze the qualitative data for this research and discuss what purpose this research will have if you cannot generalize the results?

Research Design: Quantitative Methods

2. You are a researcher who formed three groups of preschoolers: those who never watched Sesame Street, those who watched it sometimes, and those who watched it frequently. You compared the three groups on a test of reading readiness to see if there is an effect of watching Sesame Street on reading readiness.
 - a. Write a quantitative research purpose and a question. You can add more contextual details in terms of number, site of research.
 - b. What type of design is most appropriate for this study and why? (Hint: Descriptive or Inferential?)
 - c. Label all the mean values (μ_1 , μ_2 ...) for all the groups that you will look at for this study.
 - d. Write the null and alternate hypothesis for this study if appropriate. If it is not appropriate then state N/A and explain why.
 - e. Explain what statistical test would be appropriate for this study and what needs to happen for you to be able to state that watching Sesame Street has some effect on reading readiness?