**[Mayra Casas](https://ashford.instructure.com/courses/77436/users/231562%22%20%5Co%20%22Author%27s%20name) post to week 5 discussion 1**

Hello class,

Mixed methods research can be defined as utilizing a research design that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data, in order to answer a research question (Hesse-Biber, 2010). One aspect that makes using mixed methods worthwhile is complementarity. If complementarity is achieved, by successfully utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data, then it will help researchers get a more well-rounded understanding of the results, and insight into the research problem (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Chosen Topic/ Research Question

The topic I have selected for my research proposal is psychotropic medication use in children. Specifically, my research question is, does psychotropic medication have more negative than positive effects in children with psychological disorders?

Methods Necessary to Answer Research Question/ Dominant Approach

In order to best answer my research question, I would need to employ both a quantitative method and a qualitative one, so mixed methods. Both methods would serve an important purpose and not just “stirred-in” for frivolous purposes.

Using mixed methods would allow me to use narratives as the qualitative method, to gather information on the children’s overall experience of having a psychological disorder such as depression, anxiety, or OCD. As well their experiences, including social and emotional responses, of being on medication for the disorders. The types of medications the children are prescribed will also be asked. The data gathered during the interviews with the children, will assist me in narrowing down categories of  most common positive and negative effects experienced by the children, which will then be used in a survey. The surveys will allow me to gather data on the most commonly prescribed medication, how many positive effects are reported by children and how many negative effects. This results of analyzing this numerical data will help answer my research question.

While my study began with the qualitative method of narrative research, it is the results of the quantitative data gathered from the surveys that answered my research question, so the study is more heavily reliant on the quantitative aspect. However, the use of a qualitative method was justified and crucial to the study, as it was the foundation from which I gained insight and first hand accounts of the experience of a child living with a psychological disorder, and the physical, emotional, and cognitive effects of their treatment with psychotropic medications. Which in turn allowed me to create a quantitative tool.

Why This Approach is Best for the Study

This mixed methods approach is most appropriate for my research as it will helps me gain complementarity. It will give me a deeper understanding of the results, as well as give me a more well-rounded view of the problem, specifically what adverse effects the children experience most commonly and what improvement the treatment brings to their overall quality of life.

Ethical Principles

As always, the ethical principle that must be considered when conducting  a mixed methods study, as well as any other, is Informed Consent to Research. Code 8.02 Informed Consent to Research, states that the researcher must inform participants about the purpose of the study, including duration, option to decline or withdraw, limits of confidentiality and the right to ask questions (APA, 2017). Also, for my particular study, this would include informing the children and their parents of all of the above, but also that the results of the study are **no** indication or suggestion for the parents to discontinue or change their child’s treatment. That they are to consult with their child’s treatment team if they have any concerns or want to make changes. Another ethical consideration would be to conduct interviews and create surveys/tools using language that all of the children can understand, making sure to address cultural influences on speech and understanding of medication (Code 9.02 Use of Assessments, APA, 2017).

References

Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2010). Mixed methods research: Merging theory with practice. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

American Psychological Association. (2017). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct: Including 2010 and 2016 amendments (Links to an external site.). Retrieved from [http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx (Links to an external site.)](http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx)