

RESEARCH IN EDUCATION POLICY, PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

EDPL 690
Fall 2004
Prof. Steven Klees

Time: Monday, 7:00-9:45
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

What is research? How is it carried out? What are the assumptions that underlie it? How do we know if it is "good" research? What is the relationship of research to theory? What is the relationship of research to practice? How can research improve education policy, planning, and administration? Such questions have always been difficult to answer. Yet just a few decades ago there was general agreement on how to approach these questions. The model for research in education (and in the social sciences) came principally from the model used in the natural and physical sciences. Educational research used the "scientific method" to test the truth of hypotheses about how education functioned. The methods used were almost exclusively quantitative -- experimental, quasi-experimental, and survey.

This situation has changed dramatically. While this physical science model is still strongly held by many researchers, there has developed a multitude of alternative ways of viewing and carrying out research. Each of these views of research has different, although often overlapping, answers to the questions posed above. Sometimes this change has been characterized as a debate between "quantitative" and "qualitative" research. While this characterization can be a useful starting point, it obscures the variety of theories, traditions, fieldwork strategies, and analytical frameworks that are being used. Moreover, this characterization ignores a whole range of research strategies that come out of critical, feminist, postmodern and other theories. Most fundamentally, in the debates about research methods today, we are facing very different underlying paradigms, in the sense Thomas Kuhn used the term (in The Structure of Scientific Revolution), which have basic and often incommensurable differences.

This course offers an introduction to educational research. It is not intended to make you proficient in any one methodological technique or research paradigm or framework. It is not a course in the philosophy of science nor is it a course in the how-to of research. What it is intended to do is to:

- help you better understand the debates about educational research today, both in theory and in practice;

- provide a foundation for more in-depth study of research methods;
- give you an appreciation of how research is used in education policy and practice;
- sharpen your ability to be a critical reader of other people's research as well as to develop your own research; and
- perhaps most importantly, offer an opportunity for you to reflect on the research enterprise, on the research presented in all your other courses and in your professional life.

This can be a very exciting course. Most fundamentally, it is about how we understand and make sense of the world around us. If you allow yourself to be open to it, the readings, discussions, and exercises will challenge you to re-consider your own perspective and better understand those of others.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Regular class attendance, participation, and completion of required readings prior to class are expected. Additional reading and group work will also be expected during the semester. Grades will be based principally on the following assignments (to be described more fully in class):

3 Abstracts/Critiques -- Find a study conducted within the mode of each of the three paradigms examined in the course. Write an abstract of the study and critique it on the basis of how well it meets the criteria and assumptions of its paradigm and then (for #2 and #3) critique the study from the perspective of other paradigms and respond to the critique.

DUE: Oct. 8, Oct. 29, Nov. 19

Length: about 5 double-spaced pages

Research Proposal -- This will be a short research proposal on a topic of your own choosing along with a critique of your own proposal..

DUE: Dec. 10

Length: about 10-15 double-spaced pages

Reflections on Alternative Modes of Inquiry -- Reflect on your own evolving views of the different approaches to research we examine by keeping a journal or writing a short piece towards the end of the course,. (S/U grade).

DUE: Dec. 10

Length: about 3-5 double-spaced pages

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are two required texts.

Merten, D. (1998) Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cresswell, J. (1998) Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

COURSE READINGS

1. (8/30) INTRODUCTION

2. (9/13) COURSE OVERVIEW

Shulman, L. (1997) Disciplines of inquiry in education: A new overview, in R. Jaeger (ed.) Complementary methods for research in education: Washington, D.C.: AERA.

Cresswell, Preface and Chapter 1.

Berliner, D. (2002) Educational Research the hardest science of all, Educational Researcher, 31,8 (Nov.) 18-20.

Donmoyer, R. (1996) Educational research in an era of paradigm proliferation: What's a journal editor to do? Educational Researcher, 25, 2 (March), 19-25.

Mertens, Preface and Chapter 1.

PART 1: QUANTITATIVE / POSITIVIST PARADIGM

3. (9/20) EXPERIMENTS AND QUASI-EXPERIMENTS

Mertens, Chapter 3.

Porter, A. (1997) Comparative experiments in educational research, in Jaeger.

Howell, W., Peterson, P. et al. (2000) Test-score effects of school vouchers in Dayton, Ohio, New York City, and Washington, D.C.: Evidence from randomized field trials, Presented at the American Political Science Association meetings, Washington, DC, September, 2000.

4. (9/27) CASE STUDY: VOUCHERS

General

Mathews, J. (2000) Schools improve for D.C. pupils with vouchers, Wash. Post, 8/28/00, p.A1,5.

Levin, H. (1998) Educational vouchers: Effectiveness, choice, and costs, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 17, 3, 373-392.

Critique

People for the American Way. (2000). Deception by the numbers: Ten reasons to doubt the latest claim for vouchers. Editorial Memorandum, September 21.

Metcalf, K. (1998). Advocacy in the guise of science. Education Week, September 23, 1998.

Myers, D. & Pfeleiderer, J. (2000). Voucher claims of success are premature in New York City. Press release from Mathematica, September 15.

Critique And Response

Zernicke, K. (2000). New doubt is cast on study that backs voucher efforts. New York Times, September 15.

Peterson, P. et al. (2000). Letter to the Editor Department, New York Times, September 17.

Viadero, D. (1998). Researcher at center of storm over vouchers. Education Week, August 5.

Davis B. (1996). Dueling professors have Milwaukee dazed over school vouchers. Wall Street Journal, October 11.

Pro-Voucher

Fuller, H. (2000). School choice helps black students. Washington Post, 9/17, p. B5.

Will, F.G. (2000). Stonewalling school reform. Washington Post, 8/31.

Beyond

Compilation of suggested research questions (by topic).

5. (10/4) CORRELATIONAL AND SURVEY RESEARCH

Mertens, Chapters 4 and 5.

Lawton, M. (1996) Support for private school vouchers is on the increase Gallup Poll reports. Education Week on the Web, 9/4.

Olson, L. (1996). Poll results backing choice run counter to earlier surveys. Education Week on the Web, 9/18.

Elam, S., Rose, L. and A. Gallup (1994) The 26th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools, Phi Delta Kappan, 76, 42-56.

PART 2: QUALITATIVE / INTERPRETIVE PARADIGMS

6. (10/11) QUALITATIVE VS. QUANTITATIVE: DEBATES AND OVERVIEW

W. Firestone (1987) Meaning in method: The rhetoric on quantitative and qualitative research, Educational Researcher, 16, 7, 16-21.

J. Smith and L. Heshusius (1986) Closing down the conversation: The end of the quantitative-qualitative debate among educational inquirers, Educational Researcher, 15, 1, 4-13.

Merten, Chapter 7 (pp.159-164 only) and re-read relevant parts of Chapter 1.

Cresswell, Chapters 4 and 5.

7. (10/18) ETHNOGRAPHY AND CASE STUDIES

Merten, Chapter 7 (pp. 164-186).

Cresswell, Ethnographic and case study pages in Analytic Table of Contents.

Wolcott, H. (1997) Ethnographic research in education, in Jaeger (1997).

Cresswell, Appendix E, An Ethnography – The elementary school principal: Notes from a field study.

Cresswell, Appendix F, A Case Study -- K. Asmussen and J. Cresswell (1995) Campus response to a student gunman, Journal of Higher Education, 66, 575-591.

8. (10/25) PHENOMENOLOGY AND GROUNDED THEORY

Merten, re-read relevant parts of Chapter 7.

Cresswell, Phenomenology and Grounded Theory pages in Analytic Table of Contents

Hultgren, F. (1989) Introduction to interpretive inquiry in F. Hultgren and D. Coomer (eds.) Alternative modes of inquiry in home economics research.(yearbook no. 9). Peoria, IL: Glencoe.

Wu, Z. (1991). The lived experience of being a foreigner. Phenomenology + Pedagogy, 9, 267-275.

Cresswell, Appendix C, A Phenomenology -- D. Riemen (n.d.) The essential structure of a caring interaction: Doing phenomenology, in P. Munhall and C. Oiler (eds.) Nursing research: A qualitative perspective. Norwalk, CT: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Charmaz, K. (2000) Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Kearney, M., Murphy, S., & Rosenbaum, M. (1994). Mothering on crack cocaine: A grounded theory analysis. Social Science Medicine, 38(2), 351-361.

PART 3: CRITICAL / FEMINIST / POSTMODERN PARADIGMS

9. (11/1) WHAT'S DIFFERENT?: DEBATES AND OVERVIEW

Sleeter, C. (2002) Epistemological diversity and research on pre-service teacher preparation for historically underserved children," W. Secada (Ed.) Review of Research in Education, 25, 2000/2001, Washington, DC: AERA, 2002.

Sutton, M. (1998). Feminist epistemology and research methods. In N. Stromquist (Ed.), Women in the Third World: An encyclopedia of contemporary issues. New York: Garland Publishing.

Sutton, M. (2001). Policy research as ethnographic refusal: The case of women's literacy in Nepal. In M. Sutton & B. Levinson (Eds.), Policy as resource: Toward a comparative sociocultural analysis of education policy. Westport, CT: Ablex Press.

Weis, L. & Fine, M. (Eds.) (2000). Construction sites: Excavating race, class, and gender among urban youth. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University (Foreword and Introduction).

Weis, L. with Carbonell-Medina, D. (2000). Learning to speak out in an abstinence-based sex education group: Gender and race work in an urban magnet school. In L. Weis & M. Fine (Eds.), Construction sites: Excavating race, class, and gender among urban youth. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Nielsen, J. (1990) Introduction, in J. Nielsen (ed.) Feminist research methods. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Skrla, L. (2000) Sexism, silence, and solutions: Women superintendents speak up and speak out, Education Administration Quarterly, 36, 1 (February) 44-75.

Lather, P. (1991) Getting smart. NY: Routledge (Intro. by M. Apple and Chap. 3).

Preston, R. (1997) Integrating paradigms in educational research: Issues of quantity and quality in poor countries, in M. Crossley and A. Vulliamy (eds.) Qualitative educational research in developing countries. NY: Garland.

Mertens, pp. 15-23, 171-173, 217-228.

10. (11/8) FRAMEWORKS AND EXAMPLES

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2000). The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Pp. 1-28.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). Part II: Paradigms and Perspectives in Transition, pp. 157-162. Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2000). Radicalized discourses and ethnic epistemologies. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Pp. 257-277.

Ginsburg, M. et al. (1996) Choices in conceptualized classroom-anchored research and linking it to policy/practice to improve educational quality in 'developing' countries, Research Papers in Education, 11, 3, 239-254.

Lather, P. (1986) Issues of validity in openly ideological research: Between a rock and a soft place, Interchange, 17, 4 (Winter), 63-84.

Capper, C. (1998) Critically-oriented and postmodern perspectives: Sorting out the differences and applications for practice, Educational Administration Quarterly, 34, 3 (August), 354-379.

Lopez, G., Guajardo, M. Scheurich, J. (1998) Windows/ventanas: A postmodern re-presentation of children in migrancy, Educational Administration Quarterly, 34, 3 (August), 397-426.

White, C. Native Americans at promise: Travel in borderlands in B. Swadden and J. Zubeck (eds.) Deconstructing the Discourse of Risk. SUNY Press, 1995.

11. (11/15) SOME APPROACHES

Noffke, S. (1997) Professional, personal, and political dimensions of action research, in M. Apple (ed.) Review of Research in Education, Vol. 22. Washington, DC: AERA

Carson, T. (1990) What kind of knowing is critical action research? Theory into practice, 29, 3 (Summer)168-173.

Gormley, K. (2001) Research as a democratic process: Educational community development in Brazil through participatory research, Convergence, 34, 4, 41-57.

Anderson. G. (1989) Critical ethnography in education: Origins, current status and new directions, Review of Educational Research, 59, 3 (Fall), 249-270.

Carspecken, P. (1996) Critical ethnography in educational research. NY: Routledge (Chapter 1)

Comstock, D. (1982) A method for critical research, in E. Bredo and W. Feinberg (eds.) Knowledge and value in social and educational research. Philadelphia: Temple.

Fulton, Y. (1997). Nurses' views on empowerment: A Critical social theory perspective. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 26, 529-536.

PART 4: IN CLOSING

12. (11/22) ETHICAL ISSUES AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Mertens, pp. 23-27, 63, 275-280.

Cresswell, pp. 132-133.

Deyhle, D., Hess, A., and LeCompte, M. (1992) Approaching Ethical Issues for Qualitative Researchers in Education, In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), Handbook of Qualitative Research (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Fine, M., Weis, L., Weseen S., & Wong, L. (2000). For whom: Qualitative research, representations and social responsibilities. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Pp. 107-131.

Wolcott, H. (1999) Ethnography: A way of seeing. Thousand Oaks: Sage (pp. 280-289)

Cohen, P. (2000) Oops, sorry: Seems that my pie chart is half-baked, New York Times, April 8, 2000, p. B7.

Winerip, M. (May 7, 2003) What some much-noted data really showed about vouchers, New York Times

USDOE (Nov. 18, 2002) Report on scientifically based research supported by U.S. Department of Education

American Evaluation Association (Dec.2, 2003) Staement on "Scientifically Based Evaluation Methods."

Dyson, M. (Dec. 5, 2003) The Public Obligations of Intellectuals, Chronicle of Higher Education

Ethical Standards of AERA

University of Maryland Guidelines for Human Subject Review.

13. (11/29) THE PERSONAL IS METHODOLOGICAL: RESEARCHERS REFLECT ON THEIR PARADIGM JOURNEYS

Heshusius, L. and Ballard, K. (eds.) (1996) From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in educational and social research (the mind-body connection). NY: Teachers College. (Foreword, Preface, Afterthoughts, and pieces by Ballard, Guba, Smith and one other – maybe Anglin, Marling, or Heshusius).

14. (12/6) TO BE DECIDED