TYPES OF RESEARCH (based on methodology)

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Descriptive (What is the current situation?)
- numerical data gathered through tests, surveys, observations, interviews
- variables are not manipulated but are measured as they occur
- subgroups may be compared on some measure
- two or more variables of a group may be correlated
- does not attempt to identify cause of differences or relationships, just if they exist

Experimental (What is the cause?)
- at least one variable is manipulated and its effects are measured
- subjects randomly assigned to experimental treatment and control groups who are treated the same except for the treatment variable - determines cause and effect
- (when intact groups are used it’s called quasi-experimental)

Ex post facto/Causal comparative (What was the possible cause?)
- identifies an effect that has already occurred and attempts to infer cause
- a treatment variable (alleged cause) is identified (but not manipulated) and effects are measured
- groups exposed to the treatment variable are compared to groups who are not
- identification of cause can be called into question because groups were not randomly assigned and other extraneous variables were not controlled

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Historical (What was the situation?)
- description of past events, problems, issues, facts
- Data gathered from written or oral descriptions of past events, artifacts, etc.
- Describes what was in an attempt to reconstruct the past
- Involves much interpretation of events and its influence on the present

**Ethnographic (What is the current situation?)**

- In-depth analytical description of educational systems, processes, and phenomena within a specific context based on detailed observations and interviews
- Detailed examination of a single group, individual, situation, or site is called a case study

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