

# Developing a Research Approach

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## How the nature of reality is viewed

- Reality exists and can be revealed through 'objective' observation and examination
  - Realism/Positivists
  - Detached view

### **Quantitative Methods**

- Reality does not exist by itself, but rather is constructed by people
  - Relativism/Constructionists
  - Researcher being part of the world and therefore influencing, and being influenced by, events.

### **Qualitative Methods**



## Difference between Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

- Quantitative Methods
  - What happened?
- Qualitative Methods
  - How and why did it happen?



- **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**
  - quantities, and therefore numbers
  - proving or disproving hypotheses, and therefore confirming, or not, their theory.
- **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**
  - nature of the thing investigated, and tends to be words rather than numbers
  - exploring questions (e.g., case studies and interviews surveys) and then generate theories.
- **Mixed Methods Data Collection and Analysis**
  - numbers and words
  - confirm/refute AND generate theory



## How to choose the method

- It depends on the research question/aim.
  - Does harm minimisation work as a care approach for problematic drug and alcohol use?
  - What is the lived experience of psychosis?
  - What strategies reduce the use of seclusion practices in inpatient mental health care?



## Example: Inpatient nursing care for people with Anorexia Nervosa

- Qualitative Approach

- Exploratory/descriptive investigation exploring:

- The perspectives of adolescent consumers regarding the effective nursing care of AN, in the inpatient setting
    - Led to conclusion that the Therapeutic Alliance (TA) was the critical variable

- Mixed Methods Approach

- Determining how the context of care affected TA

- Multisite-4 sites
      - Measuring TA, Ward Climate, Staff Attitudes
      - Interview with both consumers and nurses



## Example

- Person-centred dementia care
  - Testing the efficacy-Does it make a difference?
    - Pilot study
  - Compare to ‘usual care’
    - Randomised trial
  - Compare to ‘usual care’ and environmental alteration
    - Randomised trial, including qualitative data collection and analysis