

General Instructions

- Six hours are allotted to this exam.
- This is an open book exam; Students are allowed to use the course literature, notes and dictionaries during the exam.
- All the questions together carry 100 mark points, which will be converted into letter grades (A, B, C, D, E, and F).
- Address all the major questions and sub-questions provided below.
- All your arguments/answers should be sufficiently justified.

Exam guidelines

This discussion should be brief and to the point. For instance, the student could start by elaborating on method and methodology conceptually. Nonetheless, the claim also suggests that there is some tension/confusion when it comes to the use of both. This tension/confusion – including the challenges applying such concepts when being confronted with quite messy and sometimes unclear discussions as a student – would be a good aspect to discuss. Would be great if a conclusion would be drawn in connection with studying CIE or conducting own research projects.

1. Please elaborate the purpose(s) and function(s) of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research approaches, and please also consider what distinguishes them. **(15 points)**

Exam guidelines

Show a basic understanding of the differences and similarities of these major strategies/approaches in social science research. Would be a plus if the student shows a good understanding of at least one of the above strategies/approaches.

2. Please discuss the following claim by using examples: “On the one hand, our personal lived experience combined with our education and training as social scientists enables us to bring to our research a complex understanding of our social world. On the other hand, the fact that we are enmeshed in our social world means that we can often fail to see the social and cultural assumptions that inform our own worldviews, through which we perceive social questions and social issues.” **(10 points)**

Exam guidelines

The candidate is asked to discuss a claim and give examples. The candidate should mention and discuss terms/concepts such as (or related to) epistemology, ontology, and positionality. The most important part is the discussion. For such a discussion, different possibilities exist, which is why its quality may always be judged by its coherence, consistency, and display/application of knowledge, supported by the examples given by the student.

3. How may the choice to conduct a research project as a comparative one impact the conceptualization of that project/study (for instance, in contrast to a non-comparative research project)? **(10 points)**

Exam guidelines

Show a basic understanding of comparative social science research and some of its characteristics when conceptualizing a project (such as terms and concepts commonly known to the students; 'units' or 'levels', 'cases', etc.). Would be a plus if the student can give a good example distinguishing between comparative and non-comparative research projects.

4. Please consider the following situation: You are about to embark on a comparative educational research project of your own choice regarding the subject, method, research site(s), and so forth. Please elaborate what the focus of this research project would be, and also how you would conceptualize it bearing in mind the following six aspects: **(55 points)**
 - a. Identify and justify a focus and research purpose. **(10 points)**
 - b. State two research questions/hypotheses. **(10 points)**
 - c. Specify your use of theory. **(10 points)**
 - d. What methodological choices do you think would be appropriate for your purpose? Describe your research strategy and data collection method(s). **(10 points)**
 - e. Identify the levels and units of your comparative analysis. **(10 points)**
 - f. Identify the possible issues/concerns/challenges (in addition to those related to time and resources) in your research. **(5 points)**

Exam guidelines

The guidelines for Question 5 are already made clear in the following instructions.

- a. State two research questions/hypotheses. **(10 points)**
- b. Specify your use of theory. **(10 points)**
- c. What methodological choices do you think would be appropriate for your purpose? Describe your research strategy and data collection method(s). **(10 points)**
- d. Identify the levels and units of your comparative analysis. **(10 points)**
- e. Identify the possible issues/concerns/challenges (in addition to those related to time and resources) in your research. **(5 points)**