

# Clarification of the Blurred Boundaries between Grounded Theory and Ethnography: Differences and Similarities

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## Abstract

There is confusion among graduate students about how to select the qualitative methodology that best fits their research question. Often this confusion arises in regard to making a choice between a grounded theory methodology and an ethnographic methodology. This difficulty may stem from the fact that these students do not have a clear understanding of the principles upon which to select a particular methodology and / or have limited experience in conducting qualitative research. Addressed in this paper are three questions that will help students make an informed decision about the choice of method. The answers to these questions constitute key elements in the decision-making process about whether to use a grounded theory or an ethnographic methodology.

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