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Mixed Method Evaluation: From Synthesis to Policy  
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# Insider and outsider perspectives in mixed method evaluation and policy formulation.

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## Outline of session

- Overall aim:
  - Introduce the concepts of emic and etic as potentially useful ways of thinking about research questions and data in mixed methods research
- The PPIMs project
- Categorising questions and data
- Emic and etic as concepts
- Applying emic and etic perspectives

## PPIMs study

### Practice and Process in Integrating Methodologies

- Reflexive focus on practices and processes to examine impacts on each stage of a mixed methods research project
- Explored people's experiences of everyday vulnerabilities and the ways in which they strategically managed these.



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- 4 research methods:
  - *Primary data: qualitative interviews; focus group data; visual data.*
  - *Secondary data: analysis of quantitative data sets*
- Range of diverse participants – including 3 subsets of populations
- Interviews with Local Authority officers about their use of research in planning
- Parallels in types of data sources used in PPIMs study and used by policy makers/planners in Local Authorities; overlap in concept of vulnerability



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## Data sources often used by Local Authorities





- National statistics
- Commissioned surveys and qualitative research eg interviews, focus groups
- Audits and mapping exercises
- Consultation
- Citizen panels

## Categorising different approaches

■ Quantitative





■ Qualitative

	Qualitative Paradigm	Quantitative Paradigm
<b>Ontology:</b> <i>the nature and essential properties and relations of all beings</i>	<b>Constructionist</b> Multiple realities socially constructed realities	<b>Positivistic</b> one reality objective reality
<b>Epistemology:</b> <i>the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity</i>	Findings mutually created at the time of interaction between investigators and investigated. Aims to explore process and meaning	Investigator and investigated independent. Aims to explore causal relationships between variables within a value-free framework.
<b>Logic</b>	Inductive	Deductive
<b>Methodology:</b> <i>ways of knowing that reality</i>	Techniques include in-depth interviews, group discussions (focus groups)	Techniques include highly structured protocols/ large sample sizes.



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## Conventionally...

- Quantitative questions – quantitative methods
  - Fixed, developed from theory
  - Directional...describe a relationship between variables often with a temporal causal ordering
  - Positivism
- Types of quantitative questions
  - Descriptive: What? How many?
  - Relational : Comparing groups
  - Explanatory or Causal: Search for causes or effects/ test hypotheses



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- Qualitative questions – qualitative methods
  - Open-ended, research questions may evolve during course of study
  - Emergent
  - Non-directional
  - Multiple realities
  
- Types of qualitative questions
  - Describe the experience (phenomenology) What?
  - How? Discover (grounded theory) Why?
  - Explore a process (case study)
  - Explain or seek to understand (Ethnography)

- Emphasis on the data as numbers or text obscures the differing perspectives
  
- Approach could be better described in terms of emic and etic perspectives...

- Etic
  - Outside; universal
  - Aligned with quantitative data
  - Questions explore the relationship between variables; positivism
  
- Emic
  - Inside; culture's own terms
  - Aligned with qualitative data
  - Questions explore the concept from the perspective of the research participant; symbolic interactionism

## Examples of etic (**outsider/ expert/ 'objective'**) questions concerning 'vulnerability'

- Area level: 'risky' areas?
  - Deprived areas (IMD measurements):
    - Are inequalities in health associated with place?
    - Are high crime rates associated with neighbourhood levels of deprivation?
  - Flood plains (flood maps);
    - who is at most risk of flooding?
- Individual level: vulnerable people?
  - Demographic characteristics:
    - how does vulnerability to ill-health vary by (eg) age, ethnicity, gender, disability, social class, income?

- Types of data used for etic questions
  - Census data
  - National data sets (eg GHS)
  - National statistical returns (eg Crime statistics for HO)
  - Published research findings
  - Local surveys (primary data)
  - Local statistics (secondary/primary data)
  
- Questions are
  - Specific
  - Determined at start by outside 'experts'/prior research
  - Limited by what is available eg area; analysis unit



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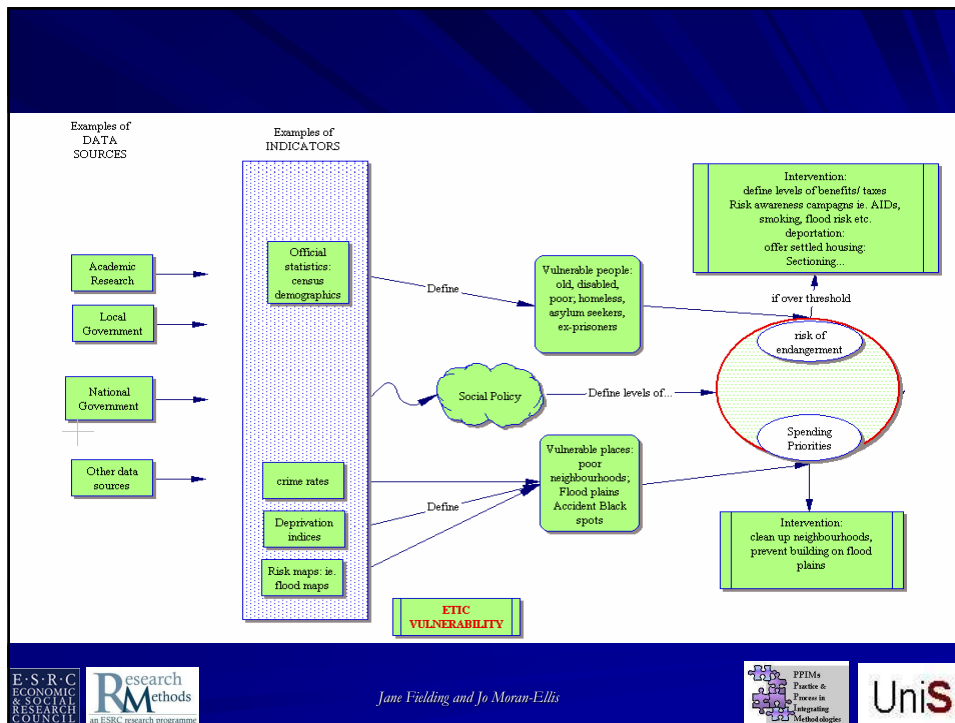


What an etic approach to vulnerability may look like...



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## Examples of emic (insider/lay/subjective) questions concerning 'vulnerability'

- What does 'vulnerability' mean in people's everyday lives?
  - Vulnerability unspecified by researcher; aim to understand how respondents define it; subjectivity and context of great importance.
- How is 'vulnerability experienced and managed by individuals/communities?
  - An individual level experience: eg feeling safe.
  - A cultural/community level understanding: eg what 'being vulnerable' means to people living in this area

- Types of data used for emic questions

- Qualitative interviews
- Focus groups
- ‘consultation’
- Visual data
- Published research

- Questions are

- Not specific
- Evolving over the course of the research
- Limited by what is available eg funding (primary data)



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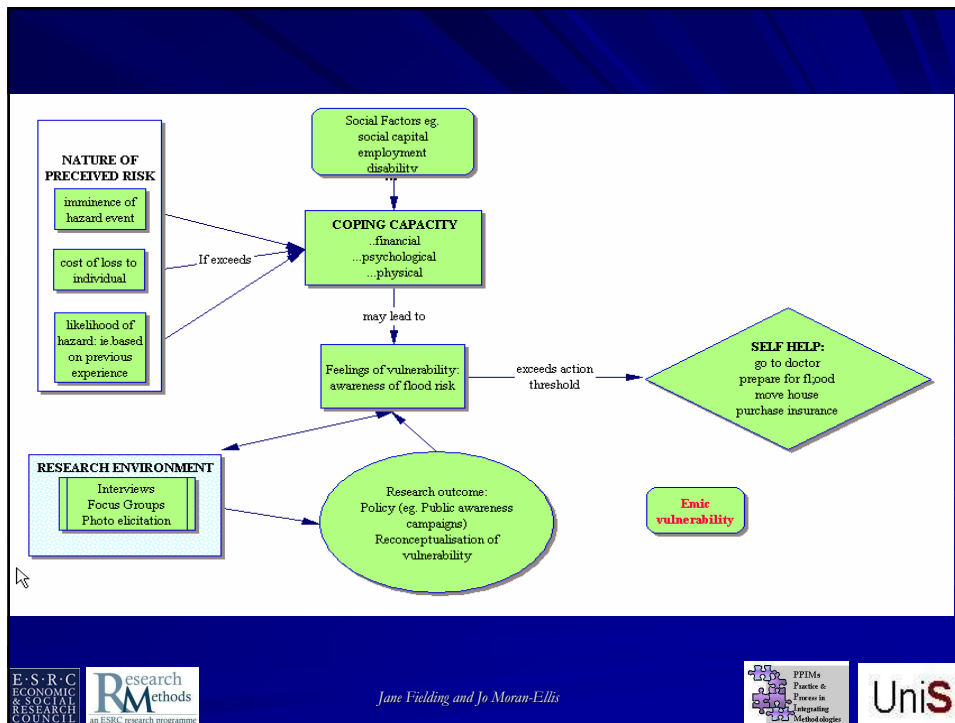


What emic vulnerability may look like...



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## Together, can be ...

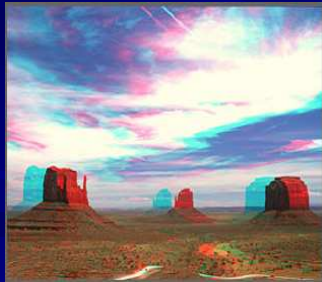
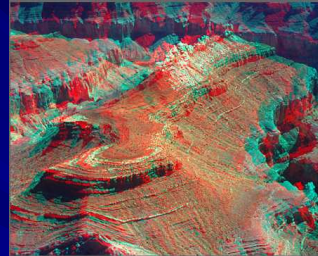
### ■ ... Combined to...

- ...Confirm each other: convergent validation: triangulation
- ...Complement each other: elaborate, illustrate or clarify results from one with analysis from the other
- ...Develop or inform the other method: sampling, implementation or measurement issues

### ■ ... Integrated to...

- ...Create a 3-D picture: equal weight to emic and etic findings/concepts to understand the phenomenon

# Different ways of seeing...



[http://www.stereoeye.jp/gallery/index\\_e.html](http://www.stereoeye.jp/gallery/index_e.html)



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- Example of integration of emic and etic perspectives in LA
- (eg Hilltown and spend on needy areas)
  - Identify needy community by etic measures
  - Identify felt need within community from emic data
  - Planned localised intervention – community centre; housing
  - Discontent in rest of borough - emic



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## What happens when brought together?

- Synergies but also possible tensions!
  - Methodological
    - Differing findings
    - Unit of analysis
  - Political
    - Preference/requirements of 'audiences'
    - timing
  - Practical
    - Time
    - Money
    - Age of data

- Ideal resolution:
  - Careful prior design and planning!
  - Integration of emic and etic (equal weighting)
- Tendency to a particular kind of multi methods design
  - Often driven by etic 'mode' of intervention/government
- Often leads to resolution through:
  - Etic measures of the emic
  - Subordination of one approach to the other (often emic to etic)

## In conclusion...

- Emic- insider perspective; Etic- outsider perspective
- Emic and etic as a more productive way of thinking about methods and questions:
  - encourages thinking in advance about the reasons for using multiple methods; theoretical framing
  - clearer relationship between the different methods
  - clearer relationship between the methods and the research question(s)