

Suggested Questions / Areas For the Cross-Examination During the Oral Defense

Opening Question (to help relax the candidate and give opportunity to show expertise to the audience): Tell us the most significant thing you've learned in your study.

1. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Statement of the Ministry Problem: Is it clear how the (more narrow) project addresses the (more broad) ministry problem?
2. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Hypothesis --Is the hypothesis sufficiently clear or does it use poorly defined terms? (e.g. does showing a children's ministry is "effective" mean you show "the children learn" or "the parents are happy?")
3. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Empirical Unknowns—Was there a better way for the researcher to measure the empirical unknown than the method chosen?
4. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Limitations and Assumptions: Is there a limitation or assumption that the researcher should have stated, but neglected to state?
5. Chapter 1 (Introduction): Theological / Theoretical Framework: Has the researcher correctly grasped these concepts? Was there a concept that should have been explained further or better, but wasn't?
6. Chapter 2 (Literature Review): Is there an aspect of the ministry problem that the literature review should have covered, but didn't? Is there a significant book or article that the literature review should have mentioned, but didn't?
7. Chapter 3 (Methodology): Could another person replicate the study, using the method described, or is some aspect of the study un-repeatable? Is any vital detail of the study omitted or unclear (e.g. sample questionnaire or sample discipleship activities described in Appendices)?
8. Chapter 3 (Methodology): Participants: Was the recruitment and selection process fair so that the findings are free from researcher bias?

9. Chapter 3 (Methodology): Instruments: Do they appear to be valid (measuring what they purport to measure) and reliable (would give the same measurement if implemented a second time)?

10. Chapter 3 (Methodology): Data analysis: If there are interviews (recordings / transcripts), is the “coding “ or “labeling” system of recurrent keywords and themes made clear? In other words, if anyone other than the researcher went over the recordings/transcripts, could he or she use the same coding or labeling system and be led to the same conclusions?

11. Chapter 4 (Findings): Is the data presented clearly? Is it summarized in a “user friendly” way? Is there a better format (chart, diagram, etc.) that would make the presentation even more clear?

12. Chapter 5 (Conclusions): Does the data support the hypothesis or is it extraneous to the hypothesis?
13. Chapter 5 (Conclusions): Did the researcher draw the correct interpretation from the data or could an alternate interpretation have been drawn? Does the researcher infer too much from the data or does he or she moderate his or her conclusions so that they are more tentatively stated?

14. Chapter 15 (Conclusions): Could there have been a mediating variable that contributed to the outcome that was not properly considered (e.g. a dynamic teacher that contributed more to the outcome than did the curriculum you are evaluating?)