

Qualitative Research

- What are the key characteristics of qualitative research?
- Why do researchers conduct a qualitative study?
- What is required to undertake this type of research?
- How do researchers design a qualitative study? .,
- What topics should be addressed in a plan or proposal for a qualitative study?

Qualitative Research

- Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3)

Characteristics of a qualitative research

- Natural Setting
- Researcher as key instrument
- Multiple sources of data
- Inductive data analysis
- Participant's meaning
- Emergent Design
- Theoretical lens
- Interpretive inquiry

When to use Qualitative research?

- We conduct qualitative research because a problem or issue needs to be explored.
- we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue.
- we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study
- we want to write in a literary, flexible style that conveys stories, Of theater, or poems, without the restrictions of formal academic'structures of writing
- we want to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue

- to follow up quantitative research and help explain the mechanisms or linkages in causal theories or models.
- to develop theories when partial or inadequate theories exist for certain populations and samples or existing theories do not adequately capture the complexity of the problem we are examining.
- quantitative measures and the statistical analyses simply do not fit the problem. Interactions among people, for example, are difficult to capture with existing measures, and these measures may not be sensitive to issues such as gender differences, race, economic status, and individual differences.

Designing a Qualitative Study

- A qualitative study begins with the broad assumptions central to qualitative inquiry, a worldview consistent with it, and in many cases, a theoretical lens that shapes the study
- The researcher looks at a topic or substantive area of investigation, and perhaps has reviewed the literature about it and knows that a problem or issue exists that needs to be studied
- Problems in Designing a Qualitative Study span the topics in the social and human sciences, and a hallmark of qualitative research is the deep involvement in issues of gender, culture, and marginalized groups
- Select an appropriate approach for inquiry
- Theoretical sampling and multiple sources of information
- Careful Examination of the qualitative data working inductively from particulars to more general perspectives. One helpful way to see this process is to 'recognize it as working through multiple levels of abstraction, starting with the raw data and forming larger and larger categories.

5 Qualitative approaches

- Narratives
- Phenomenology
- Grounded theory
- Ethnography
- Case study

General structure for a qualitative research study

- Introduction
 - Statement of the problem (including literature about the problem)
 - Purpose of the study
 - The research questions
 - Delimitations and limitations
- Procedures
 - Characteristics of qualitative research (optional)
 - Qualitative research strategy
 - Role of the researcher
 - Data collection procedures
 - Data analysis procedures
 - Strategies for validating findings
 - Narrative structure
 - Anticipated ethical issues
 - Significance of the study
 - Preliminary pilot findings
 - Expected outcomes
- Appendices: Interview questions, observational forms, timeline, and proposed budget

Maxwell's Nine Arguments for a Qualitative Proposal

- We need to better understand ... (the topic).
- We know little about ... (the topic).
- I propose to study
- The setting and participants are appropriate for this study.
- The methods I plan to use will provide the data I need to answer the research questions.
- Analysis will generate answers to these questions.
- The findings will be validated by
- The study poses no serious ethical problems.
- Preliminary results support the practicability and value of the study.