

Qualitative Research

Strategy, methodology, method and techniques

3 - Phenomenology

Qualitative Research

- **Phenomenology**
 - philosophical perspective as well as an approach to qualitative methodology
 - Used in social research disciplines including psychology, sociology, development, urban planning and social work
 - Emphasizes a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world
 - The phenomenologist wants to understand how the world appears to others.

Ontological Position

- Experience of the researched – those who live a phenomena
- PHENOMENOLOGY
 - Seeks to understanding the world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it

Epistemology

- **Interpretivism**
- **Going beyond the empirical realities of observations** and interpreting and making sense of the data
- Objective interpretation of a subjective human experience
- Takes similar course to 'emplotment' and literary view in interpretive-historical research

Qualitative Research

- **Hermeneutics: Understanding through Interpretation**
 - *Difference between Understanding and Knowing!*
 - Material and message
 - Material and meaning
 - Perspective of the viewer/receiver/analyst
 - The role of Body of knowledge outside of the data (body of used knowledge)
 - Being Conscious of pre-conceptions
 - The part's role in defining the whole/ whole's role in elucidating the part
 - Openness of interpretation > revision expecting stance

Literature and Content Analysis

- *What was intended and what is understood*
 - *Literature of all times?*
 - values of the writer (poet, etc.) in the work
 - values of the receiver in the analysis/interpretation
- सडक किनारा गाउ छ ईश्वर चराहको तानामा,
बोल्दछ ईश्वर मानिसहरूको पीडा, दुखको गानामा,
दर्शन किन्तु कही दि दैन चर्मचुँले कानामा
कुन मन्दिरमा जाँने? यात्री , कुन नवदेश विरानामा ,

Qualitative Research

- **Action Research**
 - Research in active cooperation of the researched group
 - Facts and meanings being researched and ideas put to test in parallel
 - to gain a greater degree of cooperation and
 - to delve deeper into the theme

The process of Qualitative Research

- **The key steps and the Interactive relationship between**
 - Data collection
 - Data reduction/coding
 - Data display
 - Conclusion drawing/verifying

Data Collection Techniques

- **Participant Observation**
- **Interactive Interviews**
 - In-depth Unstructured Interviewing
 - Key informants interviews
 - Case histories
- **Focus Groups**
 - Guided discussions in small groups
 - questions reconstructed to suit groups

Data Collection Techniques

- **Direct Observation**
- Distinguished from participant observation
 - First, a direct observer is not 'a participant' but an unobtrusive external but direct observer so as not to bias the observations.
 - Second, it has a more detached perspective > watches rather than takes part > Technology such as videotape, one-way mirrors can be a useful
 - Third, it is more focused than participant observation as it samples certain situations or people rather than the entire context.
 - Finally, it does not take as long as participant observation.

Data Collection Techniques

- **Unstructured Interviewing**
- Unstructured interviewing involves direct interaction between the researcher and a respondent or group: cf. structured interviews
- Some initial guiding questions or core concepts to ask about but no formal structured instrument or protocol > interviewer free to move the conversation in any direction of interest that may come up > so particularly useful for exploring a topic broadly

Data Collection Techniques

- **Unstructured Interviewing**
- Because each interview tends to be unique with no predetermined set of questions asked of all respondents, it is usually more difficult to analyze unstructured interview data, especially when synthesizing across respondents.

Data Collection Techniques

- **In-Depth Interviews/FGDs**
- In-Depth Interviews include both individual interviews (e.g., one-on-one) as well as "group" interviews (including focus groups) > may be recorded as audio, video clips or written notes
- Differs from direct observation primarily in the nature of the interaction > questioner and interviewee situation created to probe the ideas of the interviewees about the phenomenon of interest.

Data Reduction/Coding

- Qualitative research data: long interview transcripts, notes, sketches or photographs
- Reduction/coding
 - Is reducing them in volume and into manageable "chunks"
 - Chunks of themes, notes in margin, highlighted and graphic linkage
 - Make and follow a scheme of codes that could be framed from out of one's research objectives/questions

Data Display

- Qualitative data is displayed as
 - Charts, Graphs or Tables - they should display the data and be directed by the analytical process
 - Maps and Diagrams
 - Check-list matrix
 - Quite a few data displays may go as appendix

Drawing conclusions

- Identifying patterns and providing explanations: Tactics for generating meanings

Descriptive	Noting patterns, themes
	Seeing plausibility
	Clustering
	Making Metaphors
	Counting
Analytical	Making contrasts/comparisons
	Partitioning variables
	Noting relation between variables
	Subsuming particulars into the general
Explanatory	Building a logical chain of evidence
	Making conceptual/theoretical coherence

Verifying: testing or confirming findings

Data quality	Checking for representativeness
	Checking for researcher effects
	Triangulation
	Weighting the evidence
Looking at Unpatterns	Checking the meaning of outliers
	Using extreme cases
	Following up surprises
	Looking for negative evidence
Testing explanations	Making if-then tests
	Ruling out spurious relations
	Replicating a finding
	Checking out rival explanations
Testing with feedback	Getting feedback from informants

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Capacity to take in rich and holistic qualities of real life circumstances	Challenge of dealing with vast quantities of data
Flexibility in design and procedures allowing adjustments in process	Few guidelines or steps-by-step procedures established
Sensitivity to meanings and processes of artifacts and people's activities	The credibility of qualitative data can be seen as suspect with the post-positivist paradigm