



Qualitative Research

- ◆ Comes from sociology, anthropology and history
- ◆ Deep verbal description and interpretations
- ◆ Captures the human meanings of social life as it is lived, experienced, and understood



Qualitative research

- ◆ Relies heavily on structured, thorough, and disciplined inquiry
- ◆ Takes TIME



Qualitative Research

- ◆ Turn to Table 6.1 page 202

Types of Qualitative Research



Qualitative Research Requires

- ◆ Intensive participation in setting
- ◆ Collection of detailed field data
- ◆ Systematic, coded, data analysis through synthesizing and interpreting field data



Qualitative Research Questions

- ◆ Focus on participant's view of their world or situation
- ◆ Must be focused to be of value



Why ASK Qualitative Questions

- ◆ Turn to page 203

Erickson has four important points to consider



The Qualitative Proposal

- ◆ More tentative than quantitative
- ◆ Must include researcher's expectations of what will be studied
- ◆ Must include description of
 - Topic
 - Method
 - Participants



Focus, Rational, and Thought

- ◆ What will be studied?
- ◆ What will be the setting?
- ◆ What data is expected?
- ◆ How will data be collected (initially)?
- ◆ What method will be used?
- ◆ Why do the study?
- ◆ What contributions might the study provide?



Steps to Qualitative Research

- ◆ Select a topic or issue
- ◆ Obtain site entry
- ◆ Select participants
- ◆ Collect data
- ◆ Interpret data
- ◆ Describe conditions
- ◆ Describe conclusions



The Characteristic – One

- ◆ Data sources are real world
 - Natural
 - Non-manipulated
 - Unlike quantitative studies
 - Research spend TIME in setting



Five Characteristics – Two

- ◆ Data are descriptive
 - Interviewer notes
 - Observations records
 - Documents
 - Field notes
- ◆ Data interpretation relies on researcher expertise



Five Characteristics - Three

- ◆ Emphasis on holistic approach
- ◆ Focus on process and outcome
- ◆ Detailed description of setting
- ◆ Detailed recording of observations of setting, participants, and interactions



Five Characteristics – Four

- ◆ Data are interpreted inductively
 - Generalizations occur from data collection from multiple specific instances
 - Researcher does not impose on data
 - Researcher does not make assumptions prior to data collection
 - More data = greater chance of inductive generalizations



Five Characteristics - Five

- ◆ Findings are from participant's perspective.



Major Characteristics

- ◆ Table 6.2 page 205



The Importance of the Site

- ◆ Choose the site carefully
- ◆ The researcher must “blend in”
- ◆ The participants must “trust” the researcher
- ◆ The researcher is also a participant



Step One – Gain Entrance

- ◆ Ask permission from the gatekeeper do not assume
- ◆ Have facts about research available
- ◆ Know the procedure
- ◆ Share knowledge
- ◆ Be prepared for questions
- ◆ Be willing to accept ideas from others



Site Pitfalls

- ◆ Process can be tedious
- ◆ Do not study
 - Colleagues
 - Your students
 - People you supervise
 - Friends
 - Relatives
- ◆ Plan Ahead!



Questions

- ◆ What are you trying to do?
- ◆ How disruptive will this be to the site
- ◆ How descriptive will this be to the participant
- ◆ What will you do with the finding?
- ◆ Who will share the information?



Questions

- ◆ How will the information be shared?
- ◆ How will the findings impact the site and participants?
- ◆ Why this site?
- ◆ How will site or participants benefit?



Participant Selection

Method A

- ◆ Visit the site
- ◆ Make detailed observations about various participants
- ◆ Make initial contact with participants
- ◆ Review research with potential participants



Participant Selection

Method B

- ◆ Sit quietly
- ◆ Decide on characteristics of perfect participant based on site
- ◆ List characteristics of each potential participant
- ◆ List participants in order, best to least meeting perfect characteristics



Participant Sampling

- ◆ Intensity
- ◆ Homogeneous
- ◆ Criterion
- ◆ Snowball
- ◆ Random purposive

Table 6.3 describes sampling strategies



How many Participants?

- ◆ It depends
 - Type of study
 - Time
 - Money
 - Participant availability
 - Participant interaction
 - Site availability



Participants

- ◆ To what extent do they represent the range of potential participants
- ◆ Redundancy

- ◆ Kim's Study
- ◆ Jason's Study



Participants and Ethics

- ◆ Must gain INFORMED consent
- ◆ Describe the parameters of study
- ◆ Nature Purpose
- ◆ Time involved
- ◆ How data will be:
 - Interpreted
 - Shared
 - Published



Data Collection

- ◆ Observations
- ◆ Interviews
- ◆ Personal and official documents
- ◆ Photographs
- ◆ Recordings
- ◆ Drawings
- ◆ E-mails
- ◆ Informal conversations

All depends on integrative and interpersonal skills of the researcher



Fieldwork

- ◆ Plan, Plan, Plan
- ◆ Talk with more experienced researchers
- ◆ Use more than one type of data collection



The Participant Observer

- ◆ Fully engages in activities at site
- ◆ Other participants know the researcher is there



The Non-Participant Observer

- ◆ Participants are aware of researcher's identity (most cases)
- ◆ Watches or observes from outside



Researchers Goal

- ◆ To collect data
 - Do what is necessary
 - Keep focused
 - Ethics first



Field Notes

- ◆ Descriptive
- ◆ Detailed
- ◆ Neutral
- ◆ Lengthy
- ◆ Analysis by:
 - Coding
 - Computer
 - Foregrounding



Field Notes

- ◆ Begin with practice sessions before research begins
- ◆ Practice can be done at the site w/those not in the study
- ◆ Practice with another researcher and compare data



Protocols

Turn to Page 213 – 214

Keep these in mind as you begin



Thick Description

- ◆ Detailed, clear, and extensive field notes
- ◆ Based on observations but influenced by the language researcher chooses in construction
- ◆ Replaces value words with specific detailed descriptions



Let's take a look

Turn to pages 215, 216, and 217 for examples of protocols, field notes, and memo writing.



Guidelines for Field Notes

Turn to page 218

With a partner take turns reading the guidelines



Interviews

- ◆ A purposeful verbal interaction between two people: One of whom is trying to get information from the other.
- ◆ A joint construction of meaning between the researcher and participant
- ◆ Danger: gender, culture, and social class between the researcher and participant can have various implications



Constraints to Interviewer Data

- ◆ Language differences
- ◆ Experience differences
- ◆ Accuracy of participant responses
- ◆ “control”
- ◆ Appropriateness of interview questions



Interviews

- ◆ One time
- ◆ One Participant
- ◆ Multiple times
- ◆ Multiple Participants
- ◆ Variances of time 2min – 2hr
- ◆ Structured
- ◆ Unstructured
- ◆ Formal and planned
- ◆ Informal and unplanned



Once Again

Turn to page 221 Table 6.5



Interview Data Collection

- ◆ Note taking during
- ◆ Note taking after
- ◆ Tape recording
- ◆ Now – new- chat room & downloading
- ◆ Transcription
 - Tape
 - Notes
 - Chat room dialogue



Guidelines for Interviewing

Turn to page 223



Threats to Interview Data

- ◆ Observer bias
- ◆ Experiences
- ◆ Knowledge
- ◆ Beliefs
- ◆ Culture
- ◆ Status
- ◆ Attitude
- ◆ Observer effects
- ◆ Researcher impact on site



Overcoming Threats

- ◆ Be aware of bias
 - Think about your lens
 - Think about your language
- ◆ Spend time at the site
 - Become familiar with Participants

Turn to page 225 for details



The Exit

- ◆ When to leave
- ◆ Time
- ◆ Money
- ◆ Availability of Participants
- ◆ Easing out



Historical Research

- ◆ Mostly same characteristics of qualitative research
- ◆ Retrospect focus- understanding past
- ◆ Characters
- ◆ Events
- ◆ Settings
- ◆ Main source of data collection:
Literature review



Historical Research

The systematic collection and evaluation of data related to past occurrences to describe causes, effects, or trends of those events to help explain current events and anticipate future ones.



Steps

- ◆ Identify topic or problem
- ◆ Formulate questions or hypothesis
- ◆ Collect data
- ◆ Interpret data
- ◆ Produce verbal synthesis of findings or interpretations



Data Collection

- ◆ The literature
 - Refers to all types of communications
 - Tape recordings
 - Movies
 - Photos
 - Documents (formal and informal)
 - Legal documents
 - Minutes of meetings
 - Letters
- ◆ Can be expensive and time consuming



Primary vs. Secondary

- ◆ Which is better?
- ◆ Primary preferred
- ◆ Primary more difficult to locate



Data Criticism

- ◆ Knowledge and competence of author
- ◆ Time delay
- ◆ Bias and motives of author
- ◆ Consistency of sources

Remember: History is most often written by winners!



Data Analysis

- ◆ Interpretation of artifacts
- ◆ Include confirming and disconfirming of evidence
- ◆ Avoid research bias
- ◆ Apply criteria consistently