

## MAJOR TYPES OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

### 1) ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

- Ethnographic research focuses on entire cultural group which typically may consist of 20 or more members THAT INTERACT THROUGH TIME.
- Examples of a cultural group:
  - *Teachers in a certain school*
  - *Female students in a certain department*
  - *Residents of a certain neighborhood*
  - *Members of a certain clan*
- The origin of ethnographic research is comparative cultural anthropology (the study of “primitive cultures” by Western anthropologists). But, later, it became adapted by researchers in other fields, education included.
- An ethnographer studies shared patterns of beliefs, behavior, or language among members of the group. He/she *DESCRIBES and INTERPRETS these shared patterns*.
- Ethnographic study involves extended observation of the group through participant observation—meaning, the researcher observes the day-to-day life of the members of that group and also interviews them. The researcher gets “immersed” in that group.

### Major Features of Ethnographic Research

- 1) Focus on culture or aspect of culture

- *Holistic Ethnography* - comprehensive description and analysis of the entire culture
- *Micro-ethnography* – particular aspect of culture

2) Naturalistic study of individuals in the field

- Ethnographers may live among cultural groups to study cultural patterns and their origins
- shared patterns of beliefs, behavior, or language among members of a group are studied
- Participant observation – observes their day-to-day life and interviews them
- Getting “immersed” in a group – informal observations and conversations

3) Making the familiar strange

*“...analyzing cultural phenomena from the perspective of an outsider (to whom it is strange) while seeking to understand it from the perspective of an insider (to whom it is familiar)” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005, p. 349) **ETIC & EMIC** perspectives*

4) Thick Description

- Describing the field setting in great detail
- Low inference, primarily descriptive presentation of data
- Using extensive quotation from participants
- The purpose is to bring the culture “alive” for the readers
- Use of present tense to communicate permanence and universality

### Types of Ethnographic Research

- There are many forms of ethnography, such as: confessional ethnography, autoethnography, ethnography in photography and video, life history, ethnographic novels, etc.

- The two major types are:
  - Realist ethnography – an objective account of a situation, written in the third person point of view and reporting objectively the information learned from participants. The realist ethnographer remains in the “background” as reporter of the “facts”.
  - Critical ethnography- a type of ethnographic research in which the researcher advocates for the emancipation of groups marginalized in society. Critical ethnographers are political-minded people who speak against domination and inequality.

#### **Other Varieties:**

Ethnoscience - involves cataloging the semantic systems used by a culture or sub-culture to describe important social phenomena.

Ethnology – a comparative study of cultures

#### **Difference and Similarity with Case Study:**

- Similarity with case study:
  - Both focus on cases (ranging from individuals to communities, society, or institutions)
  - In-depth study of phenomenon of interest
  - Study in natural context
  - Represent both emic and etic perspectives
- Difference with case study:
  - Ethnographers focus specifically on aspect of cultures; but case researchers refer to a wide-range of phenomena pertaining to the case

### Challenges of Ethnographic Study

- Length of time needed for field work
- Need for knowledge of socio-cultural systems
- Need for literary, story-telling approach of research report
- Avoiding inaccurate portrayal of a cultural system

#### ACTIVITY – 1:

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51 Z kd#w#p#h#w#k#r#g#z#l#o#| rx#k#v#h#B#l#r#u#k#r#z#h#r#q#j#B#

61 Z kd#w#d#u#b#e#d#v#z#r#x#g#| rx#w#x#g|#B#Z kd#w#j#l#f#r#x#u#h#e#h#k#d#y#l#r#u#d#o#h#h#w#f#z#l#o#  
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- *How would you reduce accuracy bias?#*
- *How would you make sure your description of the cultural system is complete?#*

## 2) PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH

- Phenomenological research explores the meanings for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept/phenomenon.
- It focuses on what all participants have in common as they experience the phenomenon.
- The phenomenon individuals experience may be positive/negative:
  - *Example of negative experiences: Grief, anger, disease, prejudice, marginalization, victimization, abuse, surgery, etc.*
  - *Examples of positive experiences: Reading, swimming, mothering, driving, excitement, classroom activity, profession, transformation, etc.*
- Phenomenological research is common in the fields of sociology, health sciences, and education

### Major Steps in Phenomenological Research

- Typically, the phenomenological researcher:
  - *collects data from participants who experienced the phenomenon,*
    - *semi-structured interviews*
    - *Diaries*
    - *Self-video/audio, etc.*
  - *describes in detail how each participant experienced it, and*
  - *develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all individuals.*

## Types of Phenomenological Research

There are two types of phenomenological research:

1. Hermeneutical phenomenology – the researcher does not only describe, but also interprets and gives meaning to what is expressed by participants
2. Transcendental/Psychological/Empirical phenomenology – the researcher leaves out his/her experience and view of the phenomenon and only presents the researchers' interpretation and understanding of it.

### ACTIVITY – 2:

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## Steps in Analysis of Individual Cases

1. Reading and re-reading of the note
  - *Making wide-ranging unfocused notes*
  - *Documenting the initial thoughts and observations in response to the text*

2. Identifying and labeling themes

- *Conceptual titles that capture something about the essential quality of the text*
- *Can be psychological terminologies (e.g., “sense of loss”, “social comparison” etc.*

3. Introducing structure into analysis

- *Making cluster and hierarchy of concepts/themes*

4. Producing summary tables

- *Cluster labels with their subordinate labels, brief quotations, and references to where the relevant texts are found in the transcript (page and line numbers)*

5. Integrating

- *Integrate summary tables of each participant into inclusive list of master themes*

**Challenges of Phenomenological Research**

- Researcher must understand the philosophical assumptions regarding the phenomenon/concept
- Researcher must select participants carefully. They should be people who have surely experienced the phenomenon.
- Leaving out one’s own assumptions and understandings about the phenomenon may be difficult for the researcher.

### 3) TEXTUAL INTERPRETATION RESEARCH (CONTENT ANALYSIS)

- Textual interpretation is the investigation of any written product for its contents and meanings. “Content analysis” “Text analysis” “Text interpretation” and “hermeneutics” are terminologies often used in such kinds of studies.
- Textual interpretation is a non-interactive type of research design – meaning, the researcher doing textual interpretation does not interact with human participant directly
- The content of any written product can be investigated through this research approach, including: books, scriptures, school textbooks, policy documents, images, pictures, films, music lyrics, memorandums, personal letters, and fictions.
- Textual analysis/interpretation can be done for various reasons:
  - *To determine frequency of an idea/concept*
  - *To investigate stereotypes*
  - *To understand author’s viewpoint/context*
  - *To understand implicit meanings (“sub-text,” “reading in-between the lines”)*
- Analyzing text/content involves developing themes/codes before or during content analysis
- Decision needs to be made on several areas on how to do textual interpretation (content analysis) beforehand. Below is a guideline from Schreiber & Asner-self (2011, pp. 207-208) [See next page]



1. Decide on the level of analysis. If you are examining text, you need to think about phrases, paragraphs, chapters, and so on. If you are examining video or audio, your concerns may be the amount of time to spend listening or the sections to listen.
2. Decide on how many concepts to code. If you have codes *a priori*, how many do you want to code for? If you are developing codes along the way, how many will you need to reach a saturation point?
3. Decide whether to code for existence or frequency of a concept. You may also want to code for connections of codes or concepts.
4. Decide on how you will distinguish the various concepts. Are some of your concepts similar theoretically or pragmatically?
5. Develop rules for coding your text. Are you coding right on copies of the text, using a software package, note cards, or some other system? This needs to be operationalized so that you can stay organized and be able to quickly retrieve information. If more than one person is coding, this is absolutely crucial to have developed.
6. Decide on the level of concept generalization. Are you coding the exact word or phrase, or some altered or condensed form of the material? You must also be concerned with whether tense or proper nouns are important for your text material.
7. Decide on what to do with “irrelevant” information. There will be information that you will decide subjectively (which is fine) is not part of your study. You need to decide how to deal with such information. For example, you might want to categorize the information as completely irrelevant, irrelevant, appears irrelevant, looks irrelevant now but should be reviewed later (i.e., KIV). This is also part of selectively reducing the amount of material to code.
8. Decide how much to sample and how to sample. How much material are you going to sample? For example, are you going to read all of the writings of Shakespeare or just the first five years, or maybe just the comedies? Do you watch every episode of South Park to examine social commentary, or do you randomly sample episodes and time marks? This too is part of selective reduction.

#### 4) NARRATIVE STUDIES

- Narrative study is used in different social and humanities disciplines
  - *Literature, history, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and education.*
- Focus is on stories told by individuals about their lived experiences
  - *Similar to oral history; but oral history is limited only to stories told orally and not in written format.*
- A “narrative” is “a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions” (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 17)

#### ***What is narrative?***

Narratives are stories with a clear sequential order, that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience. Story and narrative are often used interchangeably. Sequence is necessary for narrative. A narrative always responds to the question ‘And then what happened?’

(Esin 2011. P. 93)

#### **Functions of Narratives**

- Narrative - Powerful means of giving meaning to lived experience
- Narratives are created through interaction with other people; they are not privately created.
- “Public Narratives” – are narratives attached to cultural and institutional formations rather than single individual.

#### **Origin of Narrative Research**

- Narrative research emerged from:

- 1) *Humanistic tradition – person centered. Pays attention to individual case studies, biographies, and life story.*
- 2) *Post-modern ontology – emphasis on multiple subjectivities in the construction of narratives.*
  - Social conditions and power relations as shaping the narrative.

### **Procedures for Conducting Narrative Study**

- It is conducted by:
  - *Gathering data through the collection of the person’s story*
  - *Reporting individual accounts*
  - *Chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences*

### **Steps in Conducting Narrative Study**

1. Determine if the research problem/question best fits narrative research
2. Select one or more individuals who have stories or life experiences to tell, and spend considerable time with them gathering their stories (“field texts” directly recorded, artifacts, photographs, personal correspondence, etc.)
3. Collect information about the context of these studies (homes, cultures, job, historical context)
4. Analyze the participant’s stories and “re-story” them into a framework that makes sense (e.g., causal links, chronologies, and deconstruction analysis of dichotomies, silences, contradictions, etc.)
5. Actively involve the subject into the research by negotiating relationship, smoothing transitions, and providing ways to be useful to participants. The researcher and the subject may jointly work on the meanings of the stories, which is beneficial for both.

## Types of Narrative Research

- 1) Narrative Analysis – the researcher collects description of events or happenings, and then configures them into a story using plot line.
- 2) Biographical Study – the researcher writes and records the experience of another person’s life.
  - Auto-biographical study- *written and recorded by individuals who are the subjects of the study*
  - A life history – *portrays an individual’s entire life*
  - A personal experience story – *portrays an individual’s personal experience found in single or multiple episodes, private situations, or communal folklore.*
  - Oral history – *gathering the personal reflection of events and their causes and effects from one individual or several individuals.*

## Challenges of Narrative Research

- 1) Research needs to collect extensive information
- 2) Researcher needs to understand the context of the individual’s life clearly
- 3) Researcher must skillfully uncover the multilayer of the story
- 4) Researcher must carefully negotiate role in terms of questions such as “who owns the story?” “who can tell it?” “who can change it?” “whose version is convincing?” etc.

## 5) CASE STUDY RESEARCH

- Case study is “a qualitative study in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) **over time**, through **detailed, in-depth data collection** involving **multiple sources of information** (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a **case description** and **case-based themes**.” (Creswell, 2005; p. 73)
- Examples of cases studied can be: a particular program, a school, an individual student, a course, a legal case, an event, etc.

### Types of case studies

There are three types of case studies:

1. Single instrumental case study – when the researcher focuses on an issue/concern and selects one bounded case to illustrate the issue
2. Collective case study – the researcher selects multiple cases to illustrate the issue
3. Intrinsic case study – focusing on the case itself because it represents unusual or unique situation. E.g., a certain program, a student who has difficulty learning, etc.

### Challenges of case study

- Deciding which case to choose
- Deciding how many cases to include (choosing several cases may compromise depth)

Extensive length of time for data collection

## 6) HISTORICAL STUDY (HISTORIOGRAPHY)

- Studying events/stories that have already occurred
- Narrative study can be a historical study if contextualized in the past (recent or distant)
- Historical research is usually conducted by attaining documented facts about the topic/issue/person under study
- Historical research may use **primary** and **secondary** sources.
  - *Primary Sources - the original document, picture, audio, video, and so on*
    - E.g., Diary of the person who's history we want to study
  - *Secondary Sources – derivative work based on the original source, but is not the original source itself*
    - E.g., Biographical study conducted about the person by another researcher

### Challenges of Historical Study

- Difficulty to establish reliability and validity of research
  - *Inauthentic documents (threat to reliability)*
  - *Biases*
  - *Anachronism – meaning, understanding stories of the past in light of the present instead of the past context (threat to validity)*

**Table 4.1** Contrasting Characteristics of Five Qualitative Approaches

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Narrative Research</i>	<i>Phenomenology</i>	<i>Grounded Theory</i>	<i>Ethnography</i>	<i>Case Study</i>
Focus	Exploring the life of an individual	Understanding the essence of the experience	Developing a theory grounded in data from the field	Describing and interpreting a culture-sharing group	Developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases
Type of Problem Best Suited for Design	Needing to tell stories of individual experiences	Needing to describe the essence of a lived phenomenon	Grounding a theory in the views of participants	Describing and interpreting the shared patterns of culture of a group	Providing an in-depth understanding of a case or cases
Discipline Background	Drawing from the humanities including anthropology, literature, history, psychology, and sociology	Drawing from philosophy, psychology, and education	Drawing from sociology	Drawing from anthropology and sociology	Drawing from psychology, law, political science, medicine
Unit of Analysis	Studying one or more individuals	Studying several individuals that have shared the experience	Studying a process, action, or interaction involving many individuals	Studying a group that shares the same culture	Studying an event, a program, an activity, more than one individual

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Narrative Research</i>	<i>Phenomenology</i>	<i>Grounded Theory</i>	<i>Ethnography</i>	<i>Case Study</i>
Data Collection Forms	Using primarily interviews and documents	Using primarily interviews with individuals, although documents, observations, and art may also be considered	Using primarily interviews with 20–60 individuals	Using primarily observations and interviews, but perhaps collecting other sources during extended time in field	Using multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, documents, artifacts
Data Analysis Strategies	Analyzing data for stories, “restorying” stories, developing themes, often using a chronology	Analyzing data for significant statements, meaning units, textural and structural description, description of the “essence”	Analyzing data through open coding, axial coding, selective coding	Analyzing data through description of the culture-sharing group; themes about the group	Analyzing data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes
Written Report	Developing a narrative about the stories of an individual’s life	Describing the “essence” of the experience	Generating a theory illustrated in a figure	Describing how a culture-sharing group works	Developing a detailed analysis of one or more cases



**Table 4.2** Reporting Structures for Each Approach

<i>Reporting Approaches</i>	<i>Narrative</i>	<i>Phenomenology</i>	<i>Grounded Theory</i>	<i>Ethnography</i>	<i>Case Study</i>
General Structure of Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction (problem, questions)</li> <li>• Research procedures (a narrative, significance of individual, data collection, analysis outcomes)</li> <li>• Report of stories</li> <li>• Individuals theorize about their lives</li> <li>• Narrative segments identified</li> <li>• Patterns of meaning identified (events, processes, epiphanies, themes)</li> <li>• Summary</li> </ul> <p>(Adapted from Denzin, 1989a, 1989b)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction (problem, questions)</li> <li>• Research procedures (a phenomenology and philosophical assumptions, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</li> <li>• Significant statements</li> <li>• Meanings of statements</li> <li>• Themes of meanings</li> <li>• Exhaustive description of phenomenon</li> </ul> <p>(Adapted from Moustakas, 1994)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction (problem, questions)</li> <li>• Research procedures (grounded theory, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</li> <li>• Open coding</li> <li>• Axial coding</li> <li>• Selective coding and theoretical propositions and models</li> <li>• Discussion of theory and contrasts with extant literature</li> </ul> <p>(Adapted from Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction (problem, questions)</li> <li>• Research procedures (ethnography, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</li> <li>• Description of culture</li> <li>• Analysis of cultural themes</li> <li>• Interpretation, lessons learned, questions raised</li> </ul> <p>(Adapted from Wolcott, 1994b)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry vignette</li> <li>• Introduction (problem, questions, case study, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</li> <li>• Description of the case/cases and its/their context</li> <li>• Development of issues</li> <li>• Detail about selected issues</li> <li>• Assertions</li> <li>• Closing vignette</li> </ul> <p>(Adapted from Stake, 1995)</p>