

DEFINITION OF RESEARCH:

- **Scientific research** – a logical and systematic research for new and useful information on a particular topic.
- “Research is a systematic investigation (including development, testing, and evaluation) designed to discover or contribute to a body of generalizable knowledge.” (US Dept. of Health)

TYPES OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Basis of Classification	Types
Purpose	Basic Research Applied Research
Nature of Data	Quantitative Research Qualitative Research
Methodology	Descriptive (Survey) Case Study Ethnographic Interrelationship (Correlational) Historical, etc.

HOW ARE QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DIFFERENT?

- **Quantitative** – involves the study of samples and populations, and rely heavily on numerical data and statistical analysis
- **Qualitative** – makes little use of numbers or statistics, but instead rely heavily on verbal data and subjective analysis
- **Mixed** – Uses both approaches

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH:

Study is conducted in **naturalistic** setting

- A setting where participants directly experience the issue under study
- They don't bring individuals to lab
- They don't send out instruments to be completed by participants
- They interact face-to-face with participants through time

Researcher as key instrument

- Researchers themselves examine documents, observe behavior, interview participants
- They don't rely on instruments developed by other researchers

Multiple sources of data

- Documents, interviews, observations
- Look for themes that cut across all the data

Inductive data analysis

- Researchers build patterns, categories, and themes from "bottom-up"
- Categorizing proceeds from organizing data into increasingly more abstract units of information

Participants' meanings

- The researcher tries to learn meanings *participants* hold about the issue under study
- Does not bring in his/her own understanding of the issue

Emergent design

- The researcher may change the original plan of the study by changing Questions, Participants, Study site, etc.

Theoretical lens

- Researchers may have a theoretical lens through which they view their study

Theoretical lens about culture, gender, race, class difference etc.

Holistic account

- Qualitative researchers try to develop a complex picture of the issue under study
 - Multiple perspectives
 - Many factors involved in the situation
 - Larger picture that emerges out of data, etc.