Chapter 3: Qualitative Research and Its Importance in Daily Life

- ASRes1: Research in Daily Life 1
- Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) Strand
- Mr. Migo M. Mendoza

Animo La Salle!
Hey, STEM!
STEM:

Oh, hi, ABM. Where've you been?
ABM:

I just came from my research class. We’re just starting to learn about qualitative research.
STEM:

What’s that?
Well, sometimes a researcher wants to obtain an in-depth look at a particular individual, say, or a specific situation. Maybe even a particular set of instructional materials.
Yeah?
When they do, they ask some interesting questions. Instead of asking something like “What do people think about this?” or “What would happen if I do this?” qualitative researchers ask, “How do these people act?” or “How are things done?” or “How do people give meaning to their lives?”
How come?
Because what they want to get at is some idea of the quality of the experiences that people have.
Sounds different. Tell me more.
We shall indeed tell STEM (and you) more about qualitative research. The nature of qualitative research, and how it differs from quantitative research, is what this chapter is all about.
Recall:

- What is qualitative research?
Qualitative Research

- Research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials are frequently referred to as qualitative research.

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Qualitative Research

• This type of research has a greater emphasis on holistic description—that is, on describing in detail all of what goes on in a particular activity or situation rather than on comparing the effects of a particular treatment (as experimental research), say, or on describing the attitudes or behaviors of people (as in survey research).
Recall:

- What is the nature of reality according to qualitative researcher?
Recall:

- In qualitative research, what is the relationship of the researcher to that researched?
Recall:

• In qualitative research, what is the role of values?
Recall:

• In qualitative research, what is the language of research?
Recall:

• In qualitative research, what is the process of research?
General Characteristics of Qualitative Research

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• **Bogdan and Biklen describe five general characteristics of qualitative research.**
First Characteristic of Qualitative Research

- The natural setting is the direct source of data, and the researcher is the key instrument in qualitative research.
Take Note:

• Qualitative researchers go to the particular setting of interest because they are concerned with context—they feel that activities can best be understood in the actual settings in which they occur.

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Second Characteristic of Qualitative Research

- Qualitative data are collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers.
Take Note:

• Gestures, jokes, conversational gambits, artwork or other decorations in a room—all are noted by qualitative researchers. To a qualitative researcher, no data are trivial or unworthy of notice.
Third Characteristic of Qualitative Research

• Qualitative researchers are concerned with process as well as products.
Take Note:

• Qualitative researchers are especially interested in *how* things occur.
Fourth Characteristic of Qualitative Research

- Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.
Take Note:

- As Bogdan and Biklen suggest, qualitative researchers are not putting together a puzzle whose picture they already know. They are constructing a picture that takes shape as they collect and examine the parts.
Fifth Characteristic of Qualitative Research

• How people make sense out of their lives is a major concern to qualitative researchers.
Take Note:

• Assumptions, motives, reasons, goals, and values—all are of interest and likely to be the focus of the researcher’s questions.
Qualitative Approaches to Research

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First Step:

Creswell has identified five approaches to qualitative research, including:

1. Narrative Research;
2. Phenomenology;
3. Grounded Theory;
4. Case Studies; and
5. Ethnography.
Narrative Research

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Narrative Research

• It is the study of the life experiences of an individual as told to the researcher or found in documents and archival material.
Narrative Research

• An important aspect of some narrative research is that the participant recalls one or more special events (an “epiphany”) in his or her life.
Different Forms of Narrative Research

1. Biological Study;
2. Autobiography;
3. Life History; and
Biographical Study

- It is a form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person’s life.
Autobiography

• It is written and recorded by the individuals who are subject of the study (Ellis, 2004).
Something to think about…

• How does biographical study and autobiography differ from one another?
Life Story

- It portrays an individual’s entire life, while a personal experience story is a narrative study of an individual’s personal experiences found in single or multiple episodes, private situations, or communal folklore (Denzin, 1989a).
Oral History

• It consists of gathering personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual or several individuals (Plummer, 1983).
Did you know?

• Narrative research is not easy to do, for number of reasons.
Reason 1:

- The researcher must collect an extensive amount of information about his or her participant.
Reason 2:

• The researcher must have a clear understanding of the historical period within which the participant lived in order to position the participant accurately within that period.
Reason 3:

• The researcher needs a “sharp eye” to uncover the various aspects of the participant’s life.
Reason 4:

• The researcher needs to be reflective about his or her own personal and political background, which may shape how the participant’s story is told and understood.
Approaches to Qualitative Research

Phenomenology

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Phenomenology

• A researcher undertaking a phenomenological study investigates a particular phenomenon (e.g., the experience of an employee in a multibillion company).
Phenomenology

• The researcher hopes to gain some insight into the world of his or her participants and to describe their perceptions and reactions (e.g., what it is like to work in a multibillion company).
Something to think about...

• How does phenomenological study and narrative study differs?
Did you know?

• Phenomenologists generally assume that there is some commonality to how human beings perceive and interpret similar experiences; they seek to identify, understand, and describe these commonalities.
Did you know?

- This commonality of perception is referred to as the **essence**—the essential characteristic(s)—of the experience.
Examples of Phenomenological Study

• Here are some examples of the kinds of topics that might serve as the focus for a phenomenological study:
Examples of Phenomenological Study

• Researchers might explore the experiences of African American students in a predominantly white senior high school.
Examples of Phenomenological Study

- Researchers might explore the experiences of teachers who have used the inquiry approach in teaching eleventh-grade Personal Development.
Examples of Phenomenological Study

- Researchers might explore the experiences of nurses who work in the operating room of a large medical center.
Did you know?

• Like narrative research, phenomenological studies are not easy to do.
• The researcher must get the participants in a phenomenological study to relive in their minds the experiences they have had.
Themes

• Those aspects of the participants’ experiences that they had in common.
To sum it up...

- Researchers who conduct phenomenological studies search for the “essential structure” of a single phenomenon by interviewing, in depth, a number of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon.
Approaches to Qualitative Research

Grounded Theory

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In a grounded theory, the researchers intend to generate a theory that is “grounded” in data from participants who have experienced the process (Strauss & Cobin, 1998).
Grounded Theory

- Strauss and Cobin put it this way: “One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge.”
Lancy describes the process as follows:

- In a study of parental influence on children’s reading of storybooks, Kelly Draper and I videotaped 32 parent-child pairs as they read to each other. We had few if any preconceptions about what we would find, only that we hoped that distinct patterns would emerge and that these would be associated with the children’s evident ease/difficulty in learning to read.
Lancy describes the process as follows:

• I spent literally dozens of hours viewing these videotapes, developing, using, and casting aside various categories until I found two clusters of characteristics which I called “reductionist” and “expansionist” that accounted for a large portion of the variation among parents’ reading/listening styles.
Lancy describes the process as follows:

- I was, of course, guided in my search for appropriate categories by my [experience] with the setting and by the transcripts of our interview with each parent.
Something to think about…

- In grounded theory study in the previously given example, how does a researcher gathers his or her data?
Did you know?

- The data in a grounded theory study are collected primarily through one-on-one interviews, focus group interviews, and participant observation by the researcher(s).
• Let us consider a hypothetical example of a grounded research study. Suppose that a researcher is interested in how operation managers try to maintain and enhance morale among the team supervisors in BPO companies. He or she might conduct a series of in-depth interviews with a number of operation managers in a few urban BPO companies.
Example of Grounded Theory Study

- Suppose the researcher finds that these operation managers utilizes a variety of strategies to keep morale high, including having frequent one-on-one “praise sessions” to reward good supervision, acknowledge the efforts of team supervisors through written and oral commendations at company meetings,
Example of Grounded Theory Study

- writing supportive letters and placing them in the immediate supervisor’s personnel files, providing extra resources, replacing unnecessary meetings with routine information in writing, advising team supervisors of policy changes in advance and asking for their input and approval before hand, and so forth.
Example of Grounded Theory Study

- Gradually, the researcher develops a theory about what effective operation managers do to maintain and enhance morale among their team supervisors. The theory is modified over time as the researcher observes and interviews even more operation managers and team supervisors.
Something to think about...

• From the given example, how does a grounded theory study is conducted?
The Point to Stress Here:

• The researcher does not go in with a theory out of the data that are collected—that is, one that is *grounded* in the data. This approach is obviously highly dependent on the insight of the individual researcher.
Case Studies

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Case Study

• What *case study researchers* have in common is that they call the objects of their research *cases*, and they focus their research on the study of such cases.
What is a Case?

- A **case** comprises just one individual, department in a company, company, or a program. For some researchers, a case is not just an individual or situation that can easily be identified (e.g., a particular individual, classroom, organization, or project); it may be an event (e.g., company celebration), an activity (e.g., learning to use a computer), or an ongoing process (e.g., agents call simulation training).
There are some students who learn a second language rather easily. In hopes of gaining insight into why this is the case, one such student could be observed on a regular basis to see if there are any noticeable patterns or regularities in the student’s behavior. The student, as well as his or her teachers, counsellors, parents, and friends, might also be interviewed in depth.
Case Study of a Certain School:

• There might be a particular elementary school in a given school district, for example, that is noteworthy for its success with at-risk students. The researcher might visit the school on a regular basis, observing what goes in classrooms, during recess periods, in the hallways and lunchroom, during faculty meetings, and so on.
Three Types of Case Studies

• Stake has identified three types of case studies as follows:
Three Types of Case Studies

1. Intrinsic Case Study;
2. Instrumental Case Study; and
3. Multiple (or collective) Case Study.
(1) Intrinsic Case Study

• In here, the researcher is primarily interested in understanding a specific individual or situation.
Did you know?

• Intrinsic case studies are often used in exploratory research when researchers seek to learn about some little-known phenomenon by studying it in depth.
(2) Instrumental Case Study

• In here, a researcher is interested in understanding something more than just a particular case; the researcher is interested in studying the particular case only as a means to some larger goal.
Example of Instrumental Case Study:

- A researcher might study how Miss Tonzie Sumulong teaches phonics, for example, in order to learn something about phonics as a method or about the teaching of reading in general.
Did you know?

• Researchers who conduct such studies are more interested in drawing conclusions that apply beyond a particular case than they are in conclusions that apply to just one specific case.
(3) Multiple-(or collective) Case Study

• In here, the researcher studies multiple cases at the same time as part of one overall study.
Example of Multiple-(or Collective) Case Study

A researcher chooses several cases to study because he or she is interested in the effects of mainstreaming employees with disabilities into regular working stations in a company. Instead of studying the results of such mainstreaming in just a single working station, the researcher studies its impact in a number of different classrooms.
Something to think about...

• Which is to be preferred, multiple- or single-case designs?
Advantage of Multiple-Case Study

- The results of multiple-case studies are often considered more compelling, and they are more likely to lend themselves to valid generalization.
Disadvantage of Multiple-Case Study

• Multiple-Case Studies often require extensive resources and time.
Ethnographic and Historical Approaches to Qualitative Research

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Recall:

• From our previous discussion, how a researcher conducts an ethnographic research? What is important in this kind of research?

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Ethnographic Research

• What we already know:
  • Ethnographic research focuses on the study of culture.
Recall:

• From our previous discussion, how a researcher conducts a historical research? What is important in this kind of research?
Historical Research

• What we already know:
  • *Historical research concentrates exclusively on the past.*
Sampling in Qualitative Research

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Sampling Technique in Qualitative Research

- Researchers who engage in some form of qualitative research are likely to select a purposive sample—that is, they select a sample they feel will yield the best understanding of what they are studying.
Sampling Technique in Qualitative Research

• At least nine types of purposive sampling have been identified. These include:
Nine Types of Purposive Sampling in Qualitative Research

1. Typical Sample;
2. Critical Sample;
3. Homogeneous Sample;
4. Extreme Case Sample;
5. Theoretical Sample;
6. Opportunistic Sample;
7. Confirming Sample;
8. Maximal Variation Sample;
9. Snowball Sample.

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(1) Typical Sample

• One that is considered or judged to be typical or representative of that which is being studied.
Example of Typical Sample:

• A class of senior high school students selected because they are judged to be typical eleventh-graders.
(2) Critical Sample

• One that is considered to be particularly enlightening because it is so unusual or exceptional.
Example of Critical Sample

- Individuals who have attained high achievement despite some serious physical limitations.
(3) Homogeneous Sample

• One in which all of the members possess a certain trait or characteristic.

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Example of Homogeneous Sample:

• A group of high school students all judged to possess exceptional artistic talent.

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(4) Extreme Case Sample

• One in which all of the members are outliers who do not fit the general pattern or who otherwise display extreme characteristics.
Example of Extreme Case Sample

- Students achieve high grades despite low scores on ability tests and poor home environments.
(5) Theoretical Sample

• One that helps the researcher to understand a concept or theory.
Example of Theoretical Sample

• Selecting a group of tribal elders to assess the relevance of Piagetian theory to the education of Native Igorots.
(6) Opportunistic Sample

• One chosen during a study to take advantage of new conditions or circumstances that have arisen.
Example of Opportunistic Sample

• Eyewitness to a fracas at a certain department in a company.

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(7) Confirming Sample

• One that is obtained to validate or disconfirm preliminary findings.
Example of Confirming Sample:

• Follow-up interviews with employees in order to verify reasons why employees resign.
Maximal Variation Sample

- One selected to represent a diversity of perspectives or characteristics.
Example of Maximal Variation Sample

• A group of newly hired employees who possess a wide variety of attitudes toward recent company policies.
• One selected as need arises during the conduct of a study.
Example of Snowball Sample:

- During the interviewing of a group of company supervisors, they recommend others who also should be interviewed because they are particularly knowledgeable about the subject of the research.
Qualitative Steps in Research

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First Step:

- Identification of the phenomenon to be studied.
Identification of the Phenomenon to be Studied.

• Before any study can begin, the researcher must identify the particular phenomenon he or she is interested in investigating.
Example:

- Suppose, for example, a researcher wishes to conduct a study to investigate the interaction between entry-level and tenured employees in a sales company.
Research Question:

• “To what extent and in what ways do entry-level and tenured employees in a sales company interact?”
Foreshadowed Problems

• The previous research question is known as foreshadowed problem. All qualitative studies begin with such problems—they are akin to the overall statement of the problem.
Foreshadowed Problems

• Foreshadowed problems are often reformulated several times during the course of a qualitative study.
Second Step:

- Identification of the participants in the study.
Identification of the Participants in the Study

• The participants in the study constitute the sample of individuals who will be observed (interviewed, etc.)—in other words, the subjects of the study.
Did you know?

• In almost all qualitative research, the sample is a purposive sample. Random sampling ordinarily is not feasible, since the researcher wants to ensure that he or she obtains a sample that is uniquely suited to the intent of the study.
Third Step:

• Generation of hypotheses.
Generation of Hypotheses

• Unlike in most quantitative studies, hypotheses are not posed at the beginning of the study by the researcher. Instead, they emerge from the data as the study progresses.
In Our Previous Example:

• A researcher might hypothesize originally that interaction in a sales company between entry-level and tenured employees, outside working hours or during lunch break, will be minimal.
In Our Previous Example:

- As the researcher observes the daily goings-on in the company, the hypothesis may be modified a number of times as the researcher becomes more aware of times and places where the employees actually do interact fairly regularly.
Fourth Step:

• Data Collection.
Data Collection

• There is no “treatment” in a qualitative study, nor is there any “manipulation” of subjects.
Take Note:

• The participants in a qualitative study are not divided into groups, with one group being exposed to a treatment of some sort and the effects of this treatment then measured in some way.
Take Note:

- Data are not collected at the “end” of the study. Rather, the collection of data in a qualitative research study is ongoing.
Fifth Step:

• **Data Analysis.**
• Analyzing the data in a qualitative study essentially involves analyzing and synthesizing the information the researcher obtains from various sources (e.g., observations, interviews, documents) into a coherent description of what he or she has observed or otherwise discovered.
Take Note:

- Hypotheses are not usually tested by means of inferential statistical procedures, as is the case with experimental or associational research, although some statistics, such as percentages, may be calculated if it appears they can illuminate specific details about the phenomenon under investigation.
Take Note:

• Data analysis in qualitative research, however, relies heavily on description; even when certain statistics are calculated, they tend to be used in a descriptive rather than an inferential sense.
Sixth Step:

- Interpretations and Conclusions.
In qualitative research, interpretations are made continuously throughout the course of a study. Whereas quantitative researchers usually leave the drawing of conclusions to the very end of their research, qualitative researchers tend to formulate their interpretations as they go along.
In Our Previous Example:

- A qualitative researcher who is observing the ongoing interactions of a sales company, for example, is likely to write up not only what he or she sees each day but also his or her interpretations of those observations.
in Qualitative Research

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Something to think about...

• What is a generalization?
A generalization is usually thought of as a statement or claim of some sort that applies to more than one individual, group, object, or situation.
Something to think about...

- How to construct generalization? What do we mean by generalization?

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Example of Generalization:

- When a researcher makes a statement, based on a review of the literature, that there is a negative correlation between age and employee’s motivation (tenured employees are slowly losing motivation than entry-level employees), he or she is making a generalization.
Something to think about...

• Why researchers generalize or why do they make a generalization?
The Value of Generalization:

- The value of generalization is that it allows us to have expectations (and sometimes to make predictions) about a future.
Take Note:

- A generalization might not be TRUE in every case, however, it describes, more often than not, what we would expect to find.
Limitation of Qualitative Research:

- A limitation of qualitative research is that there is seldom methodological justification for generalizing the findings of a particular study. While this limitation also applies to many quantitative studies, it is almost inevitable given the nature of qualitative research. Because of this replication of qualitative studies is even more important than it is in quantitative research.
Limitation of Generalization in Qualitative Research:

- A limitation of qualitative research is that there is seldom methodological justification for generalizing the findings of a particular study. While this limitation also applies to many quantitative studies, it is almost inevitable given the nature of qualitative research. Because of this replication of qualitative studies is even more important than it is in quantitative research.
Research Qualitative and Quantitative Reconsidered

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Something to think about...

• Can qualitative and quantitative approaches be used together?
Answer:

- Of course. And often they should be. In survey research, for example, it is common not only to prepare a closed-ended (e.g., multiple-choice) questionnaire for people to answer in writing, but also to conduct open-ended personal interviews with a random sample of the respondents.
Something to think about...

• Which is the better approach—qualitative or quantitative?
• By far, the most widely held (view) is that there is no one best method. It all depends on what you are studying and what you want to find out. If you want to find out what the majority of the Filipino think about a particular issue, survey research which relies heavily on quantitative design in picking your sample, designing and pretesting your instrument, analyzing the data is best.
• If you want to know about the process of change in a company’s organizational chart and how the various company members experience change, qualitative methods will do a better job. Without a doubt there are certain questions and topics that the qualitative approach will not help you with, and the same is true of quantitative research.
Qualitative Research

Family Activity 6

Questions

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Instruction:

• Together with your family members, check-off the following questions that would lend themselves well to qualitative research. Write your answer on a manila paper and be ready to present your work in front of the class. Do not forget to justify your answer.
# Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctness</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justification</td>
<td>7 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation and Aesthetic Consideration</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>3 points</td>
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