

RESEARCH CAPABILITY BUILDING

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Transformative Way of Doing Research Using Phenomenology

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What is Phenomenology?

Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach using lived experience or consciousness of social facts on which to base its insights. The phenomenon being studied may be viewed from different standpoints and profiles. Each standpoint or profile reveals certain themes.

The task of phenomenology is to find out how the themes in each standpoint or profile are linked meaningfully and from this, draw out the interrelationships among different standpoints and profiles. In this way, phenomenology unveils layers of meanings about the phenomenon being studied. It strips the phenomenon of all superficial appearances to bring out one's perception, of the "eidotes", the essence, and the perceived "nucleus of truth."

- Dr. Mina Ramirez, President of Asian Social Institute

Practical Comparison between Qualitative and Quantitative Researches

Dimension	Qualitative	Quantitative
Purpose	understand and interpret social interaction	test hypotheses, look at cause and effect, prediction
Sample	tends to be smaller, nonrandom	tends to be larger, random
Variables	study of the whole rather than specific variables	focus is on a number of variables
Types of Data Collected	emphasis is on words, images, visual representations	emphasis is on numbers
Types of Data Analysis	coding and themes analysis	statistical analysis
Writing Style	less formal, more personal	scientific, precise, impersonal
Design Characteristics	flexible, evolving, emergent	predetermined, structured

Written (text)

Spoken (talk)

Social context

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis
is used to analyze written and spoken text of people's discourse.

Process of Discourse Analysis

1. Describe the text
- actual description of the experience
2. Analyze the text
- process of adding or subtracting
3. Interpret the text
- calculating the meaning and essence of the experience

As a Qualitative Research, what are the features of Phenomenology?

- 1 Natural Setting**
A qualitative research involves studying things as they exist, rather than contriving artificial situations or experiments. (Lichtmann, 2013, p. 20)
- 2 Self as Instrument**
Researchers must see what is to be seen, given some frame of reference, and intentions. The self is the instrument that engages the situation and makes sense of it. (Eisner, 1998, p. 34)
- 3 Interpretive Character**
The researcher is trying to account for what they gave account of versus the researcher is trying to describe the reality according to those that construct the reality. (Eisner, 1998, p. 35)
Etic (outsider's perspective) versus Emic

- 4 Multiple Method**
Qualitative research gather multiple forms of data such as interviews, observations, and documents. (Creswell, 2013, p. 45)
There is not just one way of doing qualitative research...there are potentially several ways to interpret what you see or hear. (Lichtman, 2013, p. 24)
- 5 Thick Descriptions**
Thick descriptions are used to describe details about the setting in which a study is conducted because it is desirable in order to see underlying meanings and understandings (Lichtman, 2013, p. 2013)
Since qualitative research focuses on process, meaning and understanding, the product of a qualitative study is richly descriptive. Words and pictures rather than numbers are used... (Merriam, 1998, p. 8)

- 6 Emergent Designs**
The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent. This means that the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and that all phases of the process may change or shift after the researchers enter the field and begin to collect data. (Creswell, 2013, p. 47)
Qualitative research is thought to be fluid and ever changing. (Lichtman, 2013, p. 17)
- 7 Primarily Inductive**
Builds from the ground up i.e. qualitative researchers hope to find a theory that explains their data as opposed to finding data that matches a theory (Merriam, 1998, p. 7)
Qualitative Research deals with the specifics and move to the general...moves from the concrete to the abstract (Lichtman, 2013, p. 19)

Research Capability Building

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