

Introduction to Methods of Qualitative Research

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Youtube Playlist Link:

http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=809EFFA210C27775

§.1.1.

Methods of Qualitative Research: Narrative Research: (John W. Creswell)

- Two Uses of Narrative Research:
 1. Method of Research:
 - a. “A spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected”¹
 - i. Implementation of Narrative
 - a. Selecting Subjects
 - b. Collecting Data
 - c. Reporting Findings
 - d. Description of Meaning
 2. Phenomenon:
 - a. Storytelling is an essential characteristic of the human condition.
 - b. Storytelling is a means of transferring:
 - i. Meaning: (Implicit)
 - ii. Tradition: (Explicit)
 - iii. Morals: (Implicit/Explicit)
 - iv. Culture: (Implicit)

Types of Narrative Research:

1. Biographical Study: Account of another person’s life
2. Autobiography: Written by the subject of the study.
3. Life History: Account of the subject’s life
4. Personal Experience Story: Episodic accounts of experiences throughout the subject’s life.

¹ Creswell, p. 54.

5. Oral History: “consists of gathering personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual or several individuals”²

§.1.2. Methods of Qualitative Research:

5 Procedures for Conducting Narrative Research:

1. Narrative research is best implemented among individuals or a small number of subjects.
2. Amass “Field Texts”, which are the collected gatherings of the subject’s stories.
 - a. Information can be collected in any of the following ways:
 - i. Journal
 - ii. Audio
 - iii. Collection of Letters / Documents
3. The Narrative must be **contextualized**:
 - a. Importance of Contextualization:
 - i. Offers meaning to narrative account
 - ii. Creates the conditions for empathic responses
 - iii. Better expression of the subject’s experience
 - b. Instances of contextualization:
 - i. Job / Home
 - ii. Race / Ethnicity
 - iii. Time / Place
 - iv. Gender / Sexuality
 - v. Social / Cultural
4. Begin the process of “**Restorying- a. Organize the qualitative data into a theoretical framework
- b. Establishment of causal links (connecting ideas)
- c. Establishes the chronology
 - i. [**NOTE**: The theory must conform to the facts. The fact cannot conform to the theory]. Don’t force narrative to fit a preconceived conclusion.**

² Ibid, p. 55.

5. Establish relationship with subjects of the Research
 - a. Look for *epiphanies*: drastic changes in the narrative, unexpected consequences of the narrative.
 - b. Emphasize the historical context
 - c. Reflect on how the research also affected the researcher.

Four Dimensions of Narrative Space:

1. **Personal and Social:** (interaction)
 - a. Interpersonal
 - b. Intrapersonal
 - c. Social interactions
2. **Past, Present Future:** (community)
 - a. Significant changes
3. **Place** (situation)
 - a. Environmental influences to the narrative
4. **Deconstruction:** (implicit)
 - a. Unstated
 - b. Silence
 - c. Avoidance

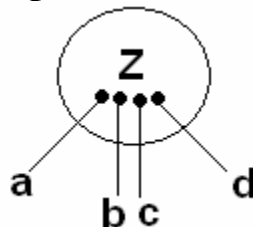
§.2.1. Methods of Qualitative Research:

Methods of Qualitative Research: Phenomenological Research

Definition: “Whereas a narrative study reports the life of a single individual, a phenomenological study describes the meaning of several individuals of their lived experience...”³

5 Elements of Phenomenological Research:

1. Identification of a shared experience
2. Phenomenological research attempts to locate the universal nature of an experience.
3. Attempt to identify shares experience among various individuals experiencing the same phenomena



³ Ibid., p. 57.

4. attempt to locate the essence of the experience
5. The account of their experience includes
 - a. What was experienced
 - b. “How the experienced it”⁴

3 Elements of Phenomenology:

1. “The study of the lived experiences of persons”⁵
2. Experience is a conscious process
3. The “development of [interpretations] of the essences of these experiences”⁶

Types of Phenomenology:

1. **Hermeneutic Phenomenology:** The interpretation of the meaning and significances of one’s experience with a phenomenon.
2. **Transcendental or Psychological Phenomenology:**
 - a. **Transcendental:** “everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time”⁷
 - b. The focus shifts from researcher interpretation to participant description.

Best Practices:

1. *Epoche*: bracketing of research bias and expectations
 - a. Begin with a discussion of your own interpretation to the phenomena *prior* to conducting research.

Phenomenological Methodology:

1. Identify phenomena
2. Bracket and interpret researcher bias and expectation
3. Data Collection
4. Reduction: (identification of salient or seminal points of interpretation/description).
 - a. Theme formation:
5. Description of themes:
 - a. **Textural description:** *what* participants experienced
 - b. **Structural Description:** *how* participants experienced

⁴ Ibid., p. 58.

⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

⁶ Ibid., p. 58.

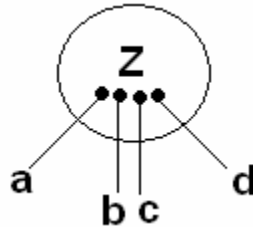
⁷ (Moustakas, 1994).

- c. **Essence of the experience**: Combination of both textural and structural descriptions.

§.2.2. **Methods of Qualitative Research**:

8 Procedural Steps for Conducting Phenomenological Research:

1. Identification of a “common or shared experience of a phenomenon”⁸
 - a. Desire to have a better understanding of the phenomena, more than a narrative account of one’s experience.



- Researcher hopes to better understand “Z” ***more than*** subjects a,b,c,d interpretation of Z.
 - Their interpretation of Z is necessary for a better understanding of the *essence* of Z.
2. The Phenomena is identified
 3. Bracket researcher bias and interpretation
 4. Data Collection:
 - a. Best sample sizes range from 5-25 participants⁹
 5. Questioning:
 - a. **Two Essential Research Questions**:
 - “What have you experienced in terms of the phenomena?”¹⁰
 - “What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experience of the phenomenon?”¹¹
 - b. **Best Practices in Questioning**:
 1. Questions should draw from a common theme
 2. Questions should urge participants to identify the affect the phenomenon had on their lived experiences.

⁸ Creswell, p. 60.

⁹ Polkinghorne 1989.

¹⁰ Creswell, p. 61.

¹¹ Creswell, p. 61.

3. Questions should seek to identify the importance of interpreting the experience in a unique way.
6. Data Analysis:
 - a. **Horizonalization**: attempt to understand participant experience.
 - b. **Clusters of Meaning**: Unification of interpretations into themes.
7. Unified Descriptive Account:
 - a. Unification of textural descriptions *into one description*
 - b. Unification of structural descriptions *into one description*
8. Presentation of the Invariant Structure:
 - a. Combination of unified textural and structural descriptions.

§3.1. Methods of Qualitative Research:

Methods of Qualitative Research: Participatory Action Research

(PAR), (Alice McIntyre)

- Research that directly involves the both the researcher and the participants in the research project

4 Tenets of PAR:

1. “Collective commitment to engage an issue or problem”¹²
2. Inclusion of self and collective reflection as a mode of research.
3. Mutually beneficial collective or individual action
4. Alliance building between researchers and participants

Distinction between Engagement and Involvement

Engagement in the research project addresses the research process

- The process is facilitated by mutual engagement
- **Engagement**: yields “ownership over or in the project”¹³
- **Involvement**: *does not* yield “ownership over or in the project”¹⁴

Context-Specificity of PAR:

- There is no unified or consolidated methodology for implementing PAR

¹² McIntyre, 2008.

¹³ McIntyre, p. 15.

¹⁴ McIntyre, p. 15.

- Each instance of PAR is specific to the environment and the research objective.
- There are no unifying theoretical frameworks for participatory action research
- Community based critical reflection is indicative of PAR
 - **Creates** a counter hegemonic narrative and **suggest** the necessary conditions for change, all of which are necessarily context specific.
 - Marx / Freire

8 Forms of PAR:

1. Rapid Rural Appraisal
2. Critical Action Research
3. Community-based Participatory Research
4. Participatory Community Research
5. Action Research
6. Teacher Research
7. Reflective Practice Research
8. Community Service Learning

The Role of Participant-Generated Actions

- *Collective* identification of desired outcomes:
- **Outcomes of PAR**
 - i. Problem solving
 - ii. Organizing
 - iii. Policy Changes/Recommendations
 - iv. Awareness/Education
- **Emergent Questions**
 - i. Research questions should arise *from* the PAR process
 - ii. Participants should always be encouraged to critically reflect on the research questions and the emergent research questions.

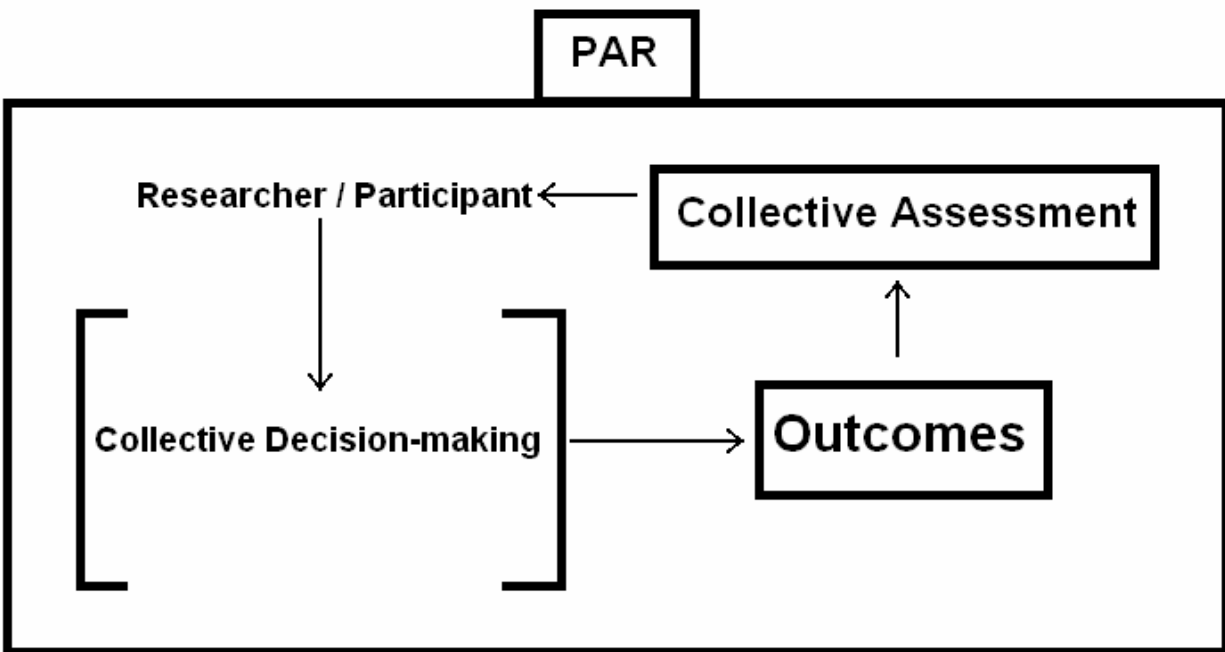
The Recursive Process of PAR:

1. Questioning a Particular Issue
2. Reflecting upon and investigating the issue
3. Developing an action plan
4. Implementing and refining the plan.

§3.2. Methods of Qualitative Research:

Best PAR Practices:

1. Researcher / Participant modes of identification should be dissolved (Freire).
2. Participant considerations “frame” the nature of PAR
3. Collective decision-making inform the outcomes
4. Outcomes are collectively assessed and analyzed by both participants and researchers.



Three Advantages of a PAR Model:

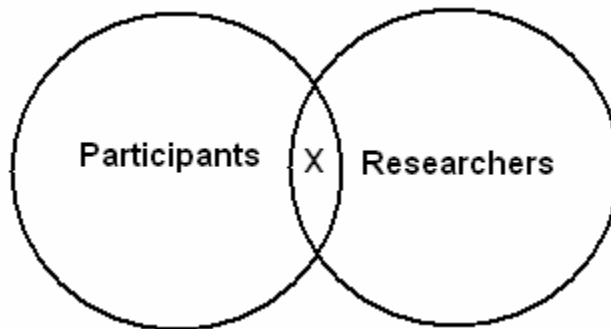
1. Conducive to social and community based research:
 - a. “A research approach that is a theory of possibility rather than a theory of predictability”¹⁵
 - b. Highly Context Specific Community Research
 - c. Facilitates “an overall demystification of what research is and how it can relate to people’s lives”¹⁶
2. Participants and Researchers become “subjects of their own history”¹⁷
 - a. Recognition of the interpretative difference for social truths.
 - i. [Eg., the cat and the mouse]

¹⁵ (Wadsworth, 1998).

¹⁶ McIntyre, p. 67.

¹⁷ Freire, 1971.

- ii. Recognition that our lived experience matter beyond the experiences themselves (global /cross-cultural implications).
- iii. Recognition of the unique ability to “share” the PAR process with individuals outside the community, with a possibility for inclusion. [not necessary outcome but a possible outcome].



- 3. The PAR process affords participants the opportunity and freedom to shape their own outcomes

§4.1. Methods of Qualitative Research:

Methods of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Research

[See Graham R. Gibbs Analysis on Youtube](#)

“the intent of grounded theory is to move beyond description and to generate or **discover** a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a process”¹⁸

Staples of Grounded Theory

- 1. A theory is grounded when: “There is a constant interplay between proposing and checking” [Inductively derived]
- 2. The theory is “grounded” in the research data.
- 3. Theory isn’t applied to the data, the data generates the theory
- 4. The theoretical framework created **from** the data applies most specifically **to** the data.
- 5. The more data, the more grounded the theory.

Key Elements of Grounded Theory

- 1. **Category:** “A classification of concepts...grouped together under [a category]”¹⁹ Collection of concepts/incidents = category
- 2. **Conceptualization:** “first step in analysis”²⁰

¹⁸ (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), Creswell, p. 62-63.

¹⁹ (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)

3. Theoretical Sampling: Analyzing and honing conceptual categories, “sampling on the basis of concepts that have proven theoretical relevance to the evolving theory”.²¹ [indirectly, not PAR]. [zigzag]
4. Constant Comparative: a method of data analysis where data is compared and contrasted against categories.
5. Open Coding: coding the data for **major** categories, the application of **labels**.
6. Axial Coding: the identification of “Connections between categories”²² contingent of properties and dimensions.
7. Properties: characteristics of a category
8. Dimensional Continua: representative locations of a property along continua.

Category: Color

Property: Shade

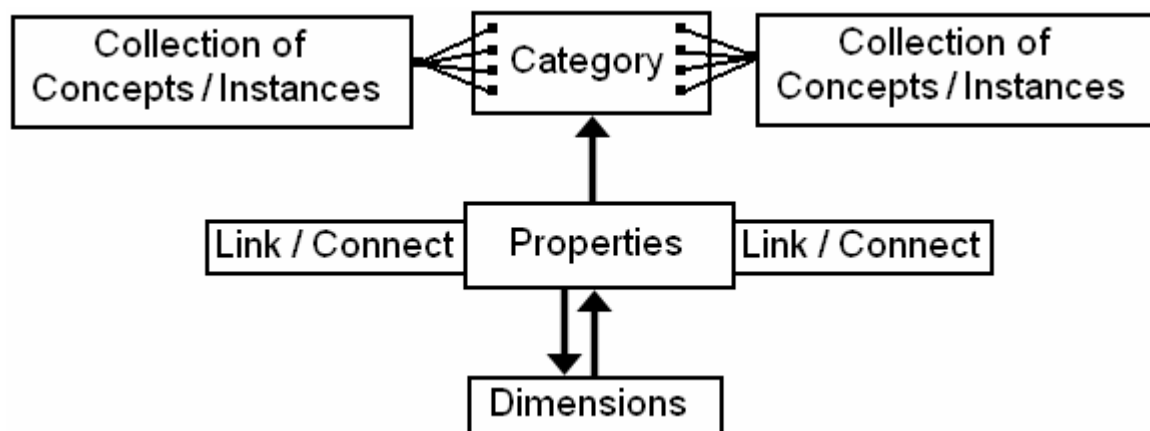
Dimension: Lighter to Darker

Example

Category: Domestic Abuse

Property: Violence

Dimension: Physical Violence / Mental Violence



²⁰ (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), Creswell, p. 63

²¹ Ibid., p. 176

²² (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), p. 96.

§4.2. Methods of Qualitative Research:

9. Core Phenomenon/Codes: an isolated category selected to further develop the theory.
10. Causal Conditions: factors that cause or influence the phenomena, “antecedent conditions”²³
11. Context: “the specific set of properties that pertain to a phenomena”²⁴
12. Strategies: responsive action to core phenomena
13. Consequences: strategic outcomes
14. Selective Coding: “The process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development [Theoretical Sampling]”²⁵
15. Saturation: Category analysis offers no new content

Sampling in Grounded Theory

1. Theoretical Sampling
2. Proven Theoretical Relevance: the significance of concepts because of the reoccurrence and importance
3. Opening sampling: broad sampling to locate general concepts, “includes on-site sampling”²⁶ associated with open coding
4. Relational and Variational Sampling: associated with axial coding. “Its aim is to maximize the finding of difference at the **dimensional level**.”
5. Discriminate Sampling: associated with selective coding. Used to maximize relationships between categories.

Coding Method	Sampling Method
Open Coding	Open Sampling
Axial Coding	Relational and Variational Sampling
Selective Coding	Discriminate Sampling

²³ Ibid., p. 101.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 101.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 116.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 176.

§5.1: Methods of Qualitative Research:

Ethnographic Research

- An analysis of the shared patterns of behavior, beliefs and language among study participants.
- **Ethnography**: study of “an entire cultural group”²⁷
- Typically involves a large n (+20)
- **Participant observation**: observation of study participants within their cultural group.
 - **Immersion**: daily or extended observation of group participants
- **Ethnographic Schools**:²⁸
 1. Structural Functionalism
 2. [Symbolic Interactionism](#)
 3. Cultural and Cognitive Anthropology
 4. Feminism
 5. Marxism
 6. Ethnomethodology
 7. Critical Theory
 8. Cultural Studies
 9. Post Modernism

Types of Ethnographies: (as noted in Creswell, 2007, p. 69)

1. Confessional Ethnographies
2. Life History
3. Autoethnography
4. Feminist Ethnography
5. Ethnographic Novels
6. Visual Ethnography
7. **Realist Ethnography**: “an objective account of the situation”²⁹ third person descriptive account.
 - i. **Reports “facts”** (findings)
 - ii. Researcher “has the final word on how the culture is to be interpreted and presented”³⁰

²⁷ Creswell, p. 68.

²⁸ (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994)

²⁹ Creswell, p. 69.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 70.

8. **Critical Ethnography**: includes an “advocacy perspective”³¹
 - i. Account of the marginalization of select portions of the population. [**discuss marginalization**]
 1. included populations: form hegemonic power
 2. excluded populations: marginalized
 - ii. Reactionary Research:
 1. Responds and Addresses:
 - a. Inequality
 - b. Discrimination
 - c. Structural Violence [define]
 - d. Oppression
 - e. Bias
 - f. Privilege
 - g. Transformation of Status Quo

6 Steps to Conducting Ethnographic Research

1. Identify a cultural group of interest
2. Select an Appropriate Type of Ethnography to Use
3. Identify patterns within the group of interest
4. “Select cultural themes or issues to study about the group”³²
 - a. Identification of Group Patterns:
 - i. Life cycles
 - ii. Events
 - iii. Cultural themes
 - iv. Hierarchical Relationships
 - v. Group Dynamics
5. Conduct Fieldwork
6. Formulate a holistic Cultural Portrait

³¹ Ibid., p. 70.

³² Ibid., p. 71.

§6.1: Methods of Qualitative Research:

Case Study Research (Robert K. Yin)

[See Alan Bryman's Discussion on Youtube](#)

- Detailed and in-depth analysis of one or multiple number of cases
- Single: one case within the study
- Multiple: more than one case within the study
 1. Direct: exact replications
 2. Systematic: “predictably different”³³

6 Types of Case Studies³⁴

1. **Single-exploratory**: A single case within a study “aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent study or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedure”³⁵
2. **Single-descriptive**: A single case within a study that “presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context.”³⁶
3. **Single-explanatory**: A single case within a study used to present “data bearing on cause-effect relationships— explaining which causes produced which effects”³⁷
4. **Multiple- exploratory**: Multiple cases within a study “aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent study or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedure”³⁸
5. **Multiple-descriptive**: Multiple cases within a study that “present a complete description of a phenomenon within its context.”³⁹
6. **Multiple-explanatory**: Multiple cases within a study used to present “data bearing on cause-effect relationships— explaining which causes produced which effects”⁴⁰

³³ Yin, 1993, p. 5.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 5.