
Qualitative Research

- I. What is it?**
- II. Conducting qualitative research:
prep, sampling, data collection**
- III. Strengths and Weaknesses**

I. What is qualitative research?

- Being in the field
- Anthropology, journalism
- Social context, comprehensiveness, rich texture of life
- Patterns, themes, common categories

I. What is qualitative research?

QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
▪ Theory/hypothesis testing	▪ Theory/hyps. generating
▪ Explanation	▪ Understanding
▪ Quantification and statistics (what/how much?)	▪ Description (in what context?)
▪ Deductive	▪ Inductive
▪ Focus on Objective Data	▪ Focus on Observation

I. What is qualitative research?

- ❖ Topics appropriate to qualitative research
 - Exploratory research questions
 - Topics and peoples in natural settings
 - Data: written or spoken words and observations

II. Conducting qualitative research

1. Preparing for the field

- Gaining entry and building relationships
- Use key informants and consultants



II. Conducting qualitative research

2. Sampling in qualitative research

- ▶ Purposive sampling
- ▶ Quota sampling
- ▶ Snowball sampling
- ▶ Deviant case sampling

❖ Sample size: saturation point

II. Conducting qualitative research

3. Methods for data collection

- Observation
 - Pure observation
 - Participant observation
 - (1) complete
 - (2) participant as observer
 - (3) observer as participant

II. Conducting qualitative research

3. Methods for data collection

- Interview
 - Individual
 - (1) informal conversational
 - (2) interview guide
 - Group: focus group

III. Strengths and weaknesses

1. Strengths

- Depth of understanding
- Flexibility

2. Weaknesses

- Subjectivity
- Suggestive, not definitive
- Limited generalizability

❖ *Mixed methodology*

