

Instructor's Manual

For

Scott/Garner

Doing Qualitative Research Designs, Methods, and Techniques

First Edition

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Opening Remarks: The important thing to keep in mind is that students should feel excited and eager to get involved in qualitative social research! You are not programming computers to follow a series of steps, but encouraging human beings to explore the world around them in systematic ways. Many of these designs and methods invite the novice to get started, and most of the chapters should inspire students to say, "Yes, I want to do this kind of research!" Ethnography (and the various specific methods that go with it), social autopsies, and the analysis of cultural artifacts occupy the top of the list in this regard!

Do not let these feelings, this spirited curiosity, die amid picky test items.

On the other hand, encourage students to follow best practices for these various methods and to make sure that they understand the various tips and guidelines. Ultimately, this book is designed to underpin a course in which students learn and implement different ways to exercise "disciplined curiosity."

Three of the research designs we cover require a bit more caution: One is community-based participatory research (CBPR), which we emphasize is not a design for novices or for anyone who needs to quickly complete a research project. Another design that presents problems for beginners is historical comparative research; many undergraduates are not aware how important this design is in the "big picture" of social science research. The chapter can only familiarize them with the design, but it takes a lot of work to become an adept practitioner. Finally, the multi-method and mixed quantitative/qualitative designs definitely present challenges, and here too we have designed the chapter more to make students aware of this type of project than to prepare them to do it right away.

Finally another couple of things that are important in the book but require discussion with the class.

One is the heavy emphasis on theory. Research should always be in a conversation with theory. In fact, some people argue that all research questions are asked within theoretical frameworks or paradigms, however implicitly they may be; the "problematic" is fundamentally motivated by theory and the terms in which the RQ is stated derive from a theory. We can encourage students to think theoretically not only by reviewing their theory classes, but also by "doing theory" themselves as they develop explanations

and thick interpretations and consider macro-micro linkages in discussing their findings.

Another element of the book that requires discussion is the politics of research as well as the “beyond the protocol” ethical issues. Qualitative research is never a simple technical enterprise but rather always unfolds in social, political, and personal contexts. Students need to talk about these issues in a setting—the classroom—in which they feel comfortable. Some students will want to use research to promote their values (and social justice will certainly come up) while others will be concerned about “bias” and lean towards Max Weber’s advice that political commitment must not get in the way of the scientific enterprise. As the instructor, you likely will want to be open to the full range of views and not discourage or stifle any of these. At the same time, we encourage you to discourage simplistic notions of “bias” and help students move to a more nuanced grasp of how to be critical and reflexive about one’s own research. You probably will find yourself needing to help students see that we cannot simply deduce an individual’s “biases” or values from their race, gender, sexuality, or class of origin; these factors need to be considered, but they do not “cause” values on their own but only in the way that they are refracted through experiences, childhood socialization, reference groups, careers, education, and so on.

Suggestions for Instructors about the Test Items:

Almost all multiple-choice questions can be easily transformed into fill-in-the-blank questions. Fill in the blank questions are a very effective way of differentiating students with an active knowledge of concepts and terminology from students who have only a weak, passive capacity of selecting a correct answer from a list. Fill—in-the-blank questions are easy to grade and are virtually guaranteed to produce a -curve in the distribution of answers for tests that make use of them.

Almost every key term in a chapter can be used in short identification essays. Students are asked to define or briefly explain a term—usually in a sentence or two.

The multiple-choice questions must be unambiguous. If there is more than one possible correct answer, it is not a good multiple-choice question. (Yes, we are aware that many tests are made up of questions for which three answers are clearly incorrect and two answers are both possible; we do not

think that these items are fair.) If there is disagreement and ambiguity, it would be better—fairer to students—to formulate a short essay or even a fill in the blank with two possible correct answers that can both get credit. The material in the text is complex and often contentious; in fairness to students, ambiguity and disagreement need to be explored carefully and not “glossed over” in a machine-graded multiple-choice question.

Multiple choice questions are often best worded as “...the authors say...” or “...the researcher found...” In other words, they are not about “reality” (and hence legitimately subject to disagreement and debate) but about a text. Either the students know what the text says or they don’t!

Less ambiguity means less room for disagreement.

This type of wording makes the item relatively unambiguous. The multiple choice items thus separate students who read and understand the text (or followed a lecture) from those who were not able to pick out the right answer from a list of five (either because they did not do the work or because they were not able to understand it). The fill-in-the-blank items can then be used to distinguish between (1) students who have achieved an active mastery of the terminology and (2) students who only passively recognize the correct answers but cannot call up the term or concept by themselves even when they see its definition. Finally, the essay questions distinguish students with an active and nuanced understanding of the material from those who have learned a correct answer (i.e., can fill in a blank) but cannot express the ideas freely and articulately on their own. A battery of questions that includes all three types (multiple choice, fill in the blanks, essays) will produce a well-calibrated “curve” with plenty of variance for assigning a range of grades.

It is important not to let test items “get stale.” It is easy to reformulate items in new ways and “refresh” the test. For example, multiple-choice items can be recycled as fill-in-the-blank items (use the right answer as the definition for which the term must be supplied). True-False questions are easy to write but have the disadvantage of encouraging guessing (unless you choose to penalize incorrect answers). Class discussion can be used as the basis of essay questions. Students themselves can be asked to come up with appropriate essay questions; and if they are posing questions to a

course-management site, these questions about the material often lend themselves to reformulation as essay questions.

Finally, a small warning—pretty obvious once you look at the questions. You need to be careful not to use a question that contains a clue about the right answer to another question, as is occasionally the case with our test bank items. In that instance, you either can use only one of the questions or you need to make a change in the “give away” question so that it cannot be used to answer the other question.

CHAPTER 2

To the instructor: Important ideas in the chapter:

1. Qualitative research has many points of origin and not a single, linear, cumulative history.
2. The distinct contributions of different researchers and theorists (and types of theory) create a complicated tradition. Qualitative research developed in the context of theories and the various ways of “doing qualitative research” reflect theoretical orientations.
3. The most direct and important influence on today’s research originated in post-war micro-sociology and the “new qualitative research” of that period.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Identify and explain different schools of theory and research that contributed to the development of qualitative research.
2. Understand Max Weber’s three conceptual guides to qualitative research.
3. Explain what the “new qualitative sociologists” (and micro-sociologists) saw as the guiding principles of research.
4. Define or explain key terms of the chapter.

KEY TERMS

1. Verstehen: A German word that expresses the view that researchers must understand the ideas, thoughts, and meanings of the people they study.
2. Historical-comparative method: Analysis of variation among societies, institutions, and cultures, with a focus on how whole societies change.
3. Ideal-type: A construct that specifies key or essential features of a situation or institution—describing it in “pure form” in order to facilitate comparative analysis and understand variation.

4. Chicago School: a school of sociology in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century that focused on neighborhoods, occupations, everyday life, ethnic relations, crime and deviance, and the spatial organization of cities.
5. Breaching experiments: Studies based on breaking unspoken rules that structure the flow of interaction and the extraction of meaning from what is said.
6. Critical community studies: Studies that exposed inequalities, ideologies, and external forces that operated below of the surface of apparently cohesive and independent small towns and cities.
7. Documents: printed texts, usually ones that are spontaneously produced in a culture, such as personal letters, newspapers, and records kept by agencies and businesses.
8. Dramaturgical model: Erving Goffman's approach to interaction, based on an analogy to the world of theater.
9. Ethnographic work in anthropology: Fieldwork-based accounts of cultures as comprehensive ways of life. (Includes the British School of Ethnography as one among many different approaches)
10. Ethnomethodology: A perspective in sociology that focuses on how shared meanings are embedded in our use of language and how these understandings underlie our ability to decipher what others are saying.
11. Feminist theories: A cluster of theories that focus on the construction of gender and gender inequalities in societies and cultures.
12. Grounded theory: A way of building theory by analysis of textual data bases formed in comparative observation of interactions and symbolic behavior. (NB: This term appears in Chapter 2 but is really explained much better in Chapter 6; and it might be wise not to test it until students have had read the more detailed treatment.)
13. Labeling processes: the application of discourses to individuals or groups, usually emphasizing negative characteristics and thereby leading to further marginalization or punishment; this self-fulfilling prophecy is often carried out by media, law enforcement, and other authorities against people that are perceived as "deviant."
14. Life histories: a type of qualitative data and a method of learning about a culture or group of people by asking them to produce narratives about their own lives.
15. Methodology: a broad, philosophical perspective on what designs and methods are appropriate for a type of question or area of inquiry.

16. Micro-sociology: a view in sociology that the study of “society” needs to be broken down into the examination of interactions and situated actions to avoid “reification.”
17. Occupational studies: research on how people carry out their jobs, a major research area of the Chicago School.
18. Postmodernism: a philosophical orientation that focuses on the construction of narratives and discourses, and remains skeptical about the ultimate truth of any of these “texts.”
19. Projective tests: psychological tests in which the stories that people tell the researcher in response to a stimulus such as an inkblot or a picture are used as indicators of unconscious desires or fears.
20. Psychoanalysis: A school of psychology, associated with the work of Sigmund Freud, that focuses on the unconscious, repressed drives, childhood experiences, and infantile wishes as motivating forces throughout adult life.
21. Reification: a fallacy of reasoning in which a concept or idea—a non-material “thing” that exists only in our minds and discourse—is treated as if it were a material object that exists in the empirical world. This term is often used to characterize the way we talk about “society” as if it existed apart from interactions and actions of human beings.
22. Situated action: what people are doing and saying in their normal setting, milieu, or social context, rather than in a lab.
23. Sociological imagination: A term used by C. Wright Mills to mean the capacity to understand the political and historical context of the lives of individuals, and especially to see “personal troubles” as “public issues.”
24. Symbolic interactionism: A school of micro-sociology that emerged in the post-war period that emphasized observing people’s interactions and actions and understanding meaning.
25. Spatial mapping and spatial analysis: Research activities that began with the Chicago School and continue to be widely used that emphasize understanding and charting the location of activities and the distribution of activities and people in space, which may reveal market forces, power differences, values, and many other aspects of social conditions.
26. Units of analysis: these are the entities—such as individuals, places, organizations, nations, cultures—to which the variables in the study pertain. The “cases” that we are studying are the units of analysis, be

they individuals, whole cultures, places such as cities or nations, or organizations.

27. The view that researchers must understand the ideas, thoughts, and meaning of the people they study: verstehen.
28. Analysis of variation among societies, institutions, and cultures, with a focus on how whole societies change and why they differ from each other; historical-comparative method.
29. A construct that specifies key or essential features of a situation or institution, describing it in "pure form": ideal type.
30. Three concepts that Max Weber introduced into qualitative research: Verstehen, historical-comparative method, ideal types.
31. A school of U.S. sociology in the first half of the twentieth century that focused on neighborhoods, occupations, deviance, everyday life, and the spatial organization of cities; Chicago School.
32. A European school of social research with interests in Marxism, psychoanalysis, and the study of media, movements, culture, and consumption: Frankfurt Institute.
33. What were 4 basic principles of "the new micro-sociology"? Field work, natural settings, situated action, and grounded theory.

CHAPTER 3

To the instructor: Have each student identify an area or topic of interest and state an RQ to guide a research project. The RQ can be developed and refined as you work your way through the chapter.

This likely will be a difficult chapter for students and may stir up controversy. Not everyone will like the underlying adherence to the scientific method (and may feel it does not apply to sociological inquiry and especially not to qualitative research!). But it's very important to work with students to facilitate their comprehension of the great variety of approaches to qualitative research, including those approaches with a foundation in the scientific method.

All of the principles that govern research should be the subject of discussion and reflection. What does it mean that results were "generalizable"? When is a hypothesis falsified and does it ever get a "second chance?" What are our standards for reproducibility when we know that researchers who differ in demographic characteristics and life experiences may produce different data

and perspectives in answering a research question? And what do we mean by “objectivity”? All of these are controversial and contentious. The point is not to impose them mindlessly and mechanically but to help students “make them their own”.

Students should be encouraged to think about variable relationships even in qualitative research—in the sense that it too is about variability in human arrangements and that we try to understand and account for that variability.

Because this chapter quickly introduces a very large vocabulary (the “science vernacular”), students might resist it, grudgingly discuss it, and otherwise express dismay over it. We encourage you to be forceful in pushing the vocabulary.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Understand how a research question guides research.
2. Formulate research questions for a research project.
3. Understand the scientific method and how it can be modified for qualitative research.
4. Think in terms of hypotheses that link variables and be able to discern these hypotheses even in qualitative designs.
5. State hypotheses linking variables in a way that is appropriate for qualitative research.
6. Understand the statement that qualitative research usually involves fewer cases than quantitative research, but many variables, most of them contextualized in a situation or milieu (rather than simply referring to individual demographic characteristics or opinions).
7. Understand the concept of “units of analysis” and identify the units of analysis in a research design.
8. Identify the many sources of research questions—personal experience and curiosity, previous research (one’s own or others’), and theories.
9. State buffer hypotheses (or related research questions) for a major question/hypothesis.
10. Articulate the similarities between “evidence” in law and “evidence” in social science; understand the rules of narrative construction for acceptable evidence.
11. Articulate basic principles guiding the construction of hypotheses: generalizability (and “genericizing”); falsifiability; objectivity; reproducibility.
12. Understand controversies surrounding the meaning and adherence to the principle of “objectivity.”

13. Read a research study and be able to summarize it in terms of answers to a research question.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do we mean by "objectivity"? Why is it an important ingredient of the logic of scientific inquiry? What are some of the problems of being objective in conducting a sociological study? Can we be politically engaged and also objective?
2. On page 37, the authors assert that being different in one or more respects from research subjects can be a positive element of a research project and contribute to its success. A researcher who is different from the research subjects is not necessarily disqualified from carrying out the research. Do you believe that? What might be examples of advantages and disadvantages of being similar to or different from the subjects?

KEY TERMS

1. Ecological fallacy: faulty generalization from rates based on one category of individuals to other individuals who share the place or space.
2. Reductionism: using a single cause (often based on psychological or economic explanations) to explain a complex multi-causal phenomenon.
3. Tautology: a faulty argument in which a phenomenon is explained by reference to a "cause" that is really a restatement of the outcome.
4. Believability: Construction of an account or research report that is plausible.
5. Buffer hypotheses: hypotheses that qualify, refine, or limit the central hypothesis of a research project.
6. Cases: the "entities" that the researcher is studying and the "things" on which the variables are defined; in practice these are usually individuals, places, or organizations. The cases are also the "units of analysis."
7. Dependent variable: a characteristic of the cases that is seen as an outcome of a process or of other variable (characteristic).
8. Empirical data: information that we produce in a process that involves our five senses and not only "mental reflection" or "cogitation."
9. Falsifiability: The findings or conclusions of a study are stated in a way that they can be challenged and possibly "proven wrong" by empirical evidence. This is a desirable characteristic of a study because it means that its findings can be tested.

10. Generalizability and generalizable: The findings or conclusions of a study can be applied to a setting or to people other than those in which they were first found; the study's findings help us to understand other, similar situations.
11. Generic processes: When a study yields information or findings that are relevant to many similar situations or that help us understand a wide range of institutions or behaviors, we can consider the processes discussed in the study to be "generic."
12. Groups: Clusters of several individuals, in the strict sense linked to each other by a sense of affiliation or by interaction, but the term is sometimes used as synonymous with "category of people" such as an ethnic group even when not everyone placed in that category shares a sense of identity.
13. Historical context: The specific period with its unique social, economic, and cultural characteristics, a term that is based on the idea that the human condition is not unchanging and that social scientists must study actions and behavior within a specific time period.
14. Hypothesis: A statement that explicitly or implicitly links variables to each other and allows researchers to test whether these relationships exist and to understand the nature of the relationship. For example, the hypothesis "women are more likely to talk about the Super Bowl than men are" is a testable statement that links the variable of gender to the variable "presence or absence of the Super Bowl as a conversation topic."
15. Individual is a person or human being, considered as a case or "unit of analysis" in contrast to other possible cases in a study, such as places, organizations, groups of individuals, and so on.
16. Limits (of the unit of analysis): this term refers to the effort to specify very clearly whether the research focuses on individuals' actions or characteristics or some other unit of analysis (such as a group, place, or formal organization), and not to confuse these different levels.
17. Literature review: a careful analytic summary and overview of works of research and theory (and sometimes policy analysis) that has been written by social scientists on a specific topic.
18. Logic of scientific inquiry: Science is a human enterprise that is based on the idea of research, empirical data, evidence-based conclusions, and a transparent set of activities for producing the data.
19. Objective and objectivity are terms that refer to a way of obtaining information that is not influenced by personal feelings and that can yield similar results for all individuals who engage in the process

- because the process itself is focused on a “world out there” with characteristics that are independent of the observer.
20. Organization: a special type of group that engages in planned, purposeful, and coordinated actions and usually attempts to “produce” something tangible or intangible. Often these groups have clearly defined boundaries and membership and explicit rules. Organizations are a major “unit of analysis” in qualitative research.
 21. Outcome variable: is a characteristic or feature of our unit of analysis that we seek to explain or predict on the basis of information about other characteristics. For example, we might seek to explain the frequency or intensity of Super Bowl conversations among a group of people in terms of the gender of the individuals.
 22. Places: these spatial locations are often the units of analysis in social science research, and they are sometimes identified with formally defined units of governance, such as cities or nations; for example we might be interested in studying variation in homicide rates among U.S. cities or differences in literacy among countries. But a place does not need to be formally identified, and a neighborhood, street corner, or community area can also be the site of a study.
 23. Plausibility and plausible are terms that refer to the extent to which empirical data can be seen as constituting evidence for a conclusion, the degree to which they are convincing and make others feel confident in the truthfulness and accuracy of the work and the extent to which it “matches something out there in the world” as opposed to being either inaccurate or false.
 24. Reflexivity means that the researcher is thinking about what he or she is doing, rather than just following a set of rules in a mechanical fashion. Reflexivity means asking yourself the question—would someone else have done this differently?
 25. Relationship among variables: A statement that specifies that we can understand, explain, or predict variation in one characteristic from our knowledge of variation in another characteristic; and it is the core of research hypotheses.
 26. Relevance: a term closely related to “generalizability” because to say that a finding can be generalized is to assert that it is relevant or applicable to a wide range of situations and contexts.
 27. Replicability and reproducibility: Terms that mean that a research project could be repeated by another researcher and produce very similar results.
 28. Representation of social life: Telling a story about human actions.
 29. Research Question: A question that guides an empirical research project and sets in motion all of the activities the researchers engage in to produce empirical evidence.

30. Research reports are accounts that summarize the research project and present evidence-based findings in an effort to answer the research question, usually following a standard format for discussing scientific inquiry.
31. Rules of evidence are statements that specify what information constitutes evidence, how it has to be produced, and how the narrative of its production has to be told; different rules might apply to juridical procedures in different countries, and the rules of evidence are different in scientific inquiry than in juridical procedures.
32. Rules of sociological presentation: These are rules that sociologists generally agree upon as the acceptable way of reporting about a research project and its empirical findings, that is, of telling a story about social life and human actions.
33. Scientific Method is a set of procedures for asking questions, organizing a research project, producing evidence, reaching conclusions, and telling a story that is generally agreed upon by the scientific community as a way of increasing our knowledge of the natural world, including the actions of human beings.
34. Science vernacular is the specialized language, terminology or vocabulary that scientists (including social scientists) use to talk about the process of research, the logic of inquiry, and the rules of evidence for presenting their results. These terms include: research question, hypothesis, findings, data, methods, and so on. Qualitative research vernacular is the specialized language that qualitative researchers use to talk about their research activities and designs and the goals of their research.
35. Self-reflexive and symbol-using beings: this term draws our attention to the fact that human beings are not the inanimate and/or non-language using subjects of natural science research but can interact with the researcher, develop their own ideas about the research project, present their own views and understanding of a situation, and alter their actions in response to being observed, so that social science researchers must modify the scientific method to cope with these capacities of the "subjects" of their research.
36. Units of analysis: these are the entities—such as individuals, places, organizations, nations, cultures—to which the variables in the study pertain. The "cases" that we are studying are the units of analysis, be they individuals, whole cultures, places such as cities or nations, or organizations.
37. Variable and variable-oriented: This is a basic term throughout the sciences and refers to characteristics of whatever we are studying that can be identified (measured in some way, though not always reducible to a metric) and for which we can discern differences

among the cases. Most scientific research asks questions about what causes the variation and how variation in one variable is related to variation in one or more other variables.

38. Way of knowing: Science is one “way of knowing” for human beings. Some people (scientists) might say it is the only way of knowing. But not everyone likes it or adheres to this way of thinking about the world in which we live. Science is very skeptical of “hope in things unseen”; it insists on empirical evidence. It is also skeptical of intuitive and local knowledge that has not been arranged systematically, organized around research questions and variable relationships (rather than holistic understandings), and subjected to the principles and rules of evidence that we outline in the chapter. Taken seriously, this chapter should be very thought provoking and unsettling.

CHAPTER 4

To the instructor: This chapter encompasses two distinct topics—the formal history and procedures for research ethics and an informal “beyond the protocol” reflection on ethical dilemmas in interactive and fieldwork-based qualitative research. Each half carries its own challenges. To meet IRB requirements “the devil is in the details,” and researchers must understand how to prepare specific information and plan their procedures carefully. But the second half of the chapter requires a broader personal reflection on how a relationship with a “research subject” can be ethical; and it raises profound questions about the very core of ethics. Can an instrumentalized, objectifying, deceptive relationship ever meet ethical standards?

LEARNING GOALS

1. Reflect on the greater ethical challenges in qualitative research because of the diffuse nature of the relationship between researcher and subject and the inherent difficulty of withdrawing from a study.
2. Know and understand the significance of a few key turning points in the history of research ethics and in particular the ethical issues raised in social and behavioral science research (as examples, the studies by Milgram, Zimbardo, and Humphreys).
3. Understand the goals of institutional review boards and the principles that guide their decisions.
4. Reflect and talk about ethical issues in the relationships with research subjects, such as deception, the impersonal and objective “gaze,” and the instrumentalizing of friendships.

1. Discuss why formal codes of ethics are sometimes difficult to apply in a study based on participant-observation. Give attention to the meaning of informed consent and the right to withdraw from a study.
2. To the instructor; A good class discussion can be generated by talking about the meaning of deception and the extent (if any) to which it might be acceptable in some studies—if so, which ones? Read the selection by Norman Denzin (1989, pp. 261-264) and discuss Denzin's arguments. Do you agree with him?
3. Role playing classroom exercise: Ask two groups of students to contrast a "studying up" and a "studying down" situation in the city or community in which the university/college is located. What steps would they need to go through to obtain access? What responses might they encounter in the process? Would ethical issues be different or the same in the two situations.
4. On the following pages, several hypothetical (but based on "true stories") cases in research ethics are presented for class discussion.