Qualitative Methods: The systematic analysis of non-numerical data

**Approaches:**

- **Phenomenology:** Describes human experience and sensory preconceptions without resorting to preconceived ideas
- **Grounded Theory:** An inductive method which relates categories to each other to form a theory
- **Ethnography:** Analysis of a culture or society that describes and interprets the patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and/or language of the group
- **Case Study:** An in-depth examination of an individual, event, or organization in context
- **History:** An examination of past events to draw conclusions or make future predictions

**Examples of Data Collection Methods:**

- Interviews, observation, close reading of literature, analysis of cultural artifacts

Quantitative Methods: The analysis of numerical data, often using statistical techniques

**Approaches:**

- **Descriptive:** Describes the characteristics of a population
- **Correlational:** Measures two variables and the relationship between them
- **Quasi-experimental:** Manipulates an independent variable but does not randomly assign participants to experimental and control groups
- **Experimental:** Manipulates a variable and has an experimental and control group to which participants are randomly assigned

**Examples of Data Collection Methods:**

- Surveys, pre-test / post-test, controlled trial
Mixed-Methods: Using both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to produce a broader perspective than either method can used alone.

Approaches:

**Triangulation:** Qualitative and quantitative data are gathered at the same time and given equal weight.

**Embedded:** Qualitative and quantitative data are gathered at the same time, but one type of data is given more weight than the other.

**Explanatory:** Qualitative data collection follows quantitative data collection and helps explain quantitative findings.

**Exploratory:** Quantitative data collection follows qualitative data collection and helps explore qualitative findings.

Examples of Data Collection Methods:

A combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods above.

Formulating a research question and choosing a methodical approach

Research Question:

Methodological Approach:

Data Collection Method:
Are you studying...

- an experience?
  - Phenomenology
  - Absolutely!
  - Grounded theory

- a social process or phenomena?
  - Do you want to formulate a new theory about it?
    - Not necessarily.
    - Ethnography

- an individual, event, organization, or institution?
  - Does it exist in the past? Is it historically relevant?
    - Not necessarily.
    - Case Study
    - Absolutely!
    - History
Is there an educational intervention?

Is the primary purpose the examination of relationships?

- No
  - Descriptive Design
  - Correlational Design

- Yes
  - Is it tightly controlled by the researcher?
    - No
      - Quasi-experimental Design
    - Yes
      - Experimental Design
Triangulation: Interpretation based on QUAL + QUANT results

Embedded: Interpretation based on QUANT (qual) results

Embedded: Interpretation based on QUAL (quant) results

Explanatory: Interpretation based on QUANT→ qual results

Exploratory: Interpretation based on QUAL→ quant results