

BEDU307 Research Methods II: Qualitative Strategies

ECTS Value: 2 ECTS

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

Qualitative Research Methods have been gaining momentum amongst the research circles not only as an alternative form of research but also as complementary to quantitative research methods. In contrast with the latter, the former type of research is not concerned with having a large sample population for the possible generalisation of the findings. Instead, qualitative research offers the possibility of transferability after the area of interest has been investigated in great depth. What matters in qualitative research is the richness and trustworthiness of the data rather the broadness. In fact, in this type of research, the validity and reliability of the study are judged by how trustworthy the research project is. The rigour that has been taken in the operationalisation and analysis process has to be clearly evident.

This module is an important part of this degree course as it offers the possibility to students to explore the different methods and methodologies that can be employed to carry out their mandatory research study, which then has to be reported in a dissertation format.

Course content outline:

- Epistemology and Ontology.
- What is meant by positionality?
- What is a theoretical framework?
- Difference between methods, methodology and research design.
- Familiarisation with some of the most common methods used in educational research such as action research, case studies and grounded theory.
- Trustworthiness.
- Qualitative Research Questions.
- Research Questions vs Field Questions.
- The Ethics of Research
- Sampling, Recruitment and Access
- Pilot Studies.
- Research Proposal.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences

- a. complete a research proposal;
- b. establish one's epistemology, ontology and theoretical framework;
- c. make a decision about which method/s and methodology suit best a study;
- d. carry out a research investigation;
- e. manage the data gathered from the methods used;

- f. produce a coherent write-up about the research design, the methodology used and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness;
- g. comply with the research ethics;
- h. negotiate matters of confidentiality, anonymity, data storage and dissemination with the research participants;
- i. ensure that sampling, recruitment and access to the participants follows the research ethical guidelines.

Knowledge

- a. identify own positionality;
- b. communicate about one's ontology;
- c. describe what methods and methodology are;
- d. comment and sustain on own theoretical framework;
- e. write a specific and measurable research question;
- f. write unambiguous field questions;
- g. plan all the ethical measures that need to be taken when carrying out a rigorous investigation;
- h. detail the steps taken in the sampling and recruitment of the participants as well as how access was obtained;
- i. draw a draft pilot study for your study.

Skills

- a. design a research plan for a study;
- b. demonstrate a coherent link between the research questions, the methods, the methodology and the theoretical framework;
- c. formulate research questions and field questions;
- d. operationalise a pilot and a main study.

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Presentation and Write-up.

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List:

1. Clough, P., and Nutbrown, C. (2012). *A Student's Guide to Methodology* (3 ed.): Sage Publications.
2. Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2013). *Research methods in education*. Routledge.
3. Jackson, E. (2013). Choosing a methodology: Philosophical underpinning. *Practitioner Research in Higher Education*, 7(1), 49-62.
4. Thomas, G. (2017). *How to do your Research Project*. (3rd edition). Sage Publications Ltd.

Supplementary Reading List:

1. Blaikie, N. (2000). Strategies for Answering Research Questions. In P. Press (Ed.), *Designing Social Research* (p. 85-127).
2. Creswell, J. W., and Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry. *THEORY INTO PRACTICE*, 39(3).
3. Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*: Sage.
4. Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*: Sage.
5. De Vaus, D. A. (2001). *Research design in social research*. Sage.