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Qualitative Research for Educational Science Researchers: A Review of An Introduction to Qualitative Research

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Abstract

Qualitative research is a type of scientific research which includes document analysis, observation or interview. Qualitative research process describes the events in the natural environment realistically and holistically. Although quantitative research methods are mostly used in educational sciences, qualitative research methods are also used by the educational science researchers. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* by Uwe Flick (2014) is an ideal guide for educational science researchers in regard to qualitative research methods and techniques.

Keywords

Qualitative Research, Educational Science, Qualitative Data Analysis, Research Methods

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Qualitative Research for Educational Science Researchers: A Review of *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*

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Qualitative research is a type of scientific research which includes document analysis, observation or interview. Qualitative research process describes the events in the natural environment realistically and holistically. Although quantitative research methods are mostly used in educational sciences, qualitative research methods are also used by the educational science researchers. An Introduction to Qualitative Research by Uwe Flick (2014) is an ideal guide for educational science researchers in regard to qualitative research methods and techniques. Keywords: Qualitative Research, Educational Science, Qualitative Data Analysis, Research Methods

The chief goal of scientific research is to observe and find an answer to the problem methodically and analytically. Therefore, a scientific research process involves steps such as identifying the problem, reviewing the literature, defining the population and sampling, developing the research instrument, collecting and analyzing the data. The last step of a scientific research process is reporting the results. Researchers are generally into quantitative and qualitative research methods. However, some researchers are working on both quantitative and qualitative research methods together. While quantitative research methods are connected with numeric data, qualitative research methods are, in general, related to verbal data. Qualitative research methods are becoming favorites especially in social sciences and educational sciences as well.

Flick (2014) points out that new methods and approaches are showing up in qualitative research. As a result of these developments, new books or articles on qualitative research can be seen a lot such as in the fifth edition of his popular book, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, published by SAGE Publications in 2014. This newest edition has seven parts and each part is composed of thirty-one chapters in total. Some chapters of this fifth edition have been moved and discussed in other parts. Although the fourth edition was composed of eight parts, the fifth edition has seven parts. Therefore, this edition has been updated concisely.

Each chapter starts with chapter objectives. With chapter objectives, the readers will learn what they should have learned before and what they will learn after reading the chapter. In various chapters, the author provides the readers with boxes where they can see various functions such as advice or examples. The most important feature of the book is the section of case studies and checklists. Case studies, reflected in the parts of the book, help the readers find a solution to special problems or questions. Checklists, which are at the end of many chapters, are as helpful as the exercises and key questions in the chapters. In this way, the readers will have a chance to review what they have learned in the chapter.

The first part of the book is framework. This part contains five chapters (chapters one to five). The titles of these chapters are Guide to this Book, Qualitative Research: Why and How to Do It, Qualitative and Quantitative Research, Approaches to Qualitative Research and Ethics of Qualitative Research. These chapters are discussed in order to guide the researchers and readers on how to use this book efficiently. In addition to this, the first part attaches importance to know-how details in qualitative research so that researchers can learn the methods about how to combine their qualitative research with quantitative research. The fifth chapter of this part is very crucial in terms of the ethics of the qualitative research. The third,

fourth and fifth chapters include checklists for the readers so that they can check themselves with questions prepared by the author. The second part is about the theory in qualitative research. This part consists of three chapters (chapters from six to eight). This part is about the details on using the existing literature, theories and methodologies in qualitative research. The readers and researchers can see the relation between text and realities. The chapters in this part end with checklists and guideline questions for the readers as well.

The third part of the book is about the research design and contains six chapters (chapters nine to fourteen). In this part, the readers and researchers can improve themselves on how to design their qualitative research properly. These chapters provide crucial methods on planning, designing, sampling, triangulation and enhancing qualitative research process. This part emphasizes fundamental points in qualitative research. The fourth part of the book is about verbal data and involves four chapters (chapters fifteen to eighteen). This part informs the readers about how to obtain and employ the verbal data in qualitative research. The readers and researchers can have an overview on the types of interviews, focus groups and narrative data. What is more, they can clarify what they have learned with the checklists at the end of the chapters. The fifth part of the book centers on data beyond talk. This part has four chapters (chapters nineteen to twenty-two). The author presents data collection techniques that do not contain talk or conversation such as participant observation, non-participant observation, ethnography or visual data. With this chapter, the readers and researchers will have fresh insights into other qualitative research techniques.

The sixth part is about analysis of qualitative data. This part includes six chapters (chapters twenty-three to twenty-eight). The author focuses on techniques and methods about how to analyze qualitative data. For example, coding, sequential analysis, interpretation and content analysis can be learned in this part. In this part, the readers and researchers can learn qualitative research analysis softwares and improve themselves on how to use them in their qualitative research. The seventh part of the book is grounding, writing and outlook. This part contains three chapters (chapters twenty-nine to thirty-one). In this part, the author underlines the quality of qualitative research. Methods and techniques on how to assess the quality in research are explained by the author. In this way, the readers and researchers are informed in order that they can enhance qualitative research process. Moreover, the author provides details on writing their research and results smoothly. The last chapter of this part is the summary of the book. Also, the readers and researchers can learn the recent methodological trends and how to follow the future of qualitative research. As in other previous parts, there are checklists at the end of the chapters in the sixth and seventh parts.

As for the strengths of this book, it can be a perfect guide for new researchers in educational sciences and social sciences. Each chapter in the parts of the book starts with chapter objectives so those who are new in qualitative research can get ready for the chapters. Also, they will be able to check and improve what they have learned with case studies, checklists or exercises at the end of the chapters. In addition to these, the book is user-friendly because in the first part of the book, the author provides the readers with some features of the book about how to use the book easily and properly.

Finally, this book can be a perfect reference book on qualitative research for educational science researchers. It offers comprehensive know-how on qualitative research which educational researchers can employ in their research.

References

Flick, U. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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