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3-18-2023

## The What and How of Existential Phenomenological Research

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### Recommended APA Citation

Pandin, M., & Yanto, E. S. (2023). The What and How of Existential Phenomenological Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(3), 816-827. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.6268>

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### Abstract

In this book, Scott D. Churchill introduces readers to existential phenomenological research, an approach that explores a comprehensive, embodied knowledge of subjective human life that reflects a person's values, goals, ideals, intents, emotions, and relationships. This approach helps researchers understand people's and needs by identifying and resolving theoretical and ideological misconceptions. In this book, Churchill defines important aspects of EPR as: a method based on empirical data for evaluating the mental life of individuals. In this case, the researchers are concerned with the evidence and access to it, which is based on first-person narratives of experience and the researchers' reflections on those experiences, as well as encouraging the researchers' sensory sensitivity and a sense of empathy, curiosity, and excitement in of human experience.

### Keywords

existential phenomenological research, human experience, narrative of experience

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# The What and How of Existential Phenomenological Research

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In this book, Scott D. Churchill introduces readers to existential phenomenological research, an approach that explores a comprehensive, embodied knowledge of subjective human life that reflects a person's values, goals, ideals, intents, emotions, and relationships. This approach helps researchers understand people's needs by identifying and resolving theoretical and ideological misconceptions. In this book, Churchill defines important aspects of EPR as: a method based on empirical data for evaluating the mental life of individuals. In this case, the researchers are concerned with the evidence and access to it, which is based on first-person narratives of experience and the researchers' reflections on those experiences, as well as encouraging the researchers' sensory sensitivity and a sense of empathy, curiosity, and excitement in of human experience.

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## Introduction

The volume, *Essentials of Existential Phenomenological Research*, written by Scott D. Churchill, consists of seven chapters, organized as follows: Preface to the series by Clara E. Hill and Sarah Knox, followed by seven interconnected parts: "Conceptual Foundations of Existential Phenomenological Research," "Getting Started: Selecting an Experience to Study," "Writing the Research Report," and "Collecting the Data." The volume closes with a conclusion.

To understand what existential phenomenological research actually means, we must first identify some basic concepts about how our culture views science. When we talk about science, we usually associate it with objective truths and sophisticated laboratory procedures. This has also been the case with social sciences such as psychology, which have adopted natural scientific methods to study human experience (De Castro, 2018). As a result of this context, instead of understanding the meaning of human experience, psychology has adapted human experience to the natural sciences' approach. Psychology has treated people as mere objects, adapting their experiences to some quantitative and abstract methods about which we can only know facts. In this sense, the importance of experience is neglected because the most important thing is to quantify that experience and determine whether it is right or wrong (De Castro, 2018).

## Theoretical Framework

De Castro (2018) argues that psychologists failed to recognize that they were only projecting their own theories onto subjects in order to legitimize them. In the name of

objectivity, there is a significant disconnect between the researcher and the subject being studied. According to De Castro (2018), the end result is that the psychologist is unable to approach and understand the meaning of the experience for the person experiencing it.

On the other hand, the existential phenomenological approach in psychology claims to understand and acknowledge human experience from the consciousness and position of the person having the experience. To do this, these existential phenomenological psychologists argue that a entirely different strategy is required in the social sciences, one that attempts to reveal the core meaning of the matter under study rather than developing abstract theories about the same phenomenon (De Castro, 2018).

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that this method leads from a concrete description of a subject's experience (seen as a fellow researcher) to an interpretation of his or her experience, rather than making abstract statements without following and understanding the consciousness of the subject. In the first case, the researcher evaluates the incident after seeing and listening to the co-researcher's explanation, which helps to understand its meaning.

De Castro (2018) suggests that the key point is that we as researchers should never isolate a particular experience from the person's specific structure of meaning as we would lose the meaning that the person is trying to assert in their daily life. De Castro (2018) argues that existential phenomenological psychologists begin by verifying a description of the coresearcher's actual experiences in order to grasp the coresearcher's full meaning and concrete structure. The aim is to capture the human experience as it is really experienced in daily life, as opposed to an artificial environment.

Borrowing from Von Eckartsberg (1998), existential phenomenological research encompasses four basic and critical procedures for conducting existential phenomenological research: (1) question formulation (where the researcher emphasizes a focus of inquiry), (2) data-generating situation (in which co-researchers reveal their experience), (3) data-analysis (where the researcher reads the data provided by the co-researchers and uncovers the meaning of her/his experience), and (4) data-analysis (where the researcher reads the data provided by the (in which the researcher presents the research results publicly).

### **Findings and Discussion**

In the social sciences, qualitative approaches are accepted and even welcomed as empirical methodologies, as scholars have recognized that whatever phenomena they are interested in are complicated and require more introspection and investigation. Quantitative methods (e.g., self-report measures) generally cannot adequately capture such occurrences, so qualitative designs using interviews and other detailed data collection techniques provide fascinating, dynamic, and productive research methods.

In Chapter 1, Churchill examines the "conceptual foundations of existential phenomenological research" to help the reader understand the humanistic approach as a mode of perception and the crucial insight of existential phenomenology. The author emphasizes that existential phenomenological methods are particularly beneficial for two types of research. The first application is when a person seeks information about what encompasses the different types of experiences, such as emotions. In these cases, we ask what characteristics are easily recognizable when someone is experiencing anger, embarrassment, fear, or happiness. Because they provide general insights into the "lived meanings" of emotions, perceptions, and problematic behaviors, the findings of such research have implications for our self-perception and for psychological practice (including its motivational contexts). In the second form of research, the individual level of experience for a deeper understanding could be opened up a deeper understanding, as seen in case studies where the complexity of human experience needs to be understood.

The author claims that existential phenomenological research (EPR) uses both the pure phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and the existential phenomenology of Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jean-Paul Sartre as a strategy to integrate both the nomothetic and idiographic elements of the includes human experience. The author adds that Husserl's (1962) transcendental philosophical method aimed at universal dimensions of consciousness and his intuition of essences can be used to understand what is most general about certain types of experiences of the types of emotions that common experiential phenomena such as learning, anxiety, interpersonal attraction, forgiveness, humiliation, gender, identity, procrastination, self-esteem, shame, and victimization are felt by all people. Nonetheless, Heidegger's (1999, 1962) "existential-hermeneutic" method could be used to understand the unique, special, and even peculiar ways in which people discover themselves on a daily basis.

The author claims that the first century of psychology as a science, the core idea of science (methodology and epistemology) supporting empirical research methods remained largely unchallenged. Despite half a century of criticism, positivist scholars generally accepted the rationale for conducting experiments to determine the "causes" of behavior as the (only) way of doing science. Giorgi (1970) introduced the concept of "approach" to clarify the intertwined assumptions underlying scientific practice recently reviewed by Levitt et al. (2017) who advised qualitative researchers to connect their research procedures to their philosophical foundations in the name of "methodological integrity." The author claims that each component of the EPR is directly influenced by phenomenological concepts and reflective procedures. This involves ontological assumptions underlying the nature of psychological phenomena and epistemological clarifications as to the most effective means of accessing and understanding them.

The author claims that as qualitative researchers, we often start by collecting descriptions from people who have experienced the phenomena of interest. The fundamental question is: What exactly are we doing when we read these descriptions? How do we deal with the words and expressions of our informants? How do we prevent unwarranted bias or prejudice from influencing our findings? Dilthey's (1977a, 1977b) technique of understanding was based on what he called sympathy or transposition or placing oneself in the living context of the person one was trying to understand. According to Dilthey, in order to cultivate a sensitivity to meaning in the lives of others, we must rely on all our psychic powers while not only recognizing and judging, but also experiencing, intuiting, imagining, and remembering human experiences.

At the end of the Chapter 1, Churchill (2022) presents key features of existential phenomenological research as follows:

- The method is a rigorously “scientific” research method because it is evidence based.
- The nature of the evidence is the description of the “affairs of our psychological life.”
- These affairs are the conscious acts (the “matters themselves”) to which we return in “bringing ourselves to the evidence” (Husserl, 1968, p. 6).
- The method is “phenomenological” not just because we begin with first-person descriptions of experience (after all, this is true of most qualitative research) but primarily because the researcher’s method of reflection on those experiences follows methodologically prescribed procedures borrowed from phenomenology, including
  - ✓ epoché (bracketing preconceptions, suspending belief),
  - ✓ intuition (encountering or “looking at” something),
  - ✓ reduction (a manner of focusing, “leading oneself back” to meanings),

- ✓ intentional analysis (seeing and thematizing individual moments within a whole),
- ✓ imaginative variation (to arrive at what is essential), and
- ✓ synthesis (to see and articulate how the moments within an experience function together within the “whole” of that experience; pp. 32-33)
- The method is “existential” because it focuses on experiences as they manifest themselves within the flow of human existence, defined in terms of how we transcend our circumstances toward possibilities of our own choosing.

Churchill (2022) also provides the key features of the EPR theory of science:

- The phenomenological principle of intentionality is favored over the explanatory principle of causality.
- Existential choice and transcendence are the focus rather than reductive assertions of cause-and-effect.
- EPR approaches human temporality as fundamentally distinct from the non-telic temporality of natural phenomena: We find that “in-order-to” motives are more important than “because” motives in assessing the meaning of human experience.
- “Because” motives tend to be self-deceptive; one encounters them frequently in naive descriptions of experience: “I am angry because he is hateful.”
- “In-order-to” motives are more genuinely revealing of human meaning: “I unwittingly experience him as hateful in order to escape from the hurt I was feeling a moment ago.”
- The “how” of EPR: The researcher engages in existential contact with the phenomenon under investigation, whether through direct or vicarious experience. To access meaningful experiences through participants’ descriptions requires that the researcher cultivate a sensitivity to meaning as well as a strongly developed sense of empathy.
- The “whence and the whither” of EPR: We begin with a sense of curiosity, fascination, even wonder in the face of some aspect of human experiencing. We hope to gain a better sense of our chosen “phenomenon” through clarification of how it appears to us and an articulation that enables others to grasp what we have come to see and understand about the evidence to which we have brought ourselves (p. 33)

Chapter 2 covers the process of formulating a research question, also known as a research interest, developing entry questions that can be asked of participants to stimulate them to think about their experience while prompting them to write a description or story that will serve as data serving, and conducting follow-up interviews to clarify the data. The chapter distinguishes the research phenomenon from lived experience along the line, showing how psychological phenomena are embedded in circumstances and require a sensitivity to meaning to surface.

In the author’s view, the researcher, as a phenomenological researcher, can study virtually any experience. He argues that it is challenging to focus on one aspect of the event being analyzed to uncover meaning making by research participants. He also contends that phenomenological psychology begins by describing experiences of informants and then goes back in time to explore the underlying motives that constructed those experiences for

individuals. According to the author, EPR (existential phenomenological research) is well suited to study circumstances in which people cope with something unpleasant or challenging. In summary, EPR can be used to analyze situations in which people have to make a decision or are emotionally unstable.

The author claims that Heidegger (1985) divides the process of asking a question (*fragen*) into three parts: (a) an idea of what is being asked such as a definition of a term or an explanation of a psychological factor in a client's disorders, (b) a research phenomenon that corresponds to the question asked (*Gefragte*), and (c) a situational context or lived experience that is then asked of questioned (the *Befragte*) to bring to light what is being asked.

The author argues that the difference between research interests and access questions is that the former refers to the questions that stick in our mind as when reading the data, while the latter deals with a stimulus to get the participant to talk about their experience or write a way to persuade participants to write about their experience (e.g., Please describe an emotional experience). It can be simple or complicated. In summary, EPR is exploratory rather than hypothesis-confirming. In this case, the participants' idea should generate descriptions without revealing our expectations.

In this chapter, the author argues that EPR begins by distinguishing between the narrative experience and the underlying meanings or interpretations that the research seeks to uncover. In exam anxiety research, the situation is the exam that made the person anxious. The aim of the is to uncover the interpretations of concerns (e.g., What will happen to me if I fail this test?) We call these labeled meanings the research phenomena and answer our formal research questions— what is at stake for the student concerned? What if they fail this exam? Our study questions must deal with (a) the places in which we locate our phenomena (the *befragte*, or circumstances investigated), (b) the phenomena sought there (the *gefragte*), and (c) the psychological implications to be uncovered (the *erfragte*).

Churchill asserts that the analogy of the situation-phenomenon distinction is similar to the classical stimulus-response. A key difference is that in EPR, the response is a choice rather than an automatic reflex. And it is these choices that create our research phenomenon. The first lesson of EPR is to recognize the difference between the circumstances that affect us and the choices we have within those circumstances. In this case, the author distinguished between the experience being studied and the latent meanings uncovered by the research. The former was seen as the situation to be explored through a collection of descriptions. The latter was defined as a phenomenon, something that appears to the researcher through the words and self-portrayal of the study participant.

Finally, in Chapter 2, the author has prepared the novice to predict and resolve data, that cast any confusion between the psychological phenomena studied and the situations chosen to demonstrate them. The aim of EPR is to provide a structural understanding of a psychological phenomenon on both the individual (situational) and transsituational level. The author has attempted to show how easy it is to lose sight of a research phenomenon focusing too much on the lived experience in which it is embedded. The phenomenological reduction leads researchers from the immediately investigated situation (lived experience) to the phenomenon that ultimately interested us (the *Gefragte*). After clarifying this difference, the researcher can start the data collection.

Chapter 3 outlines a systematic description of the proposed procedure and discusses how each of these stages in the overall research process derives its distinctive features from philosophical implications. The author claims that existential phenomenology (EP) researchers formulated their study goals differently and collected participant data. He adds that in humanistic research it is always crucial to recognize how useful it might be for a participant to engage in an interview about their experience. The author shows that when researchers start

collecting data from informants, they need to consider whether the questions they ask make them uncomfortable, unhappy, or even depressed.

Regarding the selection of participants, the author recalls that it is crucial to recruit participants who are not only willing to provide a written statement (if permitted), but who are also be amenable to follow-up interviews to clarify or explain the data. Churchill asserts that beyond accessibility, researchers recruit participants who clearly have the psychological phenomena under being studied and, most importantly, who can articulate their experiences. According to Giorgi (2009), the basic criterion for selecting the participants is simply that they have experienced the phenomenon under study. In this case, meanings are contextual, and there is no limit to the range of ways in which one might find examples of the meanings inherent in human experience of a given phenomenon.

In terms of developing an experiential approach to data collection, the author claims that EPR is inherently a process that allows a psychological phenomenon to reveal itself to the researcher. As Heidegger (1962) stated:

The word [phenomenology] merely informs us of the “*how*” with which “*what*” is to be treated in this science gets exhibited and handled (p. 59, italics in original).

This “*how*”—for Heidegger, a “letting be” on the part of the researcher—is primarily an attitude, a posture, a pathway, a way of being in a situation, a way of encountering. (p. 54)

Regarding recommended data collection practices, the author believes that it is preferable for first-time researchers to seek a written description followed by an interview rather than conducting a research interview from the beginning to collect data. He claims that it is beneficial to give participants time to focus before beginning to share their experiences. He adds that by sending them an email with a specific question, participants can gather their thoughts before beginning to share their experience. In this case, the participants can think about what they want to say instead of jumping right in, as is likely to be the case in an interview.

In exhibit 3.1 Flow chart of Data Generating-Activities (p. 57), the author provides a complete explanation of the method of supporting data production in EPR.

- **Create an access question that serves as a prompt for participants to write a description of a lived experience.** Considerations here include focusing them on the situation they lived through and, when possible, pointing to the psychological phenomenon within that situation that serves as the research interest, if that has already been decided through review of the literature and/or piloting.
- **First impressions.** Before formal data analysis, the researcher reads the data carefully, looking for points of interest, identifying places along the way that need elaboration for the researcher to more fully place themselves in the participants’ shoes to better understand the experience and to ultimately perform an analysis of the experience through empathic identification with the participant, whereby their experience becomes a “vicarious experience” of the researcher (Spiegelberg, 1975).
- **Follow-up interview.** Conduct a face-to-face recorded interview where the participant reads their description aloud, offering spontaneous elaborations as well as responses to prompts from the researcher (based on first



impressions). This interview is transcribed and then used as the principal data for the study.

In summary, in Chapter 3, the author introduced the readers to the process of phenomenological data collection, which involves conducting interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the individuals' experiences. With a little respect and imagination, researchers may be able to get a closer look at the so-called inner lives of the others they study.

Chapter 4 demonstrates how the researcher acts as an active agent, allowing the presence to enter into a dialogue with the data and begin work out its implications. The author emphasizes that phenomenological research is about creating meaning for participants and researchers.

As the author discussed in Chapter 2, he distinguished between researched experience and the latent meanings that emerged from the research. The former was seen as a situation to be explored through a collection of descriptions. The latter was defined as a phenomenon, something that appears to the researcher through the words and self-presentation of the study participant. The author argues that the findings represent the experiences of the participants as lived and reflected by the participant: they constructed the situation under study. The findings express the researcher's interpretation of the participant's experience. In this case, the phenomenon arises from the researcher's understanding of the experience. The author explains what the term phenomenon means both philosophically and scientifically: it means that everything is associated with consciousness, in the presence of which meaning is made clear.

In this chapter the author extensively asserts that phenomenologists try not to believe that the meanings they observe are real, since there are simply provided in the data. He points out that this is an example of what Husserl (1962) called a natural attitude, or the assumption that the object of perception is really as it appears to me. He argues that there is a co-construction of meaning in our research process when a researcher examines data (written descriptions, interview transcripts) and then interprets (or understands) what he reads. He adds that to see, hear, and capture meaning, the researcher must be more than a blank slate, but rather a person who helps create meaning. In this case, the researcher is actively building a meaningful world.

The author obviously covers each of the processes of analysis and synthesis given in this book in exhibit 4.1: Overview of the Process of Data Analysis (p. 70).

1. Preliminary familiarization with the participant and their data (Chapter 3)
  - (a) Pre-interview reflection on the original protocol
  - (b) Conducting the interview
2. First phase of formal data analysis (Chapter 4)
  - (a) Reading and reflecting for a sense of the whole
  - (b) Division of the transcript into "meaning units"
  - (c) Transformative reflections on psychological meaning
3. Second phase of data analysis: comprehensive synthesis (Chapter 5)
  - (a) Individual structural description
  - (b) General structural description

In summary, Chapter 4 explains that phenomenological research is about making meaning on the part of both the researcher and the participant. The role of the researcher is to enhance such meaning making by "seeing through" the surfaces of the description or latent meaning. This chapter highlights how the researcher acts as an active person who engages with the data and begins to flesh out its implications. To do this, the researchers must use all their abilities to understand and draw on the wisdom they have gained from their own experiences

to illuminate on the experiences of others. The initial goal of phenomenological reflection is to see meanings emerge at the individual level. The next stage is to synthesize all these newly revealed meanings into a coherent whole.

Chapter 5 deals with the second phase of data analysis. The focus includes the phase, in which both individual and general structural descriptions are developed, bringing together all of information gathered along the way into a creative synthesis. The authors claims that the individual structural description arises from the initial data analysis and the researcher's analysis notes. The process of obtaining an individual structural description takes place through the selective reflection and integration of selective knowledge from notes from the analysis of meaning.

The author argues that the results of meaning unit analysis are presented in a structured way and synthesized into structural descriptions through the researchers' experience. Structural descriptions reflect the networking of the researcher's ideas, new insight, and existential dimensions. The author adds that single structural descriptions lead to particularly biased results. However, as the number of discoveries grows and emerges as new knowledge, this result becomes a general structural description.

Furthermore, Churchill asserts that the transition from individual structural descriptions to general structural descriptions was achieved through repetition reduction and independent variables based on imagination. The process developed organically from the idiographic to the nomothetic level of analysis. The process of repression begins with free variation of the imagination. This process modifies the individual structural description by abstracting it from empirical phenomena and giving it an essential direction. Furthermore, in the second process, the findings of the general structural description are condensed and presented in a drawing model.

Churchill concludes that the characteristics of the general structural description Indicator represent all aspects of the individual structural description data. Therefore, the main challenge for researchers is to present the general structural description in a coherent manner, sticking to the research context and appealing to readers. Through his illustrations, Churchill showed how the intuition of essences and the formulation of general knowledge depend in part on the personal talent of the individual investigator.

Chapter 6 deals with writing the research report. This chapter gets straight to the point because the author assumes that the reader now understands what is being discussed. Therefore, the way readers describe their research interest (or research question) in the final report may differ from what they initially understood. Methodological fidelity in the EPR involves showing readers honestly how, for example, the process of interviewing informants can lead to changes in research goals.

According to the author, essential phenomenological research presents research findings in four aspects of research reports, like the reporting format of other research methods. The first section is the introduction. In this section, the literature review should focus on developing the research question. The literature review should begin with a summary of the literature to be reviewed, as well as its order and justification. The research interests represented in the research questions form the core of the introduction. This section intended to describe a body of research literature from previous study results on the meaning or nature of life that will aid the study of research questions from time to time. The second section is the method sections.

In the Method section, researchers should explain how they conducted a phenomenological investigation of their proposed topic. Method sections are critical in any research report and should be fully developed in a sophisticated manner, with subsections on the method of researcher involvement in data collection, interviews, reflexivity and, most importantly, the presentation the definitive aspects of the method of data reflection that make

the work truly phenomenological (instead of a more general method of qualitative research). The author suggests that the methods section should ideally contain two main subsections namely, approach (theory of science) and procedure (data collection and data analysis). The approach is like a second literature review, except that it presents the existential phenomenological literature as the philosophical underpinning of the method before presenting the qualitative procedure itself. The third section deals with the results section. The author believes that the presentation of the results is the most important aspect of the research report. The phenomenological principle of description (as opposed to explanation) directs the researcher to attempt to construct a richly nuanced, ideographically dense description of the event as it occurred. If original log data is short, it can be presented in the results section and separated from the rest of the text by using italics and/or single -space or other convention of researcher's choice.

In view of the of EPR, the author suggest that general findings would be needed to be formulated more precisely, that is, — be based on more rigorous (and mature) reflection, so that the transition from individual to general levels of validity can be confidently presented the results section. The last section is the discussion section. According to the author, in the discussion section, researchers present their latest and best thinking on their topic, which they understand after working long and hard to bring these efforts together. It is important that researchers do not substitute a summary for a discussion in this case. Certainly, there can and should be a return to the literature, in which researchers engage in informed dialogue with some of the authors whose ideas influenced their project. By pointing out gaps in the literature, ambiguities, and ideas that they now wish to challenge considering their findings, they, so to speak, sit down at the table based on their research and comment on those who informed their study. Finally, the limitations of the method must be addressed before discussing the implications of one's findings for theory or practice.

In conclusion, the author suggests that the report must be coherent in a way that does not simply depend on each section being written in sequence as the project progresses from research proposal to written report. The whole should exceed its parts. To this end, researchers should review and revise each section of their final report based on their findings. The results of the study can help researchers refine their literature review and research interest statement at the end of their introduction. Therefore, the final report should be written from the perspective of the result, not as a slightly modified research proposal with results and discussion.

In Chapter 7, the author concludes that researchers engaged in existential phenomenological research (EPR), like all researchers, start from the assumption that their current level of knowledge is in some way insufficient or limited. The author gives example the researchers are motivated to investigate specific topics because of fragmentary or contradictory theories, inconsistent findings, problematic methods, or a scarcity of research on the subject. When an assessment of the literature leads to the conclusion that our existing knowledge is not sufficiently grounded in description that is faithful to some area of human experiencing, along with the belief that such a description will improve our understanding, phenomenological research is appropriate.

Finally, in this book, Scott D. Churchill outlines existential phenomenological research (EPR). EPR is a philosophy-based qualitative method that focuses on how we understand and access the nature of our subject. EPR data focuses on how individuals enter life situations and how they find channels of choice withing those events. These events are inferred by researchers through empathy, intuition, or third-ear hearing. Churchill identified the central characteristics of EPR: an evidence-based method for studying the psychological life of individuals. In this case, researchers take themselves to the evidence and how to access it." EPR data focuses on how individuals enter life situations and how they find channel of choice. These events are

inferred by researchers through empathy, intuition, or third-ear hearing. Churchill identified the central features of EPR: an evidence-based method for examining the psychological lives of individuals; Researchers proving themselves; reliance on first-person descriptions of experience and researchers' reflections on those descriptions; and researchers cultivate both sensitivities to meaning and a sense of empathy, curiosity, and emotion in human experience.

### Conclusion and Argumentation

Phenomenological research methods are already part of the repertoire of qualitative research method traditions. The phenomenological method emphasizes the use of bracketing or empathy to reduce bias and prejudice. This method uses the same validity as sensory perception to relate subject data. Phenomenological research focuses on discovering the meaning of experience and the essence of participant experience while avoiding tautologies and the confirmation bias of previous research.

*Essential Phenomenological Research* integrates aspects of research methods that are in place from the start to achieve research goals. The direction of research integration is supported by internal validity. This validation process clarifies and reduces bias and prejudice (Gadamer) to find evidence of each act of consciousness (Merleau-Ponty) until the purification of reflection is achieved. *Essentials of Existential Phenomenological Research* achieves external validity by applying eidetic (Husserl) intuition to achieve general knowledge claims. The results are general knowledge that goes beyond sample and population data from standard research methods.

We see the strength of *Essentials of Existential Phenomenological Research* in its ability to articulate participants' experience in a clear, concrete, and comprehensive manner. The limitations and weaknesses of Essential Phenomenological Research lie in the limited ability of the researchers themselves to represent phenomena of experiential. Additionally, *Essential Phenomenological Research* cannot be used for studies that demonstrate causality or the impact of interventions on research samples. Instead, *Essentials of Existential Phenomenological Research* is a method that focuses on expressing experience with an analytical structure that shows that experience. Finally, of course, the future of *Essentials of Existential Phenomenological Research* depends on researchers' familiarity with existential phenomenological research in uncovering human problems.

### Recommendation

Overall, this book has described essential phenomenological research methodologies clearly and in detail. In addition, the author provides concrete and relevant examples of the application the existential phenomenology approach and provides practical guidance methods for data analysis. However, despite the positive sides of Scott D. Churchill's book, some disadvantages can be corrected. First, minimal application to broader social and humanitarian research, so not all readers can directly apply it to all research. The method explicitly searches for the meaning of experience. Second, this book does not discuss research triangulation in relation to objective truth. Third, the problem of effectiveness and efficiency research in applying essential phenomenological research methods to solve problems facing the world.

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### Article Citation

Pandin, M. G. R., & Yanto, E. S. (2023). The what and how of existential phenomenological research. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(3), 816-827. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.6268>

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