

Topics for Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis (SOC 605)

1. Be prepared to discuss different purposes and different research designs for which qualitative research methods may be employed.
2. Be prepared to discuss the sampling issues that arise in qualitative research and be able to explain different types of sampling that are used in qualitative research such as quota sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling, as well as sample size and how it is determined.
3. Be prepared to discuss the concepts of validity and reliability as they apply to qualitative research as well as the methods that qualitative researchers use to insure or enhance validity and reliability.
4. Be able to identify the major ethical issues likely to arise in the context of qualitative research and discuss how qualitative researchers might best address the ethical obligations that they incur.
5. Be prepared to discuss circumstances in which qualitative methods are particularly appropriate and also circumstances in which they might not be appropriate.
6. Be able to discuss the nature, sources, and the range of different kinds of materials that might constitute data for a qualitative study.
7. Be able to discuss the use of existing literature and theory in qualitative research and to explain how existing literature and theory might be used differently by researchers engaged in qualitative studies than by researchers engaged in quantitative studies.
8. Be prepared to discuss the different types of triangulation and also the different purposes for which triangulation might be used.
9. Be able to discuss the procedures and steps involved in setting up and conducting qualitative fieldwork with regard to issues such as site selection, gaining access, entering the field, observations, interviews, field notes, and leaving the field.
10. Be prepared to describe and explain effective techniques for recording field notes.
11. Be able to explain the use of codes and coding in qualitative data analysis. For example be able to explain coding related concepts such as open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and analytic memos.
12. Be able to explain how the methods for interviewing research subjects that are used in qualitative research are likely to differ from those used in interviews conducted for quantitative research.
13. Be prepared to discuss data analysis within the context of qualitative research and explain how data analysis in a qualitative research process differs from data analysis in a quantitative research process.

14. Be prepared to discuss grounded theory and the logic, processes, and methods involved with developing grounded theory.

15. Be prepared to identify issues that might present challenges or problems for qualitative research such as reactivity and discuss both the nature of the problems they present and the techniques that can potentially be used for addressing them.

Some sources to study for the comprehensive exam in qualitative research

You should probably start by studying all the materials from your SOC 605 class including the textbook, class notes, handouts and assignments. There are many good books available on qualitative research methods and analysis. I particularly like Sage Publications for their variety and costs as well as the recognized expertise of their authors. There are other publishers of course (Pearson, Allyn & Bacon, Oxford UP, etc.). You don't need to read them all but it would be good to review one or two basic qualitative methods texts. You can often find earlier editions for lower costs.

Some good basic social science research textbooks:

Babbie, Earl. *The Basics of Social Research*. Wadsworth Publishing (I think Cengage has a 7th ed, 2016 that might be the most recent but there are many earlier editions around and some are titled "The Practice of Social Research").

Singleton & Straits. *Approaches to Social Research*. Oxford University Press (5th ed. 2009) There are newer editions with various co-authors. I think the newest one is Dixon, Singleton & Straits, *The Process of Social Research* (2nd ed Oxford UP, 2018).

Neuman, Lawrence. *Social Research Methods, Qualitative and Quantitative*, Pearson (7th ed. 2009 but there are various other editions)

Qualitative Research methods textbooks.

Berg, Bruce. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 7th ed. Pearson, 2008 (this might be his last one as single author, but now there are newer ones with other co-authors like Howard Lune. (Bruce Berg's 5th ed is one of my favorite books I return to again and again).

Hennick, Monique, Hutter, Inge and Bailey, Ajay. *Qualitative Research Methods*. Sage, 2011

Silverman, David. *Doing Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. Sage Publications, 2018 (Many earlier editions with similar titles)

Walcott, Harry. *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Sage 1990. Also author of other titles: *The Art of Fieldwork* (2004); *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing* (2008); *Ethnography Lessons: A Primer* (2016).

Warning. Don't use John Creswell's 5 approaches or mixed methods. His focus is on educational psychology and they do things very differently than sociologists. There are some very good qualitative researchers in education, health care, social work and other disciplines but try to stick with sociologists or sociologically-trained qualitative researchers.

Suggestions for Specific Qualitative Research Methods. These are just some suggestions, there are many other good authors and books available.

Ethnography:

David Fetterman, A Step-by-Step Approach, 3rd ed. 2013, various other authors:
Ethnographic & Observational Research, Michael Angrosino, Sage 2014
Visual Ethnography, Wesley Shrum & Greg Shiort, Sage 2016 (also Sarah Pink, 2013)
Gender Issues in Ethnography, Warren & Hackney, 2000, Sage
Ethnography in Organizations, Helen Schwartzman, 1992, Sage
Evicted: Poverty & Profit in an American City, Matthew Desmond (his notes are a fantastic guide for conducting ethnographic research) Broadway Books, 2017.

Focus Groups:

Morgan, David. Focus Groups as Qualitative Research, Sage, 1996; newer book: Basic and Advanced Focus Groups, Sage 2018
Other authors: Krueger & Casey, Jane Farley Templeton, Hennick & Leavy,

Interviewing:

Weiss, Robert. Learning from Strangers, The Art & Method of Qualitative Interview Studies. Free Press, 1995
Rubin, Herbert. Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data, 3rd ed, Sage 2011.

Content Analysis:

Content Analysis, Karl Krippendorff, Sage
Coding, Johnny Saldana, Coding Manual, Sage

Qualitative Data Analysis:

Lofland and Lofland. Analyzing Social Setting, 4th ed. Wadsworth, 2005 (other editions)
Miles & Huberman. Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook. Sage 2019, other editions available)
Authors using Atlas Ti, Susanne Friese, or NVivo, Bazeley & Jackson, or Looney

Grounded Theory

Birks & Mills. Grounded Theory. A Practical Guide, 2nd ed. Sage 2015
Charmaz, Kathy. Constructing Grounded Theory, Sage 2014
Glasser, Barney & Strauss, Anselm. The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Routledge 2000. Other editions available. They are the founders of this approach, 1967.

Helpful Websites:

Lists (with links) of Journals in Qualitative Research (there may be duplicates)

The Qualitative Report: <https://tqr.nova.edu/journals/>

Qual Page: <https://qualpage.com/journals-publishers/>

Social Research methods: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualmeth.php>

National Science Foundation: https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/chap_3.htm

Data Collector's Field Guide:

<https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/Qualitative%20Research%20Method%20-%20A%20Data%20Collector%27s%20Field%20Guide.pdf>