

SUMMARY

1. Qualitative research methods are sensitive to the social construction of meaning, and they explore social phenomena through an emphasis on empirical, inductive, and interpretive approaches.
2. Qualitative methods aim for subjectivity and intersubjectivity.

3. Qualitative methods are characterized by the following: a theoretical interest in how humans interpret and derive meaning from communication practices, concern with socially situated interaction, reliance on the researcher as the data collection instrument, and reliance on textual data.
4. Qualitative research recognizes that everything in the communication environment influences everything else and generally does not seek to ascertain causality.
5. Qualitative research uses inductive reasoning, which requires the researcher to become intimately familiar with the field of interaction.
6. The qualitative research process is comprised of processes that are interdependent and cyclical.
7. Triangulation and member checks help establish credibility in qualitative research findings.
8. Research questions guide qualitative research projects.
9. The concept of data is broadly defined in qualitative research.
10. Researchers assess data for the way in which meaning is constructed and the level of the evidence.
11. Advantages of qualitative research include being able to study communication features or functions taken for granted, collect information about those who cannot or will not participate in more traditional quantitative research designs, and enter the communication environments of those who are deviant or hostile.
12. Limitations of qualitative research include difficulty in accessing or gaining entry to the desired communication environment, participants changing their normal behavior due to the presence of the researcher, and having the researcher being the sole interpretive lens of the interaction.

KEY TERMS

contingent accuracy	member check
credibility	member validation
data triangulation	mutual simultaneous shaping
discourse	researcher construction
inductive analysis	subjective valuing
interdisciplinary triangulation	subjectivity
intersubjectivity	triangulation
investigator triangulation	

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- chapter outline
- chapter checklist
- chapter summary
- short multiple-choice quiz
- PowerPoint presentation created by Dr. Keyton

For a list of internet resources, visit <http://www.joannkeyton.com/CommunicationResearch-Methods.htm>.