

Qualitative approach to inquiry research and theory



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Contents

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For about four decennaries now, the disciplinary boundary between societal scientific disciplines and humanistic disciplines has drawn closer together in order to organize an interpretative, qualitative attack to inquiry, research, and theory (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) . Although the usage of qualitative attacks is non new, it is singular the extent to which it has expanded through societal scientific disciplines and into other related Fieldss such as public wellness (Carter et al. , 2009, Finlay, 2007, Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, Draper, 2004, Liamputtong, 2009) .

In the past, public wellness research undertakings chiefly involved quantitative methods and attacks (Finlay, 2007) . The quantitative attack includes the traditional public wellness adherents of epidemiology and statistics, and medical specialty and biological science (Draper, 2004) . More loosely, this attack employs strict, systematic, and nonsubjective methodological analysis in order to obtain cognition that can be generalisable (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, Patton, 2002) . In recent times, nevertheless, qualitative research methods and attacks have become progressively recognized within public wellness Fieldss (Finlay, 2007, Draper, 2004) . Recognition of the value of such research is increasing, where the focal point is on the lived experiences of an person every bit good as the societal context of wellness and unwellness. Although, non surprisingly, the increased popularity of the qualitative attack has been met with some opposition (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) . A resurgent scientifically based research paradigm has created a hostile environment for qualitative

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research. From this position, qualitative research is viewed as a “ soft ” scientific discipline, and research results are frequently thought to miss in dependability and cogency (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, Liamputtong, 2009, Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) . Furthermore, quantitative research workers argue that the ‘ gold criterion ‘ of bring forthing worthwhile cognition is based on quantitative, experimental survey designs (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) , and that the interpretative nature of qualitative informations is of small value in lending to scientific cognition (Liamputtong, 2009, Finlay, 2007) . Consequently, attempt is required from qualitative research workers to be expressed about the procedure in which research is being carried out and to support that procedure as a signifier of human enquiry that should be taken earnestly (Crotty, 1998) . More specifically, there is a demand for qualitative research workers to understand and appreciate the philosophical and theoretical rules that underpin qualitative research (Draper, 2004, Carter and Little, 2007) .

As such, this paper will sketch a theoretical account developed by Crotty (1998) , which provides a model for the assorted philosophical and theoretical positions that influence and distinguish qualitative enquiry. This model offers research workers a sense of stableness and way as they move towards understanding and set abouting the research procedure (Crotty, 1998) . Following, this paper will briefly discourse the principle behind using qualitative attacks for research, peculiarly in rating scenes and culturally diverse research contexts. However, before sketching the model developed by Crotty (1998) , it will be utile to briefly analyze what is meant by the term qualitative research (Draper, 2004) .

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is an country of enquiry that crosses subjects, Fieldss, and capable affairs (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) . It includes a scope of complex, interrelated footings, constructs, and premises. Furthermore, qualitative research does non favor a individual methodological pattern over another and has no theory or paradigm that is clearly its ain (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) . The wide usage of qualitative research as a term can therefore do it hard for bookmans to hold on any indispensable definition (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, Strauss and Corbin, 1996) . In this being said, we must set up a definition for the intent of this treatment. Denzin & A ; Lincoln (2005) specify qualitative research as ; a located activity that locates the perceiver in the universe. It is comprised of a set of interpretative, material patterns that make the universe visible. These patterns transform the universe and turn it into a series of representations including ; field notes, interviews, conversations, and recordings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) . Basically this means that qualitative research workers study things in their natural scene, trying to do sense of, or construe, phenomena in the context of the significance people bring to them. Consequently, qualitative research involves an interpretative, realistic attack to the universe (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, Patton, 2002, Draper, 2004, Liamputtong, 2009) .

As a starting point, during the initial phases of developing a qualitative research undertaking it is suggested that two chief inquiries are addressed (Crotty, 1998) . First, what methodological analysiss and methods will be used in the proposed research? Second, how will the chosen methodological

analysis and methods be justified? These inquiries can so be expanded into four basic elements ; epistemology, theoretical position, methodological analysis and methods (Crotty, 1998) . When set abouting societal research bulk of treatment and nomenclature relate in some ways to these four chief elements, nevertheless there are legion ways in which they are categorized (Patton, 2002, Carter and Little, 2007, Draper, 2004) . What is often found is that the four elements are placed together in ways that suggest comparison (Crotty, 1998, Carter and Little, 2007) . For illustration, footings such as Ethnography and Constructionism may be placed together as ‘ methodologies ’ , ‘ approaches ’ or ‘ perspectives ’ (Crotty, 1998) .

In order to forestall confusion it is suggested that these chief elements are sorted to supply some counsel when set abouting the research procedure (Crotty, 1998) . Assorted ways to separate these qualitative traditions have been offered by legion writers (Draper, 2004, Patton, 2002) , including: Lincoln and Guba (2005) , Schwandt (2007) , Crotty (1998) and Creswell (1998) . However, for the intent of this treatment, the model (delight mention to Figure 1 below) suggested by Crotty (1998) will be employed.

Methods

Methodology

Theoretical Position

Epistemology

Figure 1
This model offers three chief epistemologies: objectivism, constructionism, and subjectivism (Patton, 2002, Crotty, 1998) . These three elements are so suggested to act upon in changing grades different theoretical positions:

positivism (and postpositivism) , interpretivism (symbolic interaction, phenomenology, hermeneutics) , critical enquiry, feminism, and station modernism (Patton, 2002, Crotty, 1998) . It is far beyond the range of this paper to specify and spread out on each of these philosophical and theoretical elements outlined above, nevertheless it is of import to be cognizant of the features and differentiations that exist at each degree of this theoretical account (Draper, 2004) .

First, it should be noted that in many research textbooks the usage of the term qualitative frequently implies that is signifiers an umbrella higher-up to the term paradigm (Guba and Lincoln, 1998) . Furthermore, qualitative research and quantitative research are frequently compared against each other as polar antonyms (Crotty, 1998, Johnson and Waterfield, 2004, Draper, 2004) . However, as Crotty (1998) suggests, the differentiation between qualitative research and quantitative research is drawn at the degree of methods (Crotty, 1998) . It does non happen at either the degree of epistemology or theoretical position. What does happen at these degrees is the differentiation between objectivist/positivist research, on the one manus, and constructionist and subjectivist research, on the other (Crotty, 1998) . As such, treatment of Crotty ' s model will get down at the degree of epistemology.

Epistemology

Epistemology purposes to supply a philosophical foundation for make up one's minding what sorts of cognition are possible and how we can guarantee that they are equal and legitimate (Crotty, 1998) . In other

words, epistemology is the survey of the nature of cognition and justification
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(Schwandt, 2007) . This component is the get downing point because epistemology creates the foundation for the research procedure and will straight act upon other elements in the model (Carter and Little, 2007) . More specifically, determinations about epistemology will impact pick of methodological analysis, as some epistemologies are incommensurable to certain methodological analysiss (Carter and Little, 2007) . Epistemology may besides restrain research methods, find the relationship between research worker and participant, the appropriate steps of research quality, and the nature of coverage (Carter and Little, 2007) .

Although there are a assortment of epistemologies (Crotty, 1998, Schwandt, 2007) , Crotty ' s model proposes three chief epistemologies ; objectivism, subjectivism and constructionism. Of these three, constructionism is the epistemology that qualitative research worker frequently invoke (Crotty, 1998) . However, it is of import to observe that it has become common for qualitative research workers to superficially claim to be a constructionist (Crotty, 1998) . When a research worker claims to be a constructionist it is critical that the deeper significance of the term is reflected on, including: what does it intend for research to be constructionist? And what deductions does being constructionist clasp? Responses to these inquiries are of import for supporting the procedure in which research has been undertaken (Crotty, 1998) .

As antecedently mentioned, Crotty ' s model suggests that from an epistemic position the differentiation is made between Objectivist/Positivist research, on the one manus, and Constructionist and subjectivist research on the other (Crotty, 1998) . Furthermore, the differentiation between <https://assignbuster.com/qualitative-approach-to-inquiry-research-and-theory/>

qualitative and quantitative attacks is drawn at methods. As such, in conformity with this model, research can be qualitative or quantitative, or both qualitative and quantitative, without this being debatable in any manner (Crotty, 1998) . However, jobs would originate in the effort of being both objectivist and constructionist (or subjectivist) . Therefore, to avoid such struggle there is a demand to be systematically objectivist or systematically constructionist (or subjectivist) (Crotty, 1998) .

Theoretical Position

Next we describe the philosophical stance that forms the base of the chosen methodological analysis for the research undertaking (Crotty, 1998) .

Inevitably, when set abouting research a figure of premises are made in relation to the chosen methodological analysis (Crotty, 1998) . By saying what these premises are we are lucubrating the theoretical position of the survey (Crotty, 1998) . Crotty ' s suggests the theoretical positions: positivism (and postpositivism) , interpretivism (symbolic interaction, phenomenology, hermeneutics) , critical enquiry, feminism, and station modernism (Crotty, 1998) . By and large, qualitative research is said to be loosely rooted in the interpretative tradition, while quantitative research being rooted in the rationalist tradition (Draper, 2004, Liamputtong, 2009) . However, Crotty offers an alternate place in respects to the differentiation drawn at this degree (Crotty, 1998) .

Crotty suggests that from the degree of theoretical position, contrast is made between positivism vs. non positivism, non quantitative vs. qualitative (Crotty, 1998) . In other words, it is possible for a quantitative piece of work to be presented in non positive manner. Furthermore, qualitative research
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may besides be understood in a rationalist mode, or situated in an overall rationalist scene (Crotty, 1998) . For illustration, when research workers talk of researching significances by using qualitative methods and so ' confirming ' or ' validating ' their findings through a quantitative survey, the latter is being approached in a positive manner. Consequently, what makes a survey bend into a positive piece of work is non needfully the usage of quantitative methods but the ascription of objectiveness, cogency and generalisability to quantitative findings (Crotty, 1998) .

Methodology

Methodology is the 3rd degree in the model and is a term that is often used slackly in the literature (Carter and Little, 2007) . For illustration, assorted writers refer to methodology as: schools of idea or motions (such as symbolic interactionism or feminism) , whole adherents (such as anthropology) , or methods (such as focal point groups or observation) . However, the definition that will be offered for the intent of this treatment is: the research design that determines the pick and usage of specific methods and connects them to want results (Crotty, 1998) . Furthermore, methodological analysis is the in-between land that exists between the treatment of methods and the treatment of the doctrine and theoretical elements of the survey. In this sense, methods and methodological analysis are closely associated. What is required at this degree of the model is non merely a description of the methodological analysis but besides an history of the principle it provides for the pick of methods and the peculiar signifiers in which the methods are employed (Crotty, 1998) .

There are legion methodological theories that research workers may follow in qualitative research. Over the decennaries, methodologists have articulated assorted ways to near qualitative research (Carter and Little, 2007) . Some of the methodological analysiss that Crotty (1998) suggest include: Experimental research, Ethnography, Phenomenological research, Grounded theory, Action research and Discourse analysis. Among the assorted methodological theories that are used in qualitative research, one of the most normally used is phenomenology (Liamputtong, 2009) .

When building methodological analysis research workers normally province that they will utilize whichever methodological analysis that suits the aims and research inquiries of the survey (Carter et al. , 2009) . Although, this does non recognize that this relationship exists in two waies. In other words, the methodological analysiss provide a manner of believing that will strongly impact a survey ' s possible aims, inquiries, and survey design. Importantly, nevertheless, the aims, inquiries, and survey design will besides determine the pick of methodological analysiss (Carter and Little, 2007) . As such, the grade to which a survey is undertaken within a theoretical model will be less of import that the grade to which a survey can warrant the internal consistency of the picks of method, methodological analysis, and epistemology (Carter and Little, 2007) .

Methods

Finally, the last degree of the model that will be outlined is methods.

Research methods can be defined as the peculiar activities that research workers engage in so as to garner and analyze their informations (Crotty, 1998) . Whichever data aggregation methods are chosen for the survey, the <https://assignbuster.com/qualitative-approach-to-inquiry-research-and-theory/>

challenge lies in being capable to set about the process off skilfully, strictly, and sensitively (Finlay, 2007) . Given the purpose of identifying and warranting the research procedure, it is critical that the methods are described in every bit much item as possible. Crotty (1998) outlines a broad scope of methods that may be employed when set abouting research (Draper, 2004) , some of which include: questionnaires, observation, interviews, instance surveies, papers analysis, and concentrate groups. More specifically, within qualitative research there are multiple methods that may be utilized, some of the most common include: Observation, Interviewing, and Focus Groups (Patton, 2002) . However, it is of import to observe that there is no 1 peculiar method or set of methods that wholly represent the qualitative attack (Schwandt, 2007) .

Methods are the most flexible and matter-of-fact constituents of the research procedure and are strongly influenced by other elements in the model.

Methods besides create the tract to the concluding research merchandise (Carter and Little, 2007) . There is no research without: sampling,

informations aggregation, information directions, analysis, and coverage.

Additionally, without careful pick of methods, the research inquiries will non be efficaciously answered and the aims will non be met. As methods are the most accessible, discernible and obligatory of the four elements in Crotty ' s model, it is frequently the component that is most accompanied to in pattern (Carter and Little, 2007) . It is besides excessively easy to choose methods because they are more familiar, faster, or easier to implement without paying sufficient attending to the research results and decisions they will bring forth (Carter and Little, 2007) . In the wellness sector, qualitative

research is often conducted without attending to the philosophical and theoretical positions that influence and distinguish qualitative enquiry. In these fortunes, such research will be hard to warrant unless methods, methodological analysis, and epistemology are outlined and internally consistent. By holding a house grip on the methodological and epistemic determinations, the methods should germinate to function the survey (Carter and Little, 2007)

Justification

Since the model developed by Crotty (1998) has been outlined, treatment will now briefly touch on the principle for using a qualitative attack to research, peculiarly in rating scenes and culturally diverse contexts. The existent and possible application of qualitative methods and attacks is so wide and over clip is invariably spread outing (Patton, 2002) . However, qualitative attacks are non ever allow for all enquiry state of affairss (Patton, 2002) . Certain intents, inquiries, jobs and state of affairss are more appropriate for qualitative application than others. Within the field of public wellness qualitative research has much to offer in footings of understanding forms of behavior and how peculiar jobs arise, every bit good as informing the design of intercessions or services (Draper, 2004) .

In general, within the field of public wellness quantitative research aims to help both practitioners and policy shapers to guarantee that wellness instruction and proviso are relevant to the demands of service users (Finlay, 2007) . Some qualitative research will besides concentrate more peculiarly on giving a ' voice ' to marginalise, vulnerable or disempowered persons or groups, with a position to authorise them to take control of their ain
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wellness. Another relevant application for qualitative attacks is in the context of ratings, since they tell the plans narrative by capturing and pass oning participant ' s narratives (Patton, 2002) . Qualitative findings in ratings illuminate the people behind the Numberss and set faces on the statistics in order to intensify apprehension (Patton, 2002) .

More specifically, qualitative research has besides become of import for roll uping information on the perceptual experiences, beliefs, and values of culturally diverse groups (Caldero et al. , 2000) . As states become more culturally diverse, qualitative research attacks will go more widely used. This is in the hope to accomplish a better apprehension of the demands of minorities and other vulnerable populations that are sing less than optimum entree to wellness attention and sing poorer wellness position so the broader population (Caldero et al. , 2000) . The usage of qualitative research is non intended to replace, but should be considered complementary to, quantitative research attacks. This will ensue in wider and a more realistic apprehension of the wellness position of our diverse population (Caldero et al. , 2000) .

Decision

In decision, it might be true that research can be completed without go toing to the philosophical and theoretical foundations of one ' s work (Carter and Little, 2007) . However, this treatment suggests that holding an consciousness of these elements carries significant benefit (Carter and Little, 2007, Draper, 2004) . Epistemology, theoretical position, methodological analysis and methods are all cardinal constructs (Draper, 2004) . Reporting our research requires us to put forth the research
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procedure we have engaged in and to make so dependably and comprehensively (Crotty, 1998) . Is it, after all, our history of the research procedure that establishes the recognition of our research. The procedure itself is the lone beginning of justification. Consequently, attempt is required from research workers to be expressed about the procedure in which research has been carried out and to support that procedure of qualitative research as a signifier of human enquiry that should be taken earnestly (Crotty, 1998) .

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