

# Comparison of qualitative and quantitative research methods



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DISCUSS QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS.

INTRODUCTION.

What is Research?

Research is an inquiry to describe, explain, predict and control the observed development. Research helps to acquire knowledge about a particular thing it is done to understand.

It can also be seen as the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

Research methods are often divided into two main types:

- Qualitative Research methods
- Quantitative Research methods

#### 1. Qualitative Method of Research.

Qualitative research which is also called Field research is done to gain a deep understanding of a specific organisation or event rather than the surface description. It is aimed at getting a better understanding through first experience, truthful reports and quotation of actual conversations, also aims to know how participants derive meaning from their surroundings and how their meaning influences their behaviour.

Qualitative research makes use of observation as a data collection method; this is the selection and recording of behaviours of people in their

environment, observation is useful for generating in-depth descriptions of organisations or events, for obtaining information that is otherwise inaccessible, and for conducting research when other methods are inadequate. The context or background of behaviour is included in observations of both people and their environment.

### Stages in Participatory Observation

#### 1. Selection of a site and definition of problems, concepts and indicators.

The problem or phenomenon of interest is first identified by the researcher; he tries to discern what will yield the greatest understanding of that problem. The researcher then identifies preliminary concepts and what data will be gathered as indicators of those concepts.

#### 2. The researcher chooses a strategy to move into the researcher.

This involves an overt or a covert role for the researcher, issues may include how to record observations (writing notes, tape recordings, video tape) as well as ethical issues (privacy, confidentiality, etc.)

Strategies include: adopting a passive role at first, learning the ropes; don't seek data aggressively until later; be a researcher not a therapist, answer questions but don't become closely identified with any one person until you are sure it will not cost you information in the long run, be non-persistence.

#### 3. Selecting people and events to observe.

Primary sources also known as "key informants" of information are identified by the researcher. These people may be relied upon in the beginning to help the researcher get acculturated to the situation. The <https://assignbuster.com/comparison-of-qualitative-and-quantitative-research-methods/>

statements of key informants can be taken as evidence, even if their statements are somewhat self-serving. The researcher must also be aware of possible differences between the validity and intention of volunteered statements that are made in response to the researcher's questions.

#### 4. Develop relationships with the participants.

Researchers must have the trust and confidence of the informants.

Researchers must speak their “ language” and understand their “ world”.

The researcher can note the differences rather than accept one and reject the other. The researcher must determine whether certain things are not being said because of his or her role as “ researcher” or whether they can use their position as “ neutral outsider” to gain more information.

#### 5. Analysing observations.

The researcher can check whether none, all or some proportion of behaviours or events occur under distinct circumstances. A preliminary model can be generated to explain the data collected. Further observations are then collected which can strengthen or weaken the researchers preliminary model.

#### 6. Final analysis and interpretation.

Models are checked against the evidence. Advanced concepts and evidence for their support and refutation are checked. The major problem is how to present the data in a brief but meaningful form.

Advantages of Qualitative research.

1. It gives the researcher freedom to let the study unfold more naturally.

2. The researcher gains more detailed and rich data in the form of comprehensive written descriptions or visual evidence such as photographs.
3. It looks at the context and social meaning and how it affects individuals.

#### Disadvantages of Qualitative research.

1. It is time consuming.
2. It is difficult to code data.
3. It is not applicable to widely dispersed social settings
4. It is difficult to control for researcher bias.

#### Quantitative Research of Method.

Quantitative research can be seen as explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods; this method reduces the data into numbers, the researcher helps to analyse the data with the help of statistics. The researcher knows in advance what he/she is looking for and all aspects of the study are carefully designed before the data is collected. Its objective is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories or hypotheses pertaining to phenomena.

#### Process of Quantitative research method.

1. Developing models, theories, and hypotheses of what the researcher expects to find.
2. Developing instruments and methods for measuring the data.
3. Experimental control and manipulation of variables.

4. Collecting the data.
5. Modelling and analysing the data.
6. Evaluating the results.

#### Principles of Quantitative Research.

1. Objectivity is important.
2. Methods and conclusions are examined by researchers for any possible bias.
3. Researchers go to great length to ensure that they are really measuring what they claim to be measuring.
4. External factors which might affect the result must also be controlled as it might be the other factor which produces the result.
5. When looking at results the P value is important, P stands for probability. It measures the likelihood that a particular finding or observed difference is due to chance, P is between 0 and 1, the closer the result is to 0 the less likely it is that the observed difference is due to chance, the closer the result is to 1 the greater the likelihood that the finding is due to chance and that there is no difference between the variables.

#### Advantages of Quantitative method of research.

1. It allows researchers to measure and analyse data.
2. It helps to carry out test for hypotheses in experiments because of its ability to measure data using statistics.
3. The researcher is more objective about the findings of the research.

#### Disadvantages of Quantitative research.

1. It doesn't study things in a natural setting or discuss the meaning things have for different people unlike qualitative method of research.
2. A large sample of population must be studied; the larger the sample of people researched the more statistically accurate the results will be.

## CONCLUSION.

Each of these researches are done for a purpose just like Qualitative is done to gain understanding of a specific organisation or phenomena, Quantitative is done by analysing data with the help of statistics it has to do with numbers. Just like everything they both have their advantages and disadvantages.

## REFERENCES

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