

# Qualitative social research



Qualitative Social Research in Human Relations Human relations is a very broad field of study. In fact, human relations can be studied as it is observed in the family, in school, in the business sector and many other venues where people interact. It has also been the focus of numerous research endeavors all over the world. A simple keyword search in any journal database would yield quite a number of articles on human relations with varying venues as said earlier.

As the focus of research endeavors, both quantitative and qualitative measures have been employed. It can be argued though that it would be better to employ qualitative research measures because we are dealing with humans and their relationships with one another. Observations techniques, an example of a qualitative data gathering tool, can yield more candid results which can be more reliable than survey questionnaires in this kind of study.

Creswell (2003) lists a number of qualitative procedures and also presents a number of characteristics of the said method. He describes qualitative research as taking place in the natural setting, in the home, office, community etc. of the participant. In such manner, the participant or the subject is more comfortable and is acting more naturally than when he is kept in a holding room for observation. The methods used to determine the conditions and situations of the participant or subject being researched is multiple. An observation method is usually coupled with an interview such that the observations of the researcher will be validated to remove researcher bias. It is also more flexible in as much as human nature is also flexible. And to top it all, the view rendered by a qualitative research is holistic, taking to consideration not only the individual or subject being

researched but also the other things and factors that affect it.

The March 2009 issue of the Tamara Journal of Critical Organisation Inquiry contains several articles discussing new and emerging issues in qualitative research. Among the issues discussed are reflexivity, role of the researcher, flexibility of the qualitative research process, voyeurism and ethical considerations.

Browsing the journal entitled Human Relations yields quite a number of researches and this is one of the articles:

The transformational leader as pedagogue, physician, architect, commander, and saint: Five root metaphors in Jack Welchs letters to stockholders of General Electric. By: Amernic, Craig and Tourish Dec 2007

This article discusses how the letters of Welch has contributed to the understanding of his type of leadership. This is an example of a content analysis with the goal of determining the behavior of a person based on the interpretation of his letters.

Other researches done with the subject on human relations were on personal communication, organizational behavior, organizational change, training and development, education and effectiveness in the workplace. There are more topics in the literature that are not included here and this is due to the fact that human relations is very much everywhere and perhaps this is a field of study which is very difficult to exhaust.

References:

Amernic, Joel, Craig, Russel, Tourish, Dennis. “ The transformational leader as pedagogue, physician, architect, commander, and saint: Five root metaphors in Jack Welch’s letters to stockholders of General Electric” Human Relations. 60. 12 (2007): 1839-1903. Online.

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Creswell, John. Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Sage Pub.