Second Edition

QUALITATIVE INQUIRY & RESEARCH DESIGN
Choosing Among Five Approaches

Instructor

Morteza Maleki, PhD
Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry
Questions for Discussion

• What are a narrative study, a phenomenology, a grounded theory, an ethnography, and a case study?
• What are the procedures and challenges to using each approach to qualitative research?
• What are some similarities and differences among the five approaches?
Narrative Research

Definition and Background

✓ Narrative might be a term assigned to any text or discourse, or, it might be text used within the context of a mode of inquiry in qualitative research (Chase, 2005), with a specific focus on the stories told by individuals (Polkinghorne, 1995).

✓ Narrative can be both a method and the phenomenon.
  ✓ As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals.
    ✓ Writers have provided ways for analyzing and understanding the stories lived and told.

✓ Narrative is understood as spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 17).
Narrative Research

Definition and Background

✓ The procedure for implementing this research consist of

1) Focusing on studying one or two individuals,
2) Gathering data through the collection of their stories,
3) Reporting individual experiences,
4) Chronologically ordering (or using life course stages) the meaning of those experiences.
Narrative Research

Types of Narrative Studies

Approach to narratives

I. Analysis of narratives
   ✓ Using paradigm thinking to create descriptions of themes that hold across stories or taxonomies of types of stories,

II. Narrative analysis
   ✓ Researchers collect descriptions of events or happenings and then configure them into a story using a plot line.

III. Worldview studies
   ✓ Researchers may use pragmatic reasons for a narrative studies such as how individuals are enabled and constrained by social resources, socially situated in interactive performance, and how narrators develop interpretations.
Narrative Research

Forms of narrative research

1) Biographical studies (the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person’s life)

2) Autobiography (written and recorded by individuals who are the subject of the study) (Ellis, 2004).

3) Life histories (portrays an individual’s entire life) (Denzin, 1989).

4) Personal experience story (a narrative study of an individual’s personal experience found in single or multiple episodes, private situations, or communal folklore) (Denzin, 1989).
Narrative Research

Forms of narrative research

5) Oral history (consists of gathering personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual or several individuals) (Plummer, 1983)

6) Contextually focused stories about individuals (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002) or organizations (Czarniawska, 2004)

7) Narratives guided by theoretical lenses (may be used to advocate Latin Americans through Using Testomonios (Beverly, 2005), or may be a feminist lens used to report the stories of a woman (Personal Narrative Group, 1989), a lens that shows how women's voices are muted, multiple, and contradictory (Chase, 2005)).
Narrative Research

Narrative Research Procedures (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)

1) Determine if the research problem or question best fits narrative research.
   - Narrative researches are best suited for capturing the detailed stories of life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals.

2) Select one or more individuals who have stories or life experiences to tell (spend considerable time with them gathering their stories through multiple types of information).
   - Gather stories and analyze for key elements of the story such as time, place, plot, and scene
   - Rewrite stories into a chronological “storyline” with basic elements found in good novels (e.g., predicament, conflict, protagonist, struggle, resolution, scene, time)
   - Include detailed themes that arise from the story that provide a detailed discussion of the meaning of the story

3) Collect information about the context of the stories
4) **Analyze the stories and “restory” into a general framework**

- Gather stories and analyze for key elements of the story such as time, place, plot, and scene
- Re-write stories into a chronological “storyline” with basic elements found in good novels (e.g., predicament, conflict, protagonist, struggle, resolution, scene, time)
- Include detailed themes that arise from the story that provide a detailed discussion of the meaning of the story

5) **Collaborate with participants by actively involving them in research**
Narrative Research

Narrative Research Challenges

1) Extensive information about the participant is needed.

2) Researcher needs to have a clear understanding of the context of the individual’s life.

3) Care must be given to uncover key source material that captures the individuals’ experiences and explains the multi-layered context of their life.

4) Active collaboration with the participants is needed.

5) Researcher needs to reflect on how their own background shapes how they “restory”.

6) Questions of ownership of the story, who can tell the story, what version is convincing, and what happens when the narrative is complete must be addressed.
Phenomenological Research

- Describes the meaning of lived experiences for several individuals.
- Describes what the participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon.
- The purpose is to reduce the experiences of the participants with a phenomenon to a description of a universal essence.
Phenomenological Research

✓ Researcher collects data from participants, develops a composite description of the essence of the experience that consists of “what” they experience and “how” they experienced it.

✓ It has a philosophical foundation based on the writings of Husserl (1859-1938), and those who expanded on his view like, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty (Speigelberg, 1982).
Phenomenological Research

Types of Phenomenology: Hermeneutic (van Manen, 1990)

✓ Interpreting the “texts” of life

✓ Phenomenology research is a dynamic interplay among the research activities
  ✓ Determine a phenomenon
  ✓ Reflect on the essential themes that constitute the nature of the lived experience
  ✓ Write a description of the phenomenon
  ✓ Use the description to interpret the meanings of the experience

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/#pagetopright
Phenomenological Research

Types of Phenomenology: Trancendental (Moustakas, 1994)

✓ Focuses on the description of the experiences of the participants

✓ Researchers engage in “epoche” in which they set aside their own experiences to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon they are studying (“bracketing”)

✓ Researchers reduce data to “significant statements” from which they construct themes and descriptions and then reduce them to an overall essence of the experience
Phenomenological Research

Phenomenology Research Procedures: Moustakas (1994)

1) Determine if the research problem is suited for a phenomenological approach
   ✓ The one in which it is important to understand several individuals’ common or shared experiences of a phenomenon.

2) Identify a phenomenon of interest

3) Recognize and specify the broad philosophical assumptions of phenomenology
   ✓ To fully describe how participants view the phenomenon, researchers must bracket out their own experiences.

4) Collect the data from those who have experienced the phenomenon
   i. Multiple interviews (5-25 persons)
   ii. Observations
   iii. Artifacts (e.g., art, poetry, music)
Phenomenological Research

5) Ask participants two broad general questions:
   ✓ What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon?
   ✓ What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences about the phenomenon?

6) Identify significant statements (sentences or quotes) that provide an understanding of how the participant experienced the phenomenon—a process called Horizontalization.

7) Develop clusters of meanings of significant statements into themes
   ✓ They are then used to write a description of what the participants experienced (textual descriptions).
   ✓ They are also used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon (called imaginative variation/structural description).
   ✓ Researchers also write about their own experiences and the context and situations that have influenced their experiences.
Phenomenological Research

8) From the structural and contextual description, the researcher then writes a composite description that presents the essence of the phenomenon (called essential, invariant structure (or essence)).

- It is a descriptive passage, a long paragraph or two, and the reader should come away from the phenomenology with the feeling.
Phenomenological Research

The focus of a phenomenological study according to Patton (1990)

- Lies in the "descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience."
  - The goal is to identify essence of the shared experience that underlies all the variations in this particular learning experience.
  - Essence is viewed as commonalties in the human experiences.

- Epoche: a phase in which the researcher eliminate, or clarify about preconception.
  - Researchers need to be aware of "prejudices, viewpoints or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation" (Katz, 1987).

- Phenomenological reduction: the researcher brackets out the world and presuppositions to identify the data in pure form, uncontaminated by extraneous intrusions.
Phenomenological Research

Challenges

✓ Understanding the broad philosophical assumptions of phenomenology

✓ Choosing individuals for the study who have all experienced the phenomenon so that a common understanding can be forged

✓ Bracketing personal experiences – Researchers must decide how their personal experiences will be introduced into the study
Bracketing involves the following steps (Denzin, 1989):

1) **Locate within the personal experience or self-story key phrases and statements that speak directly to the phenomenon in question.**

2) **Interpret the meanings of these phrases, as an informed reader.**

3) **Obtain the subject's interpretations of these phrases, if possible.**

4) **Inspect these meanings for what they reveal about the essential recurring features of the phenomenon being studies.**
Phenomenological Research

Bracketing involves the following steps (Denzin, 1989) con...:

5) Offer a tentative statement, or definition, of the phenomenon in terms of the essential recurring features identified.

6) Textural portrayal of each theme: a description of an experience

7) Development of structural synthesis: containing the bones of the experience:
   - The true meanings of the experience of deeper meanings for the individual.
Grounded Theory Research

Definition and Background

- The purpose of grounded theory is to develop a theory for an action or process that is “grounded” in the viewpoints of the participants.
  - Participants in the study would all have experienced the process, and development of the theory might help explain practice or provide a framework for further research.

- The inquirer generates a general explanation (a theory) of a process, action or interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).
Grounded Theory Research

Definition and Background

✓ Grounded theorists hold that theories should be “grounded” in data from the field (in the actions, interactions and social processes of people).

✓ It was initially proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1965, 1968).
  ✓ Yet the two authors disagreed about the meaning and procedures of grounded theory.

✓ Glaser criticized Strauss’s approach to grounded theory as too prescribed and structured (Glaser, 1992).
Grounded Theory Research

Definition and Background

- Charmaz (2006) advocated for a constructivist grounded theory.

- Clarke (2005), along with Charmaz, seek to reclaim grounded theory from “Positivists Underpinning”.

- Clarke suggested that social “situations” should form our unit of analysis in grounded theory and that three sociological modes can be useful in analyzing these situations for collecting and analyzing qualitative data:
  1. Situational
  2. Social World/Arenas
  3. Positional Cartographical Maps
Grounded Theory Research

Definition and Background

✅ Clarke further expanded grounded theory “after the postmodern turn” and relies on postmodern perspectives:

1) The political nature of research and interpretation
2) Reflexivity on the part of the researchers
3) A recognition of a problems of presenting information
4) Questions of legitimacy and authority
5) Repositioning the researchers away from the “all knowing analyst” to the “acknowledged participant”
Grounded Theory Research

I. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Systematic Approach

✓ The approach is systematic and is used to develop a theory that explains a process, action, or interaction.

✓ The participants are chosen by theoretical sampling to help the researchers form the best theories.

✓ The data is collected mainly through 20-30 interviews during multiple visits to the field to saturate categories (happenings, events, documents).

✓ A category represents a unit of information composed of events, happenings, and instances.
Grounded Theory Research

I. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Systematic Approach

✓ The data analysis can alternate with data collection.
  ✓ It’s a kind of zigzag process: out of the field to gather information, into the office to analyze the data, back to the field to gather more information, into the office, and so forth...

✓ The participants interviewed are theoretically chosen (theoretical sampling), to help the researcher best form the theory.

✓ How many passes one makes to the field depends on whether the category of the information become saturated or whether the theory is elaborated in all of its complexity.

✓ The process of taking information from data collection, and compare it to emerging categories is called the constant comparative method for data analysis.
Grounded Theory Research

I. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Systematic Approach

✓ The data analysis consists of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding with a visual model developed during the axial coding phase.

II. Open Coding: coding the data for its major categories of information.

II. Axial Coding, it emerges from open coding, in which the researcher identifies one open coding category to focus on (called the “core” phenomenon), and then goes back to the data and creates category around this core phenomenon, they consisted;

✓ Causal conditions; what factor caused the core phenomenon.
✓ Strategies; actions taken in response to the core phenomenon.
✓ Contextual and intervening conditions; broad and specific situational factors that influence the strategies.
✓ Consequences; outcomes from using the strategies.
I. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Systematic Approach

III. Selective Coding; the researcher takes the model and develops propositions (hypotheses) that interrelate the categories in the model or assembles a story that describes the interrelationship of categories in the model.

✓ The theory that is developed is articulated at the end of the study in a narrative statement (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), visual model (Morrow and Smith, 1995), or a series of hypotheses or propositions (Creswell and Brown, 1992).
Grounded Theory Research

I. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Systematic Approach

IV. Conditional Matrix: a coding device to help the researcher make connections between the macro and the micro conditions influencing the phenomenon.

✓ It is a set of expanding concentric circles with labels that build outward from the individual, group or organizations to the community, region, nation, and global world.

✓ Yet, grounded theorists seldom have the data, time or resources to employ the conditional matrix, hence, and they typically end their studies with a theory developed in selective coding.
II. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Constructivist Approach

✓ The approach exists within the interpretive tradition with flexible guidelines.

✓ The focus of the theory is based on the researcher’s interpretation.

✓ The focus in the approach is on learning about the experiences within hidden networks, situations, relationships, and making visible hidden hierarchies of power.

✓ The emphasis in the approach is placed on views, values, beliefs, feelings, and ideologies of individuals.
Grounded Theory Research

II. Types of Grounded Theory Studies: The Constructivist Approach

✓ The coding emphasizes the use of active codes such as gerund-based phrases (e.g., “recasting life”) (Charmaz, 2006).

✓ The role of the researcher is not minimized in the process.

✓ The researcher brings personal values and experiences to the process as well as making decisions regarding priorities and questions to be asked of the data.

✓ The conclusions are suggestive, incomplete, and inconclusive.

1) Determine if grounded theory is best suited for the research problem
   - It is a good design to use when a theory is not available to explain a process.

   i. The literature might have models, but
      - They were developed and tested on samples and populations other than those of interest to the qualitative researchers.

   ii. Theory may be present, but
      - They are incomplete because they do not address potentially valuable variables of interest to the researcher.

   iii. A theory may be needed to explain how people are experiencing a phenomenon.

2) Focus research questions on understanding how individuals experience the process and identify the steps in the process

- What was the process?
- How did it unfold?

After initially exploring these issues, the researcher returns to the participants and asks more detailed equations that help to shape the axial coding phase;

- What was central to the process? (the core phenomenon)
- What influenced or caused this phenomenon to occur? (causal conditions)
- What strategies employed during the process? (strategies)
- What effect occurred? (Consequences)
Grounded Theory Research


3) Other forms of data may be collected:
   ✓ Data like observations, documents and audiovisual materials.

   ✓ To gather enough information to fully develop (saturate) the model.
   ✓ Conduct interviews with 20-30 or 50-60 participants
Grounded Theory Research

4) Data collection proceeds in stages (open, axial and selective coding).

✓ Open coding: researcher forms categories of information about the phenomenon by segmenting the information

✓ Within each category, the investigator finds several properties, or subcategories, and looks for data to dimensionalize, or show the extreme possibilities on a continuum of the categories.
Grounded Theory Research

Axial coding – the investigators assembles the data in new ways after open coding, which is presented using a process called coding paradigm or logic paradigm (a visual model).

- Here, the researcher identifies a central phenomenon (a central category about a phenomenon), explores causal conditions (categories of conditions that influence the phenomenon), specifies strategies (the actions or interactions that result from the central phenomenon), identifies the context or intervening conditions (narrow and broad conditions that influence the strategies), and delineates the consequences (the outcomes of the strategies).

In the selective coding, the researcher may write a “story line” that connects the categories.

- Propositions or hypotheses may be specified that state predicted relationships.
Grounded Theory Research

5) The researcher may develop a visual model that portrays the social, historical and economic conditions that influence the central phenomenon
   ✓ It is an optional step and one in which the qualitative inquirer thinks about the model from the smallest to the broadest perspective.

6) The theory that results is a substantive-level theory that addresses a specific problem or people
   ✓ The theory emerges with help from the process of memoing, (a process in which the researcher writes down ideas about the evolving theory throughout the process of open, axial, and selective coding).
   ✓ It can be tested later for its empirical verification with quantitative data to determine if it can be generalized to a sample or population (Mix Method).
Grounded Theory Research

Challenges of Grounded Theory Research

1) The researcher needs to set aside theoretical ideas or notions so that the substantive theory can emerge.

2) The researcher may have difficulty in determining when categories are saturated or when theory is sufficiently detailed.

3) The researcher has little flexibility when using the Strauss and Corbin approach; the theory that is developed consists of prescribed categories.

4) The researcher faces the difficulty of determining when categories are saturated or when the theory is sufficiently detailed.

✓ Discriminant sampling: ....
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography: Definition and Background

✓ The purpose of ethnography is to describe and interpret the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs and language of a culture-sharing group (Harris, 1968).

✓ An ethnographer focuses on an entire cultural groups; sometimes these cultural groups are small (a few managers, a few customers, ...), but typically it is large, involving many people who interact over time (managers in an entire organization, customers in a (virtual) communities, ...).
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography: Definition and Background

✓ Agar (1980) notes that ethnography is both a process and an outcome of the research.

✓ As a process, ethnography involves extended observations of the group, most often through participant observation, in which the researcher is immersed in their daily lives of the people and observes and interview the group participants.

✓ Ethnographers study the meaning of the behavior, the language, and the interaction among members of the culture sharing group.
Ethnographic Research

Types of Ethnographic Studies: **Realist Ethnography**

- The approach is the traditional approach to ethnography, used by cultural anthropologists.
- It reflects a particular stance taken by the researcher towards the individuals being studied.
- The account of the situation is **objective and written in the third person point of view** and reporting objectively on the information learned from participants at a site.
- The ethnographer remains in the background and reports the **facts**.
  - They report objective data in a measured style uncontaminated by personal bias, political goals, and judgment.
- The researcher may provide details of daily life among the people studied.
  - They uses standard categories for cultural description (e.g. family life, communication networks, worklife, social networks, status systems).
- The ethnographer produces participant views through closely edited questions and has the final word on how culture will be interpreted.
Ethnographic Research

Types of Ethnographic Studies: **Critical Ethnography**

- The goal is the **advocacy** and the **emancipation** of marginalized groups.
  - Critical researchers are politically minded individuals who seek, through their research, to speak out against inequality and domination (Carspecken and Apple, 1992).
- The orientation in the study is **value-laden**.
- Empowering people by giving them more authority,
- The status quo is challenged.
- The concerns of power and control are addressed.

- The issues of **power**, **empowerment**, **inequality**, **dominance**, **repression**, **hegemony**, and **victimization** are studied.
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999)

(The approach taken here includes elements of both Realist Ethnography and Critical Ethnography)

1) Determine if ethnography is the most appropriate design to use to study the research problem;
   - It is appropriate if the needs are to describe how a cultural group works and to explore the beliefs, language, behaviors, and issues such as power, resistance, and dominance.

   - The literature may be deficient in actually knowing how the group works because
     1) The group is not in the mainstream,
     2) People may not be familiar with the group, or
     3) Its ways are so different that readers may not identify with the group.
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

2) Identify and locate culture-sharing group to study;
   ✓ Typically this group is the one that has been together for an extended period of time, so that their shared language, patterns of behavior, and attitudes have merged into a discernable pattern.
   ✓ This may also be a group that has been marginalized by a society.

✓ Because ethnographers spend time talking and observing this group, access may require finding one or more individuals in the group who will allow the researcher in – a gatekeeper or key informants (or participants).
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

3) Select cultural themes or issues to study about the group.

✓ This involves an analysis of culture-sharing groups.
✓ The themes may include such topics as:

1. Enculturation,
2. Socialization,
3. Learning,
4. Cognition,
5. Domination,
6. Inequality,
7. Child and adult development.
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

✓ The ethnographer begins the study by examining people in interaction in ordinary settings and by attempting to discern pervasive patterns such as life cycle, events and cultural themes.

✓ Culture is an amorphous term, not something “lying about” (Wolcott, 1987, P. 41), but something researchers attribute to a group when looking for patterns of their social world.
   ✓ It is inferred for words and actions of members of the group, and it is assigned the group by the researcher.
   ✓ It consists of what people do (behaviors), what they say (language), the potential tension between what they do and ought to do, and what they make and use, such as artifacts (Spardley, 1980).
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

- Fetterman (1998) describes how ethnographers describe holistic perspective of the group history, religion, politics, economy and environment.
  - Within this description, cultural concepts such as social structure, kinship, the political structure, and the social relations, or function among members of the group may be described.
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

4) To study cultural concepts, determine which type of ethnography to use.
   ✓ Perhaps how the group works needs to be described, or the critical ethnography may need to expose issues such as power, hegemony and to advocate for certain groups.
   ✓ A critical ethnographer, for example, might address an unequity in society or some part of it, use the research to advocate and call for changes, and specify an issue to explore, such as inequality, dominance, oppression, or empowerment.
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

5) Gather the information where to group works or lives; this is called fieldwork (Wolcott, 1999).

- Gathering the types of information typically needed in an ethnography involves going to the research site, respecting the daily lives of individuals at the site, and collecting a wide variety of materials.
- Field issues of resect, reciprocity, deciding who owns the data, and others are central to ethnography.

- Ethnographers bring a sensitivity to the field work issues (Hammersley & Arkinson, 1995), such as;
  - Attending how they gain access,
  - Giving back or reciprocity with the participants,
  - Being ethical in all aspects of the research, like presenting themselves and the study.
Ethnographic Research

Ethnography Research Procedures (Wolcott, 1999) ...

✓ LeCompte & Schensul, (1999) organizes types of ethnographic data into observations, tests and measures, surveys, interviews, content analysis, elicitation methods, audiovisual methods, spatial mapping, and network research.

✓ From the many sources collected, the ethnographer analyzes the data for a description of a culture-sharing group, themes that emerge from the group, and an overall interpretation (Wolcott, 1994b).
  ✓ The researcher begins by compiling a detailed description of the culture – sharing group, focusing on single event, on several activities, or on the group over prolonged period of time.
  ✓ The ethnographer moves into a theme analysis of patterns or topics that signifies how the cultural group works and lives.
6) Forge a working set of rules or patterns as the final product of this analysis.

- The final product is the holistic cultural portrait of the group that incorporates the views of the participants (emic) as well as the views of the researcher (etic).
- It might also advocate for the needs of the group or suggest changes in society to address needs of the group.
- The reader should learn about the culture – sharing group from both the participants and the interpretation of the researcher.
Ethnography Challenges

1) The researcher must be grounded in cultural anthropology and the meaning of a social-cultural system and the concepts typically explored by ethnographers.

2) The researcher needs extensive time in the field to collect data.

3) The researcher must be aware that the audience for the work may be limited because of the narrative storytelling approach to writing that is often needed.

4) The researcher must be aware of the danger of going native.
   ✓ Be unable to complete the study or be compromised in the study.

5) The researcher must be culturally sensitive to the individuals being studied.

6) The researcher must be aware of his or her impact on the people and places studied.
Case Study Research

Case Study: Definition and Background

✓ Case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e. a setting, a context, ...).

✓ Stake (2005) states that case study research is not a methodology, but a choice of what is to be studied (i.e. a case within a bounded system).

✓ Others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003) present a case study research as a strategy of inquiry, a methodology, or a comprehensive research strategy.

✓ It is a type of design in qualitative research, or an object of study and a product of the inquiry.
Case Study Research

Case Study: Definition and Background ....

✓ Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded system (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observation, interviews, audiovisual materials, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes.

✓ The case study research is familiar to social scientists, because of its popularity in psychology (Freud), medicine (case analysis of a problem), law (case law), and political sciences (case reports).
Case Study Research

Types of Case Studies

✓ Types of qualitative case study are distinguished by the size of the bounded case,
  ✓ Whether the case involves one individual, several individuals, a group, an entire program, or an activity.

✓ In terms of intent, the case could be of;
  1) Single instrumental case study
  2) Collective or multiple instrumental case study
  3) Intrinsic case study

✓ This approach focuses on the case itself because the case presents an unusual or unique situation (e.g., evaluating a program or one particular student who is having difficulty studying).
Case Study Research

Types of Case Studies ...

1) **In a single instrumental case study** *(Stake, 1995)*, the researcher focusses on an issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue.

2) **In a collective case study** *(multiple case study)*, the one issue or concern is again selected, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate the issue.

   ✓ The researcher might select for study several programs from several research sites, or multiple programs within a single site.

   ✓ Often the inquirer purposefully selects multiple cases to show different perspectives of an issue.
Case Study Research

Types of Case Studies ...

✓ Yin (2003) suggests that the multiple case study design uses the logic of replication, in which the inquirer replicates the procedure for each case.

✓ As a general rule, the qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize from one case to another, because the contexts of the cases differ.
  ✓ To best generalize, the inquirer needs to select representative cases for inclusion in the qualitative study.

3) In intrinsic case study, the focus is on the case itself (e.g., evaluating a program, or studying a student having difficulty, ...), because the case presents an unusual or unique situation.
  ✓ This resembles a narrative study, but the case study analytic procedures of the detailed description of the case, set within its context or surroundings, still hold true.
Case Study Research

Case Study Research Procedures
✓ Stake (1995) presented his approach in conducting case study research as follows:

1) First, researchers determine if a case study approach is appropriate to the research problem.
   ✷ A case study is a good approach when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases.
Case Study Research Procedures ...

2) Researchers next need to identify their case or cases.
   - These cases may involve an individual, several individuals, a program, an event or an activity.
   - It is recommended that an investigator first consider what type of case study is most promising and useful
     - Single instrumental or collective instrumental, multi-site or within-site, focused on a case or an issue (instrumental or intrinsic case study)
   - In selecting which case to study, an array of possibilities for purposeful sampling is available.
     - Select cases that show different perspectives of a problem, process or event (purposeful maximal sampling).
Case Study Research

Case Study Research Procedures ...

3) The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observation, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials.

✓ Yin (2003) recommends six types of information:

1. Documents,
2. Archival Records,
3. Interviews,
4. Direct Observations,
5. Participant Observations,
6. Physical Artifacts.
Case Study Research

Case Study Research Procedures ...

4) The type of analysis of the data in case study research are (Yin, 2003):
   I. Holistic analysis of the entire case
   II. Embedded analysis of a specific aspect of the case

Through this data analysis, a detailed description of the case (Stake, 1995) emerges in which the researcher details such aspects as the history of the case, the chronology of events, or a day-to-day rendering of the activities of the case.

After this descriptions ("relatively uncontested data", Stake, 1995, p.123), the researcher might focus on a few key issues (or analysis of themes), not for generalizing beyond the case.
Case Study Research

Case Study Research Procedures ...

✓ One analytic strategy would be to identify issues within each cases, and then look for common themes that transcend the case (Yin, 2003).
✓ This analysis is rich in the context of the case or setting in which the case presents itself (Merriam, 1988).

✓ When multiple cases are chosen, a typical format is to first provide a detailed description of each case and themes within the case, called within-case analysis, followed by a thematic analysis across the cases, called a cross-case analysis, as well as assertions or an interpretation of the meaning of the case.
Case Study Research

Case Study Research Procedures ...

5) The final interpretive phase, the researcher reports the meaning of the case, whether that meaning comes from learning about the issue of the case (an instrumental case), or learning about an unusual situation (an intrinsic case).

✓ The phase constitutes “the lessens learned” from the case (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Case Study Research

Case Study Challenges

1) Identifying cases to study.
   - There is no clear solution to this problem;
   - The case study researcher must decide which bounded system to study, recognizing that several might be possible candidates for this selection and realizing that either the case itself or an issue, which a case or cases are selected to illustrate, is worthy of study.
2) Identifying whether a single case or multiple cases are needed.

- The study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis;
  - The more cases an individual studies, the less the depth in any single case.

- When a researcher chooses multiple cases, the issue becomes “How many Cases?”
  - There is not set number of cases.
  - Typically the researchers choose no more than four or five cases.

- What motivates the researcher to consider a large number of cases is the idea of “generalizability”, a term that holds little meaning for most qualitative researchers (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).
Case Study Research

Case Study Challenges ...

3. Selecting a case requires that the researchers establish a rationale for his or her purposeful sampling strategy for selecting the case and for gathering information about the case.

4. Having enough information to present an in-depth picture of the case limits the value of some case studies.
   ✓ Some researchers develop a data collection matrix in which they specify the amount of information they are likely to collect about the case.

5. Deciding how the boundaries of a case (how it might be constrained in terms of time, events, and processes).
   ✓ Some cases might not have clean beginning and ending points, and the researcher will need to set boundaries that adequately surround the case.
## Comparison of the Five Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Narrative Research</th>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
<th>Grounded Theory</th>
<th>Ethnography</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td>Exploring the life of an individual</td>
<td>Understanding the essence of the experience</td>
<td>Developing a theory grounded in data from the field</td>
<td>Describing and interpreting a culture-sharing group</td>
<td>Developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Problem Best Suited for</strong></td>
<td>Needing to tell stories of individual experiences</td>
<td>Needing to describe the essence of a lived phenomenon</td>
<td>Grounding a theory in the views of participants</td>
<td>Describing and interpreting the shared patterns of culture of a group</td>
<td>Providing an in-depth understanding of a case or cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discipline Background</strong></td>
<td>Drawing from the humanities including anthropology, literature, history, psychology, and sociology</td>
<td>Drawing from philosophy, psychology, and education</td>
<td>Drawing from sociology</td>
<td>Drawing from anthropology and sociology</td>
<td>Drawing from psychology, law, political science, medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit of Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Studying one or more individuals</td>
<td>Studying several individuals that have shared the experience</td>
<td>Studying a process, action, or interaction involving many individuals</td>
<td>Studying a group that shares the same culture</td>
<td>Studying an event, a program, an activity, more than one individual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of the Five Approaches

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<tr>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong></td>
<td>Using primarily interviews and documents</td>
<td>Using primarily interviews with individuals, although documents, observations, and art may also be considered</td>
<td>Using primarily interviews with 20–60 individuals</td>
<td>Using primarily observations and interviews, but perhaps collecting other sources during extended time in field</td>
<td>Using multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, documents, artifacts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forms</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Data Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Analyzing data for stories, &quot;restorying&quot; stories, developing themes, often using a chronology</td>
<td>Analyzing data for significant statements, meaning units, textural and structural description, description of the “essence”</td>
<td>Analyzing data through open coding, axial coding, selective coding</td>
<td>Analyzing data through description of the culture-sharing group; themes about the group</td>
<td>Analyzing data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Written Report</strong></td>
<td>Developing a narrative about the stories of an individual’s life</td>
<td>Describing the “essence” of the experience</td>
<td>Generating a theory illustrated in a figure</td>
<td>Describing how a culture-sharing group works</td>
<td>Developing a detailed analysis of one or more cases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Comparison of the Five Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Approaches</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
<th>Grounded Theory</th>
<th>Ethnography</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Structure of Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entry vignette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Introduction (problem, questions)</td>
<td>• Introduction (problem, questions)</td>
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<td>• Introduction (problem, questions)</td>
<td>• Entry vignette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research procedures (a narrative, significance of individual, data collection, analysis outcomes)</td>
<td>• Research procedures (a phenomenology and philosophical assumptions, data collection, analysis outcomes)</td>
<td>• Research procedures (grounded theory, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</td>
<td>• Research procedures (ethnography, data collection, analysis, outcomes)</td>
<td>• Description of the case/cases and its/their context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Report of stories</td>
<td>• Significant statements</td>
<td>• Open coding</td>
<td>• Description of culture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Individuals theorize about their lives</td>
<td>• Meanings of statements</td>
<td>• Axial coding</td>
<td>• Analysis of cultural themes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Narrative segments identified</td>
<td>• Themes of meanings</td>
<td>• Selective coding and theoretical propositions and models</td>
<td>• Interpretation, lessons learned, questions raised</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Patterns of meaning identified (events, processes, epiphanies, themes)</td>
<td>• Exhaustive description of phenomenon</td>
<td>• Discussion of theory and contrasts with extant literature</td>
<td>{Adapted from Stake, 1995}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summary</td>
<td>(Adapted from Moustakas, 1994)</td>
<td>(Adapted from Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990)</td>
<td>{Adapted from Wolcott, 1994b}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The End