The Nature of Qualitative Inquiry

Fieldwork comes from research purposes. The primary purpose is to generate or test theory and contribute to knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Usage will affect the credibility of research in terms of audience.

Qualitative Findings come from discipline purposes. Dissertations and graduate theses are in part for the researcher to understand the phenomena. Qualitative findings inform actions and evaluation.

Primary purpose for researchers, scholars, policymakers, and others is to understand the phenomena. The nature of qualitative inquiry is systematic collection of activities, characteristics, outcomes of programs, policies, organizations, personnel.

Kinds of data collection: in depth open ended interviews, direct quotations (feelings, emotions, thoughts, experiences, opinions, knowledge, perceptions), document analysis: study excerpts, quotations, passages (organizational, clinical or program records), interviews, organizational processes.

Grounded theory is the source of qualitative inquiry. Generated from methodological skill, sensitivity, integrity, rigor, competence. Generated from cultural theory.

Quality and credibility depends on methodological skill, sensitivity, integrity, rigor, competence. Grounded theory makes best sense. Conducted systematically and empirically through careful data collection and full analysis.

Documents analysis: study excerpts, quotations, passages (organizational, clinical or program records, memoranda and correspondence, official publications and reports, diaries, and open-ended written responses to questionnaires and surveys). Result in understandings, insights, patterns, themes.

Valid of data collection require use of standardized measures with limited number of responses assigned to numbers. Use of standardized measures with limited number of responses assigned to numbers.

Case study: tells what happened, when, to whom, and with what consequences.
Open-Ended Responses

- Respondent's writing skills, impossibility of probing or extending responses, and the effort required of the person completing it.

- To see the world as seen by the respondents

- permit

- Elementary form

- questionnaires

- limitations

Description that are factual, accurate, and thorough

- Contains

- get close enough to the people and situation being studied

- aim at capturing what actually takes place and what people actually say

- include a great deal of pure description of people, activities, interactions and settings

- by providing

- a framework that represents accurately and thoroughly respondent's points of view

- understand a program or treatment to an extent not entirely possible using only the insights of others obtained through interviews

- researcher

- purpose

- purpose

- permit

- inquiry by observation

- to take the reader into the setting that was observed

- understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories

- by providing

- a framework that represents accurately and thoroughly respondent's points of view

- mutually reinforcing

The Nature of Qualitative Inquiry

1. The types of data gathered in qualitative research
   From the diagram.

2. What is the place of reliability and validity in qualitative studies?
   Both, reliability and validity should be addressed in qualitative studies in order to justify and make the studies more credible. This can be done by describing the context and the setting including as much detail as possible. This can also be done by accurate collection of data and multiple ways to collect it and corroborate its accuracy. It is also important if the researcher remains neutral and objective when collecting it.

3. The compatibility of quantitative and qualitative methods in one study (include your thoughts on the examples Patton gives)
   Patton argues that quantitative and qualitative methods are not exclusive. He says that a qualitative study may have a quantitative component. Both studies can be combined in order to make a good sense of the research they want to do building on the strengths of both approaches.

   For the case of the examples provided by Patton, qualitative data was used because the quantitative data showed great variability. Also the fact that there was lot of learners with different levels made the researchers find out that they needed to know more specific needs and interests. Researchers wanted to gain a deeper level of understanding and detail of individual variation, of the context, and the situation in question.

   In the third example, Patton presents how it is useful to contrast close-ended questionnaire results with responses to open-ended group interviews providing more insights into the individual and personal experiences adding depth, detail and meaning at a very personal level of experience.