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Comprehension of the Descriptive Qualitative Research Method: A Critical Assessment of the Literature

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ABSTRACT

When a researcher comprehends the research, they can develop research methods because the research needs to adhere to scientific principles. Because of this matter, a methodical scientific approach is required to guarantee that the study can be reaffirmed by other researchers. Moreover, the descriptive qualitative method has become popular due to its less reliance on numerical values or metrics for variable measurement. The aim of this research is to provide a general review of the literature on descriptive qualitative research methods. The researcher can determine that qualitative descriptive research is a descriptively described research method that employs qualitative data based on the findings of the research. Analyzing events, phenomena, or social conditions is a common use for this kind of descriptive qualitative research. Furthermore, qualitative research does not rely on numerical measurements for its research object, nor does it employ statistical methods to test elaborative characteristics. Its application allows for the combination of different data collection techniques, data analysis, instrument creation, and other research stages commonly used in qualitative and descriptive research methodologies.

Keywords: *Descriptive Qualitative, Literature Review, Research Method*

INTRODUCTION

The characteristic of descriptive qualitative research means that the research attempts to create a systematic, accurate, and factual general description of the facts, characteristics, and relationships between the phenomena being researched. Nazir (2014) stated that in order to create a systematic, factual, and complete understanding of the facts, properties, and relationships between the phenomena under investigation, the descriptive research method examines human stability, a specific object, a condition, a thought system, or a particular phenomenon at this time. The typical category, approach or technique used to conduct studies on scientific objects in real-world settings that are unrestricted, unlike experiments, is the descriptive qualitative research method. Descriptive research describes the findings with as much accuracy as possible from the research that has been completed, but it is unable to draw any conclusions from the research findings; this is also referred to as creating only broad conclusions. Qualitative research according to Moloeng (2018) is research that intends to understand phenomena about a participant's condition, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions and others. Meanwhile, according to Sugiyono (2019) qualitative research is research used to examine the conditions of natural objects and the data obtained tends to be qualitative data with qualitative data analysis techniques. In addition, according to Cresswell (2018) a qualitative research approach is research that aims to study or understand social problems.

The basic descriptive qualitative design is a valuable research methodology that stands on its own. As stated by Sandelowski (2000), this method should rely on categorization rather than non-categorization and can be used as an alternative to other research methods. This approach is less interpretive compared to the interpretive description method, as it does not require the researcher to focus on numerical data in detail. Furthermore, it does not necessitate highly abstract conceptualization or rendering of data, unlike other qualitative designs (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). There are several reason why researchers intend to use descriptive qualitative method, such as (1) when the researcher has difficulty in defining a specific problem statement or research objectives; (2) when the research objectives require a more detailed and in-depth understanding; (3) when the research objective is to examine the occurrence of natural phenomena; (4) when the researcher wants to examine several interrelated research contexts; and (5) when a more updated approach is needed (Fadli, 2021). Regarding the use of sampling in descriptive qualitative designs, there are almost any sampling techniques that can be used. Such any other qualitative research design, the purpose is to obtain cases that are considered to have a lot of information that aims to saturate the data.

There are several types of qualitative research that have certain general characteristics such following below:

1. Researchers have the opportunity to collect data directly from respondents through direct meetings with individuals, through face-to-face interviews, group interviews, and observations.
2. Data is used to generate theoretical concepts and theories that enable us to understand the social phenomena.
3. Attempt to obtain better comprehension of community thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.
4. This research is related to the individual's opinions, experiences, and feelings that lead to subjective data..
5. A researcher is responsible for getting the right information and ensuring ethical treatment of respondents.

The most important thing for researchers is to be able to maintain a sampling strategy to accomplish their research objectives. Therefore, this research is conduct to describe the literature study on descriptive qualitative methods in a research.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used descriptive review method. A descriptive review provides the content and structure of a research as objective as possible, describing important information about the purpose and authority of the research. It accomplishes this by stating the perceived aims and objectives of the research, often including quoted passages from the text that highlight key elements of the research. In addition, there may be some indication of the reading level and expected readership of the research (R. W., 1996). Descriptive review also known as mapping reviews, this method sometimes used to determine the extent to which the content in a particular research topic conveys meaning that can be interpreted in relation against prior propositions, existing assumptions, theories, methodologies, or previous researches (King W. R., 2005). In addition, descriptive reviews involve systematic and transparent procedures, which includes searching, screening, and classifying the research (Paré et al., 2015). Descriptive reviews have many different forms, including qualifying the data, summarizing or resuming the data, expanding the data into more fascinating and useful details, and drawing an accessible and applicable conclusion. An effective review of the relevant research findings is included, along with an easily accessible collection of theme documents (both published and unpublished) that contain published facts, concepts, data, and confirmation from a specific perspective to obtain or express that perspective on the subject's character and the ways those subjects should be examined (Templier & Paré, 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Qualitative and descriptive research methods have become general procedure for researching in multiple academic fields, such as education, psychology, and social sciences. Logical approaches, discourse analysis, case studies, ethnography, open-ended interviews, direct participant observation, counseling, therapy, grounded theory, biography, comparative approaches, introspection, focus groups, literary criticism, meditation techniques, and other techniques are all part of qualitative research (Mohajan, 2018). In addition, qualitative researchers are interested in community beliefs, their experiences, and their meaning systems from the community's perspective. Qualitative research excluding statistical analysis and empirical calculations. The terms qualitative research and descriptive research are sometimes used interchangeably, but this research will discuss both, descriptive qualitative methods. In collecting research data, we are familiar with research instruments. In general, research instruments are tools for the success of the data collection process whether it uses observation, interview or other methods (Arikunto, 2017). Research instruments are very flexible because they depend on the type of research. However, unlike qualitative research, detailed data is required in this method. There are several research instruments in qualitative research method, such following below:

1. Researchers

The researcher is the most important instrument in qualitative research. The researcher will provide his/her personal perspective on the research focus. However, all data collected by the researcher will be organized based on his/her personal perspective. Therefore, when conducting qualitative research, the researcher must be validated for his/her capabilities in understanding research methods (Sugiyono, 2016).

2. Interview Guidelines

For researchers who use interviews as their data collection method, researchers need to compile an interview guideline that is used to facilitate the interview process. This guidelines were not used for the respondents because the interview respondents would answer based on the questions that were asked by the researcher. This guideline is used by the researcher to help them get on the correct way in gathering statements during the interview. This guideline contains the opening statement to open the interview, the opening question and the direction of the interview. However, there are some researchers who do not need this guideline due to their experience and expertise.

3. Questionnaire

This questionnaire is widely used in quantitative research, but can also be used in qualitative research on the condition that the researcher must understand about his/her research. Because researchers cannot explore freely as well as during direct interviews. In qualitative research, questionnaires typically include open-ended questions that respondents respond to with detailed explanations.

4. Stationary

This stationery is used for unexpected moments when researchers make observations about their research.

5. Recording Devices

Recording devices serve the same purpose as stationery: they are meant to capture unforeseen events. Recording scheduled activities, like experiments or interviews, is another use for it.

6. Documents or Literature Sources

In conducting qualitative research, there is a data collection method called literature study. This entails looking through books or documents that are relevant to the research's topic in order to compare them or acquire a deeper comprehension of the findings.

Combining descriptive and qualitative data analysis techniques results in the qualitative descriptive data analysis technique. Data for qualitative data analysis comes from a variety of sources. Additionally diverse are the data collection techniques, which are used continuously until the data is saturated. Inductive analysis, or developing a hypothesis based on an analysis of the data collected, is the method used in qualitative data analysis. One of the primary benefits of descriptive analysis is the high degree of objectivity and neutrality exhibited by the researchers. Compared to other quantitative techniques, descriptive analysis is thought to be more comprehensive, especially when gathering data that characterizes a relationship. Furthermore, the benefits of descriptive data processing are thought to be more helpful in locating novel variables and theories that can be investigated through experimental and inferential research, providing researchers with the freedom to combine quantitative and qualitative data to learn more about the characteristics of the population.

Besides the advantages of qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques, it also has disadvantages, such as creating subjective data because research in this method will always have a subjective quality of the data they collect and it will be biased, besides that, this method requires a lot of time to collect data points and this is an element of uncertainty that cannot be eliminated when we do qualitative research. Qualitative descriptive data analysis also does not offer statistical representation. Furthermore, researchers must be knowledgeable about what they

are creating, and must be able to identify unspoken data points, making it difficult to replicate results using this method.

There are three main approaches to qualitative data analysis according to Miles & Huberman (1994), such following below:

1. An interpretive approach, This method offers a way to find useful interpretations of action and meaning. In order to identify patterns of human behavior, activity, and meaning, researchers with a more broad interpretive orientation (conflict, metaphorical interaction, etc.) frequently systematize or reduce data.
2. A social anthropology approach, This anthropological method requires advantage of the variety of information the researcher obtained. Finding patterns that emerge in the various sources and materials is the goal, not interpreting the “text” of field notes. Many researchers who apply this method begin with a theoretical or conceptual framework, test or refine it through field trials.
3. Collaborative social research approach, Participants in the research project who the researcher perceives as stakeholders in the situation that requires action or change participate in the data analysis completed within the collaborative research framework. Once acquired, the data can be used as information to understand the situation, solve problems, or perform out field experiments, or it can be used as feedback to reject taking action. The analytical techniques used in this study may have similarities to interpretive and socioanthropological methodologies. The fact stated, one goal of the analysis is to create a shared viewpoint using data gathered from multiple sources.

In qualitative research, the higher the quality of the research, the more comprehensive, in-depth, and thoroughly examined the data were collected. Because the qualitative research method emphasizes the quality of data over quantity, it contains fewer objects than quantitative research. When conducting qualitative research, a researcher should be aware of the following crucial points:

1. When measuring its variables, qualitative research is careful to avoid an excessive emphasis on numbers or values.
2. In qualitative research, no test occurs using statistical techniques.
3. Elaborate: due to relying less on numerical measurements, researchers are able to obtain more in-depth knowledge about the subject of their research.
4. Not as structured as research that is quantitative.

Because qualitative research is descriptive within their structure, it aims to provide a methodical, factual, and accurate summary of the details, traits, and connections among the phenomena being studied. Regarding in its entirety, qualitative descriptive research methods involve examining an object, a condition,

a group of people, or other phenomena under natural or real conditions (as opposed to experimental situations) in order to produce a factual and accurate systematic overview or detailed description.

CONCLUSION

Research that attempts to accurately and thoroughly describe social reality and various phenomena that occur in society can be conducted using descriptive qualitative research methods. It will enable the object of the research to be presented in detail and its traits, nature, and model to be fully understood. Researchers are considering using the descriptive qualitative method for several types of reasons, such as: (1) difficulty in defining a specific problem statement or research objectives; (2) need for a more thorough and in-depth understanding of the objectives; (3) research objectives examining the occurrence of natural phenomena; (4) desire to examine multiple related research contexts; and (5) need for an updated approach. Its application allows us to combine different methods of data collection, analysis, instrument creation, and other research steps that are frequently used in both descriptive and qualitative research methods.

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