

Qualitative Research Making Sense of the Data



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Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Assumptions

1. No single set of criteria or technique can establish valid knowledge.
2. All knowledge, however well founded, is uncertain.
3. Any development of criteria poses theoretical issues in addition to technical ones.
4. The research is reflexive; that is, the researcher is part and parcel of the setting, context and culture s/he is studying.
5. Research is no longer coupled with knowledge, but is given multiple choices in purpose such as liberation, emancipation, political progression and art.
6. The social world in which research is done is an interpreted world, not a literal one.



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society.

Michel Foucault
1926 –1984



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

Five Dimensions to Consider

1. The relationship between what is observed and the larger cultural, historical, and organizational context.
2. The relationship among the observer, observed and the setting.
3. The issue of perspective or point of view: Are participants asked to interpret the data or validate the findings?
4. The role of the reader in the final product.
5. The issue of representational, rhetorical or authorial style used by the author to render the description and/or interpretation.



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

Deepening Reflexivity

Points to Consider in Design and Implementation

1. Entrée: Organization and individual
2. Approach and self presentation
3. Trust and rapport
4. The researcher's role and way of fitting in the setting
5. Mistakes, misconceptions, surprises



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research


Deepening Reflexivity Points to Consider in Analysis and Reporting

1. Types and varieties of data
2. Data collection and recording
3. Data coding and organization
4. Data demonstration and analytic use
5. Narrative report



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Criteria

- **Credibility**
 - Believability of the findings
 - Outsider (etic) view compared to insider (emic) view
- **Confirmability**
 - Repeated, direct, participatory and documented evidence
- **Meaning in Context**
 - Meaning in lived experience is understandable in a specific context



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Criteria, continued

- **Repeated Patterning**
 - Behaviors, actions and experiences recur over time in similar ways

- **Saturation**
 - Full immersion into phenomena allows for complete saturation of all data categories
 - Gives a breadth and depth to the interpretation

- **Transferability**
 - Useful to other settings
 - Meaning is preserved in other settings



Credibility and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

I believe that history has shape, order, and meaning; that exceptional men, as much as economic forces, produce change; and that passe abstractions like beauty, nobility, and greatness have a shifting but continuing validity.

Camille Paglia
1947-



References

1. Altheide, D.L. & Johnson, J.M. (1994). 'Criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research,' in Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
2. Mertens, D.M. (1998). *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrity, Diversity with Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.