

# Research Methods Glossary of Terms

Jeff Brisbois

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# Educational Research

The use of scientific methods to investigate teaching and learning, both inside and outside school. Produces knowledge by collecting empirical data (Moll, n.d.).

# Quantitative Research

Collects numbers and quantities as basic data, normally uses statistical analysis. Is conclusive, objectivity valued, separates researcher from research, context free, measurable, and controlled (Moll, n.d.).

# Qualitative Research

Collects words stories, pictures and/or video to identify patterns and themes. Is exploratory, values subjectivity, involves the researcher as part of the process, context dependent, and interpretive (Moll, n.d.).

# Mixed Methods Research

Collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data includes closed-end information that undergoes statistical analysis and results in a numerical representation. Qualitative data, on the other hand, is more subjective and open-ended. It allows for the “voice” of the participants to be heard and interpretation of observations (Overview of Mixed Methods, n.d.)

# Experimental Quantitative Research

Quantitative in nature; used to investigate causal (cause/effect) relationships and to study the relationship between one variable and another. Researchers use experimental research to compare two or more groups on one or more measures. In these designs, one variable is manipulated to see if it has an effect on the other variable (Overview of Experimental Research, n.d.)

# Non-Experimental Quantitative Research

Designs in which an experimenter simply either describes a group or examines relationships between preexisting groups. The members of the groups are not randomly assigned and an independent variable is not manipulated by the experimenter, thus, no conclusions about causal relationships between variables in the study can be drawn. Non-experimental designs are used simply to answer questions about groups or about whether group differences exist. The conclusions drawn from nonexperimental research are primarily descriptive in nature (Salkind, 2010).

# Ethnographic Qualitative Study

A qualitative method where researchers completely immerse themselves in the lives, culture, or situation they are studying (Hawkins, n.d.).



# Phenomenological Qualitative Study

The direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced by people living those experiences. Based on the academic disciplines of philosophy and psychology and has become a widely accepted method for describing human experiences. Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that is used to describe how human beings experience a certain phenomenon. A phenomenological study attempts to set aside biases and preconceived assumptions about human experiences, feelings, and responses to a particular situation (Phenomenology Research Overview, n.d.).

# Critical Qualitative Studies

Research that addresses social inequities, inequities, and power differentials; the methodologies include action research, participatory action research, critical research, and feminist research (What is Critical Research Paradigm, n.d.).

# Narrative Studies

Narrative research is a term that subsumes a group of approaches that in turn rely on the written or spoken words or visual representation of individuals. These approaches typically focus on the lives of individuals as told through their own stories. The emphasis in such approaches is on the story, typically both what and how is narrated (What is Narrative Research? n.d.).

# Action Research

Research that teachers do to improve their own practice through experience, observation, fieldnotes, enquiry, examining artifacts (Moll, n.d.).

# Validity

The extent to which the scores from a measure represent the variable they are intended to (Reliability and Validity of Measurement, n.d.).

# Reliability

The degree of consistency of a measure. A test will be reliable when it gives the same repeated result under the same conditions (Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2009).

# References

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