

Q:- Discuss Qualitative and quantitative research approaches appropriate for anthropological research.

CSS-2023

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Approaches

Qualitative research approaches focus on understanding subjective meanings and symbols that individuals attach to their actions and culture rather than verifying universal laws. These approaches use descriptive data obtained through qualitative methods like ethnography for gaining an emic perspective about community's culture.

Quantitative research approaches analyze numerical data obtained through quantitative methods like census, survey for gaining outsider's, objective perspective. Their main goal is to test

hypothesis and identify universal patterns of human behavior. These approaches do statistical comparison of different cultures.

1- Characteristics of Qualitative Research Approaches

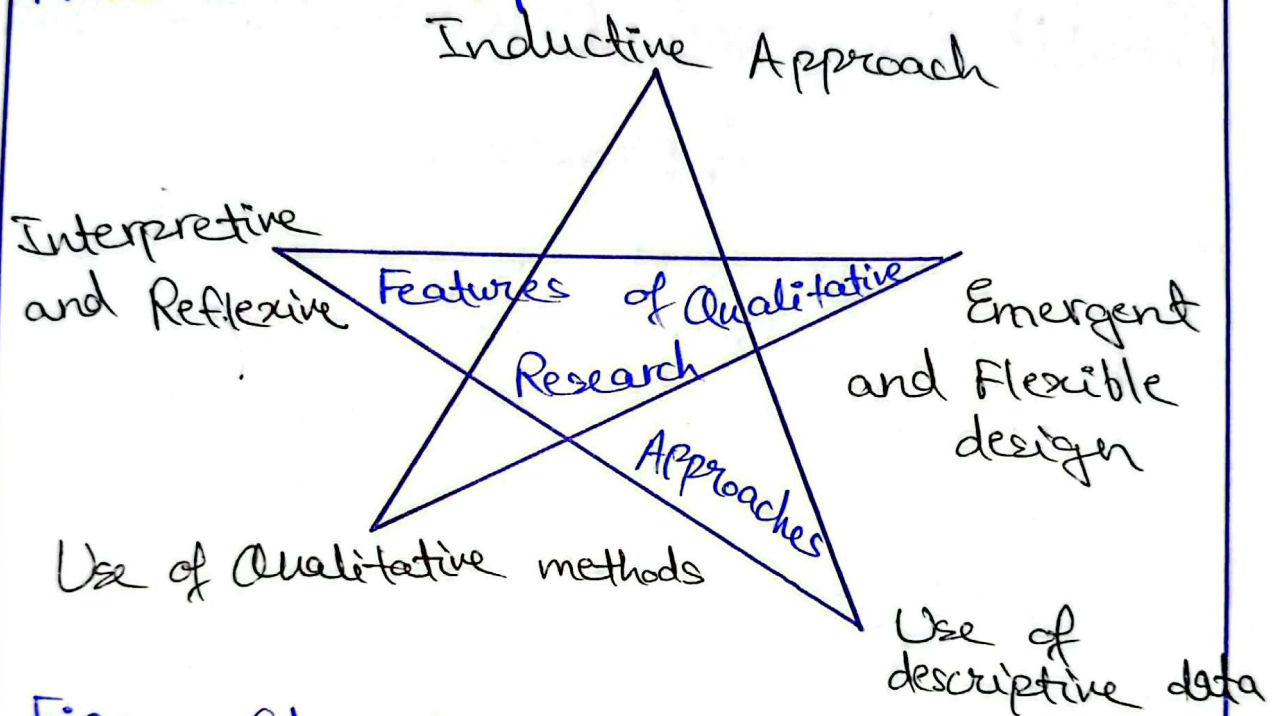


Fig: - Characteristics of Qualitative Research Approaches

Qualitative Research Approaches

i- Inductive Approach

Qualitative research approaches are inductive in nature. They focus on developing theories and concepts rather than verifying pre-defined hypothesis.

Emergent and Flexible Design

Research design and analysis are flexible and adaptive. Research questions and methods evolve as new insights emerge during field-work. It is open-ended and less rigidly structured approach.

iii- Interpretive and Reflexive

This approach focuses on understanding the symbols people assign to their social realities while acknowledging how researcher's presence and background influence observations and data he collects.

iv- Use of Qualitative Methods

These approaches use field methods for collecting descriptive data. For example: genealogical method, historical method.

v- Use of descriptive data

They rely on narratives, observations

and symbols for understanding social life.

Qualitative Research approaches appropriate for anthropological research

Interpretivism is the main qualitative research approach appropriate for anthropological research.

Interpretivism is defined as:

“It is qualitative research approach that focuses on understanding subjective meanings and symbols that people attach to their actions and culture rather than verifying universal laws.”

3. Qualitative Methods Used in Interpretivism

The key qualitative method used in classical qualitative research approach i.e. interpretivism is ethnography.

Ethnography: A qualitative research method that involves long-term immersive fieldwork within community for gaining an emic perspective about community.

culture.

Correlation between Ethnography and ²²Thick Description⁹⁹

Thick Description is what defines the enterprise of ethnography.

It involves interpreting rituals, symbols, social and cultural behavior by uncovering deeper symbolic meanings embedded in them.

4. Clifford Geertz' Analysis of Balinese Cockfight : A Classic example of Qualitative Research Approach

Clifford Geertz analyzed how Balinese cockfight is a reflection of beliefs and social values.

i- Balinese cockfight : A Reflection of Beliefs

a- Rituals of Purification

Before and after cockfight the participants perform religious rituals to purify the space. This reflects that cockfight is not seen as an individual game but as a

sacred encounter with fate and super-natural forces.

b. Belief in fate

The outcome of cockfight is interpreted as a sign of divine-will, reflecting their belief in karma and cosmological order.

ii. Balinese Cockfight: A Reflection of Social values

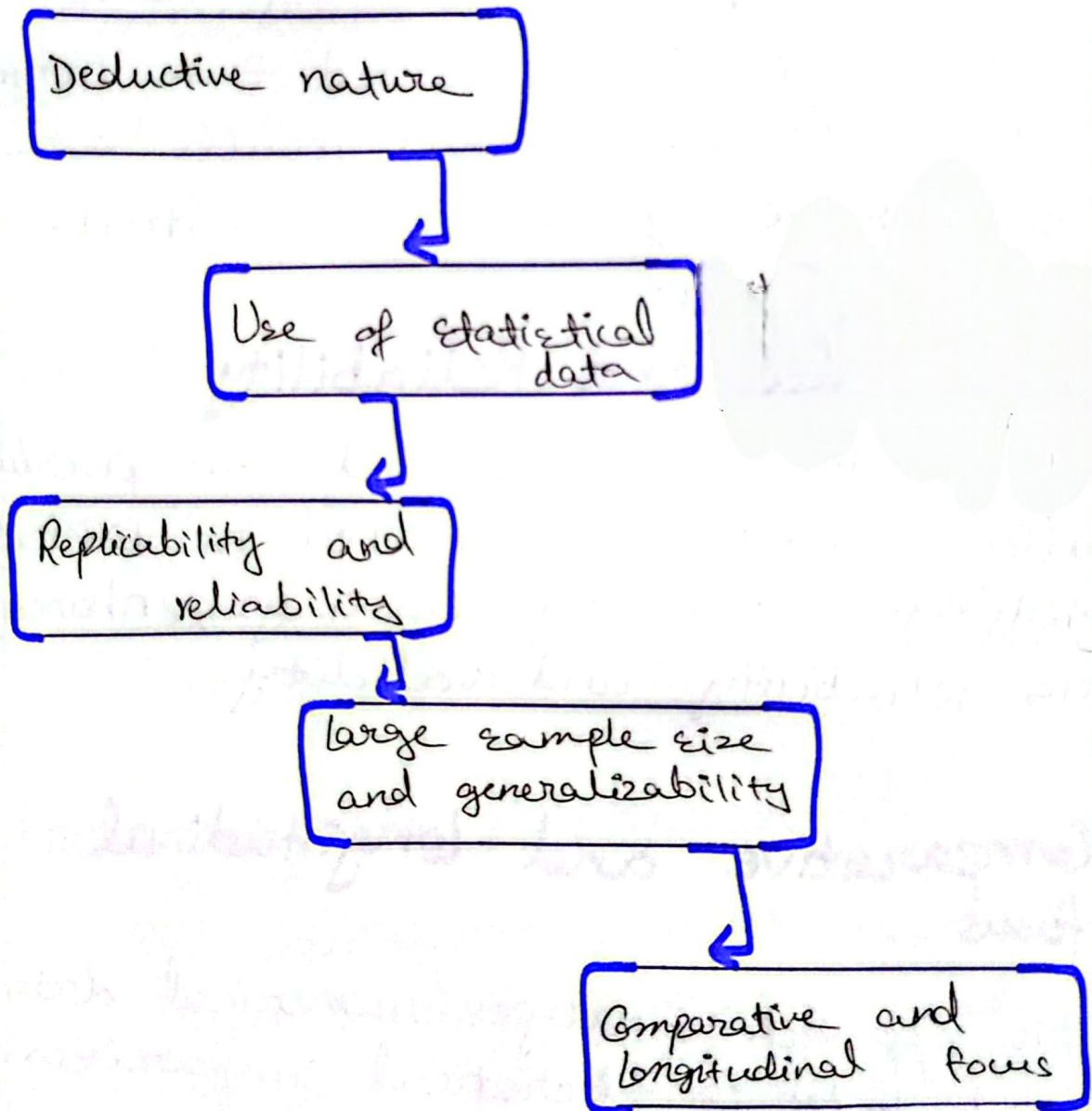
Correlation between Deep play and Honour
Geertz borrowed the concept of "Deep play" from Jeremy Bentham referring to activities where stakes are so high that participants play for symbolic gains not just material gains. High-stakes cock-fights are not primarily about money in fact they are more about prestige & honour and reputation.

5. Characteristics of Quantitative Research Approaches

Quantitative Research approaches are characterized by deductive nature & use

of quantitative methods ; use of statistical data ; large sample size ; and focus on ^{cross-cultural} comparisons and longitudinal focus.

Fig: Features of Quantitative Research approach



i- Deductive Nature

This approach starts with a general theory and tests it with specific data. It follows a deductive reasoning process.

ii- Use of statistical data

This approach uses statistical data obtained from quantitative methods like census and surveys.

iii- Large sample size and generalizability

Data is typically gathered from large samples to ensure that results are representative of broader population.

iv- Replicability and Reliability

Standardized methods and clear procedures allow study to be repeated in different settings to verify findings, enhancing its reliability and validity.

v- Comparative and longitudinal focus

This approach analyzes numerical data which helps in statistical comparison of different cultures and tracking cultural or biological changes within a community over long period of time.

Quantitative Research Approaches appropriate for anthropological research

i- Cross-cultural Approach

“A quantitative research approach that involves comparative study of data obtained from large samples of societies such as HRAF (Human Relations Area Files) to test hypothesis and identify universal patterns or correlations across diverse human societies.”

ii. Demographic Approach

“A quantitative research approach that involves statistical study of past and present human populations by analyzing numerical data on fertility, mortality and migration to study how biological, social and cultural factors shape population change and

social structure over time. ”

iii. Archaeological Quantification Approach

“ A quantitative research approach that involves ^{systematic} application of statistical techniques to numerical data derived from material remains such as artifact counts, site density to objectively reconstruct past human behaviors and social organization. ”

Concluding Thoughts

Qualitative research approach focuses on understanding subjective meanings that individuals assign to their actions and culture. Interpretivism is the main qualitative research approach. Quantitative research approach analyzes numerical data obtained through quantitative methods like census, survey for gaining an etic perspective.