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BOOK REVIEWS



An Introduction to Qualitative Research, 6th edition by Uwe Flick, published by Sage Publication Ltd, 2018, pp. 696, ISBN 1526445654, OCLC Number-1043585625, Language -English.

- Reviewed by Pushpa Priya

General Information

Qualitative research mainly influences humanities and social science time and again with new methods. This book is the outcome of being acquainted with new approaches in qualitative research that is revised and updated in 6th edition form. The book was published by sage publication in the year 2018. The author designed the contents of the book in the way that mainly facilitates the novice researchers and also experienced quantitative researcher who is new to qualitative researcher. It is simply practical guideline to assist readers through step by step with an intention to make each and every concept of the qualitative research clear. How to make an approach for qualitative research and how to enhance research skills related to qualitative is well elaborated throughout the book. In total, there are 34 chapters in this book that is divided into six sections; and every chapter begins with specific objectives with an aim to generate awareness among the readers towards the upcoming discussion; later it is followed with checklist in order to reinforce the readers' level of understanding. First part of the book comprised 1 to 5 chapters that discusses on foundations of qualitative research; second part covered 6 to 13 chapters that mainly focused on research design; third part covers from 14 to 17 mainly emphasized on data collection; fourth part contains from 18 to 22 chapters that discussed on data beyond talk; fifth part of the book ranges from 23 to 28 emphasized on ways to data collection and sixth part of the book covers chapter from 29 to 31 that emphasized on the strategies on making reporting of the conducted research.

Part Wise Gist

Part 1 of the book entitled “Foundations of Quality Research” ranges from chapter one to five in which the author discussed in-depth concept on qualitative research in terms of why and how to conduct qualitative research; focuses on the essential features of qualitative research like: correct choice of appropriate methods and theories; etc; limitations of qualitative research, theoretical perspectives in the form of theoretical framework; positivism and constructivism as a epistemological assumptions, effect of feminist position in qualitative research; distinction between qualitative and quantitative research.

Part 2 entitled “Research Design” ranges from chapter six to thirteen mainly discussed on practical methodological issues; formulating research question as the whole research revolves around finding answer of the posed research question for particular research study; what makes good and bad research questions; question designing is also a vital part of the discussion in this part; concept on how to design in qualitative research is well elaborated; concept on ethical considerations are brilliantly shown too; how and when to use existing literature; theories, theoretical literature; empirical and methodological literature and how to search for literature, how to enter the field and make access to institution and participants; very well interpreted on strategies to gain access to field for research study; furthermore discussed on the ways of qualitative research sampling method in-depth; concept on data triangulation in terms of how to do it is also well explained. In brief, overall research design is well interpreted in this part.

Part 3 entitled “Verbal Data” covers from chapter fourteen to seventeen and reveals on practical issues relevant for conducting qualitative research. This part discussed concept on verbal data in terms of its types, aims and targets. Similarly, concept on interview in qualitative research well presented. Concept on what makes narratives, focus group explained Characteristics is well explained, possible approaches for verbal data collection interpreted in a meaningful way, different types of conducting interviews like: focused interview group interview, semi-standardized, ethnographic interview, problem-centered interview, online interview, narrative interview; and the ways to analyze interview are explained in depth, strategies to use narrative data are described.

Part 4 entitled “Data Beyond Talk” ranges from chapter eighteen to twenty-two examined on how the data can be collected beyond talk. Observation, visual data and some related documents made a significant place in qualitative research that is well explained in this part; different ways of data collection and analysis process are explained in terms of collecting data through offline and online along with each method’s advantages and disadvantages, data collection strategies through interview, using documents, field notes, analysis of even a document like websites; and also discussed on social media and digital data in terms of how social media like facebook, youtube, twitter, blogs can be used for studying social issues with qualitative method.

Part 5 entitled “Texts as Data in Qualitative Research” ranges from chapter twenty-three to twenty-eight discussed on qualitative data analysis in terms of establishing relevant theoretical insights from the collected data and further text produced after analyzing. In-depth analyzing concepts are explained like: data management, transcription, coding, thematic coding, naturally occurring data, and also discussed on using software for qualitative data analysis. In brief, this part of the book explained on analyzing data in qualitative research.

Part six of the book ranges from chapter twenty-nine to thirty-one where there is a discussion on the use of traditional quality criteria along with some alternative criteria; and there was also a discussion on the ways of answering questions of quality in qualitative research. Furthermore, there is an explanation of how to make reporting of the conducted research; and finally, chapter 31 provided with outlining for qualitative research in terms of its further development in the future.

Perceptions on the strengths and weakness of the book.

This book presented comprehensive ideas on conducting qualitative research. The ideas presented brilliantly in simple and understandable language. Chapter contents, objectives are well illustrated that provided the readers with an idea of the intended things to be discussed in the particular chapter. Checklist provided in every chapter reinforces readers’ level of understanding of the particular discussed contents of the chapter. Features of qualitative research, ethical consideration, data collected methods, techniques are well elaborated too. This book is beneficial for novice researchers, experienced quantitative researchers who aimed of conducting qualitative research and even for the experienced qualitative researcher this book is a toolkit as it guides the whole process of conducting qualitative research in a comprehensive way. However, I found only one weakness that is t data analysis technique in qualitative research should be more elaborated in terms of giving a comprehensive effect. Apart from this only one weakness I found many strengths of this book; and I recommend this book to the ones who have interest for conducting qualitative research.

The reviewer: Pushpa Priya is Mphil Scholar, Kathmandu University, and Lecturer of English at Global College of Management and Samriddhi College. She is Columnist of English National Daily such as “The Himalayan Times” and “The Rising Nepal”. Her research interests are: educational leadership, psychological well-being, public speaking and emotional intelligence.