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Research Design and Research Methods

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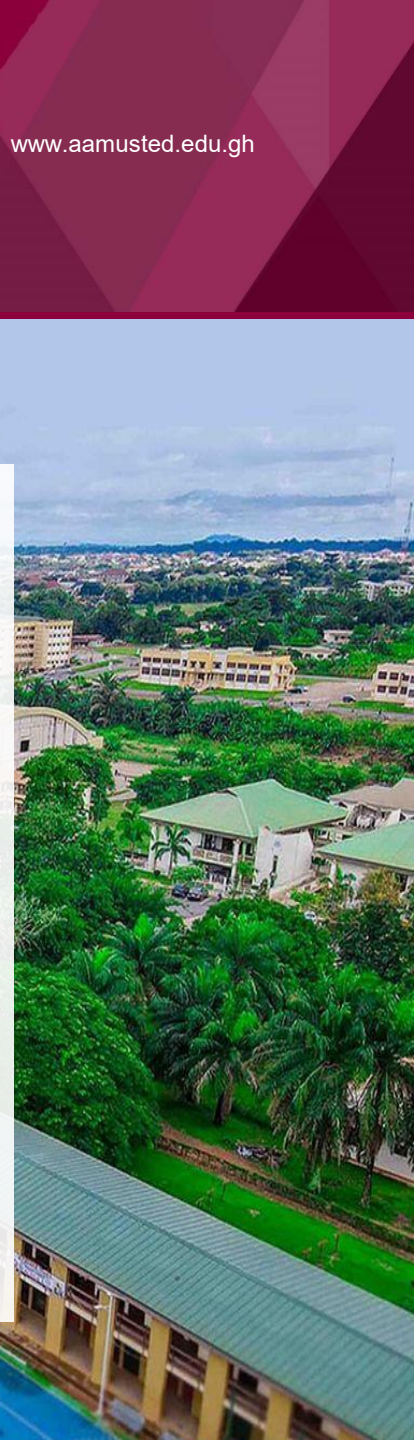




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What is research design?

- It is the overall plan and strategy for conducting the research
- It shows the approach the researcher wants to adopt to answer the research questions
- It shows how the researcher is going to connect the research idea to practical empirical research order to answer the research question.
- It articulates:
 - ✓ the type of data required,
 - ✓ the methods to be used to collect the data
 - ✓ theories to be relied upon
 - ✓ concepts and
 - ✓ analysis



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What is research design?

- Different types of study need different types of designs
- The type of research design you adopt depends on the purpose of the study:
 - ✓ Descriptive
 - ✓ Explanatory/analytical
 - ✓ Exploratory
 - ✓ Evaluative
 - ✓ Historical/Legal
 - ✓ Predictive



The Design depends on data required

1. Sometimes you will have to generate **primary data** through:
 - ✓ surveys,
 - ✓ experiments,
 - ✓ case studies,
 - ✓ ethnographic studies
2. Sometimes you **analyze existing/secondary data**
 - ✓ text data: discourse analysis, content analysis, textual criticism, historical studies, or
 - ✓ numeric data: secondary data analysis, census data, statistical modelling etc.



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Before Designing Research: Take a Realistic Approach

- In any research that you want to pursue, you need to ask your self **five questions**, if your **answer to any of these is negative** then **there are chances that you would regret**.
- 1. Does this topic (research site or data collection method) really interest me? (Research must be fun).
 - ✓ You must enjoy what you are doing. You must avoid doing research out of convenience and without enthusiasm
- 2. Is my research problem amendable to scientific enquiry?



Taking a Realistic Approach Cont.

3. Are there adequate resources available to investigate this topic? To study this population at this particular site? To use this particular data collection method?
(Time, money and people, including yourself)
4. Will my research question or data collection method raise a serious ethical issue?
5. Is the topic of theoretical or practical interest?



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Methods

Methodological Paradigms (Creswell)

		Quantitative Paradigm	Qualitative Paradigm	Mixed
Methodological Assumption	What is the process of research?	Deductive process	Inductive process	Either or both
		Cause & effect	Mutual simultaneous shaping of factors	Linear and/or simultaneous
		Static design-categories isolated before study	Emerging design-categories identified during research process	May begin with either isolated or emerging
		Context-free	Context-bound	Either or both
		Generalizations leading to prediction, explanation, and understanding	Patterns, theories developed for understanding	Either or both
		Accurate and reliable through validity and reliability	Accurate and reliable through verification	Either or both



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Thank You



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Qualitative Methodologies



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Qualitative Methodologies

- There are several of them, however, the most commonly used are:
 - ✓ Grounded theory
 - ✓ Ethnography
 - ✓ Phenomenology
 - ✓ Narrative Inquiry
 - ✓ Case Study



Grounded Theory

- The purpose is to study the experience of participants in order to develop a theory grounded in the data collected.
- Through this approach, the researcher is able to construct hypothesis and make predictions about other experiences
- It leads to generalization
- It is applied a lot in clinical psychology



Ethnography

- It is the study of a group of individuals within the setting in which they live/work to construct the shared pattern of group behaviour, culture, beliefs, languages, etc.
- It draws on a range of data including field notes, interviews, transcripts, documents, artifacts in order to generate themes, issues etc.
- There are several types of ethnography:
 - ✓ Realist ethnography (objective, scientifically written)
 - ✓ Confessional ethnography (report of ethnographer's field work)
 - ✓ Autoethnography (reflective examination of ethnographers experience)
 - ✓ Micro ethnography (focused on a specific aspect of a group)



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Types of Ethnography Cont.

- ✓ Critical Ethnography (Focused on a shared pattern of life of a marginalized group with the goal of advocacy)
- ✓ Feminist ethnography (focuses on women and cultural practices that disempower and oppress)



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Phenomenology

- This studies phenomenon that a number of individuals share
 - ✓ For example: “One corner” Dance; Pentecostalism; Prayer camps
- It discerns the core or the essence of the phenomenon
- It is grounded in the lived experiences of people but also attempts to transcend that experience
- It draws primarily on interview data



Narrative Inquiry

- This approach studies the storied experiences of a person or number of persons
- It describes the lives of individuals
- It collects and tells stories about the life of individuals situated within cultural, social and institutional narratives.
- It writes narratives of the experiences of those individuals.
 - ✓ For example: African women in Rome, child workers in urban communities, head porters.



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Narrative Inquiry

- This approach draws on a range of data. E.g.
 - ✓ Conversational transcripts
 - ✓ interview transcripts
 - ✓ Artifacts
 - ✓ Photographs
 - ✓ Documents
 - ✓ field notes
 - ✓ memory box items
 - ✓ autobiographical items
 - ✓ journal writings



Case Study

- The purpose of case study is to study a bounded system, an individual, whether this individual is a person, an institution or a group such as a school, class, or an event (festival)
- It is meant to provide an in-depth understanding of a case
- Types of case study include:
 - ✓ Intrinsic: the subject of study is the primary interest
 - ✓ Instrumental: it uses a case to get insight into a phenomenon
 - ✓ Multiple cases: uses information from different studies to formulate the case for a new study
 - ✓ Explanatory: an explanation of a question or a phenomenon especially event. E.g. a particular vehicle has series of crashes caused by fault brakes
 - ✓ Exploratory: a precursor to a formal large scale study



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Types of Data/Data gathering techniques



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Types of Data/Data gathering techniques

- Participant observation
- Interview
- Document
- Others



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Participant Observation

- direct observation of ongoing group life, also referred too as ethnography
- ranges from being a passive observer to active participant



Participant observation Cont.

- In order to succeed, the researcher has to negotiate the following:
 - a. Gaining access to site or group
 - b. building trust
 - c. Developing and maintaining relationship with informants
 - d. Dealing with attachment and emotions



Interviews

- Types of interviews include:
 - Standardized/Structured interview with open or close ended questions posed to participants (use of interview guide).
 - Semi structured or unstructured or informal interviews
- Unstructured interviews are conversational in style.
 - ✓ This approach is important for gaining in-depth information.
 - ✓ However, it requires adept listening skills and preparedness to improvise and generate questions



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Document

- Gathering of personal, public or historic documents:
 - diaries
 - letters
 - biographies
 - autobiographies
 - photographs
 - news papers
 - Archival materials
 - organizational records
 - actuarial records
 - official records
 - manuscripts
 - contracts
 - court proceedings
 - films
 - TV programmes
 - graffiti
 - song lyrics
 - web sites
 - social media
 - internet chat rooms
 - etc.



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Other techniques

- Focus Group Discussion
- Life histories (using one persons first hand account of his life)
- The study of material artifact
- Triangulation (Using a multi-method approach to collect data)



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Data Analysis/ Interpretation



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Data Analysis/ Interpretation

- Analysis is breaking something down into its constituent parts
 - For example when a scientist analyses water, he breaks it down into its constituent parts.
- Analysis involves the following steps:
 - ✓ Data preparation and organization
 - ✓ Coding & memoing
 - ✓ Data interpretation
 - ✓ Reporting



Data preparation & Organization of data

- **Data preparation**

- - Interview tapes transcribed, dated and labeled as to context and participant identities
 - Documents dated and labeled
- - Artifacts dated and labeled as to context

- **Data organization**

- Data can be organized in four ways

- By types (sorting, interview transcription as distinct from journal records)
 - site (place of data collection)
 - Participants
 - Time interval



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Coding and Memoing

- Depending on the research methodology and purpose, data can be coded as follows:
 - ✓ Descriptively (looking for thick descriptions of social processes)
 - ✓ Categorically (looking for types, classes, group categories)
 - ✓ Thematically (looking for themes)
 - ✓ Narratively (looking for similarities in the narratives)



Interpretation of data

- After data has been coded, it is then given an interpretation. There are several approaches to text analysis:

1. Hermeneutics/interpretative analysis:

- ✓ derived from biblical hermeneutics or exegesis
- ✓ It is search for meaning and their interconnection in the expression of culture
- ✓ require deep involvement with the culture (knowledge of the language)
- ✓ discover the meaning attached to symbols



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2. Narrative and performance analysis

- ✓ discovers regularities in how people tell stories and give speeches
- ✓ Analyses of written texts (for example, literary work)

3. Schemas, Models, and metaphors

- ✓ Combined elements of anthropological linguistics and cognitive psychology in the examination of text



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- **Discourse analysis**
- Close study of naturally occurring interaction
- Our discourses are a representation of our culture and ourselves
 - ✓ For example: through discourse analysis, you can determine gendered power relations, respect for adults etc.



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Key Considerations

- Irrespective of the methodologies that one adopts, the main purpose of qualitative research is to understand the meaning of human experience.
- Therefore, the researcher has to take the following precautions



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Key Considerations cont.

1. Bracketing out his or her subjectivity
2. Setting aside biases
3. Selecting of site and participants.
 - ✓ This is not based on random sampling
 - ✓ Use purposeful sampling



- Maximal variation sampling (range of participants with the most variation in experience is chosen)
- Typical Sampling
- Theory or concept sampling: when a clear understanding of the concept or theory is in place
- Homogeneous sampling: Based on membership with defining characteristics
- Critical sampling of exceptional cases
- Opportunistic sampling: It permit the researcher to take advantage of unfolding event
- Snowball sampling.
- Confirming / disconfirming sampling



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- Finally, use your imagination and creativity



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Thank you



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