

conducting field research

preparing for the field:

- formulate research theme
- search for relevant literature (what do we already know?)
- formulate research question
- choose and contradict the field

when in the field:

- follow the action
- observation (+ taking notes)
- interviewing
- small talk

validity and reliability

	validity	reliability
quantitative methods	-	+
qualitative methods	+	-

improving the reliability of qualitative studies:

- work in teams
- used mixed-method approach
- compare several cases instead of describing one case
- extensively explicating the choices made in the study
- being transparent as a researcher about own biases

qualitative interview

- either a topic list or pre-formulated questions can be used
- including a generative opening question
- interviewers have to listen, think, and talk at the same time
- the art of probing (asking follow-up questions)
- interviewer needs to make the other person seem interesting and can do so by being interested and by listening more than talking

unobtrusive research: content analysis

Unobtrusive research methods refer to studies of social life from afar, without influencing it in the process

+ often starts from a specific theory, concept or research question that leads the analysis (induction)

uses:

- operationalization
- data selection
- coding*

strengths:

- cheaper and less time consuming
- allows correction of errors
- permits process of study to happen over time
- little effect on subjects
- reliability

weaknesses:

- limited
- interpretations cannot be checked
- validity

*transforming raw data of latent and manifest content into categories based on some conceptual scheme



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