



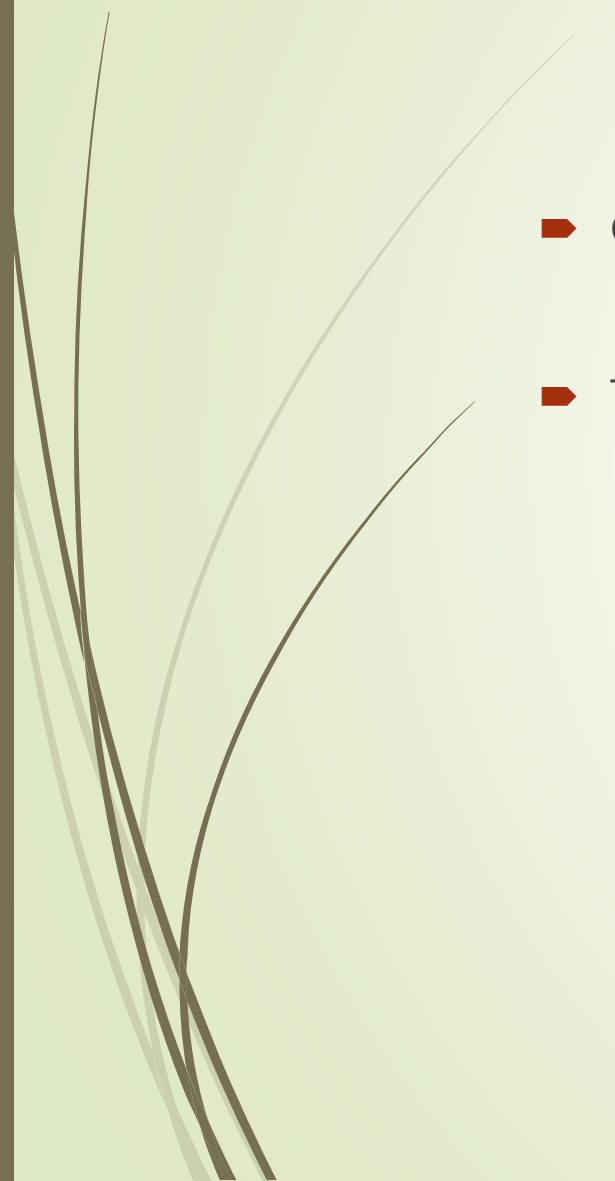
Research Design: Qualitative Approaches

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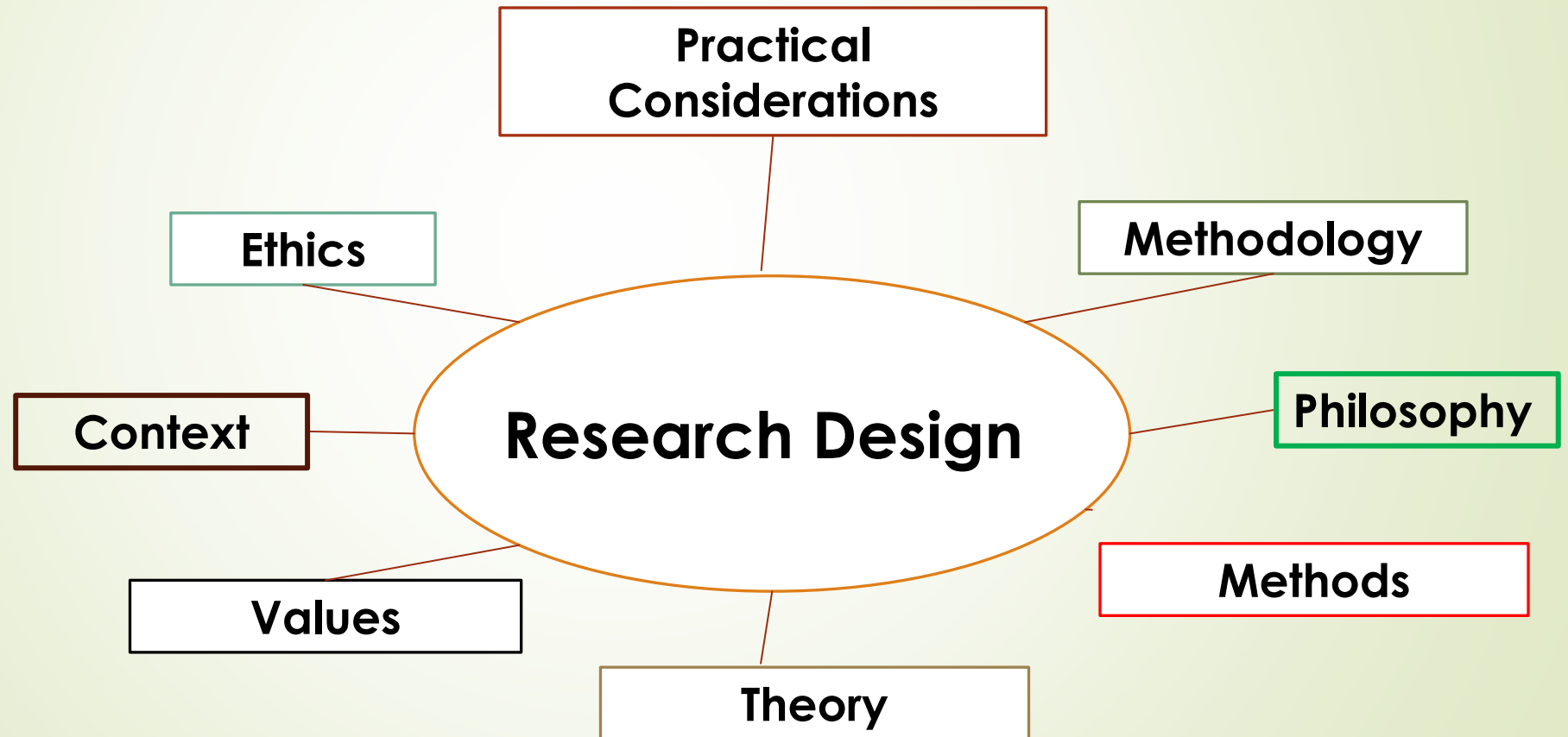
Session 4



Aims of Session

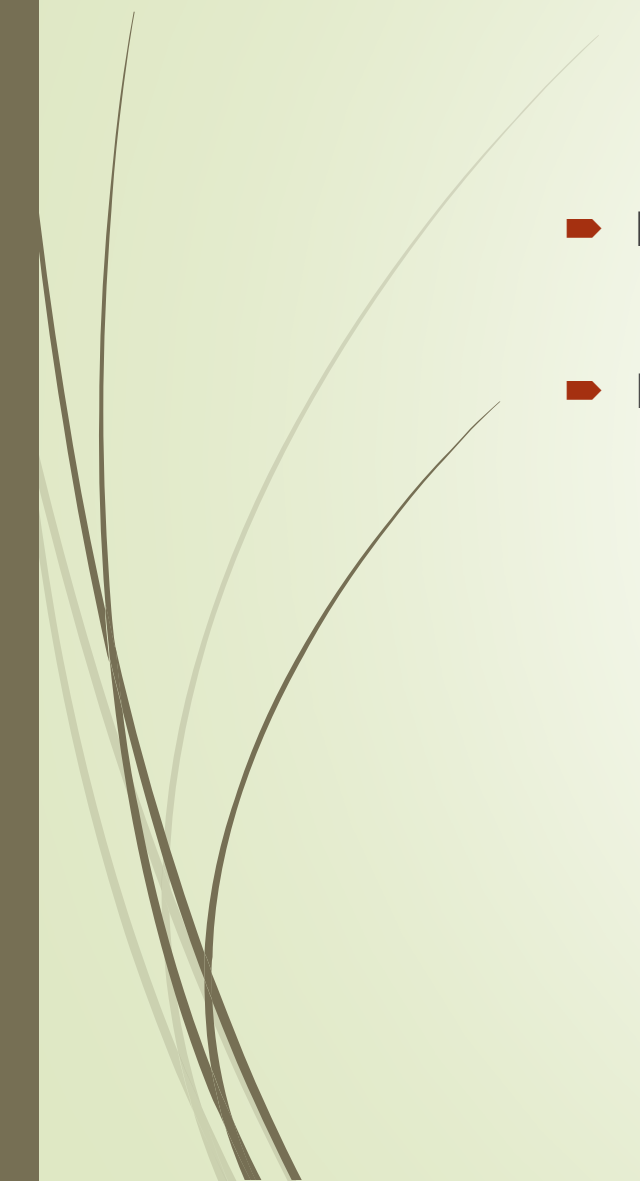
- Consolidate learning on Research Paradigms
 - To explore approaches to research design focusing on qualitative designs.
- 

Research Design





Research Design



- In order to undertake your research
 - you need to identify the design you will be adopting:
- Design is concerned with
 - how you will turn research questions into projects
 - and is closely linked to the purpose of your research.



Research Design



- Which Research Approach to Follow? What is the nature of the research problem?
 - What will be your procedures of inquiry/research design?
- You need to first consider some questions:
 - What research methods (data collection, analysis interpretation) will I follow?
 - What are your philosophical assumptions/world views?



Types of Research

Positivist Quantitative

Constructivist Qualitative

Pragmatic Mixed Methods



Objectivism, Subjectivism & Pragmatism

Objectivism

- is the philosophical position which holds that social entities exist in reality external to social actors.
- QUANTITATIVE

Subjectivist

- view is that social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors.
- QUALITATIVE

Pragmatism

- holds that the most important determinant of the research philosophy adopted is the research question.
- MIXED-METHODS



Research Design/Strategies of Inquiry: Mixed Methodology

Convergent parallel
designs

- Merges quantitative and qualitative data

Explanatory sequential

- First conducts quantitative research , fills in the detail with qualitative

Exploratory sequential

- Reverse to explanatory

Transformative embedded
or multi purpose

- Involves utilising a theoretical perspective, both data is used to build on each other.



Methodology vs. Method

- Methodology vs. Method

- The theoretical framework that outlines
 - the rules (axioms) to follow in a study.

- Methodology vs. Method

- The actual tools/steps taken
 - When you conduct research into a subject or a topic.



Methodology

- Research methodology:
 - What do we need to consider?
 - What are the options?



Research Design- Strategies of Inquiry

Qualitative Examples

- Case Study
- Ethnography
- Phenomenology
- Grounded Theory
- Life History
- Historical Methods
- Clinical Research
- Action and applied research
- Participatory research

Quantitative Examples

- Surveys:
 - requires large sample sizes for statistical analysis
- Experimental designs:
 - requires a control group



The Five Main Qualitative Methods

Method	Focus	Sample Size	Data Collection
Ethnography	Context or culture	—	Observation & interviews
Narrative	Individual experience & sequence	1 to 2	Stories from individuals & documents
Phenomenological	People who have experienced a phenomenon	5 to 25	Interviews
Grounded Theory	Develop a theory grounded in field data	20 to 60	Interviews, then open and axial coding
Case Study	Organization, entity, individual, or event	—	Interviews, documents, reports, observations



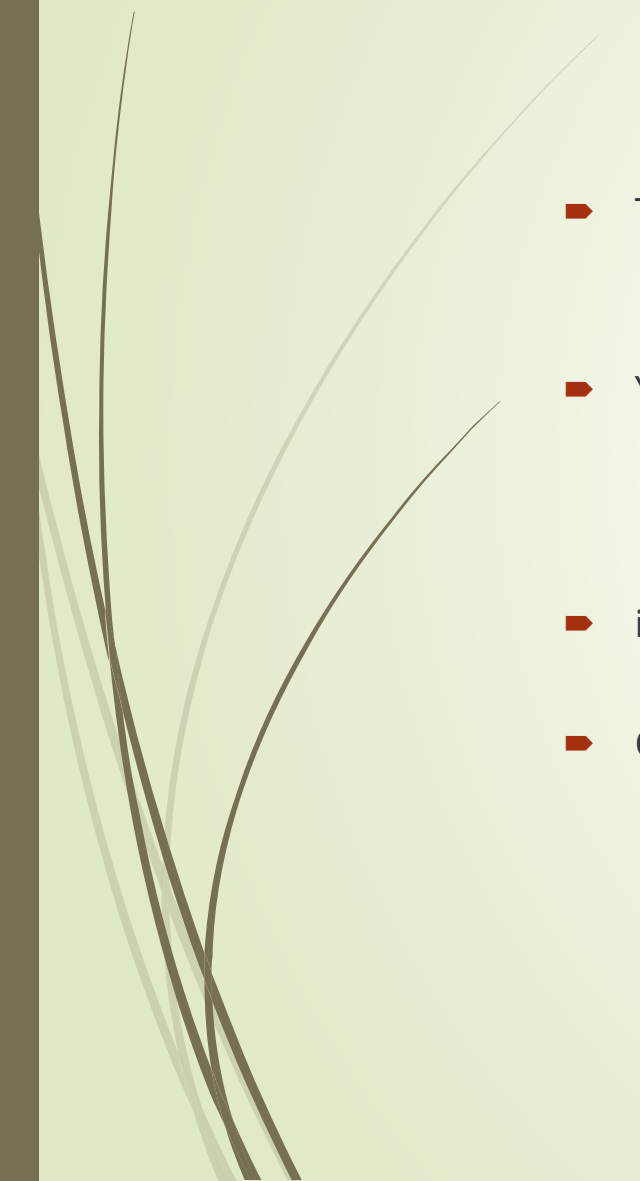
Ethnography



- Ethnographic research is probably the most familiar and applicable type of qualitative method
 - In ethnography,
 - you immerse yourself in the target participants' environment to understand
 - the goals, cultures, challenges, motivations, and themes that emerge
- Ethnography has its roots in cultural anthropology
 - where researchers immerse themselves within a culture, often for years!
- Rather than relying on interviews or surveys,
 - you experience the environment first hand, and sometimes as a "participant observer."
- For example, one way of uncovering the unmet needs of customers is to
 - Follow them Home
 - Observe them in as they interact with the product
- You don't come armed with any hypotheses to necessarily test
 - rather, you're looking to find out how a product is used



Narrative



- The narrative approach weaves together
 - a sequence of events,
 - usually from just one or two individuals to form a cohesive story
- You conduct
 - in-depth interviews,
 - read documents
 - look for themes
- in other words,
 - how does an individual story illustrate the larger life influences that created it
- Often interviews are conducted over
 - weeks,
 - months,
 - or even years,



Narrative (continued)

- The final narrative
 - doesn't need to be in chronological order
- Rather it can be presented as
 - a story (or narrative) with themes
 - and can reconcile conflicting stories and highlight tensions and challenges which can be opportunities for innovation
- For example,
 - a narrative approach can be an appropriate method for building a persona
- While a persona should be built using a mix of methods
 - Including segmentation analysis from surveys
 - In-depth interviews with individuals in an identified persona can provide the details that help describe the culture,
 - whether it's a person living with Multiple Sclerosis,
 - a prospective student applying for college, or a working mom.



Phenomenological

- When you want to describe
 - an event,
 - activity,
 - or phenomenon,
- the aptly named phenomenological study is an appropriate qualitative method
- In a phenomenological study, you use
 - a combination of methods,
 - such as conducting interviews,
 - reading documents,
 - watching videos,
 - or visiting places and events,
 - to understand the meaning participants place on whatever's being examined

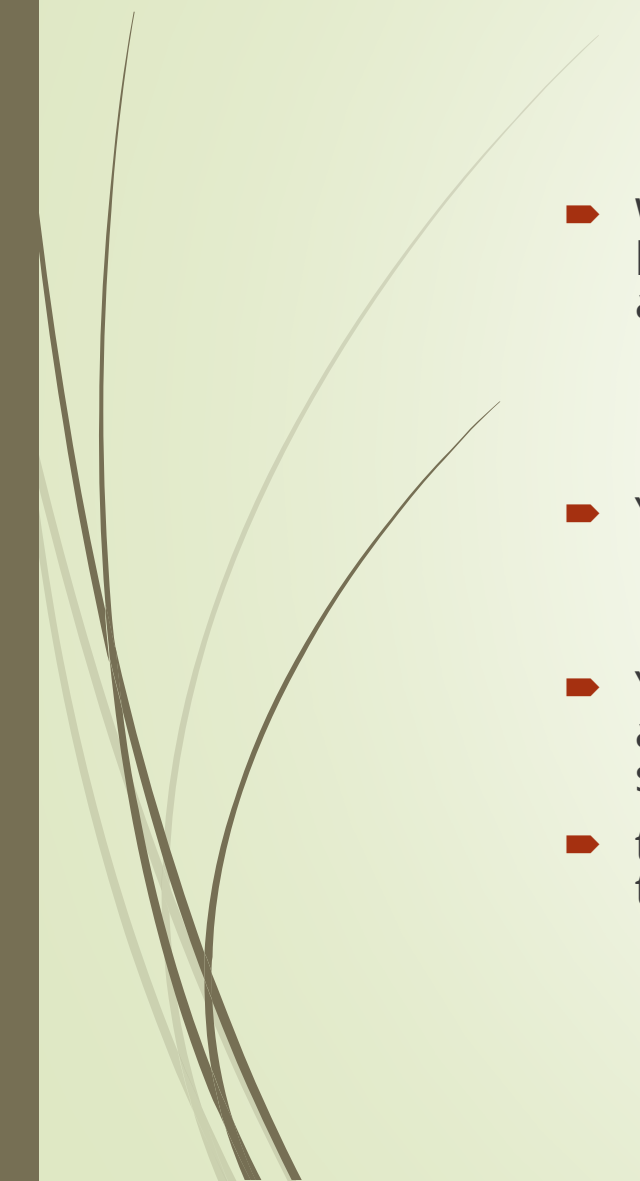


Phenomenology (continued)

- You rely on the participants'
 - own perspectives to provide insight into their motivations
- Like other qualitative methods,
 - you don't start with a well-formed hypothesis
- In a phenomenological study, you often conduct a lot of interviews
 - Usually between 5-25 people
 - This builds a sufficient dataset to look for emerging themes
 - and to use other participants to validate your findings
- For example,
 - there's been an explosion in the last 5 years in online courses and training
 - But how do students engage with these courses?
- While you can examine time spent and content accessed using log data and even assess student achievement vis-a-vis in-person courses,
 - a phenomenological study would aim to better understand
 - the students experience
 - and how that may impact comprehension of the material



Grounded Theory



- Whereas a phenomenological study looks to describe the essence of an activity or event
 - grounded theory looks to provide an explanation or theory behind the events
- You use primarily
 - interviews and existing documents to build a theory based on the data
- You go through a series of open and axial coding techniques (See next slide)
- to identify themes and build the theory
- Sample sizes are often also larger
 - between 20 to 60 participants to better establish a theory
- Grounded theory can help
 - inform design decisions
 - by better understanding how a community of users currently use a product or perform tasks



Grounded Theory (Continued)

- For example,
 - a grounded theory study could
 - involve understanding how software developers use portals to communicate and write code
 - or how small retail merchants approve or decline customers for credit



Axial Coding

- **Axial coding** is the
 - breaking down of core themes during qualitative data analysis
- In Grounded Theory Axial Coding is
 - the process of relating codes (categories and concepts) to each other
 - via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking
- The basic framework of generic relationships is understood
 - according to Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) who propose the use of a "coding paradigm"
 - to include categories related to
 - (1) the phenomenon under study,
 - (2) the conditions related to that phenomenon (context conditions, intervening -structural- conditions or causal conditions),
 - (3) the actions and interactional strategies directed at managing or handling the phenomenon
 - (4) the consequences of the actions/interactions related to the phenomenon



Axial Coding (Continuing)

- As Kelle (2005) underlines
 - the implicit or explicit theoretical framework necessary to identify categories in empirical data is derived
- in the procedures explicated by Strauss and Corbin (1990),
 - from a "general model of action rooted in pragmatist and interactionist social theory" (Kelle, 2005, para. 16)
- This model or theoretical framework underlines the importance of
 - "analysing and modelling action and interaction strategies of the actors" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).
- Axial coding is a cornerstone of Strauss and Corbin's (1990, 1998) approach
 - but is **regarded by Charmaz (2006) as highly structured and optional**



Case Study



- Made famous by the Harvard Business School,
 - even mainly quantitative researchers can relate to the value of the case study in explaining an organization, entity, company, or event.
 - A case study involves a deep understanding through multiple types of data sources.
 - Case studies can be explanatory, exploratory, or describing an event.
- For example,
 - a case study of how a large multinational company introduced methods of delivery into an agile development environment would be informative to many organizations



Links to Consider

- <http://study.com/academy/lesson/phenomenological-design-definition-advantages-limitations.html>
- Review and discuss in your groups the different types of research designs...



Research Design



1. Consider what your research focus might be

2. Review the handout which identifies various research paradigms and research approaches.

3. In your groups discuss your preferences and which paradigm you would like to possibly adopt.



Axioms: Quantitative

- Validity:
 - The degree to which research outcomes are valid/ true
- For Example:
 - Is a particular measure a valid reflection of the concept?
 - Measurement Validity
- Are the outcomes generalisable, applicable to a wider population?
 - External Validity
- Is the relationship between variables valid?
 - Internal Validity
- Are the outcomes realistic in terms of normal social settings?
 - Ecological Validity



Axioms: Quantitative

- Reliability:

- The degree to which research outcomes are repeatable, and do not fluctuate.

- Can you replicate the exact experiment and get the same result?
- Can the outcomes be attributable in other contexts?



Axioms:

Quantitative

- Discuss:

- If a child's IQ is measured on four consecutive days
- They were found to have a different values!!!

- Q: Is this a reliable index of intelligence?

- Q: Do you think that IQ is a valid measurement of intelligence anyway?



Axioms:

Qualitative

- We consider a range of different concepts to ensure
 - Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research:
 - Audit Trails
 - Authenticity,
 - Personal integrity,
 - Member checking
 - Ethical positions....



Axioms:

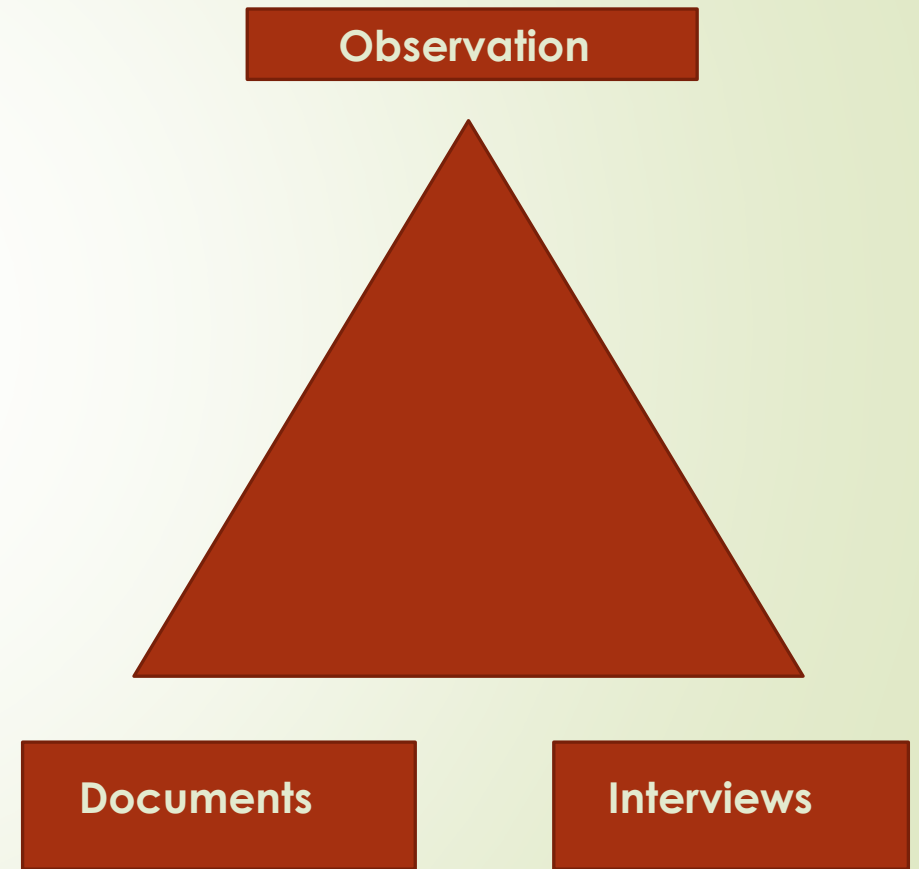
Qualitative

- Vicarious generalisations:
 - *Definition of Vicarious*
 - *experienced in the imagination through the feelings or actions of another person*
- This includes for example
 - Thick description
 - allows learning to take place
 - between contexts
 - e.g. sharing best/good practice)
 - Reflection
 - Embracing bias and one's own subjectivity

Axioms:

Qualitative

- ▶ Another tool we use is called Triangulation:
 - ▶ Multiple tools for data collection
 - ▶ Multi Perspectives
- ▶ Consider:
 - ▶ If you were to justify a rigorous qualitative design as apposed to a quantitative design, how would you justify your case?





Axioms



- Consider your research questions:
 - What Axiom position would you take to ensure that your work is indeed robust?
- What would the implications for your research design?
- It will depend upon your paradigm choice if you were to apply the different axioms



Directed Study



Task 1:

Explore the different Research Approaches and consider which one is suitable for your Research.

Task 2:

Read the Chapter Qualitative Research Design

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