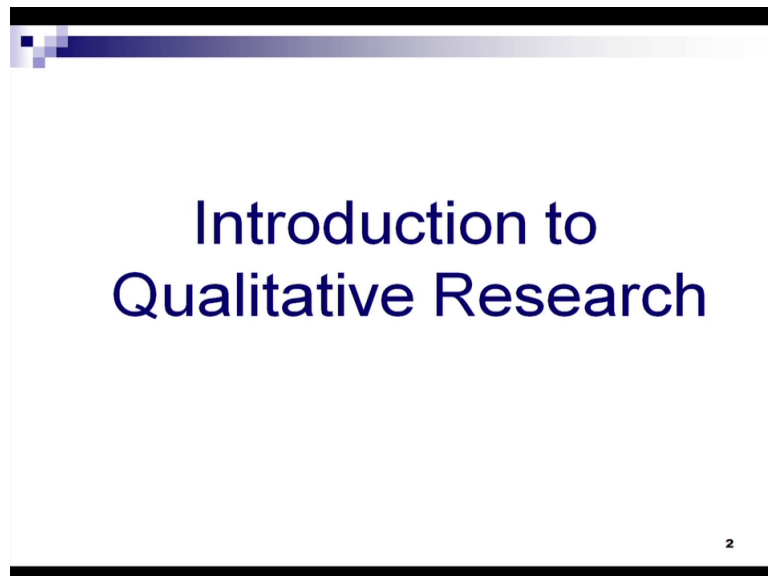


**Qualitative Research Methods**  
**Assistant Prof. Aradhna Malik**  
**Vinod Gupta School of Management**  
**Indian Institute of Technology – Kharagpur**

**Lecture – 1**  
**Introduction**

Welcome back to the NOC Course, title Qualitative Research Methods, my name is Aradhna Malik and I am an assistant professor in Vinod Gupta School of Management, the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, and I am going to be helping you with this course, so we will cover whole bunch of things in this course, this is the first session that we are taking. So I just tell you what the courses all about and I will tell you what kinds of things, we will cover, what kinds of things we will talk about, how the course will be structured etcetera.

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## About the course

Qualitative research methods serve to explore the grey areas that remain outside the confines of quantitative predictive research in human behavior. Training in qualitative research is absolutely essential to understand and explore the dynamic nature of the society in which we function. This course introduces students to qualitative research and helps them understand how qualitative research supplements quantitative inquiry in human behavior and the social sciences.

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So what will happen is that will discuss what Qualitative research is, the course is, you know going to talk about something that is not discussed very much in the Indian settings, by the Indian academia. Now qualitative research methods serve to explode the grey areas that remain outside the confines of quantitative predictive research in human behavior. qualitative research is more exploratory and training in qualitative research is absolutely essential to understand and explore the dynamic nature of the society, in which we function.

So this course introduces you all, the students, the listeners to qualitative research and helps you all understand, how qualitative research supplements quantitative enquiry in human behavior and social sciences. What qualitative research does that quantitative research cannot do and that is what we will be talking about in this course.

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# What will we study?



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## Week 1: Introduction to qualitative research

- Introduction
- The Qualitative Researcher
- Quantitative vs. qualitative research
- History of qualitative research
- The process of qualitative research

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And what we will study, is we are going to study various things in the first week, we are going to talk about introduction to qualitative research, we will discuss, you know this is the introductory lectures, so this is this lecture one introduction, the qualitative researchers, we talk about what qualitative researchers do. We will also discuss the differences between qualitative and quantitative research.

We will talk about how qualitative research came to be where it is today and we will talk about the process of qualitative research, what does it tell, what do you need to do as a qualitative researchers, what kind of situation to explore etc. So all that will be covered in the first week.

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## Weeks 2 & 3: Major paradigms & perspectives

- Dominant paradigms of qualitative research
- Interpretivist thinking
- Verstehen
- Constructivism
- Properties of constructions
- Constructivism: Sub paradigms
- Criticisms of interpretivism & constructivism
- Critical theory
- Characteristics of critical theory
- Critiques of critical theory



Then in the second week, second and third week, we will talk about major paradigms and perspectives, so we will be talking about some dominant paradigms, we will talk about Interpretivism, Constructivism, Verstehen and we will talk about critical theory, we will talk about the critics of critical theory etc. Now the way this is going to be is will have one light week and one heavy week and one light week and one heavy week that is how is structured this.

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## Weeks 4 & 5: Strategies of inquiry

- Introduction to qualitative inquiry
- Qualitative research design
- Ethnography
- Autoethnography
- Case studies
- Analyzing interpretive practice
- Grounded Theory
- Participatory Action Research

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Then in the fourth and fifth week, we will discuss strategies of enquiry, we will talk about what Qualitative Enquiry is, we will talk about Qualitative research design, will discuss specific strategies, which is including Ethnography, Autoethnography, Case Studies, Analyzing interpretive practice, Grounded Theory and Participatory Action Research for the most part. These are the things that we will talk about in the fourth and fifth weeks.

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## Weeks 6 & 7: Methods of collecting & analyzing empirical materials

- Observations
- Interviewing
- Interpretation of documents & material culture
- Images & visual methods
- Autoethnography, personal narrative & reflexivity
- Analyzing talk & text
- Data management & analysis methods
- Software & qualitative research



In the sixth and seventh weeks, we will talk about the Methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials, so we will talk about Observations, how do you conduct observation. Interviewing, what are the aspects of interviewing, how does interviewing shape up. Interpretation of documents and material culture, how and what, how do you interpret documents and physical things, material culture, material tangible aspects of reality.

We will talk about Images and visual method; we will also talk about Autoethnography, personal narratives and reflexivity, which is, you know reviewing, what one has done. We will also talk about, how you Analyze talk and text and then we will start winding up the discussion on Data management and analysis methods and then we will also talk about how Software plays a role in quality research, how you can use software for qualitative research.

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## Week 8: Interpretation, evaluation & presentation

- The problem of criteria
- Interpretation
- Writing
- Evaluation and social programs
- Qualitative research and social policy
- Conclusion



Then we will, in the last week of the course, we will talk about Interpretation, evaluation and presentations. We will talk about The problem of criteria, we will talk about Interpretation, we will talk about Writing, we will talk about Evaluation and social programs, we will talk about Qualitative research and social policy and then we will talk about the, we will conclude the discussion, by reviewing whatever we have done.

Now we will discuss how Qualitative research is interpreted, we will talk about how Qualitative research is presented, what are the concerns, what are the opportunities of ordered by the scores, et cetera. So that will be done, that will be dealt with, in week eight.

Now what do we expect from students? We expect you to listen to the lecturers very clearly, we expect you to contribute, we would encourage you to contribute on the forum that is meant for this purpose. Please think about whatever you have heard, post your questions, post your queries, talk about, you know discuss ideas that generate some interest, discuss ideas that stimulate your imagination and then say ok. Why this, can I know more about this? can I know more about that? Etc.

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## What this course is not

- A prescription
- A substitute for a textbook
- A complete summary of the entire field of qualitative research

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Now what this course is not about, this course is not prescriptive; this course will not give you, step-by-step instructions on how to do things. That is not what this course is aimed at. This course is not a substitute for a standardized text book on qualitative research methods; that is not something this course will do. This course is not a complete summary of the entire field of qualitative research; this course is not aiming to tell you everything there is, to know about qualitative research.

This course is only meant as an overview of the field of qualitative research. The idea here is to stimulate enough interest, is used to stimulate enough curiosity, in the minds of the students, in the minds of the listeners, so that they can take whatever is discussed here and go and explore some more. So if you know the number of questions on the forum will really help us understand how successful we have been as teachers or as you know, some how successful I have been in stimulating your interest in this very, very, very interesting, very enriching field of qualitative research methods.

And that is something that we will really look forward to, please post your questions, I promise you your questions will be answered within a reasonable amount of time to the best of our ability. The discussions will go on and we will have a very nice group that we will build up. Now the bottom line here is that the stimulus will be provided to you and we need you to get the ideas from here.

And explore as much as you like, take the ideas from the discussions here, from the discussions in these videos and talk to your friends, discuss amongst yourselves, if you end

up being more confused, at the end of a lecture than you were, when you began, I will assume that I have done my job.

I need you to open your minds, to more ideas, now I'm not talking about real confusion, I am not talking about you feeling lost hanging in there thinking, okay what did she talk about, no. But, then I need you to be more and more curious, I should use the word confused, if you are more curious, about the topic at the end of the lecture than you were, when the lecture began and then I am doing my job right and that is really what I am here to do in this class.

Now the assignments and I will post all of this information on the announcements portal also, the assignments will be given to you in multiple choice or very, very short answer format and they will all be online assignments and the format will be communicated to you, as soon as the portal opens. The slides will be given to you after the assignments are closed, I am announcing this: the slides will be given to you after the assignments have been closed.

So after we receive the assignments we will give the slides to you and any additional material that we think you can use. We also welcome suggestions on material that you may have found useful, that you would like to share with the rest of the group. Please submit the material, we will go through it and if we find it useful, we will very happily share it with the rest of the group.

So that is what we expecting from our students, to stay in touch, do stay connected and tell us what you need and then we will, you know, we can have discussions on the forum, we can answer your queries, we welcome queries from you, so thank you very much for listening, that is all we will cover in this class. We will get down to the hardcore nuts and bolts of Qualitative research methods in the next class. Thank you very much for listening.