

Qualitative Data Collection:

Focus: Understanding meanings, attitudes, behaviors, and experiences.

Methods: interviews, focus groups, diaries, participant observation.

Characteristics:

- Data is descriptive (words, stories).
- Explores the “why” and “how” of decision-making.
- Provides in-depth and detailed insights.
- Less structured, flexible, open-ended.
- Harder to analyze (subjective interpretation).
- Examples: Interview transcripts, narratives, themes from focus groups.

Advantages:

- Rich, detailed data.
- Useful for exploratory research.
- Flexible approach to discover unexpected findings.

Disadvantages:

- Time-consuming.
- Difficult to quantify.
- Harder to generalize findings.

Quantitative Data Collection:

Focus: Measuring variables and analyzing them numerically.

Methods: Surveys, structured interviews, experiments, questionnaires.

Characteristics:

- Data is numeric (statistics, percentages).
- Focuses on the “what,” “where,” “when,” and “how much.”
- Structured, precise measurements.
- Easier to analyze statistically.
- Examples: Survey results, statistical data, numerical scores.

Advantages:

- Easier to generalize findings to larger populations.
- Allows for statistical analysis.
- Efficient for large sample sizes.

Disadvantages:

- Lacks depth in understanding underlying reasons.
- Can miss important qualitative insights.

Aspect	Qualitative	Quantitative
Nature of Data	Descriptive (words, themes)	Numerical (numbers, statistics)
Focus	Understanding meanings, attitudes, and behaviors	Measuring variables and relationships
Methods	Interviews, focus groups, diaries, observations	Surveys, structured interviews, experiments, questionnaires
Approach	Flexible, open-ended, less structured	Structured, closed-ended, rigid
Purpose	Explore the “why” and “how”	Measure the “what,” “how much,” and “where”
Analysis	Subjective interpretation (thematic analysis)	Objective, statistical analysis
Data Form	Words, stories, narratives	Numbers, percentages, statistics
Sample Size	Usually small, in-depth focus	Usually large, representative of population
Advantages	Rich, detailed insights; flexible for exploratory research	Easy to generalize; allows for statistical analysis
Disadvantages	Time-consuming, difficult to quantify, hard to generalize	Lacks depth, may overlook context or underlying reasons
Examples	Interview transcripts, focus group discussions	Survey results, numerical scores, experimental data

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