Book Review

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Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Information Systems
by: Robert M. Davison
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Historically, scholars in information systems (IS) have relied on material from the social sciences as a primary source for qualitative research, owing to the need for a single authoritative resource. There exists a need for a complete compilation of literature about information systems and qualitative research, which may function as a fundamental resource for students enrolled in advanced information systems courses, hence facilitating their learning and instruction.

Gorman et al. (2005) offered a comprehensive compendium of qualitative research methodologies and techniques. Their book encompassed the entire process from the first idea to the final implementation; including research conducted across many sites and the systematic arrangement of data and comprised a comprehensive handbook of practice for library and information science professionals, with several illustrative examples and case studies. The book included a discussion on grounded theory and several qualitative research methodologies and covered fieldwork, data collecting, recording procedures, analysis of qualitative data, and publishing qualitative research reports.

Given (2008) published The *Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, which provides comprehensive and current content, practical procedures, empirical knowledge, and illustrative examples of qualitative research. This publication effectively fulfils a crucial need in the existing body of reference literature by offering a thorough and encompassing overview of the basic ideas that form the basis of qualitative research methodology. The entries include a comprehensive range of qualitative research methodologies, addressing critical aspects such as participant recruitment, data analysis, ethical considerations, the significance of theory in qualitative research, and other relevant topics. While the scope of subjects covered aims to be all-encompassing, each item is specifically crafted to provide a basic overview of the respective topic.

Goldkuhl (2019) focused on examining qualitative information systems and their methodologies for data collection and replaced 'data collection' with 'data generation' to emphasise the active involvement of the researcher in producing comprehensive and relevant data for further analysis. The data generation process encompasses several activities, such as identifying, concentrating, recording, selecting, extracting, and gathering. To investigate the data generation process, this study employs

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practice-theoretical techniques to elucidate the phenomena inside information systems and the data sources.

Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Information Systems presents a collection of current scholarly contributions from experts in IS to analyse the methodologies and approaches employed in qualitative research within the IS discipline. The chapters consist of several subjects, including the pedagogy of qualitative research techniques, advancements in qualitative methodologies, the interplay between qualitative research methods and theoretical frameworks, and the prospective avenues for advancing qualitative research methods.

The book is structured according to the following groups of subjects. Part I: an overview of qualitative research. Part II: philosophical perspectives: a critical examination of philosophical frameworks. Part III: methodology for conducting qualitative research. Part IV: methodologies for the analysis and interpretation of qualitative data. To have a complete understanding of qualitative research, it is advisable to confine one's focus to the domain of qualitative research in the subject of information systems.

1 Part I: How to do qualitative IS research

This book begins by discussing educating younger scholars and doctorate students in qualitative IS research. The authors investigate the history of qualitative research and data acquisition and processing. The authors also list several obstacles to teaching qualitative research, such as the prevalence of quantitative methodologies in IS research, student misconceptions and fallacies regarding qualitative IS research, the need for a clear and unanimous definition of rigor, contextual disparities, and language barriers.

Examining research discourse styles is the subject of Chapter 3. Post-truth communication in contemporary discourse is characterised by the elevation of personal notions over facts. Modern culture responds to logical arguments with 'whataboutism' and misinformation. Recognising that this phenomenon is pervasive across multiple professional domains is essential. Academics worry about the impact of post-truth culture on scientific organisations. They encourage the prioritisation of scientific discourse and the dissemination of knowledge. Academic pursuits necessitate that individuals engage in active reasoning and evidence-based critical thinking.

Chapter 4 discusses the expanding academic interest in metaphors in IS research. In research in which the authors discovered profound understandings about the perceptions and use of social networking sites, particularly Facebook, among people of varying ages, metaphors should be examined more thoroughly. Visual metaphors for social networking illustrate generational disparities. After concluding the chapter, the authors discuss future research implications.

The development of qualitative researchers' knowledge and skills is addressed in chapter 5, which enhances field research. The authors utilise current academic and personal experience to guide field preparation for researchers and to suggest clarifying methods in research papers. This may assist other researchers in comprehending the design and production of the study. Researchers must learn contextual details that experts may need to consider. This information helps outsiders in understanding the situation.

In chapter 6, the examination is on the potential of phenomenological research to enhance understanding and comprehension in the digital realm. The field of phenology

encompasses the study of human subjective experiences. It is recommended that they be approached with more regularity. Subjective perspectives can influence the social experiences of researchers. The underutilisation of information systems is increasing in tandem with advancements in technology. Individuals needing more expertise in a specific subject need further information or clarification. Scholars investigate the phenomenon of digital existence using theory-free phenomenology. Phenomenological critical evaluations reveal intricate circumstances.

Chapter 7 provides an in-depth analysis of ethnographic evidence. The use of empirical data in professional advice and decision-making processes is progressively growing to optimise results. Ethnography enables academics to comprehensively understand cultural concepts that impact corporations, societies, and localities. Certain ethnographic studies provide more expedient outcomes, while others need more investigation. The strategies outlined above are more effective in conveying practical outcomes. Using agrarian, design, and research ethnography can potentially enhance practical decision-making processes.

Chapter 8 proposes the use of an IT contextual framework. Scholars need to engage in a rigorous analysis of the effects of technology on its practical implementation. Individuals understand how an issue becomes anchored and the subsequent reactions shown by a diverse population. Scholars can provide contextualisation for discussions on technology theory. Vignettes are a way for writers to display their use of technology. Individuals communicate their ideas and challenges using narrative expression. Scholarly research may need to consider certain aspects or elements. Three narratives illustrate the impact of research on technical comprehension.

2 Part II: methodological advances in qualitative IS research

Chapter 9 examines how planned case studies and action research may assist. These factors improve them all and provide outcomes that would not otherwise be attainable. Early case studies help diagnostic and analytical activities that strengthen action research projects. The authors demonstrate their strategy using a Chinese corporate resource planning case study. The case study and action research phases were beneficial in this investigation.

Chapter 10 discusses key concepts and critical thinking. Deconstruction, emancipatory data science, design science, focus groups, collaborative action research, and critical discourse analysis are employed. Experts are developing innovative writing styles, according to the author. These writings focus on Western ideals, personal perspectives, negativity, abstraction, and the local environment. IS professionals should aggressively seek free-people-freedom-promoting research possibilities, the chapter concludes. Using many study techniques increases academic variety. It supports many educational and research approaches to enhance inclusiveness.

Chapter 11 addresses the methods used in sociomateriality from a philosophical point of view that has been called into question for observational study. It investigated how academics use a relationship sociomaterial method in a qualitative observational study. In a field study, they want to show how to use sociomateriality. Relational ontology based IS theory agentialism affected the ways of doing things. Using these methods, authors think of things as flows and forms. The writer's help IS experts understand relational

sociomateriality by using up-to-date academic studies on IS phenomena that include sociomateriality.

Chapter 12 introduces qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), a growing social science and information systems research method. QCA helps academics understand digital phenomena in depth. This technique considers several factors supported by its theories, making it easier to discover causality in complex digital contexts. This chapter encourages researchers to assess their research assumptions thoughtfully and engage in an ongoing conversation between theory and evidence.

Chapter 13 research reveals that phronesis, an Aristotelian theory about how we know, has returned in the past 20 years. Phronesis, episteme, and techne are information types. Phronesis examines how people's activities might attain objectives and satisfaction. Abductive reasoning is used to explore how political and governmental concerns impact behaviour. IS specialists prioritising value-neutral research. Digitisation's complex repercussions have shown that we must understand how technology design and usage influence individuals, businesses, and society. The phonetic study improves research approaches to overcome these issues.

Decoloniality in qualitative information systems research is covered in Chapter 14. Eurocentric IS critical and interpretative research maintains Western epistemic dominance. Decolonial hermeneutics may assist scholars communicate with non-Western cultures, according to this chapter. Indigenous theorists' study local histories and narratives. They want to promote local understanding and population improvement.

In-depth coverage of qualitative evidence theory is provided in Chapter 15. The portrayal of qualitative theorising often emphasises its abstract nature, suggesting that it is not easily teachable and has more similarities with creative pursuits rather than scientific endeavours. This chapter provides an elucidation of qualitative theorisation for academics. This study investigates morphological patterns associated with various hypotheses and establishes connections between these patterns and qualitative data.

3 Part III: theoretical aspects of qualitative IS research

In chapter 16, a dancing metaphor showed how abductive reasoning links evidence and theory. Studies, reasoning, and assumptions are ideal while dealing with computers. Abduction better describes the challenging and faulty process of research conjecture despite its limited study. The chapter discusses abductive reasoning's conceptual origins, methodological criteria, and usage in IS research. The chapter concludes by suggesting abductive thinking for information system innovation.

Within the setting of qualitative IS study, chapter 17 looks at the possibility of creating local theory. According to the definition, an indigenous theory is tailored to the specific wants and situations of people who live and work in a particular place and society. Indigenous ideas are significant for solving problems that need to be understood in the context of their culture and historical background.

Using grounded theory, chapter 18 explores the social effects of automation and datafication. It is tough to keep track of the enormous amount of digital info that is available. It might be possible to solve this problem by combining computer and algorithmic studies with grounded theory. This set of data might show trends that other methods miss. More research is needed to understand these data-driven events fully.

Incorporating digital trace data into qualitative research methodologies necessitates a comprehensive understanding of how this data might be contextualised within different research frameworks. This issue becomes more relevant with the growing use of computer methods in qualitative studies and the integration of qualitative research with other methods. The *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Information Systems* is an extensive compendium that delves into many qualitative research procedures designed for information systems.

The book takes a critical look at current trends in qualitative studies in the field of IS and gives many examples of valuable ways to teach IS research methods. The leading group of authors looks ahead to the future and evaluates basic research methods. They talk about important topics like the essence of theory and philosophy in qualitative IS research and new developments in the field. At the end of the book, it is acknowledged that current research approaches need to be brought together with new ones as part of an exploratory study into the future direction of qualitative IS research potential.

This book says that embracing process thinking and process ontology can help academics in the field of IS improve their ontological frameworks for studying, understanding, and theorising about complex IS phenomena. The goal of this book is to get IS academics interested in and involved with the unpredictable and new parts of the digital world's growth. That way, it hopes to find new ways to investigate things, learn new things, and help people develop new theories. The book wants to make IS study more significant and in-depth. Overall, the book does an excellent job of bringing together the most essential works in the field.

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