

Chapter 6

The Role of Triangulation in Qualitative Research: Converging Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Triangulation is a methodological approach that involves using multiple methods or data sources to enhance the credibility and validity of research findings. This approach is useful in qualitative studies that aim to gain a deeper understanding of complex social phenomena and to understand the intricacies of multicultural environments. By embracing diverse perspectives, methods, and data sources, researchers can verify and validate their findings, leading to more comprehensive and reliable conclusions and can navigate cultural dynamics more effectively, leading to more nuanced and culturally sensitive findings. Beyond methodological considerations, triangulation allows researchers to capture diverse perspectives and enrich their analysis, playing a crucial role in qualitative research by enhancing the credibility, validity, and depth of research findings. Additionally, it is beneficial for mixed methods designs to provide a holistic understanding of research problems. Triangulation serves as a cornerstone for advancing knowledge and understanding in multicultural research contexts.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of triangulation has been widely discussed in the literature, emphasizing its importance in ensuring the robustness of qualitative research. Triangulation can reveal shared perspectives and realities without claiming absolute 'truth' in findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This approach is particularly valuable in qualitative studies that seek to gain a deeper understanding of complex social phenomena.

The significance of using triangulation to improve understanding and strengthen the validity of qualitative research findings has been highlighted in several studies (Clifford et al., 2010; Longhurst, 2016). Researchers can verify and validate their findings by combining different techniques and data sources, leading to more comprehensive and reliable conclusions. Triangulation is useful for mixed methods designs as it integrates quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of research problems (Fielding, 2012). Triangulating data from multiple sources, including stakeholder interviews, enhances scientific research (Sands & Roer-Strier, 2006).

This method enables researchers to capture diverse perspectives and enrich their analysis, playing a crucial role in qualitative research by enhancing the credibility, validity, and depth of research findings. By combining various methods, data sources, or perspectives, researchers can enhance their interpretations and achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied.

TRIANGULATION

Triangulation is a crucial aspect of research as it enhances the credibility, validity, and depth of research findings by integrating multiple methods, data sources, or viewpoints (Hussein, 2009). This methodological approach, which is commonly used in qualitative research, involves the strategic use of different data sources, research methods, investigators, or theoretical frameworks to explore a research question or phenomenon (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1999).

Definition of Triangulation in Qualitative Research

Triangulation is the use of multiple methods or perspectives, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, to collect and interpret data about a phenomenon. The purpose of triangulation is to increase the credibility of the study and obtain an accurate representation of reality (Cassidy et al., 2022; Polit & Hungler 1999).

The term 'triangulation' is metaphorically inspired by navigation, where multiple reference points are used for accurate location. The primary objective is to ensure comprehensive data collection by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to identify similarities and differences. This is particularly valuable for gaining deeper insights into complex social phenomena (Hussein, 2009).

Triangulation, which originated with Denzin's work in the 1970s, emphasizes the need to use multiple data sources and methods to enrich the depth and breadth of qualitative research (Denzin, 1978). Patton (1999) proposed various forms of triangulation, including data triangulation, investigator triangulation, and methodological triangulation, each of which contributes to the overall rigor and credibility of the research. Data triangulation involves using multiple sources of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, to validate or corroborate findings. Investigator triangulation involves the participation of multiple researchers to reduce individual bias and increase reliability (Patton, 1999). Methodological

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