

The research method e-researchers choose can often reveal their beliefs about what is valuable knowledge and, perhaps more importantly, perspectives of the nature of reality . an objective of qualitative research methods is the discovery of patterns and the development of theories that expand understanding of complex social phenomena. When conducting qualitative research the researcher usually uses an in depth inductive process. Semi structured and unstructured interviews are the most common methods for achieving this deep understanding of complex social phenomena. This direct communication allows for customization of the questions , depending on the subjects' previous answers, their attitudes, and the trust that builds between the researcher and the participants. Such direct and focused interaction is necessary to pursue a deep understanding of the subjects' views and of the topic of investigation.

Typically, there is no option for variations in response. While a structured interview, generally referred to as a survey, can be conducted one-on-one with the researcher, it is most commonly presented in a paper based or online format to a large sample. The data from structured interviews are usually analyzed numerically using descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations or multivariate statistics such as cluster and factor analysis, with the reliability of internal scales being calculated using sophisticated mathematical formulas such as Cronbach's alpha. Since these types of interviews are presented to large and carefully selected samples, the results are often evaluated in terms of their generalizability.

to conduct interviews and observe participants in their natural setting, thus making Net-based ethnographic research more commonplace. While this interview process is possible now, it is currently beyond the means of most researchers and their subjects in terms of the cost, required skills, and equipment. There are researchers who conduct ethnographic research in a Net-based context where the objective of the study is to explore the social culture on the Net as well as the use of the Net for data collection. For a variety of reasons (the primary one being financial), most researchers are exploring text-based asynchronous formats for interviewing. This type of interview includes a small number of loosely defined questions (sometimes only one question) that provide openings for the participants to describe their views in their own language and style.