



## Qualitative Research Design generated by Mango

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**Date:** February 11, 2026

## Step 1: Paradigmatic View of the Researcher

The Worldview you will be bringing to the study is:

**Constructivist**

## Step 2: Topic & Goals of your study

### Description of your Research Topic:

I'm wondering about how high school students use social media for collaborative learning outside the classroom. Specifically, I'm interested in understanding what motivates them to create study groups online, how they share knowledge with peers, and whether these informal learning spaces impact their academic performance and engagement. I've noticed that many students seem to learn from each other on platforms like Discord and Instagram, and I want to explore this phenomenon more deeply.

### Personal goals driving your study:

Not yet completed

### Practical goals driving your study:

Not yet completed

### Intellectual goals driving your study:

Not yet completed



## Step 3: Conceptual Framework of your study

### Topical Research:

Research shows that collaborative learning can enhance student engagement and achievement (Vygotsky, 1978; Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Recent studies indicate that Generation Z students are "digital natives" who naturally integrate technology into their learning (Prensky, 2001). However, there's limited research on how students self-organize learning communities on social media platforms. Some studies suggest that peer-to-peer learning on social media can increase motivation (Manca & Ranieri, 2016), while others raise concerns about distraction and misinformation. The gap I see is understanding the authentic student experience and perspective on these practices.

### Gaps identified in the field:

Not yet completed

### Theoretical Frameworks:

Not yet completed

### Problem Statement:

Not yet completed

## Step 4: Research Tradition

The Research Tradition you will be using is:

**Qualitative**

I will use a qualitative methodology because I want to deeply understand students' lived experiences and perspectives. A phenomenological approach will allow me to explore how students make meaning of their collaborative online learning experiences. This aligns with my constructivist worldview, as I'm interested in understanding the subjective reality of participants rather than measuring predefined variables.

## Step 5: Research Questions

How do high school students experience and make meaning of peer collaboration on social media platforms for academic learning purposes?

Sub-questions:

- What motivates students to engage in social media-based study groups?
- How do students describe the benefits and challenges of learning collaboratively on social media?
- In what ways do students believe these experiences influence their academic engagement?

## Step 6: Data Gathering Methods

The data gathering methods you will be using in your study are:

I will collect data through:

1. Semi-structured interviews with 12-15 high school students (ages 16-18) who actively participate in social media study groups
2. Screenshots or anonymized examples of study group interactions shared by participants
3. Reflective journals where participants document their experiences over a 4-week period
4. A focus group discussion with 6-8 participants to explore themes that emerge from individual interviews

This combination will provide rich, detailed accounts of student experiences from multiple angles.

## Step 7: Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis methods you will be using in your study are:

I will use thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify patterns and themes across the data. The process will include:

1. Familiarization: Reading and re-reading transcripts
2. Initial coding: Generating codes that capture important features
3. Searching for themes: Grouping codes into potential themes
4. Reviewing themes: Ensuring themes work across the entire dataset
5. Defining themes: Refining the essence of each theme
6. Writing up: Weaving together narrative and data extracts

I'll use NVivo software to organize and manage the coding process while maintaining an audit trail of my analytical decisions.

## Step 8: Trustworthiness

The strategies you will use to ensure the trustworthiness of your study are:

To ensure trustworthiness, I will employ several strategies:

- Credibility: Member checking by sharing preliminary findings with participants for feedback; triangulation using multiple data sources (interviews, journals, focus groups)
- Transferability: Providing thick, rich descriptions so readers can assess applicability to other contexts
- Dependability: Maintaining a detailed audit trail of all research decisions and analytical processes
- Confirmability: Practicing reflexivity by keeping a researcher journal documenting my assumptions and biases
- I will also engage in peer debriefing with my research advisor to challenge my interpretations and ensure rigor.

## Step 9: Ethical principles driving your study

The ethical principles that will be driving your study are:

Ethical considerations include:

- Obtaining IRB approval before beginning data collection
- Securing informed consent from participants and parental consent for those under 18
- Protecting participant privacy by using pseudonyms and removing identifying information
- Ensuring confidentiality of shared screenshots by blurring names and profile pictures
- Storing all data on password-protected devices and secure cloud storage
- Being mindful of power dynamics as a researcher interacting with students
- Giving participants the right to withdraw at any time without penalty
- Considering potential risks such as discussing negative peer experiences; offering resources for support if needed
- Addressing my own biases through reflexivity to ensure participants' voices are centered