UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Qualitative Social Research

2223-1-F8802N008

Learning objectives

The course aims to offer the essential conceptual tools to construct a qualitative analysis of social phenomena concerning both the material and virtual reality, as well as to provide a guide to the related research methods and techniques. Its main goal is to raise awareness of some crucial epistemological and methodological presuppositions of qualitative social research, by making students able to face socio-cultural questions and problems, project a research design, analyze empirical data of various kinds and communicate the research outputs.

Contents

The course aims at strengthening the interdependence between some sociological approaches and qualitative research and analysis techniques and methods by tutorials and group works. By departing from the identification of sociological questions regarding the virtual and material reality and their interconnections, the students will learn to identify the more idoneous research tools, collecting, coding and analyzing empirical data of various kinds.

Detailed program

The course is divided into three parts.

The first part explores the epistemological, theoretical, and methodological premises of a qualitative social research, looking at the micro, meso, and macro levels of social analysis together. Particular attention will be paid to the interpretative, interactionist, and phenomenological-constructivist approaches, as well as to the field theory.
The second one focuses on the building of a research design based on the interdependence among a conceptual framework, qualitative research and analysis methods and techniques (as well as mixed methods). As regards

research techniques, special attention will be given to narrative interviews, focus groups, digital ethnography, and multimodal digital storytelling, while among analysis techniques and methods more attention will be paid to the thematic analysis, the grounded theory, the interpretative phenomenological analysis, the narrative analysis, the field analysis, the frame analysis, the documentary method of interpretation, the embodied research methods, and the visual methods.
In the third parts the students will participate in group works and tutorials making use of the methods and techniques discussed. Furthermore, strategies in analysis and scientific writing and communication will be discussed.

Prerequisites

A good knowledge of sociological theories and concepts, and of the main tools of the social science research

Teaching methods

Interactive lessons; seminars; group works; tutorials; research reports by the students attending the lessons.

Assessment methods

Written exam for non attending students, that is students who do not participate in group works and do not present research reports.

Students attending the lessons may choose between the written exam and writing a research report (individually or in group). The research report should be sent up to two days before the oral presentation during the exam.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

The texts will be available in the website of the teaching course

Index:

- Savage, M. and Silva, B. Elizabeth (2013), Field Analysis in Cultural Sociology. Cultural Sociology 7(2): 111-126.
- Curry, W.L. & Seddon, J. (2022), Stakes, positions and logics: An institutional field analysis of cross-border health IT policy. Journal of Information Technology 37(2): 165-187.
- Smithson J. (2007), Focus groups. In P. Alasuutari (ed.), Social Research Methods (pp. 356-371). London: Sage Handbook.
- Halkier, B. (2010), Focus groups as social enactments: integrating interaction and content in the analysis of focus group data. Qualitative Research 10(1): 71-89.
- Tie Y. C., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019), Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers, Sage Open Medicine, 7: 1-8.
- Bowen, G.A. (2006) Grounded Theory and sensitizing concepts. International Journal of Qualitative Methods 5(3): 12-23.

- Millikane, P.J. (2012). Examining the nexus between Grounded Theory and Symbolic interactionism. International Journal of Qualitative Methods 11(5): 684-696.
- Floersch, J. & Longhofer, J.L. (2010), Integrating thematic, grounded theory and narrative analysis. Qualitative social work 9(3): 407-425.
- Nasheeda, A. et al. (2019), Transforming transcripts into stories: a multimethod approach to narrative analysis. International Journal of Qualitative Methods 18: 1-9.
- De Fina, A. & Georgakoupolou, A. (2008), Analysing narratives as practices. Qualitative Research 8(3): 379-387.
- Philipps, A. & Mrowczynski, R. (2021), Getting more out of interviews. Understanding interviewees' accounts in relation to their frames of orientation. Qualitative Research 21(1): 59-75.
- Bartoli, A. (2020), Every picture tells a story: combining interpretative phenomenological analysis with visual research. Qualitative Research 19(5-6): 1007-1021.
- Todres, L. & Galvin, K.T. (2008), Embodied interpretation: a novel way of evocatively representing meaning in phenomenological research. Qualitative Research 8(5): 568-583.
- Chadville, R. (2017), Embodied methodologies: challenges, reflections and strategies. Qualitative Research, 17(1): 54-74.
- Engelsrud, G. (2005), The lived body as experience and perspective: methodological challenges. Qualitative Research 5(3): 267-284.
- Mason, J. (2006). Mixing Methods in a qualitatively driven way. Qualitative Research 6(1): 9-25.
- Koenig, T. (2006), Compounding mixed-methods problems in frame analysis through comparative research. Qualitative Research 6(1): 61-76.
- Hood, M.M. (2021), Instagram versus reality: the design and use of self-curated photo elicitation in a study exploring the construction of Scottish identity amongst personal style influencers on Instagram. Qualitative Research 21(6): 865-889.
- Venturini, T. et al. (2018), A reality check(list) for digital methods. New media & Society 20(11): 4195-4217.
- Cottica, A. et al. (2020), Semantic social networks: A Mixed Methods Approach to digital ethnography. Field methods 32(3): 274-290.
- Ruppert, E. et al. (2013), Reassembling social science methods: the challenge of digital devices. Theory, culture & society 30(4): 22-46.
- Lupton, D. (2015), Digital sociology. London&New York: Routledge. (chapter 8, 'The digitized body/self': 164-187)

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION