



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Qualitative Research Methods

2425-1-E4001N076

Learning objectives

Starting from the distinctive features of qualitative research in sociology, the course aims to provide the knowledge required to conduct social research using the main techniques that characterise this approach. At the end of the course, students will be able to design and carry out qualitative research on topics relevant to contemporary society. They will also have acquired skills relating to research techniques, the analysis of qualitative data and the presentation of research results.

Contents

The course aims to introduce students to qualitative research in sociology. After an initial epistemological section, the focus will be on research design and the main techniques of qualitative research, including participant observation, qualitative interviews and focus groups. Therefore, students will learn how to observe social phenomena and write ethnographic notes, develop interview guides and analyse data. Emphasis will be placed on the role of the researcher and the communication of research findings.

Detailed program

In the first part of the course, the distinctive epistemological aspects of qualitative research will be addressed, and an overview of the main topics that can be investigated through a qualitative approach will be outlined.

Subsequently, the main research techniques – participant observation, qualitative interview and focus group – and data analysis approaches will be illustrated, as well as some innovations in the field of data construction and collection. Specific reflections will be addressed to the selection of research participants.

In terms of conducting social research, the focus will be on the development of research projects involving the combined use of multiple qualitative techniques, the observation of social phenomena and situations, the writing of

ethnographic notes, and the production of an interview guide on a specific topic. Special attention will be paid to the role of the researcher in different research contexts and to the communication of the research results.

Prerequisites

There are no preliminary requirements for the course.

Teaching methods

The Course will be divided 60% in didactic (lectures with slides) and 40% in interactive teaching (subgroup work, presentation and discussion). During the course, therefore, the active participation of students in teaching activities will be encouraged.

Assessment methods

Students can choose between:

- A) Project work (a collective paper based on a qualitative research experience).
- B) Written examination with open-ended questions on the topics outlined in the reference texts.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

A) Reference texts for students who choose the project work will be communicated at the beginning of the course.

B) Reference texts for students who choose the written exam.

1) Books:

- Cardano M. & Gariglio L. (2022). *Metodi qualitativi: pratiche di ricerca in presenza, a distanza e ibride*. Carocci.
- Corbetta P. (2015). *La ricerca sociale: metodologia e tecniche. Vol. 1. I paradigmi di riferimento*. Il Mulino.

2) Book chapters (that will be made available on the web page of the course):

- Madge J. (1966). *Lo sviluppo dei metodi di ricerca empirica in sociologia*. Il Mulino.
 - Cap. 3: La scuola di Chicago attorno al 1930 (pp. 131-173).
- Marzano M. (2006). *Etnografia e ricerca sociale*. Laterza.
 - Cap. 3: Le giustificazioni morali della ricerca sociale (pp. 63-100).
- Melucci A. (1998). *Verso una sociologia riflessiva: ricerca qualitativa e cultura*. Il Mulino.
 - Cap. 1: Domanda di qualità, azione sociale e cultura: verso una sociologia riflessiva (pp. 15-31).
 - Conclusioni: Metodi qualitativi e ricerca riflessiva (pp. 295-317).

Erasmus students are requested to contact the professor.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION
