

# Chapter 7

## Unusual Qualitative Research Practices in Management Sciences: The Case of Ethnography and Dyadic Approach

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The qualitative method is an indispensable instrument for researchers who aim to adopt an open, indirect methodology for data collection. Only qualitative methods are capable of providing access to participants personal experiences and to the interpretation of their actions. This chapter aims to highlight the importance of qualitative methods for both researchers and professionals in the management sciences. It will present the theoretical and methodological contributions of two fieldwork methods applied to qualitative research in the management sciences, namely the ethnographic method, insofar as its application requires the use of several data collection materials, and the dyadic approach, which emphasized the link uniting two actors: how and why different transactions are created, supported, or avoided between the members of the duo. This chapter will start with a presentation of the main advantages of exploratory research, then it will outline the foundations of the ethnographic method and the dyadic approach, followed by an explanation of the data collection apparatus.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Each researcher in management science must guide their research towards a precise method, considering the recommendations of authors in the field. This choice must be meticulous, well-considered, and scientifically grounded. In this context, qualitative methods are indispensable tools for researchers who want to adopt an open and indirect methodology for data collection (Charreire & Huault, 2001; Miles & Huberman, 2003; Thiétart, 2007). According to Corbin & Strauss (2008), only qualitative methods can provide access to participants' personal experiences and interpret their actions within a specific context. Negura (2006) notes that there are several techniques for collecting qualitative data, involving discursive materials such as words, phrases, texts, and images.

Adopting exploratory research allows the researcher to draw from a variety of qualitative data collection methods (Negura, 2006), including various forms of interviews (structured, semi-structured, or free), case studies, comparative methods, experimental research, ethnography, simulation, and action research (Wacheux, 1996).

In the field of social and management sciences, the strategy for accessing reality is not neutral, as it often meets the specific requirements of the research problem and the orientation defined by the researcher (Sanséau, 2005; Alla et al., 2022).

This chapter highlights the importance of qualitative methods for both researchers and practitioners in management sciences. We will focus on methods/approaches frequently used in social sciences but recently explored by management sciences. We will begin by explaining the dyadic approach, which focuses on the relationship between two actors: how and why different transactions are created, maintained, or avoided between duo members (Achrol et al., 1983). We will present two examples of applying the dyadic approach in qualitative research in management science.

Next, we will present the foundations of the ethnographic method, explain the data collection apparatus within ethnography, including observation, logbooks, interviews, and direct and indirect visual materials such as photography (Badot et al., 2009). Finally, we will focus on data analysis from the application of this method, as well as some criteria for its credibility and scientific validity.

## **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

### **General Information**

In the 1920s, anthropologists and sociologists were the first researchers to study human phenomena in their natural environment from a holistic perspective, giving birth to qualitative research. A few decades later, in the 1950s, management sci-

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