

## Qualitative Methods in Business Research

*Edited by Paivi Eriksson and Anne Kovalainen*

2nd edition

Sage Publications Ltd.

London

2016

Review DOI 10.1108/QROM-08-2016-1410

---

**87**

Imagine for a moment that its 40 below 0 outside, the depth of winter is upon you, and you roll yourself up into the warmest blanket you can find to keep out the chill. This image – of being surrounded by this warm blanket – kept playing out in my mind as I read through the second edition of *Qualitative Methods in Business Research* by Paivi Eriksson and Anne Kovalainen. I fondly remember the first edition that was assigned to us in my first year as a doctoral student. When I started reading through the first edition, I thought that finally I could understand this journey I was on! The language in the first edition was clear, concise, and such a relief from the ontological and epistemological debates I had been exposed to. The second edition, thankfully, keeps this tradition alive: the book is attainable for its intended student audience and I might add for those that want a refresher in qualitative methodologies that the reader may have skipped over upon first reading.

There are five important changes within the structure and content of this second edition. The first two changes consist of renaming a few key chapters (chapter 4, “Research questions and literature review;” chapter 8, “Interviews and observations;” chapter 9 on “Digital data”), and the addition of new chapters on “Qualitative content analysis,” “Visual research,” and “Publishing.” The next change involves the addition of new and updated literature references (i.e. books and academic publications) to support the various chapters, and to instigate the student to do further independent study via the further reading section found at the end of each chapter. Finally, the two remaining changes involve more editorial issues such as restructuring problems and questions for the reader to practice their acquired knowledge and the tightening up of language for clarity. Within these editorial changes, there are now four parts to this edition (“The business of qualitative research,” “Working with qualitative data,” “Qualitative research approaches,” and “Writing, evaluating and publishing”) as opposed to initial three parts found in the first edition.

The new chapters on “Qualitative content analysis,” “Visual research,” and “Publishing” are very much welcome additions to this book. The “Qualitative content analysis” chapter was present in the first edition, but was lost in the “Electronic research” chapter. The “Visual research” chapter was, I found, an exciting addition as this method gains traction in studying businesses and their environment. Finally, the “Publishing” chapter was a surprise addition that was much needed. Many doctoral students question where and how to publish their research, some to make a difference within the business world and others to build their own academic pursuits. While this last chapter is brief, it allows for the beginning of a conversation on what avenue to follow (i.e. practitioner publications, conferences, book chapters, academic publications, etc.).

I identify in my academic work as a postfeminist poststructuralist. As controversial as this may sound, I must make this distinctive identification clear when I consider my expectations with respect to the “Feminist approach” chapter in this second edition. The authors point out



right away that many textbooks do not identify feminism let alone as a method of study. While I was and continue to be ecstatic that these authors recognize this shortcoming within the business research literature, I really wanted to see some major updates to this chapter which unfortunately did not happen in this edition. Suggested improvements include considering introducing different types of feminism, and then suggesting matches of these types with appropriate methods. Too much focus was given to postmodernism as a feminist method, potentially confusing the audience into believing such avenues such as liberal feminism could be dealt with effectively say via a critical discourse analysis. Feminist studies span many different ontological states which necessitate a variety of potential approaches to bring forth feminist epistemologies, and thus different feminist approaches that can span an extensive continuum of possibilities. While I embrace this book as an introductory one to various qualitative methodologies, the authors have simplified the idea of feminism too much I believe.

On the whole, this is a wonderful warm blanket of a resource book for its intended audience. It provides a level of security to students in understanding the beginning of the conversation on a variety of qualitative methodologies. My first edition book is dog-eared, with many scribbles and tags throughout. I found myself doing the same thing with this second edition – writing down notes for myself, flipping corners of pages, etc. – and it is a welcome addition to my ever growing library of resource books that keep out the cold.

**Stefanie Ruel**

*Athabasca University, Cote Saint-Luc, Canada*

### **Milestone Moments in Getting your PhD in Qualitative Research**

*Zeegers, M. and Barron, D.*

1st edition

Elsevier

Amsterdam

2015

**Review DOI 10.1108/QROM-08-2016-1401**

While the internet is full of blog posts and articles on how to get a PhD, the book *Milestone Moments in Getting your PhD in Qualitative Research* (*Milestone Moments* for short) definitely deserves to be highlighted on a list of hands on practical guidebooks for early stage PhD candidates and for persons considering applying for candidacy. The authors, Dr Margaret Zeegers and Dr Deirdre Barron from the Swinburne University of Technology, draw on their own experiences as supervisors and deliver a book that both breaks down the dissertation process into tangible milestones and covers parts of the process, which are usually overseen in other guidebooks. The book is structured around 12 concrete steps or “milestones” in the PhD process and gives practical advice on how to manage each step. The authors give emphasis to the specific nature of qualitative research and how a young researcher might have to defend one’s choice of conducting qualitative research over quantitative. Each chapter also provides a real-life example from a student paper or dissertation chapter showcasing exemplary examples of how each milestone has been tackled and written. These extracts are accompanied with detailed annotations that help an unpracticed reader to see through the tricks of the trade and learn to evaluate one’s own and others’ writing. The practical approach of the book and the examples provide a comprehensible picture of what it means to get your PhD in qualitative research.