

SGO 4010 – Qualitative method

Course content

The course discusses the qualitative method. At the start the characteristics of the qualitative method is clarified in view of the characteristics of the quantitative method. Other topics are: qualitative data collection and interviewing; qualitative data and interpretation; case studies and analytical generalisation; and power and ethics.

Learning outcomes

The students will gain knowledge about qualitative research. They will obtain competence in a variety of techniques of qualitative data collection. They will become familiar with issues of ethics in qualitative interviewing and in qualitative research writing. Moreover, they will achieve skills in analysing qualitative data including limitations of using such data in empirical and theoretical generalisation.

Knowledge

The course provides students with an overview of key aspects of the qualitative method, and its advantages and limitations regarding research. The students will get an understanding of the distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research through the discussions of the different stages of the research process.

You should have obtained:

A familiarity with key concepts of the qualitative method.

An understanding of the characteristics of qualitative interviewing compared to the characteristics of interviewing in quantitative data collection.

An insight into qualitative data interpretation.

An awareness of limitations of and ways to generalise empirically and theoretically from qualitative data.

Skills

The course seeks to give the students the necessary ability to carry out qualitative research. The goal is that the students should become able to carry out in-depth interviews with different types of informants.

You should be able to:

Make research questions suitable for qualitative analysis and an interview guide.

Analyse qualitative data and include ethical issues in report writings.

View case study findings in a broader empirical and theoretical perspective.

Competence

The course provides the students with an awareness of the advantages and limitations of qualitative research. They will attain an ability to choose between qualitative research techniques adapted both to different research objectives and to various contexts in which data are collected.

You should have gained:

Sufficient knowledge to select a suitable method and research techniques relevant for your master thesis.

An ability to critically assess your findings in view of other related empirical research and theories.

An understanding of the importance of including ethical aspects in all the different stages of the qualitative research process.