



GSJ: Volume 11, Issue 1, January 2023, Online: ISSN 2320-9186  
[www.globalscientificjournal.com](http://www.globalscientificjournal.com)

## **COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

---

By. Florence Nthenya Kigen

A PhD Candidate at Daystar University Kenya

### Abstract

Communication philosophy is a pertinent aspect in scientific inquiry for effective investigation. It is not uncommon to focus on the scientific process of the inquiry which is a paramount exercise and fail to enhance the philosophical communication aspect which is equally important. The scientific facts need to be communicated with clarity to ensure that the target audience as well as the general public are well informed of the issue of concern. Such clarity births motivation and conviction to take the necessary action or adopt the recommended attitudes. This paper examines the role of philosophical communication in the scientific process and how effective communication can bridge gaps in the scientific process until the culmination of the same through effective dissemination after a close investigation of other scholars. This would ensure that research reports are not just dumped in shelves but that the recommendations are actualized.

Key words: Communication, philosophy, inquiry, justification, qualitative, dissemination, writing, editing

## Introduction

Communication is an important aspect in qualitative research since such an inquiry involves capturing life experiences of persons or groups in a society. Qualitative research employs methods of data collection such as interviews, focus group discussions, observations, narratives, videos, biographies, drawing and others in order to understand the participants' context as stated by Subudhi and Mishra (2019). This involves a great deal of communication and therefore the researcher is mandated to exhibit a clear understanding of philosophy in communication so as to portray with clarity the various contexts as depicted in the empirical.

As Subudhi and Mishra (2019) further indicates, the researcher is an important instrument in collection and analysis of data. Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger (2020) say that a researcher has to make informed decisions concerning the choice of methods and implementation of the same as well as which and how many units to apply. This may demand for several back and forth move between data collection and analysis. New insights spring up leading to expansion of the original plan (Busetto et al., 2020).

Ronald (2016) indicates that qualitative research involves communication related activities including “questioning, reading, writing, editing, thinking, and interpretation” (p.1) which are not isolated categories but functioning simultaneously in a qualitative inquiry process.

### Communication Philosophy in Designing an Inquiry Topic

In designing a scientific inquiry, a researcher begins with a question in an effort to understand the empirical as stated by Ronald (2016). The investigator therefore needs to design the issue in question in a logically sound way so as to present it to the public as a postulation of inquiry. The issue should be posited in manner so as to make complete sense and be philosophical enough to convince the public that it is worth undertaking. A sloppily designed topic of inquiry

may confuse the investigator as well as the intended consumers of the work produced. One should be able to detect the significance and rationale of the study just from the topic. This therefore demands the researcher to be concise yet meaningful in every terminology employed in making up the topic.

As individual explores writings whether online, academic works, books articles among others, one acquires information and insight to begin the engagement in a certain topic/ issue (Ronald, 2016). This demands for one to further explore the questions of others and how they have sought to answer them in the process of an inquiry. One is able to gain temporal understanding of their question and this acts as a basis of proceeding with the process of the investigation as Ronald further indicates.

#### Communication Philosophy in Literature Review

An investigator needs to have a philosophical mind when delving in literature review so as to detect and draw connections while synthesizing ideas and compliments as well as the differences that exist in the various lines of thoughts expressed by the various scholars on a given topic as indicated by Keen and Todres (2006). Qualitative inquiry also involves gathering pieces that support and evidence enough to begin filling gaps as well as creating openings that demand for further reading (Ronald, 2016). This calls for a philosophical qualitative reading and for one to explore the dimensions of work simultaneously; being able to perceive and acknowledge the multiple dimensions of reading commonly known as hypertextuality that enriches as well as perplexes the reader as Ronald (2016) says.

As Leydesdorff (2021) indicates, a communicative perspective on the sciences enables a researcher to move to the next step of measurement which involves discussing knowledge contents. Knowledge propositions are organized into texts constructed into evolving structures (Leydesdorff, 2021). The collection of citation on related issues among journals enable for

visualizing of structures and relations and the researcher is able to reproduce various structures which differ and involve use of specific codes in communication as Leydesdorff indicates.

### Justification and Validation by Philosophical Communication

Communication philosophy is very significant in both the context of discovery as well as in the context of justification as Leydesdorff (2021) continues to say. The communicative perspective provides for local interactions and exchanges in the process of discovery which is bottom-up based and also concerns submitting knowledge claims (Leydesdorff, 2021).

Communication perspective also provides for the validation of knowledge by providing justifications in globalized contexts as well as playing a key role in mediation of these prior mentioned processes in texts and discourse. It enables a researcher to determine the kind of diction to adopt so as to bring out the intended research related information effectively as Leydesdorff says. The researcher then interweaves the three contexts historically but analytically recognizable (Leydesdorff, 2021).

### Philosophical Writing in Qualitative Research

Writing is an important gathering tool in qualitative research. It involves opening and meeting gaps in the process of interpretation. Ronald (2016) further says that writing allows for macro-points of understanding to be shade light into. The researcher writes to fill and open gaps while contenting and balancing a multiplicity of opinion; it involves handling gaps between opinions and the interspaces. The researcher shifts from writing from an act of accumulation to conversations that begins with questions and discerning to give a particular position as Ronald (2016) indicates.

### Editing as a communication philosophy function

Editing is another step in a qualitative scientific inquiry and this involves contemplative philosophical thinking as Ronald enables for enhanced coherence, clarity and theoretical enhancing. It involves attending to the gaps in writing and highlighting areas that may require additional research, provision of evidence and enhancing clarity. This macro-level editing involves simultaneous connection of one idea to another and ensuring a continuous flow of idea from one paragraph to another while being keen on individual research reports. This involves thoughtfulness in diction as one begins to form a picture of the whole project. As (Ronald, 2016) further explains that mere engaging in thoughtfulness of individual choices of words without key ideas and evidence can lead to sophism which only responds to gaps and questions and fail to connect key ideas to come with logical explanations.

### Philosophical Communication and Interpretation

Thinking and interpretation are employed at each stage of the inquiry and this involves both deductive and deductive reasoning in a qualitative study where abduction drives the implications (Ronald, 2016). Abduction is an educated and reasoned guess taking the best form of public explanations concerning a set of happenings as Ronald further states. In engaging the key components of an inquiry, one is able to develop a picture of the whole venture where the different components transition from one idea to another and therefore one edits to enhance clarity (Leydesdorff, 2021). Through the process of editing, one attends to an emergent revelation truth.

Qualitative research embraces abduction which is a thoughtful reasoning that allows for educated and reasoned guess assuming the form of the best public explanation for an observed set of happenings; one is able to ascertain what is around the corner that is out of

sight momentarily as Leydesdorff (2021) further clarifies. This involves a dialogic engagement that involves inductive and deductive insights with interpretive clarity. (Keen &

### Communication Philosophy in Dissemination of Findings

Keen and Todres (2006) state that many qualitative researches continue to pile on shelves year after year without much impact; something which is attributed to authors paying attention to scientific concerns of the qualitative research and fail to consider the communicative ones. Keen and Todres (2006) says that dissemination of research is either passive or active. Passive dissemination is a form of conventional communication like academic journal publication while active disseminations involve tailoring research findings targeting a target audience by using dynamic flow of information (Keen & Todres, 2006).

Multifaceted intervention offers the best hope in promoting behaviour change in communicating the findings (Leydesdorff, 2021). Research formats should be fashioned to appeal to potential consumers and different formats. It should be tailored in approaches that appeals to the audience in relation to the content, message and medium (Leydesdorff, 2021). One should pay attention to the source of the message and allowing for active discussion of the research findings (Keen & Todres, 2006); (Leydesdorff, 2021).

### Conclusion

Communication philosophy is a key strategy that needs to be well exploited right from designing of the research topic and in the whole process of the investigation. This would ensure that the various components and issues in the research are well articulated and clearly availed to the target audience for the necessary action.

## References

- Busetto, L., Wick, W., & Gumbinger, L. (2020). How to use and assess qualitative research methods. *Neurological Research and Practice*, Retrived from, <https://neurorespract.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s42466-020-00059-z>.
- Keen, S., & Todres, L. (2006). Communicating qualitative research findings: An annotated bibliographic review of non-traditional dissemination strategies. *Institute of Health and community Studies*, 1-60.
- Leydesdorff, L. T. (2021). Chapter 2 The Communication Turn in Philosophy of science. In L. Cantoni, & J. A. Danowski, *The Sciences are Discursive Constructs*: (pp. 39-50 [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-030-59951-5\\_2](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-030-59951-5_2)). Berlin, Germany: De Gruiter Mouton.
- Muhammad, A. (2016). The relevance of philosophy in media and communication . *Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 21(12), 10-15. DOI: 10.9790/0837-2112021015.
- Ronald, C. A. (2016). Philosophy of communication: Qualitative research questions in Africa. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, 17:1, 1-6, DOI:1020/17459435.2016.1194313.
- Subudhi, R. a. (2019). Methodological Issues in Management Research: Advances, Challenges, and the Way Ahead. *Emerald insight*, 1-328. Doi:10.1108/9781789739732.

© GSJ