



Organizational Development & Evaluation

Overview of Qualitative and Quantitative Program Evaluation Methods

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods yield **non-numeric information** and are used to **better understand the issues being addressed**. They are best for understanding the nature of something. They provide a deep understanding of the context, processes, and significance. However, due to the subjective nature of the data, they may not be generalizable. For program evaluation purposes, qualitative methods can be used to develop program outcomes, elicit qualitative findings and success stories, and clarify evaluation findings when necessary.

Quantitative Methods

Quantitative methods provide measurable and analyzable **numerical data**. They help appreciate the extent of something. They can **help measure the program's outcomes and impacts**. However, they may overlook the context or depth of individual experiences.

These methods are not mutually exclusive. They can be integrated as complementary forms of investigation, each contributing to different stages in the scientific process. This allows for a more comprehensive evaluation of the program.

Comparing qualitative and quantitative program evaluation methods		
	Qualitative Methods	Quantitative Methods
Definition	Qualitative methods are best for understanding the nature of something.	Quantitative methods help in appreciating its extent.
When to Use	If we do not know the nature of something, we should conduct qualitative studies.	After measuring something, we may still need to use qualitative methods to learn about variations and unique forms.
Strengths	They provide a deep understanding of the context, processes, and significance.	They provide measurable and analyzable numerical data.
Limitations	They may not be generalizable due to the subjective nature of the data.	They may overlook the context or depth of individual experiences.
Role in Program Evaluation	They can help understand the program's implementation, the environment, and the people involved.	They can help measure the program's outcomes and impacts.
Examples	Interviews, focus groups, ethnography, observation, and case studies.	Surveys, tests, questionnaires, experiments, and statistical analysis.