**Qualitative analytic techniques to examine ethnographic data**

**Abstract**

Data analysis in qualitative research involves summarizing data in a dependable and accurate manner and leads to an undeniable presentation of study findings.

Qualitative data analysis requires that the researcher be patient and reflective in a process that strives to make sense of multiple data sources, including field notes from observations and interviews, questionnaires, maps, pictures, audiotape transcripts, and videotaped observations. On the other hand, data interpretation is an attempt by the researcher to find meaning in the data in terms of the implications of the findings. Analysis involves summarizing what’s in the data, whereas interpretation involves making sense of—finding meaning in—those data. Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data challenge researcher to explore every possible angle and try to find patterns and seek out new understandings from the data.

The techniques outlined in this lecture will serve as guideposts and prompts to move through analysis and interpretation as efficiently as possible. This lecture includes definitions and purposes of data analysis and data interpretation before, during, and after data collection; steps involved in analyzing qualitative research data; data analysis strategies (identifying themes, coding interviews, surveys, analyzing antecedents and consequences, displaying findings in matrixes, charts, concept maps, graphs, and figures, stating what is missing, questions for which we are not able to provide answers); data interpretation strategies (highlighting connections, common aspects, linkages between data, categories, patterns, what is important in the data, why is important, what can be learned from it, so what; extending the analysis, connecting findings with personal experience, seeking the advice of critical friends, contextualizing the findings of the study in the related literature, turning to theory, provide a clear link between data collection, analysis, and interpretation) and steps to be followed to ensure the credibility of qualitative research study.