

Navigating the Landscape of Qualitative Research Methods in Pakistan: Opportunities, Challenges, and Future Directions

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Abstract

This discussion paper describes the increasing popularity of qualitative research methods and their application in Pakistan. It defines qualitative research methods and discusses why they are becoming an integral part of the Pakistani research domain. This paper discusses the possibilities and limitations of qualitative methods. This paper begins with a look at the central role of paradigms, pragmatics, and politics in determining why qualitative methods are chosen. The paper also gives a detailed account of using qualitative research methods at all stages of the studies in Pakistan. It introduces the design phase in which researchers make decisions related to sampling, methods of data collection, and ethical considerations. The paper then discusses the implementation of fieldwork, highlighting strategies for building rapport, interviewing, and observing participants that underpin data generation processes as guiding work dynamics in a complex Pakistani research environment. It also focuses on the analysis stage by discussing coding methods, data interpretation, and synthesis of quality descriptions, as well as situating findings within a larger social, cultural, and political setting in Pakistan. Lastly, the paper highlights some common issues in conducting qualitative research studies, particularly in Pakistani settings. It looks at quality concerns to assure the trustworthiness and credibility of qualitative research, discusses pedagogy that fosters skills needed to engage in rigorous analytical practices, and addresses ways research reports can be written. Hence, they appeal not only to Pakistan-based academics but will resonate cross-culturally wherever they are read.

Keywords: Qualitative Research, Research Design, Research Ethics, Cultural Sensitivity.

Introduction

As a result of methodological diversity, qualitative research has emerged, and the approach has been recognized in the academic context of Pakistan over a few decades. Praised for their effectiveness in describing social processes and enriching the context in which they take place, the traits of these methods make them suitable for being a qualitative counterpart to more quantitative-based approaches (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Different qualitative research methods embrace ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and case studies, which typically involve collecting non-numerical data to offer richer ways of understanding the human lived experience (Marshall et al., 2022; Mills & Jordan, 2022).

The increasing inclination towards qualitative research in Pakistan can be attributed to various reasons. First, there is an increased understanding of the fact that qualitative methods on their own have many advantages when it comes to the colorful spectrum of social, cultural, and

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political dynamics taking place within the Pakistani setting (Patton, 2015a). Because of Pakistan's rich oral tradition and storytelling history, people will recognize qualitative methods more easily. In addition, flexibility and adaptability, such as the choice of methods for qualitatively investigating new problems or populations in Pakistan's complex society, are essential as its context is rapidly changing due to the rapid urbanization throughout the country's cities and new and somewhat under-investigated issues and target populations are emerging there.

Thus, discussing the importance of qualitative research in Pakistan is highly relevant. Pakistan is among the developing countries with a complex social system structure; therefore, it has numerous challenges requiring nuanced understanding, and solutions must be sought to address the circumstances of the given case. On the other hand, qualitative approaches provide researchers with a rich account of the analysis of issues such as poverty, gender discrimination, and ethnic relations that would be useful in comprehending those complex issues when deciding strategies or adopting policies or social interventions. Also, these approaches allow the revealing of the voices of individuals/groups that are otherwise neglected as well as research sensitive topics that may be difficult to address through more structured, quantitative approaches (Leavy, 2022; Silverman, 2021; Tracy, 2020).

This paper aims to examine Pakistan's qualitative research methods landscape and explore how opportunities and challenges can be harnessed to promote their adoption. It will first examine the main benefits of qualitative research in Pakistan and then discuss some of the difficulties and constraints researchers face. From there, the paper will explore reasons for using qualitative methods (rationales), using such methods across each stage in these studies, and some specific issues surrounding quality criteria, teaching approaches, and dissemination.

Opportunities and Challenges of Qualitative Research in Pakistan

One key advantage of this qualitative research in Pakistan is the possibility of obtaining an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena (Tracy, 2024). Such basic definitions of natural phenomena can be established by means different from mere categories and closed questions for points as predetermined in quantitative methods; meanwhile, ways to observe the intensity, nuances, and subtlety of human experiences and social interactions can be accomplished with ease in qualitative approaches (Bao, 2024; Patton, 2015b; Punch, 2013). For Pakistan, this is important as its social problems are mainly mixed with historical and cultural facts. This can include, for example, a rich qualitative study by Anjum et al. (2021) on the experiences of teachers from religious minorities in Pakistan who are embroiled in religion-based social adversities—illustrating the intricate relation between identity-related problems with one's faith status, social discrimination, and community resilience.

However, one of the most significant opportunities exists in the cultural sensitivity and contextual understanding that qualitative methods offer. A research approach that can adapt according to local norms and values while respecting them would be ideal since the country's land is rich and ethnically and culturally diverse (including in its languages and regional variations between different provinces). Qualitative methods focus on emic perspectives and thick descriptions of culture, helping researchers penetrate the cultural world and cultivate an understanding from that largely empathetic point of view (Geertz, 1973). This cultural sensitivity is necessary to have an ethical means of undertaking research within Pakistan, especially when exploring sensitive topics or marginalized communities (Bush, 2024).

Again, this flexibility of qualitative research design (Creswell & Poth, 2024) is a significant advantage in the Pakistani context. This is particularly the case in Pakistan, where fieldwork can be unpredictable, with political instability, security concerns, or natural disasters coming out of nowhere to disrupt field plans, and this type of flexibility associated with qualitative methods is a blessing (Muhammad & Brett, 2015). Researchers can revise their research,

sampling, and data collection strategies in light of changing situations or new findings. This flexibility also enables the examination of new and under-studied phenomena, rendering qualitative research particularly apt to consider in a context where the social landscape was unfolding remarkably fast, e.g., Pakistan (Muhammad & Brett, 2015).

Although these opportunities exist, they are not all rosy when conducting qualitative research in Pakistan. One of the greatest perceived needs is increased rigor in training for qualitative methodologies. Most Pakistani researchers and students are trained in quantitative traditions, but formal training opportunities in qualitative methods still need to be provided (Ullah & Rafiq, 2021). When these rationales are not clearly articulated or defended, it can result in misunderstanding about the strength and trustworthiness of qualitative research, making conducting a rigorous study more difficult.

Quality is also a significant issue in research. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation are inherently subjective; thus, researchers must be thorough about trustworthiness in their work (Flick, 2022). Given the prevalent challenges of academic integrity in Pakistan, it is imperative to uphold strict standards for qualitative research. This consists of validating through member checks, colleagues debriefing at the end, and transparency in reporting on research mechanisms (Creswell & Poth, 2024).

In addition, limited resources can often constrain qualitative researchers in Pakistan. Good qualitative data collection processes still tend to be slow and expensive, involving the field worker going out into the community collecting stories or experiences directly from participants (sometimes called interviews), transcribing the recordings of interviews, and finally undertaking a critical analysis, which relates them holistically as patterns for each focused thematic concern (Miles et al., 2020). Qualitative researchers could find themselves competing for limited research funding that typically favors the more significant numbers required by quantitative studies in a context where this is not feasible (Ryen, 2021; Thomas, 2021). Alternatively, this can restrict the contributions of qualitative research to knowledge and policy (Anney, 2014; Enworo, 2023; Gunawan, 2015).

Moreover, cultural and linguistic demands give qualitative researchers way more distinct challenges in Pakistan. More generally, there may be limitations to data collection in the country due to linguistic diversity (with over 70 different languages spoken), which is particularly challenging when working with more marginal or rural communities (Shackle, 2006). Cultural norms surrounding gender, age, or social status could also discourage researchers from accessing specific communities and limit their ability as participants to share sensitive information at once (Rahman, 2004, 2011, 2012). Overcoming these obstacles necessitates working with well-informed community members and creating research strategies that reflect local conditions.

Selecting Qualitative Research Methods

In Pakistan, the choice of qualitative research methodology results from a complex interplay between paradigmatic, pragmatic, and political considerations. Researchers need to comprehend these rationales to make informed methodological decisions supporting Pakistan's research type and context.

Philosophical foundations are the reason for paradigmatic choices of qualitative methods (Crotty, 1998; Willis, 2007). From an epistemological perspective, qualitative research in Pakistan can be situated within the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, arguing that knowledge is a social construct and that there exist as many versions of reality as people's lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This epistemological stance looks entirely appropriate in Pakistan, where the differences in meanings and experiences might reflect a relatively high

degree of fluctuation in different communities and population groups due to the country's highly diverse culture.

Ontologically, it has been observed that most of the Pakistani researchers focusing on largely qualitative studies are relativists, meaning they agree with the camp that 'reality is socially and historically constructed' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2018). This ontological assumption is a perfect argument since Pakistan is subject to fast social change, religious impacts, and regional differences, which create rather intricate realities. For this reason, quantitative methods do not embrace these multiple, socially constructed realities; the strength of qualitative research is the detailed account and analysis of the context that describes the phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2018).

Moreover, pragmatic considerations also play a significant role in selecting qualitative methods in Pakistan. The nature of most research questions typically determines the methodological approach and is particularly well suited to qualitative methods involving exploratory or grounded investigations into these complex social phenomena (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2024; Morse et al., 2021). For example, a study by Aslam et al. (2022) used qualitative research into the lives of trans people in Pakistan. It provided detailed insights into what is at stake for this marginalized community that would have been impossible to explore with quantitative analysis only.

Available resources also significantly affect methodological choice (Flick, 2018) in Pakistan. As a result, available resources influence the ability and cost of data collection efforts. Although qualitative research often requires a lot of time and human resources, it is more accessible in settings without rapid access to large-scale quantitative data collection tools or statistical software. While a large sample size is not often possible in many resource-constrained settings, the beauty of qualitative data that these tools can generate means this method could prove to be 'pragmatic' for situations when precise conception tracing or comprehensive inclusion lists are unavailable (Flick, 2018).

Time constraints similarly shape the choice of qualitative methods. Qualitative studies are typically more flexible than the structured format of quantitative analyses. However, text-based analysis is time-consuming in the Pakistani context, where field research often surprises researchers, which may need a flexible methodology to navigate emergent issues (Maxwell, 2012). For example, a study effectively utilized qualitative methods to explore the effect of climate change on rural lives in Sindh province with rapid changes through field realities that unfolded different trends, eventually emerging as significant themes only after a long period (Rashid & Ali, 2019).

The political dimension of research methodology selection in Pakistan must be balanced. Systems of power relations in the country's social and political context, religious influence, and regional disparities still require an approach fine-tuned enough to respond to the intricacy of complex topics with delicacy while allowing the hyper-marginalized to enunciate themselves. The qualitative method may be a helpful research approach in situations requiring a trusting relationship, such as complex cases or politically sensitive issues.

Regarding the Pakistani context, power relations are even more critical regarding research. The research methods proposed in the frames of the grounded theory's feminism participatory research, or postmodern epistemology, can challenge the research and the relationship power relations (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). This is important when dealing with sensitive topics or marginalized groups in society.

Finally, the expectation of advocacy and social change is often known to be a reason for choosing qualitative methods in Pakistan. Qualitative research can provide compelling narratives and narrative accounts of social issues that can sometimes be helpful for advocacy (Denzin, 2017). In a society filled with so many social problems, the ability of qualitative research to reflect more than figures and nuanced understanding of complex issues is priceless.

For example, a qualitative study by Muhammad(2015) traced the evolution in curriculum policy targeted at secondary school Pakistan Studies, particularly regarding concepts that promoted national identity, cultural diversity, and global perspectives. This analysis showed that the proposed differences would occur at macro-level policy documents, textbooks (Meso level), and teachers (microlevel). However, while the macro level sought pluralist practices, textbooks were more national-statist/Islam-centric in constructing a framework for conceptualizing a common identity. Islamist and nation-statist perspectives were common among teachers. The study recommended that effective curriculum reform can bridge policy contexts and state exams.

To sum up, several paradigmatic, pragmatic, and political influences have combined to strongly favor qualitative methods in Pakistan. Furthermore, the researchers should keep in mind these rationales; their methodological choices are consistent with what they intended to study and how they look at issues philosophically within a particular socio-political context of Pakistan so that they could make the best use of a qualitative approach to producing knowledge worthy of discussion among academics and civil society, thus making change within a country.

Application of Qualitative Research Methods in the Pakistani Context

Qualitative research methods in Pakistan demand context-specific modifications, ranging from communities' cultural, social, and political tendencies. This section discusses the major components of employing qualitative techniques and the research process, from design to analysis, in Pakistani settings.

Research Design Phase

The samples used in qualitative research studies based in Pakistan must always consider whether there is a possible balance between rigorous methodological work and applied operationalism. Like other sampling techniques, purposeful sampling is commonly used to identify cases most likely to yield elevated levels of information, allowing the researcher to study the matter at hand. Additionally, snowball sampling is often used when sensitive issues or specific group populations are involved. However, it is also necessary to stress that such an approach is associated with definite biases, especially in a society such as ours, where most social networks are based on communities or ethnic, religious, and caste backgrounds (Patton, 2015).

When conducting their research, Pakistani researchers tend to use semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as data collection tools in their respective qualitative research. It harmonizes with the oral narrative tradition of Pakistani culture and explores multifaceted social phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, gender dynamics and other culturally sensitive issues have to be considered by researchers for the said exercise. For instance, These may include the need for a separate focus group for males and females in conservative areas. Participant observation—the research method deemed the core of ethnographic investigation—also demands that the researcher is sensitive and, at times, located in the multifaceted social structure of people, whereby power relations and cultural norms are unveiled (Beach et al., 2018; Fetterman, 2019; Lofland et al., 2022).

This is even more important in the Pakistani setting, where anything to do with privacy, consent, or confidentiality can sometimes be considered controversial. The inequality dynamics should be acknowledged, which requires researchers to navigate power relations and ensure the research participants, especially those whose rights are endangered, comprehend what they are being enrolled in (Ratnam & Drozdowski, 2022). In a setting where participants cannot read, obtaining informed consent may require adaptations. For instance, innovative methods such as verbal techniques or including community leaders in the consenting process might be employed. Finally, researchers need to consider how they mitigate risks for

participants and perform vulnerability assessments in such sensitive matters as the experiences of religious minorities or political dissent.

Fieldwork Phase

In Pakistani qualitative research, building rapport with participants is incredibly important. Between researchers and their research sites, there are complex political agendas and social dominance mechanisms that the researcher must navigate to be trusted. This usually includes rituals like eating together and participating in community activities to show respect by cultural competency. Fluency in local dialects can make a massive difference in the ease of establishing rapport and in sending entirely different messages—most significantly, you are committed to interpreting their experience through their eyes.

Communication is primarily indirect, and researchers have to deduce cues from implicit messages. Questions that allow for a narrative are even better, as they fit in with Pakistani oral traditions. Despite this, researchers should also be ready for how interviews may morph into discussions, where participants take these opportunities to voice more significant concerns or frustrations.

Pakistan needs fieldwork models where participant observation works, keeping in view the local ground realities. Some communities (e.g., religious ceremonial events or family celebrations) may require active participation. However, researchers must always be aware of where they are situated and how their presence might change what they observe (Flick, 2018). For instance, a female researcher studying in male spaces might have to interact with the subtleties of gendered processes to get entry and be able enough to generate meaningful data. Another area of concern is cultural sensitivity in fieldwork in Pakistan. Respect for cultural practices, dress codes, and social norms. Researchers must be mindful of the local customs and conduct their research in accordance with them. This could mean adjusting research protocols around prayer times or fasting during Ramadan. Be attuned to issues of honor and shame, which have been known to affect participants' responses. Researchers may also need to be ready to handle sensitive topics appropriately and achieve the relevant aims.

Unfortunately, security concerns are part of the package in some parts of Pakistan. The researchers should perform a comprehensive risk assessment and safety protocols, especially while working in war zones or on politically charged topics (Muhammad & Brett, 2015). This can include working with local organizations, seeking government clearance, and being unobtrusive during fieldwork. This flexibility in research design is vital because security issues may change quickly, and the data collection strategy or sites must be reconsidered (Muhammad & Brett, 2015).

Analysis Phase

Linguistic and cultural nuances continually influence coding techniques in Pakistani qualitative research. Some researchers argue that in-vivo coding, where participants' language is translated into codes, can be beneficial for articulating concepts and experiences specific to a culture (Saldaña, 2021). However, researchers must be cautious when translating codes from local languages into English and preserving their original meanings. Collaborating directly with local researchers or cultural consultants can improve coding reliability—especially when the researcher is not originally from the participants' culture.

Interpretation strategies must balance emic (insider) and etic (outsider) perspectives. Scholars aim to comprehend phenomena from participants' attitudes and simultaneously place these perspectives inside a larger theoretical context. They must be reflexive and scrutinize how their cultural backgrounds shape how some interpretations make sense or can only hold in a specific context (Berger, 2015). Member checking provides researchers with a mechanism for

interjecting field data into the analytic process, thus potentially increasing credibility; it also ensures that local perspectives are reflected accurately within the research findings.

In Pakistani qualitative research, data synthesis tools enable the calibration of information from various sources to obtain a holistic perspective of societal matters and intricacies. Similarly, data from interviews can be triangulated with observations and document analysis (Denzin, 2017) to increase the robustness of findings. Narrative analysis/thematic synthesis enables the amalgamation of complex and contextualized narratives while paradoxically seeking to identify universal trends or patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

For their utility and applicability, it is essential to frame findings in Pakistan's social, cultural, and political landscape. It seems that the researchers must attempt to relate their findings to another similar historical, religious, and socio-economic framework in Pakistan while concluding. Finally, researchers should be cautious of generalizing findings from one region within Pakistan to the whole country as there are regional variations in practices.

Research findings also require careful consideration because of their political implications. In a country such as Pakistan, where research can have more significant policy implications, researchers will likely need to navigate the sensitive politics surrounding their findings. This can involve framing results to tell a constructive and actionable story while retaining academic rigor.

Overall, qualitative research methods in Pakistan need a form of reflexivity toward the social structure based on understanding the nature and state of the political economy within all its constituencies. Every other research stage, from the sampling strategy focusing on a diverse population to data analysis ensuring cultural meanings are retained, needs special attention and modification for the Pakistani context. The successful negotiation of these challenges will enable researchers to produce theoretically robust, culturally nuanced findings that inform both academia and social policy in Pakistan.

Quality Criteria for Qualitative Research in Pakistan

Maintaining the standard of qualitative research in Pakistan is essential to ensure their faith and importance on both academic and societal pedestals. Applying the criteria of trustworthiness, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested, is a valuable framework to judge the quality standards in qualitative research conducted in a Pakistani setting. This covers the areas, i.e., Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability, and each of these needs specific considerations in a unique research scenario that serves before Pakistan researchers (Enworo, 2023).

Qualitative findings' credibility is similar to quantitative research's internal validity. Credibility is a requirement if we wish readers or other stakeholders to take our study seriously. Given the impact of cultural nuances and social complexities on research outcomes in Pakistan, strategies to enhance credibility are especially critical. Prolonged work in the field to permit researchers time to attend cultural context is vital (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A critical strategy for increasing reliability is member checking or respondent validation. By this, we mean taking the preliminary findings and confirming with participants that their experiences were represented correctly. Nonetheless, it would be essential to remember that the culture of criticism and disagreement in some places can make people reluctant to provide genuine feedback (Rashid & Ali, 2019).

Transferability in qualitative research measures how the results will apply to other cases. A country like Pakistan, which is one of the most diverse areas in terms of regional, ethnic, and socio-economic disparities, must give a thick description of its research setting and participants to be able to help other researchers decide how generalizable those findings may have been within the context (Flick, 2022; Geertz, 1973; Mills & Jordan, 2022). For instance, research on the educational practices in rural Sindh should well mention what are the peculiar socio and

economic determinants specific to this region since it will help those readers who would be interested that findings can or cannot be equally generalized for other rural parts of Pakistan as also highlighted by many scholars studying similar contexts globally.

Reliability, dependability, and confirmability address the reliability of research findings. This can be a problem in reliability when research infrastructure and support might need to be more precisely present across this local context (as an example, found in Pakistan). Any changes in the research design and measures to collect data must be well documented as this forms an essential part of any process insight (Yin, 2017). Audit trails also enhance dependability and confirmability by enabling the reader to obtain a clear depiction of our research pathway (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Peer debriefing and external audits could also help with the dependability and confirmability of qualitative research in Pakistan. Engaging colleagues more broadly within the Pakistani community, though not directly involved in this study, offers insights into potential biases or blind spots that could have been overlooked during data collection or analysis (Patton, 2015a).

Teaching Qualitative Research Methods in Pakistan

Similarly, teaching qualitative research methods in Pakistan presents opportunities and challenges. Cultivating skills and competencies that benefit rigorous qualitative inquiry must engage Pakistani researchers, scholars, or students on multiple levels suited to their context.

A fundamental problem has been the sheer dominance of quantitative, numeric research in Pakistani academic-professional discourse. Incorporating qualitative methods often demands a change in mindset and the understanding that interpretivism has its place within research. To combat this, educators must nurture questioning minds and promote skepticism of positivist beliefs about the nature of knowledge and reality. This will involve practical training in data collection methods such as interviews, participant observation, and focus groups.

Cultural sensitivity must be incorporated into research training in the Pakistani context. This would require more than enabling students to appreciate the ethical dimensions of qualitative research; it would also require a deeper understanding of Pakistan's multifaceted cultural space. Case studies or examples may be derived from the Pakistani setting, illustrating how cultural orientation might present substantial factors affecting research design, data collection, and analysis.

The challenges of the Pakistani educational system, the lack of resources, and the massive strength of each class demand a creative teaching approach. Hybrid approaches that utilize online modules and in-person workshops can address some of these limitations (Farooq et al., 2023). Moreover, universities are the bedrock of research organizations, and these can be linked together to provide students with a real-world experience of doing a project and exposure to becoming part of their mentorship.

Promoting interdisciplinary work is essential because only through participation in such projects will students be able to develop the ability to usefully deal with the nature of social problems using qualitative research. Collaboration with other departments and exposure to different qualitative research approach theories can be an added advantage. For instance, a course such as qualitative methods in Public Health Research would incorporate elements of anthropology, sociology, and psychology to offer a comprehensive framework to tackle health equality concerns typical of Pakistan's society.

Lastly, sustaining the standard of qualitative research in Pakistan and teaching these methodologically sound procedures to others needs prudent strategizing on our part as the sociocultural milieu is different here, and what may work or may not be quite variant. This is where the reaction and response of the Pakistani researchers and educators toward these challenges would decide how feasible, credible qualitative research can reveal the real yet

obscured social issues of our society and, consequently, how it will contribute toward the understanding of the natural and concealed aspects of the Pakistani society.

Writing and Communicating Qualitative Research Findings

Writing and communicating qualitative research findings can be challenging in Pakistan, as it must balance detailed descriptions and brief presentations. Some good practices applicable to qualitative studies in Pakistan include integrating participant reports and research findings to give the audience a rich account of the study phenomenon while adhering to theoretical rigor (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative researchers must always translate and remain faithful to what participants say and include in-vivo codes to present their experiences (Saldaña, 2021). This is especially difficult when writing about complex social issues in Pakistan. On the one hand, detailed description is crucial for a deep and thick narrative to be weaved from qualitative data; on the other hand, researchers also have to cater to their audience to digest sufficiently elaborate materials and appropriate information. A different order or style for developing a case may be preferable, rather than beginning with that traditional linear approach Statement-Background-Methods-Results-Discussion-Synthesis. Vignettes (or even full-length cases) strategically placed within findings can add depth without losing readers (Yin, 2017).

Careful consideration of language, style, and content is required while addressing diverse audiences in Pakistan and internationally. For local readers, researchers may have to place their findings in the context of cultural idioms with which they are familiar, and for international audiences, more background regarding Pakistan's social and political situation would be required.

Translating findings for policy and practice is crucial to ensure the utility of qualitative research in Pakistan. These efforts commonly require unpacking intricate storylines into actionable insights and recommendations. Literature also indicates the utility of visual aids such as concept or thematic diagrams in conveying core insights to policymakers and practitioners (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Researchers should also produce policy briefs or executive summaries of the practical application in simple languages that policymakers can quickly grasp within their local development priorities and cultural background (Ritchie et al., 2014).

Future Directions for Qualitative Research in Pakistan

Qualitative research in Pakistan is paradigm-altering, with evolving trends and methodological constituents leading to new prospects. Community-based Action Research methods give power to local voices and are concerned with social issues. Apart from this, digital ethnography and social media analysis are emerging to investigate Pakistani society from a unique perspective due to the advancement of the technological era.

Future research directions could focus on the effects of climate change on marginalized communities, changes in religious identity and secularism over time, or the sociocultural dynamics as societies urbanize rapidly. Another essential aspect that needs to be addressed is multidisciplinary qualitative studies, which should bridge gaps in university departments and investigate emergent multifaceted socio-ecological issues outlining Pakistani society.

Continued efforts are needed to build capacity and establish mentorship programs and platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration to strengthen Pakistan's Qualitative Research Methods community. Strengthened ties between academia, civil society

organizations, and policymakers could make qualitative research more relevant in addressing Pakistan's developmental challenges.

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