

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF POPULATION STUDIES

**THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CULTURE:  
REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD**

Akya AKARSU

Department of Social Research Methodology  
Master's Thesis

Ankara  
September 2019



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Supervisor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. İlknur YÜKSEL-KAPTANOĞLU

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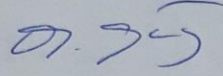
The Qualitative Research Culture: Reflections from the Field

Akya AKARSU

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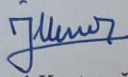
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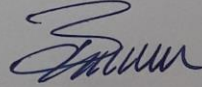


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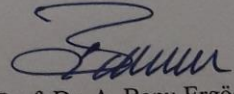
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**Student No:** N161288  
**Department:** SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY  
**Program:** M.A. in SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY  
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APPROVED

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# THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CULTURE: REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

*Yazar Akya Akarsu*

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## THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CULTURE: REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

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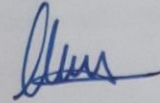
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## **ABSTRACT**

The experiences and the processes of researchers is one of the most fruitful ways to understand the approaches and methods of qualitative research and embody the theoretical aspects of any methodology. This thesis aims to understand the experiences and research practices of researchers regarding qualitative research and explore the particularities of qualitative research culture in the country. Through a comprehensive approach to the entire process of the researches, this study reflects on the various factors that affect the researcher process, and the opinions of the academicians on the difficulties faced by lecturers when teaching qualitative methods, and by students when learning qualitative methods.

This thesis focuses mainly on the experiences, perceptions and processes of researchers in academia. However, the research process is subject to change according to different contexts. Therefore, in order to have a richer understanding on the diverse research processes, in-depth interviews were also conducted with the researchers working in private research companies along with the researchers from academia. Fifteen in-depth interviews were carried out using semi-structured interview guideline.

This study suggests that even though qualitative research methods were faced with scrutiny in the past, in the last 30 years, it seems to have an accepted position and it is employed more predominantly. However, there are certain hindrances to the research practices of researchers and these hindrances, in some instances, prevent researchers from conducting studies as they prefer. Furthermore, even though the studies and efforts focused on furthering the methodological discussions on qualitative research are increasing, the interviews suggest that methodological discussions on qualitative research are, to a certain extent, still unheeded.

**Key words:** Qualitative research, methodology, in-depth interviews, research culture

## ÖZET

Nitel arařtırmaya iliřkin yaklařımları ve yöntemleri anlamının en verimli yollarından bir tanesi arařtırmacıların kendi deneyimleri üzerinden arařtırma süreçlerine bakmaktır. Bu çalıřma, arařtırmacıların nitel arařtırmaya iliřkin deneyimlerini ve arařtırma süreçlerini anlamayı ve ülkedeki nitel arařtırma kültürünün özelliklerini keřfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Arařtırma süreçlerine iliřkin kapsamlı bir yaklařım benimseyerek, nitel arařtırma süreçlerini etkileyen çeřitli etkenleri ve arařtırmacıların nitel arařtırma yöntemlerini öğretilirken ve öğrencilerin bu yöntemleri öğrenirken karřılařtıkları zorlukları tartıřmaktadır.

Bu çalıřma, akademide farklı disiplinlerde çalıřan nitel arařtırmacıların deneyim, algı ve süreçlerine odaklanmaktadır. Fakat arařtırma süreçleri arařtırmacının içinde bulunduđu bağlama göre deęiřiklik gösterebileceđi için arařtırmacı deneyimlerine zenginlik katması açısından akademisyenlerin yanı sıra özel arařtırma řirketlerinde çalıřan arařtırmacılarla da derinlemesine görüřmeler gerçekteřtirilmiřtir. Bu çalıřmada, yarı-yapılandırılmıř görüřme yönergesi kullanılarak 15 derinlemesine görüřme gerçekteřtirilmiřtir.

Bu çalıřma, geçmiřte eleřtiriyle karřılařmıř olsa da, son 30 yıl içerisinde nitel arařtırmanın daha kabul görmüř ve daha sık kullanılan bir noktada olduđuna iřaret etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, arařtırmacıların çeřitli kısıtlılıklardan dolayı bazı noktalarda arařtırma pratiklerini tercih ettikleri dođrultuda ilerletemedikleri görülmüřtür. Bunlara ek olarak, nitel arařtırmaya iliřkin metodolojik tartıřmaları ilerletme amacıyla yapılan çalıřmalar artarak devam etse de, görüřmeler nitel arařtırma metodolojisine yönelik tartıřmaların hala geri planda kaldıđına iřaret etmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Nitel arařtırma, metodoloji, derinlemesine görüřmeler, arařtırma kültürü

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## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

Understanding the world and the phenomena occurring in the social world have always been one of the main interests of scholars and researchers, in general. Throughout the history of social research, there has been a continuous shift in the paradigms and approaches used to identify and understand the social world, the social reality and the truth.

Although it is not possible to pinpoint the history of qualitative research with a linear progression, mid-20<sup>th</sup> century would mark the rediscovery and proliferation of qualitative research by diverse disciplines. This rediscovery was led by the need for a different approach for understanding the human experience, as the rigid understanding of positivist approaches fell short to encompass the detailed and complex nature of human experiences (Flick, 2009). However, understanding the erratic nature of humans and the social world required an equally dynamic and fluctuating approach. That being said, just as the difficulty of unraveling the inner worlds of human beings, the paradigms of qualitative research challenged researchers to widen their worldview and their understandings on the meaning of scientific approach. However, this paradigm shift was and still is not easy to comprehend as it has a multifaceted and multidiscipline nature. Thus, the researchers and scholars from various disciplines began to focus on both the philosophical and methodological aspects of qualitative research and the ever-continuing escalation of qualitative research ignited an increase in methodological sources, such as books and articles, which aim to guide the researchers in complex passages of qualitative research (Brinkmann et al., 2014). While handbooks and articles elaborating on the practicalities of qualitative research from the perspectives of different disciplines are crucial for familiarizing qualitative research, the articles and studies focusing on the personal experiences of researchers are also important for methodological advancements and reifying the process of qualitative research.

Looking at the progression of qualitative research in Turkey, we can see a similar pattern. The need for changing the approaches used for understanding

individuals, their opinions, perceptions and experiences also led to the increase of qualitative research. Although the methodological discussions on qualitative research still requires more attention, there is a growing literature on the philosophical and methodological aspect of qualitative research.

That being said, qualitative research does not have a standardized approach suitable for all. The design fluctuates according the requirements of the research question, the subject, the perceptions of researchers and the institutional contexts that affect the researchers. Therefore, in order to have a more comprehensive understanding on qualitative research and guide novice researchers among the intense and intricate paths of qualitative research, it is important to look into the research practices of researchers.

There is a growing literature that focus on the process of qualitative researchers. While some of these studies centralize one main concept that is among the important issues of qualitative research, such as reflexivity, subjectivity, positionality and researcher-researched bond using the personal experiences of researchers, some other articles focus on the impact of qualitative research on the researcher, especially on sensitive issues. Although the literature includes detailed accounts of the researchers on their research practices, these articles usually focus on one issue and does not include the research process as a whole.

### **1.1. Motivation and Aims of the Research**

The research question of this thesis is “How does the qualitative research process actualize for researchers with qualitative research experience?”. This thesis elaborates on the integrated insights regarding the process of qualitative researchers from different disciplines working in academia and aims to understand the perceptions of these researchers towards qualitative research. Along with their experiences as qualitative researchers, I also elucidate on their insights regarding their experiences as academicians who teach qualitative research methods or mentor students employing qualitative research methods. The process of these qualitative researchers starts with their first contact with qualitative research and includes their approaches

to qualitative research, their decision to opt for qualitative inquiry and their current research practices as academicians. As part of the research practice, their perceptions on certain concepts such as objectivity-subjectivity, ethical considerations and technology are also discussed. This thesis focuses on the varying experiences of the researchers from different fields in academia. Nevertheless, it is seen that research companies are increasingly adopting qualitative research methods. Therefore, interviews were also conducted with researchers working in or for private research companies. However, it is important to note that this thesis does not aim to compare research practices of academicians and researchers working in research companies. Rather, it endeavors to reflect on the versatile nature of qualitative research and gain different perspectives of researchers working in different contexts. In order to gain deeper and detailed understanding on the experiences and perceptions of the researchers I conducted in-depth interviews with 15 researchers with qualitative research experience from different disciplines and researchers working in private research companies using semi-structured guideline. The guideline included questions on their first qualitative research, their current research practices, their opinions on studies conducted using qualitative research in Turkey, the problems they face with students and their opinions on the future of qualitative research in Turkey.

## **1.2. Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. The introductory chapter provides a summary of the research including a brief overview of the motivation, aims and the methodology of the study.

In the second chapter, I elaborate on the scope and meaning of research culture for this study and present the main discussions revolving around the researcher process in qualitative research by, first, including studies from international literature and then focusing on the situation in Turkey.

In the third chapter, I explain the methodology of my study that includes the details of the fieldwork, my journey during the entire process, and the details of the analysis process.



In the fourth chapter, I share the findings of my study. The analysis chapter is presented under four main sections. The first section presents the interpretations of researchers regarding qualitative research, as well as the factors that affect the choice of qualitative research. The second section entitled the Course of Research explore the research processes of researchers. The third section of the analysis chapter includes the reflections of academicians on the education and training of qualitative research methods in academia. The final section focuses on the opinions on the future of qualitative research in Turkey.

The final chapter is comprised of the discussion and conclusion section and includes the main concepts arise from the analysis as well as the contributions and limitations of the study.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I first elaborate briefly on the progress and definition of qualitative research and follow by explaining the definition of research culture and its important aspects for this study. Lastly, I present certain discussions on researcher process both in the international literature and in Turkey.

The literature on qualitative research is abundant with publications that focus on different aspect of qualitative research. The aims of these publications are to provide a practical guide for novice and experienced researchers, to produce a compilation regarding the past, present and future of qualitative research in order to further and better the understanding of this practice and aid the researchers to find their position in this wide spectrum, as well as to present and elaborate on the new approaches and methodologies on qualitative research (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003; Elliot, 2005; Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2017). Understanding the philosophical and methodological aspects of qualitative research, which span across and are rooted in different disciplines, enables the researcher to find the suitable means to answer their curiosities and questions. However, understanding a practice that is defined and enriched by versatilities and fluidity might pose certain challenges (Watt, 2007). In the preface of the new edition of their book, Denzin & Lincoln (2008) expressed that qualitative research was “*still defined by tensions, contradictions and hesitations*”.

In mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, which marks the start of discussions that criticize the structured and rigid understanding of science, qualitative research gained a prominent place in the quest for understanding the phenomena occurring in the social world (Flick, 2009; Alasuutari, 2010). The shifting social contexts and, thus, the new arising needs of societies, and the shortcomings of positivist approaches for unraveling the complex nature of people and their interactions accelerated the rediscovery and proliferation of qualitative inquiry (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003; Öktem, 2003; Alasuutari, 2010; Brinkmann et al, 2014). The same pattern of paradigm shift is also apparent in Turkey (Kümbetoğlu, 2008; Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2013). Similar to the necessities that ignited the researchers to shift towards a new or, better yet, a forgotten approach in

order to delve into the hidden worlds of individuals has also been valid for Turkey. Therefore, in the last decades qualitative approaches began to proliferate among diverse disciplines (Kuş 2006; Kümbetoğlu, 2008). In fact, following the 80s methodological discussions accelerated in certain disciplines regarding qualitative research (Köktürk, 2005).

Since qualitative research does not involve standardized characteristics and strict categorizations, and encompasses different disciplines, it is difficult and unnecessary to have a universally accepted definition (Mason, 2002).

*“The open-ended nature of qualitative research project leads to a perpetual resistance against attempts to impose a single, umbrella like paradigm over the entire project (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011: preface xiii).”*

Consequentially, qualitative researchers express the difficulty of reaching a consensus on the definition of qualitative research and often refrain from presenting one (Öktem, 2003). In broad terms, qualitative research aims to further or better understand the social world and its ever-shifting dynamic through the interpretations of the researcher by focusing on the perspectives, opinions, ideas and lived experiences of individuals (Mason, 2002; Lincoln and Denzin, 2003; Brinkman et al., 2014). It is stripped from numbers, statistics and general but strict categories that endeavors to place individuals' behaviors into well-formed boxes and stresses that the truth and reality of the social world and the life experiences of human beings are deep, intricate, complex, fast changing and idiosyncratic (Mason, 2002).

*“Qualitative research does not represent a monolithic, once-and-for-all, agreed-upon approach to research but is a vibrant and contested field with many contradictions and different perspectives (Brinkman et al, 2014: 17)”*

Qualitative research focuses on constructing an understanding on human experiences by accepting that there are multiple realities and that these realities are subject to constant change due to shifting perceptions, experiences and contexts (Given, 2008). Different to the postulation of positivist paradigms, qualitative research includes the researcher as an important instrument for creating understandings on phenomena and recognizes the indispensable role of researcher presence and identity (Mason, 2002; Given, 2008). This dynamic and piquant nature of qualitative research

which echoes the intricate passage of life and the world often times leaves researchers confused as to how to proceed with their research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2013). Therefore, in addition to the extensive sources and methodological articles that explain the particularities of qualitative research, researchers have begun to reflect on their research processes in order to embody the abstract presentation of qualitative research (Foley, 2002; Ortlipp, 2008).

### **2.1. The Scope of Research Culture**

It can be stated that the concept of research culture encompasses a large area that includes the researchers that produce knowledge, the institutions that provide the necessary environment for researchers to form a community and work towards building a transparent research practice compliant with ethical considerations, as well as the institutions that are responsible for disseminating knowledge on research practices (Tynan & Garbett, 2007; Joynson & Leyser, 2015; Hajir, 2013). The scientific community and the institutions form the research culture in which the researchers are required to perform their responsibly of producing good quality studies that will add or further the knowledge on issues regarding humans and the world:

*“The scientific community brings science to life; it sustains the assumptions, attitudes, and techniques of science. The scientific community is a social institution of people, organizations, and roles as well as a set of norms, behaviors, and attitudes that all operate together. It is not a geographic community existing in one physical location nor does everyone know everyone else within it, although its members communicate and interact with one another frequently. Rather, it is a loose collection of professionals who share training, ethical principles, values, techniques, and career paths (Neuman, 2014 :12)”*

The discussions on research culture revolve around the requirements expected of academicians, as the primary actors for providing and producing researches and disseminating the knowledge to the community, and the implications of such requirements of the productivity of academicians (Tynan & Garbett, 2007, Marchant, 2009). The institutional requirements that play a crucial role on the research practices of researchers are comprised of measurement of evaluation, funding, research ethics and dissemination of knowledge (Joynson & Leyser, 2015). Many studies have

weighted upon the importance of building a robust research culture in order to further the scientific knowledge produced regarding the world (Marchant, 2009; Hajjir, 2013). However, building a research culture is not an easy and rapid practice as it includes many aspects and is currently faced with many obstacles. Marchant (2009) grouped main aspects that pose hindrances to qualitative culture or influence the productivity of the researchers as these hindrances negatively affect their research practices. The obstacles are comprised of “*strategic issues, culture and values, limited institutional resources, lack of general research skills, no specific budget and funding, workloads and industrial arrangements*” (Marchant, 2009: 57-58). In this study the concept of research culture refers to the research practices of researchers, the institutional contexts that affect these practices and the teaching practices of researchers. Therefore, this study does not tackle research culture as a whole but investigates key aspects that affect the construction of a qualitative research culture.

## **2.2. Studies on the Researcher Process**

The aims of the vast amount of literature on the studies reflecting the process of the researchers are to present practical examples of important concepts in qualitative research, and to contribute to the methodological discussion, as well as to understand and solidify their own research practice (Foley, 2002; Rager, 2005; Ortlipp, 2008; Dean et al, 2018). For the most part, the research process revolves around certain concepts crucial for qualitative research, such as reflexivity, subjectivity, researcher-researched bond and insider-outside position of the researcher, as well as empathy and ethical considerations. All of these concepts are intertwined and have been the concern of qualitative researchers for a long time. From a methodological perspective, the issues of reflexivity and rigor is discussed to be main pawns for ensuring legitimization, validity, and quality in qualitative research (Pillow, 2003; Trainor & Graue, 2014; Berger, 2015; Råheim et al, 2016). Both of these concepts are connected with the research procedure as a whole for having a more systematic, open and trustworthy organization while working with qualitative methods. In addition, reflexivity is a continuous act of self-evaluation of the researchers in terms of their

power positions and their possible impact on the research process (Berger, 2015). The experiences and perspectives of researchers are essential in their interpretations. While the interpretation and the lens of the researcher are indispensable aspects of qualitative research, it is necessary for the researcher to be aware of his or her effect on the process (Sword, 1999; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Furthermore, it is argued that the reflexive process of the researcher will help to render the process of knowledge building more transparent and, thus, have more accurate and credible analyses (Pillow, 2003; Berger, 2015). Along with these lines, the issue of researcher-researched bond and the insider-outsider position of the researcher were also discussed widely (Valentine, 2007; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Berger 2015; Råheim et al, 2016). In qualitative research, the researcher is not seen as an objective observer of the truth (Varga-Dobai, 2012). It defends that the involvement of the researcher in the research process aids the construction of knowledge and the versions of truth through interaction (Varga-Dobai, 2012). The researcher-researched bond change according to whether the researcher has/had a personal experience with the topic at hand or not (Berger, 2015). Nevertheless, regardless of the personal experiences of the researcher, the important point is to be aware of self every step of the way by creating an internal monologue and keeping a log of every current of thought (Pillow, 2003; Berger, 2015).

The articles on the researcher process can be separated into two groups. The first group encompasses studies in which researchers reflected on the methodological aspects of their qualitative practice and discussed the effects of their decisions throughout the research (Ortlipp, 2008; Dean et al., 2018). In this context, the qualitative research practice encompasses a wide range and focuses on different stages of qualitative research. For instance, Oliver et al. (2005) discussed the importance of interview transcription and certain difficulties attached to this process. In the second group, there are studies that focus on the effects of qualitative research on the researcher or their journey of becoming a qualitative researcher. For instance, Stalhke (2018), based on her own experiences, turned the focus of the discussions on ethical consideration from participants to researcher and argued certain ethical risks of qualitative research on the researchers. We can see many articles in which the researchers from different disciplines elaborate on their research process. Ortlipp, 2008

who disclosed personal experiences of keeping a reflexive journal and the impact of critical self-reflection, explained that the purpose of this paper was to demonstrate the practice of keeping a journal especially to novice researchers, to discuss the methodological aspects of this practice. This is a common aim among the articles focused on the researcher process (Pezalla et al., 2012; Stalhke, 2018). On the other hand, these articles are also a fruitful way for researchers to reflect on their own practice:

*“...research is an ongoing process, and does not stop once we complete disseminate the findings. For research to be valuable from the perspective of process over product, the value must lie beyond a sense of completion. Research continues as we reflect: on the development of an idea; on data collection; on findings, and; on implications. Our reflections may take shape in other ways. My reflections on one of my own research projects have led me to consider the interaction between myself and the participants who were kind enough to share their time and thoughts with me (Bourke, 2014, introduction).”*

### **2.3. Studies on the Researcher Process in Turkey**

Similar to the progression started in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, qualitative research has also gained popularity in Turkey. There has been an increase in the studies conducted using qualitative methods, many of the sources elaborating on qualitative research has been translated and similar handbooks were published by researchers, as well as methodological articles discussing different aspects of qualitative research continue to increase (Kümbetoğlu, 2008; Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2011; Uzuner, 2015; Seggie & Bayyurt, 2017). Accordingly, researchers started to evaluate and elaborate on the paradigm shift experienced in certain disciplines (Yıldırım, 1999; Kuş, 2007; Yüce et al, 2014; Koca, 2017). Nevertheless, in contrast with the international literature, there are few studies focusing on the researcher process regarding qualitative research. For example, Uzuner (2015) reflected on her personal experiences with qualitative research as a researcher and as a lecturer. She elaborated on her journey and stressed about certain hindrances that she faced and provided some insights on how qualitative research gained popularity on her discipline and highlighted the importance of conducting systematic and good quality research. Some other researchers, in parallel

with the similar tendencies of the international literature, focused on the insider-outsider discussion through reflexive accounts on their own research experiences (Ergun & Aydemir 2010; Orhon, 2014; Zırh, 2017). Whereas, Oğuz (2012) elaborated on her experiences in the field and reflected on her field process and her research process in general as a feminist woman researcher. Different contexts and different walks of life can affect the way we understand the word and hence, the way we construct our research practice. As can be seen in the international literature, having sources that materialize the research practice with real life experiences build on the methodological advancements and will be great sources to follow the ever-changing nature of qualitative research.

With this thesis, I aim to compile the experiences of qualitative researchers from different disciplines and present the entirety of their processes regarding qualitative research.



### **CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

With this thesis, I aim to gain insights on the research practice of researchers, and understand the dynamics of qualitative research through the experiences and perceptions of researchers working in academia. Nevertheless, even though the main focus of this thesis is on the experiences of academicians, I also conducted interviews with researchers working in or for private research companies. The main reason for this is to gain as many diverse experiences and enrich the insights on qualitative research process. As Mason (2002) mentions, qualitative research has a systematic and rigorous process, and is not arbitrary. Yet it is also important not to be too rigid and contradict to very essence of qualitative research (Mason, 2002). Therefore, I aim to see how each researcher design their research and which concepts play an important role in their process. In my understanding, the choices that the researchers make and how they perceive qualitative research is closely related to their understanding of the world and the professional context that they work in. Qualitative research enables the researchers to delve in to one's world and to understand the meanings, contexts and processes in one's life (Kvale, 1996; Maxwell, 1996). Therefore, through in-depth interviews, I aim to understand the dynamics of qualitative research process, the researchers' stances on life, their experiences and possible hardships that they have endured during their interaction with qualitative research.

Qualitative research involves a wide range of data sources and methods used to gain insights about the social world. Therefore, it is important to decide on the method or the approach to be used in the research. However, at this point, I would like to mention that while the data generation process in qualitative research is systematic and rigorous, it is also flexible, and open to mild or drastic alterations throughout the field study (Mason, 2002). Even though qualitative researchers start to design their research according to their predictions and expectations that they construct through literature or their expectations, the design could be subject to change due to newly arising needs of their field study. In this thesis, I chose to conduct in-depth interviews (qualitative interviews) with researchers. In-depth interviews focus on the experiences, ideas, beliefs and perceptions of individuals and aims to learn or unravel their inner

world through interaction using face-to-face interviews (Kvale, 2002; Mason 2002; Seidman, 2006).

For this aim, I focused on qualitative researchers that work in academia. My reasoning for this selection was that the researchers in academia would have more in-depth understanding on methodological discussions on qualitative research. However, during this selection process and with literature review I realized that private research companies have also increased the number of qualitative researches that they conduct. Thus, I decided to include researchers working at private research companies to have a richer understanding of the status of qualitative research. Even though these two groups may seem like separate categories, I do not aim to have a comparative analysis between these groups but rather have an integrated approach towards researchers with different backgrounds. Having said that, for the researchers working in academia I also paid attention to generations and aimed to see the differences attributed to the meaning of qualitative research and the research practice. In this regard, I believed that gaining insights from researchers who were involved with qualitative research during the time period when qualitative research methods started to gain popularity in Turkey would enrich the overall understanding on the process. Therefore, during the data analysis I also adopted an intergenerational perspective.

After deciding on the rather broad categories of my sample, I began to determine the interviewees. During this process I used, for the most part, snowball method and also looked at the literature to identify the interviewees. For both of the groups, my supervisor, who is also a qualitative researcher, suggested some names. Additionally, especially for the researchers working academia, I have also gathered some names looking at the literature. However, as it is quite difficult to find researchers working in private research companies through the literature, I only used snowball method for the said group of people.

In total, I contacted 26 researchers working in academia and in research companies. I reached the researchers working in research companies through their cell phones that was given to me by the researchers that I have already interviewed. For the academics, however, I opted to reach 23 of them through their e-mail addresses

and one, who accepted to participate in the study, though face-to-face meeting. Out of these 23, 12 of the researchers have accepted to participate in the study. Among the researches that I've send an e-mail, 8 of them did not respond and the rest of the 3 researchers communicated that they would like to participate in the study, however due to scheduling conflicts interviews could not be conducted. I started my field study on February 6, 2019 and finalized it on March 23, 2019 with 15 researchers working in academia or in research companies. The interviews were conducted in two metropolises of Turkey. Except for one interview, all of the other interviews were recorded with consent.

I have prepared a semi-structured interview guideline which included questions on their educational background and how did they first come in contact with qualitative research, their research processes, their ideas and experiences about the evolution of qualitative research in the country, and about the technological developments in this field, their thoughts on the criticisms towards qualitative research from the academic sphere in the country, and on the qualitative researches conducted in the country and its future. However, after conducting some of the interviews, I decided to add some other questions to my semi-structured interview guideline. These questions focused on their take on ethical considerations regarding qualitative research and their own code of ethics especially with sensitive topics, their emotional involvement during interviews, the approaches used during their analysis. The final version of the semi-structured interview guideline is presented in Annex B.

It is safe to say that, carrying out any kind of qualitative interview on any given subject can be extremely arduous. The challenges of qualitative interviewing can be due to a sensitive topics, the approach of the participants or, more importantly, the difficulty of administering a systematic interview that will yield an in-depth understanding on the research question. Even though I was aware of the challenges of qualitative interviewing, I was also faced with some other difficulties that I did not foresee at the beginning of my research. For the most part, these unexpected challenges were caused due to the specific nature of my interviewees, in other words academics who are experts in the field of qualitative research. There are many studies that focus on the researcher-researched bond and the importance of maintaining anti-

authoritarian relationship during qualitative interviewing (Råheim et al, 2016). It is important that the researcher, who usually has the hierarchal superiority, balances the power positions yet also directs the interviews. However, during the interviews with the academics I felt a shift in power position towards my interviewees. Even though I was the researcher in this study, I was interacting with qualitative researchers who have been working for quite some time in this field and who teach or mentor students about qualitative research. Thus, during my interviews I found myself scrutinizing my every word, movement and gestures as if my interviewee was scrutinizing me. After every question, I was focusing on whether I was asking the “correct” questions or conducting the interview in “suitable” way rather than their answers or the insights that they were sharing with me. Moreover, the locations of the interviews also had an impact in the interview process. Except for one, all of the interviews with academicians were carried out in their offices at the universities, which, in turn, also created a more formal environment. After every interview, I wrote my notes and observations on the interviews. Along with those notes, I also scribbled down my own thoughts and feelings on the flow of the interviews and the positive or negative aspects of the interviews. These small notes made me realize that at some points of the interviews I was focusing a little too much on my way of conducting the interviews. However, as the researchers explained, qualitative research is a process that improves with experience. Thus, in my own study through these reflective thoughts and notes I managed to improve my research practice. That being said, this issue did not manifest during my interviews with the researchers working in private research companies. In my opinion, there were two reasons why I felt more comfortable during these interviews. The first reason is the difference in identity as in them not being lecturers at university. Being a student conducting interviews with academicians sometimes reminded me a class environment in which I felt that I had to ask the “right” questions. The second reason is related to the location of the interviews. Unlike the ones with the academicians, all of the interviews with the researchers from private research companies were carried out in a more informal setting. Nevertheless, I would like to mention a positive aspect of interviewing qualitative researchers. The growing pains that I experienced at the beginning of my field lead me to learn many aspects of qualitative research and qualitative interviewing. Even though learning about

philosophies, paradigms and methodologies are the initial step for building a research practice, without the practical information and experience the theoretical information remains abstract. In another aspect, while I was learning about their experiences, some of the interviewees also reflected on their own research experience in a different light. On the other hand, conducting interviews with researchers facilitated the recruitment process. Despite the busy work schedules, almost all my interviewees who accepted to participate in the study mentioned the difficulty of reaching any participants in their studies. Owing to the shared experience on finding participants, most of the researchers that I contacted were helpful and understanding.

In every research, ethical considerations should be the main focus of the researchers. It is important to explain the study to the participants and talk about the possible positive or negative impact of the study (Kümbetoğlu, 2005). In this thesis, I first communicated the general outline of my research during the first contact with the interviewees. I, then, took their informed consent. In 14 of the interviews, oral consent was taken and in one interview where recording was not allowed written content was taken. Having said that the researcher is also responsible for protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of the interviewees. The means to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the interviewees may differ for every research and, thus, the researcher should be aware of all the aspects that can harm or expose their participants in any way (Kvale, 1996). In terms of the profiles of my interviewees, the field of qualitative research is rather small and the people in this field usually know each other. Therefore, I knew that I had be careful not to expose my interviewees. For this aim, I first started out with the simple way and gave pseudo names to my interviewees. There are two main code names for the interviewees, “*Acad*” for academicians and “*Co*” for researchers from private research companies. However, after starting the field I realized using only pseudo names would not be sufficient to ensure the anonymity of my interviewees. While sharing about the experiences and opinions of individuals, the researchers should provide a basic background information on their participant without exposing their identities. For my study, I wanted to give department information so that the opinions and the experiences could be evaluated in accordance with the fields of the interviewees. However, this proved to be slightly difficult. For example, one of

the interviewees work in a rather different area where qualitative research is increasing yet there are not many researchers in that area or one of the researchers is from a department that is very distinctive and unique. Therefore, even though I could manage to give department information for the majority of the researchers, for some of the researchers this information would compromise their anonymity. That is the reason why, I opted not to include the fields of study of the interviewees while giving background information. Instead, I included qualitative experience in years and opted to give detailed information on the interviewees in the analysis section. However, regarding the qualitative research experience, I determined the starting point of qualitative research experience as their first contact with qualitative research. For the majority of the interviewees their first contact was their PhD thesis. Along with this, I would also like to mention that, for me, the concept of qualitative experience is not limited to only conducting qualitative studies as other factors complement the qualitative research culture. For example, especially for academicians giving lectures on qualitative research methodology either as a different course or included in the introductory courses, and supervising students for their theses are also important factors that contribute to their research practices. Therefore, the years provided in the table presented in Annex B. include the period where they actively interacted with qualitative research either through research studies or through education. Therefore, for the academicians, information on whether they taught qualitative research through courses specifically on qualitative research, courses on research methodology and introductory courses of disciplines is also presented. Another important aspect is that the qualitative research experience does not signify that the interviewees only work with qualitative research. Most of the time their research practice is shaped by the subjects that they study or their research questions include diverse methodologies. That being said, all of the researchers I interviewed were from social sciences and the majority of them were from sociology department.

As a researcher, I argue that the truths of individuals shift according to the context in which individuals are living. Therefore, it is not possible to talk about one universal truth for everyone. Internal and external human experiences shape our understanding of the world and our perceptions on ourselves, people, events, and on

the social world in general. In this study, the concept of context sits at the heart of the analysis. In my opinion prior to attempting to learn about the worlds of individuals, one should accept the importance context, multiple reality arising from different contexts and the relative and fluctuating nature of human experience. This practice is also related to the researcher and their experiences and perceptions on life. Human experience has a complex nature and the implications of this experience can be unknown to the beholder. Therefore, interaction plays a key role in understanding the depths of human experience.

Following the interviews, I transcribed the interviews. In this study the main source of data generation are transcriptions of the interviews. However, I also included my notes and observations into the analysis process. I coded the interviews using Nvivo 12 software. However, prior to the coding process with the software I printed out the hardcopies of the interview transcriptions and read the interviews repeatedly. During these reading sessions, I would write down the codes and themes arising from the interviews. Also in every reading, I tried to focus on different characteristics of the researchers. Following this process, I completed the coding process using the software and I adopted an interpretivist approach.

## **CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS**

The interviews with the researchers showed that qualitative research process is multi-faceted, intertwined and dynamic. The researchers reflected upon their experiences through non-linear narratives suitable with the natural course of qualitative research processes. During the interviews, the researchers elaborated on the reasons why they preferred qualitative research methods, on their research processes and they experiences with qualitative research. Especially for their research process, the interviewees gave insights on the various factors affecting their decisions through the course of research and discussed certain concepts such as subjectivity/objectivity, researcher presence and positionality as well as ethical considerations which are among the important conundrums still discussed in qualitative research methodology. They have also linked these concepts with their own research practices and elaborated on their effect to the research process.

The meaning and the conceptualizations on qualitative research vary among researchers and the research processes differ according to various factors such as the academic discipline of the researcher, the research subject and the organizational structure in which they work. Along with several important aspects mentioned by the researchers, the most essential point emerged from the interviews is the importance of context. The researchers mentioned that, just like every aspect of human life, their research practice fluctuate according to the context. In many cases, context refers to different aspect of research. It could be related to the subject or the phenomenon investigated, the characteristics of the research project, the people with which they are interacting or their own position at a specific period of time. Due to all of these reasons, it is not possible nor necessary to present a fixed, well-shaped, static qualitative research process that encapsulates the experiences of every researcher. In order to better represent and reflect the multifaceted and fluxional nature of qualitative research and the experiences of researchers that vary according to the context, in this chapter the experiences and opinions of researchers are presented with the same dynamism and versatility.



The analysis chapter is presented under four main sections. The first section presents the interpretations of researchers regarding qualitative research, as well as the factors that affect the choice of qualitative research. This section also includes the opinions of researchers on the strength of qualitative research and certain difficulties of conducting qualitative research. The second section entitled the Qualitative Research Process explores the research processes of researchers. Qualitative research process is an extremely broad issue and comprises many diverse approaches and experiences. Thus, the qualitative research process unfolds differently for every researcher and this process is often subject to constant change due to professional experience broadened with every research project and to possible shifts in researchers' perceptions and understandings over the years. In this section, the research process is presented on the basis of certain concepts such as subjectivity/objectivity, researchers positionality, technological developments and ethical considerations. All of these concepts have been highlighted during the interviews as important components of research process. The third section of the analysis chapter includes the reflections of academicians on the education and training of qualitative research methods in academia. The final section focuses on the opinions on the future of qualitative research in Turkey. Even though the analysis section is divided into four main sections, it is not possible to have a clear-cut divide between the insights shared during the interviews. Therefore, many aspects of researcher process, such as the difficulties of qualitative research and the researcher role of academicians is scattered throughout these four main sections.

#### **4.1. The Meaning of Qualitative Research**

During the interviews, researchers mentioned about the meaning of qualitative research and the different aspects as to why they prefer to do qualitative research. For some of the researches the demand for qualitative research arose at the point when they could not answer their research questions with quantitative methods, as its strict and well-formed structure did not allow them to unravel the experiences of individuals and to understand the lives of human being. It is interesting to note that among the researchers, the majority of them started out their career using quantitative methods.

Only exception for this situation were the researchers that come from a discipline with strong qualitative research culture. For instance, one of the researchers, who used quantitative methods in her study revolving around the experiences of children, mentioned that many important details pertaining to their opinions, perceptions and experiences were lost due to the fact that the questionnaire was not sufficient to grasp these details:

*“Umm I was conducting the interview, where we completing the questionnaire together and then they will go and tell me about many experiences for one two hours. .... Those got lost .... They were telling me about why they were so angry etc. there were in my opinion very good data and [using qualitative research instead of quantitative] would be better to understand them.”(Acad-3)*

Regarding the reasons for gravitating towards qualitative methods, some of the researchers mentioned that they were aiming to “understand” people’s “experiences”, their way of living and their “perceptions”, and that they were seeking different meanings related to life. For instance, one of the academicians explained the meaning of qualitative research as catching all the meaning related to an individual’s life through deeper connection and interaction:

*“However words are meanings and the meanings fly away. So, if I am doing a qualitative research, my duty is to see where these meanings fly.”(Acad-11)*

However, at this point it is also important to note that unraveling the worlds of human beings are not always easy to achieve. Even though qualitative research aims to understand human beings and the world that they live in, this goal can be difficult even with qualitative methods. For instance, Acad-10 mentioned that in one of her studies conducted with in-depth interviews, the participant revealed her experiences with the study topic only after the interview was completed and that it was pure luck that she stayed a little longer after the interview. In fact, she mentioned that that interview shaped the basis of her analysis and helped her to understand many things. She also mentioned the importance of being more involved with the lives of the participants in order to have a deeper and comprehensive understanding on their lives.

*“And I thought, the interview took one hours and [...] she never mentioned any of those. I said why didn’t you mention these before, I’ve*

*been asking for one hour, my research subject is related to this issue. She said no I'm done with that part of my life. I mean when you have a pen and paper the other person sees you with an official identity. And I realized later that how important it is to get to know people for extended amount of time, and living together with them. I always talk about this in the class and I say fortunately I was not in a hurry that day. I mean staying there for an additional one hour contributed so much [...] It held a special place in the study. I mean her life story made me understand many things.” (Acad-10)*

Regarding the choice of qualitative research, the ontological and epistemological stance of researchers play a definitive role on their research practices. For instance, Acad-8, who prefers qualitative methods and is interested in working with sensitive issues and vulnerable groups reflected that she was always interested in the hidden details whether on research or in life. Therefore, for her, lending a voice for people and seeking to understand all the intricacies of human life is what drew her to qualitative research. Another interviewee who is currently conducting her first qualitative research pointed out to the strong interactive aspect of qualitative research highlighting the importance of building a rapport and a special relationship with people:

*“... but emotionally I feel inclined to qualitative research. Because I always liked interacting with people so it does not come as a foreign feeling for me. Because in the other one [quantitative research] you go with a more specific aim, you ask the questions you prepared to the people. Depending on the time for example 45 minutes, you complete your questions and leave. Afterwards maybe you don't see that person again. But with qualitative research it is not like that.”(Acad-4)*

Therefore, there are some main factors affect these researchers' choice of qualitative research: the subject, their research question, their epistemological and ontological stance. Some of the researchers mentioned the lens with which they perceive life and their characteristics to be influential in opting for qualitative research methods. Furthermore, one of the researchers who comes from a quantitative background reflected that she preferred first seeing the “big picture” through quantitative methods and then exploring the lives and experiences of individuals in that big picture.

However, some of the researchers encountered roadblocks and criticism because of their decision to use qualitative research. They mentioned the difficulty of explaining what qualitative research represents and explained that they received certain criticism revolving around the idea that qualitative research is not “scientific”. For some of the interviewees these criticisms had more severe implications. One of the interviewees who wanted to use qualitative research for her PhD thesis explained that her advisor did not agree with her and said: “*I won’t support you on your defense*”. She continued her words by saying that the strong influence of positivist paradigm forced her to defend her decision for preferring qualitative research:

*“...there is that kind of a perspective about proving the scientific value like the way to prove is through with like talking with figures and evidences etc...”(Acad-3)*

Relatedly, another researcher who worked with issues that are usually researched with quantitative methods mentioned that she had to incorporate quantitative component to her qualitative research because the research was not taken into consideration, as it was only qualitative research:

*“ I mean there are many people defending that [quantitative methods]. It happened to me to at some point. I mean I had to install a quantitative component [to the study]. I mean there were quantitative data but the qualitative explanations that I made was not accepted, not at all. The moment when it was integrated with quantitative data then it became more credible” (Acad-10)*

Another interviewee also elaborated on the criticisms that she received on her PhD and on the difficulties she faced in opening a course on qualitative research since the institute board was not favorable towards qualitative research. These criticisms ranged from depicting qualitative researchers as “journalists” and qualitative research as casual conversations resulting with non-generalizable results that are far from being scientific. From different interviewees who became researchers in different periods, we can see that, although more prevalent in the past, these perceptions are still valid. Two of the interviewees who became researchers during the 80s shared that when they attempted to introduce qualitative research to their respectful universities they were faced with hesitation and ridicule. Both of these researchers were working in departments in which positivist social science approach was preferred. Since the 80s,

qualitative research methods gained more recognition and popularity. Nevertheless, this popularity did not cease the criticism towards qualitative research. However, it is important to note that with the continuing proliferation of qualitative research even in disciplines that were rooted in positivist paradigms, these sorts of criticism began to decrease. For example, one of the researchers who comes from a quantitative background and then opted for using qualitative methods, as it was more suitable with how she sees the world and interact with people mentioned that she did not receive as much criticism as her professors did:

*“I mean we are lucky in this sense ... [in her discipline] 15 years ago first qualitative studies were conducted and the reactions were like “you are telling a story” and “this is not science” but since we are the students of professors who received that kind of criticism we did not engage in these kind of discussions. (Acad-4)*

At this point, it seems that the researchers received these kind of criticisms more prevalently at the start of their carrier when they were still dependent to other academicians that had a higher hierarchal status. However, as they were reaching their maturity as researchers and settling their own positions on the approaches that they prefer, they mentioned that these type of criticisms diminished in intensity. There are certain explanations for this shift in perception. Even though this situation is influenced by many factors and differs for each discipline, it seems that interviewees focus more on what their own community says about their research than other academicians.

*“Quantitative methods, I have done a lot of reading on it, and like since the thing called scientific community runs with utmost superstitions and with personal interests and with power relations, there is no sense for them to come up to me and say what we do it science and yours is something else.” (Acad-7)*

In this case, their own community refers to the group of researchers that have the same understanding of what qualitative research is. However, when they step out of their own area, we can see that these type of criticisms are still persistent. On the other hand, one of the researchers who is more inclined to incorporate mixed methods, suggested that she was in a more “protected area” and thus did not receive criticisms in that sense. Furthermore, one of the researchers who come from a discipline with

strong qualitative research culture also recognized the discussions revolving around the credibility of qualitative research but did not mention any personal experiences with such discussions.

#### **4.2. Qualitative Research Process**

As the interviewees also concurred, qualitative research has a multi-dimensional, dynamic, flexible yet systematic process that often requires multi-disciplined approach. Every researcher interviewed use qualitative research in a slightly different approach using different methods.

As expected, the interviews reinforced the understanding that qualitative research process takes shape according many diverse factors such as the subject investigated, the research question, and the interpretation of the researcher resulting from their personal and professional cultivation. This process does not follow a linear route. Therefore, it is difficult and unnecessary, especially for qualitative research, to present a fixed research design for every researcher. When discussing about their research process, all of the interviewees clearly stated that the process and the design are dynamic procedures and are dependent on the context with which they are working. Thus, in this section, instead of focusing on the concrete path of the researchers, I will elaborate on certain themes and concepts that play a key role during the research process.

Many interviewees elaborated on the importance of investigating an issue or a problem that is crucial to them and, most of the time they work with issues or questions that stem from their personal interest or from their experiences in life:

*“This is an experience, I mean this carries you to certain places, I mean you construct you research question according to the places that you roam in life.”(Acad-2)*

*“I mean if you do not have problem then no matter what you do, either qualitative or quantitative, it will be mundane.”(Acad 7)*

Even though constructing the research question might seem easy, it is in fact one of the most challenging steps of research. During the interview, Acad-7 mentioned that once the question or the problem of the research was set, then nearly half of the

work can be considered done. The reason for this stems from the influential role of question selection on the choice of methods. The research question leads the researcher toward the convenient method that will adequately answer that question. Therefore, especially for their own research, the first step for the researchers in academia is to construct their research question. Whereas, this process follows a different path for researchers working in private research companies. In some cases, before mentioning about the topic the client reaches them saying they need a research done using a certain method. Therefore, in some instances the method is chosen before the research question. There are other instances where some researchers or companies prefer a certain method regardless of the question or the topic investigated. That being said, in certain circumstances the researchers working for these companies also have influential effect on how a research should be designed. Co-1 explains that if the clients or companies are from big companies or from international organizations, then they usually tend to be more focused on building an appropriate design for the research at hand and thus listen to the researchers on how to carry out the research. In terms of research companies, there are two determinant factors that affect the course of research: the budget and time. The interviewees mentioned that most of the time the process of research continues with a tight schedule and a budget. Therefore, certain sacrifices and compromises are expected from the researchers. Consequently, the researchers mentioned that they usually work in teams and share the workload:

*“I mean that’s why I don’t do my own transcriptions, I mean the ideal situation is doing the transcriptions yourself but we are racing against the time you can’t do everything by yourself. I at least conduct the interviews and leave the transcription to someone else and allocate my time to analysis. In fact I read the transcriptions and do the analysis as they come. For example I say send me the women interviews first. For example I ask for specific groups first so that I can start reporting group by group because there is no time. The ideal situation is doing the transcriptions yourself and taking notes as you go. But as for time it always goes against you, there is always something that you have to do.” (Co-1)*

This issue is not specific for only researcher working at or for research companies. The time constraints mentioned by academicians also share some similarities with the time constraints that the researchers from the research companies mentioned. While the

time constraints are also present for the academicians who works with other institutions or organizations, the academicians mentioned another factor, which is the career pursuits of the academicians. As mentioned by the researchers, qualitative research often times requires a fairly long time to conclude. However, in order to advance in their careers in academia the academicians should publish articles and do research. The fact that academicians are evaluated according to the number of the works they publish instead of the quality, they might be forced to opt for other methods or do lower quality qualitative research. The researchers also mentions that the lower quality researchers reinforce the criticism qualitative researchers receive.

Regarding their experiences as lecturers of qualitative methods or mentors for students, the researchers stressed the heavy burden of classes or administrative responsibilities to be a hindrance to their research practice. Especially for qualitative research which usually has an intensive and long process, the researchers mentioned that with their responsibilities at the university they cannot conduct researches as frequently as before. This might be perceived as a dilemma. The researchers enter academia to conduct their own research and be free in that sense. Yet the requirements of their roles as, lecturers, which is an important aspect of academia, is an obstacle for their research practices. One of the researchers also mentioned about the state of academia in Turkey and concluded that the standardization of the academia enforces the low quality studies:

*“Now ... I mean I do not like the course of academia in Turkey, I mean it started to work like a factory and publications with low quality... the number of predatory journals is high and researchers who are measured with numbers have increased.”(Acad-1)*

As mentioned above the course of qualitative research differs for every researcher. For some of the researchers this process is, to some extent, more organized. They start from the theory and immerse themselves into the literature on their subject, and have set of ideas on the methodology and, at times, the concepts that could come up in the analysis. One important thing mentioned in the interviews is the importance of knowing the topic and the field that they are aiming to unravel. At this point, some of the researchers from academia mentioned that they prefer working with the issues with which they are familiar. For instance, Acad-1 explains that she almost exclusively



work with issues related to gender and said that “*to be honest, I don’t conduct any study if is not related to my field. I need to really know the field.*” She explains that topics related to gender are always in the center of her life and that it is the lens with which she sees world. She accumulates and builds her research practice around this issue. However, regardless of the topic, researchers mentioned that being well informed about the phenomena with which they are working is crucial, especially for the process of question preparation:

*“It is for getting the big picture, I mean learning about what happened in the past, what are they going through now, what will happen in the future. I mean in order to prepare that 5 question that you are going to ask you really need to read. [...]I mean it is difficult to enter a field without knowing anything. The anthropologists can do that. But I can’t do that.”(Acad-2)*

Qualitative interviewing aims to unravel the hidden worlds of human beings. Questions asked during the interviews holds a critical role and mimics a compass that leads the researchers into the depths of human experience. Most of the time these experiences are scattered around the vast array of human life. Therefore, preparing questions for qualitative interviewing might seem daunting. These questions should be designed in a way that will allow the participants to open up about their lives but, at the same time, should enable the researchers to be open about what is going on in the field. Therefore, researchers might presume that asking many questions would be ideal. However, some of the researchers who mentioned about this process, highlighted that the questions asked in the interviews should not be pages long. Consequently, deciding on the questions requires a thorough examination of the issue at hand.

*“But I have to read before I go to the field. Because I need to read to construct the question. The question does not appear to me out of the blue, it is something that I find after reading but at the same time I have to pretend as if I forgotten the things that I have read... I need to see what is going on there with my own eyes. And pretending to forget is not easy.”(Aca-7)*

Nevertheless, in some instances researchers might be forced to shape their research process according to certain requirements such as time.

*“But it is discussed extensively, I mean should the researcher go to the field after reading or without any knowledge, it is debated. However, in the end, the researcher does the things that the time allows. Time is not infinite. Even if they want to read, they can do it for a longer period of time.” (Acad-10)*

Regarding the research design, other interviewees are more flexible with their research practice. They do know about the phenomenon that they are working on and have a starting point for data generation. However, they construct the following steps as they go according to the requirements of their fields. Therefore, regardless of the discipline, there is no one way of carrying out a qualitative research.

*“... but I am not very strict with the research design, I do not start by saying like yes this is the aim of my research, this is my field, how can I use a suitable design for this field but of course in my mind I have various designs... I mean what I am trying to say is that I follow a flexible path postulating that new data collection techniques can emerge by immersing in the field and having extensive interactions with the people in that field and according to the characteristics of those people and that these aspects can diversify the design at any moment or if suitable continue with the path chosen before. But it is very difficult for me.”(Acad-1)*

*“Data is always at the heart of what we do, we, anthropologists I mean, do not start with the theory. Theory is always present but what triggers us is always the data.”(Acad-11)*

During the interviews, the researchers shared their experiences with qualitative data by focusing on four main methods: qualitative interviewing (in-depth interviews), focus group discussion, participant observation and, in rare cases, content analysis. However, during the interviews, while explaining their experiences with qualitative research, the academicians often gave examples from in-depth interviews and participant observation. This situation is slightly different for researchers from private research companies, as focus group discussions were also mentioned extensively along with in-depth interviews and ethnography. As can be understood from below, academicians determine the methods of the research according to their research questions. However, this process is slightly different for researchers working in research companies. For instance, focus groups were mentioned as popular method among research companies. Co-1 explained that even though she did not know the exact reason for this choice, she stated that in her opinion it had to do with spending

less time and including more people for the research. Relatedly, one of the academicians also pointed out to a similar issue that he observed among students. He mentioned that in some instances students chose a certain method due its popularity without explaining how it served their research question:

*“In Turkey things become cliché very easily and then they lose their essence. I mean concepts, I mean in one period a certain discussion get recognition, I mean it can be for example using feminist methodology in theses. I mean it overlaps with the biography and expressions of that person [...] But in the end when they look at the end result, we see that the discussion on what difference did using this method made is not included. Why because for her saying that she used feminist methodology in the introductory chapter is enough.”(Acad-6)*

For the interview process, which is the starting point of the analysis, the researchers elaborated on various aspects. First, some of the researchers stressed the importance of active listening. When talking about the difficulties that students encounter during the interview process, one of the researchers explained that listening is an intricate activity that often requires the researcher to immerse his or herself in the words, gestures and non-verbal cues of the participant:

*“Now, listening is an active thing, it is not just catching the words of the people I mean I do not know how to say it but in order to really listen you need to be there with your whole existence..”(Acad-7)*

Another researcher who is an anthropologist elaborated on the importance of listening and observing. She mentioned the researcher can accumulate extensive amount of information before the beginning of the interview and explained that the researcher begins to construct a meaning and an understanding about the participant's life right at first contact. She also explained that observation is an important talent that every researcher needs to learn and internalize:

*“... listening without speaking. [In the class] I do exercises like that. Of course when people ask you questions you can participate in the conversation out of courtesy or according to the situation but be the listener. As a nation, we really love talking, it is difficult ... I mean up until to the interview you have gathered so much information already. They somehow go into your head and you interpret accordingly...”(Acad-11)*

Along with these points, the researchers also pointed out the importance of carrying out the research themselves. Although almost all of the researchers worked in research projects that included more than one researcher, they expressed that it is difficult to understand or analyze the data without being the one who interacted with the data source, especially with the participants. One of the researchers from the private research companies, Co-2, also mentioned the importance of being in the field and understanding the flow of the research himself. He mentioned that he often worked with a group of researchers and the workload is shared throughout the research. Co-2 mentioned that he preferred being in the field and doing the interviews himself. However, due to time constraints arising from the requests from the clients or his other more administrative duties, most of the time he cannot conduct all of the interviews himself and works with a team of researchers. Thus, in order to have as much as information on the field, he asks all of the researchers in that project to write extremely detailed observations of the interviews. In different words and emphasis, many interviewees highlighted the need to experience the field themselves. Acad-2 reflected that she needed to be in the field herself in order to unravel the pattern and that she constructed the pattern immediately at the end of the field. She continued her words by stating that in she is not out in the field interacting with the participants herself then she cannot “*soul of the interviews*”. For her it is difficult to analyze an interview that she did not conducted due to the fact that she would be missing small yet important details related to the participants and his/her life. As mentioned in the narrative above, the analysis does not only comprise of the words said in the interviews. The researcher incorporates the recordings, the notes, the gestures of the participants, his or her observations on the participant and on the environment into the analysis. These reflections communicate that qualitative research is often a solitary process. That being said, the interviewees from both academia and the research companies frequently work with other researchers. However even when working in a group setting they almost exclusively conduct their own field and write they own analysis. Also, they prefer to work with researchers that they share mutual perspectives and have the same understanding on qualitative research. In fact, Acad-1 and Acad-6 mentioned that working with other researchers and sharing insights on the data to be a fruitful practice.

*“In the majority of times I carry out my research with that person. I like actualizing this practice with that person. It became very fruitful for me because we know each other very well...”(Acad-1)*

The interaction and the construction of knowledge during the interviews are the main pillars of qualitative research. These concepts rely heavily on the identity and position of the researcher. Acad-8 expressed that while researchers endeavor to understand the experiences and perceptions of the participants, the participant also constructs an idea on the researcher and create their discourse accordingly. Therefore, the interview process is a highly interactive process. During this interchange, the position of the researcher and the power dynamics between the researcher and the participant are crucial and, at times, can be difficult to balance. Almost all of the researchers expressed that the data generated through qualitative research will involve a lens with which the researcher perceives life. While highlighting this aspect of qualitative research, they discussed the extent of researcher’s presence and insider-outsider position of the researchers in the analysis. Some researchers elucidated that the voice and the presence of the researcher should not overstep the story of the participant. That is, the story of the researcher, although crucial for the research, should not constitute the center of the arguments discussed in the final product. While one of the interviewees explained that a researcher should step back and reflect what he or she sees on the field without including their own voices to the data, another interviewee expressed that interpretation of the researcher will always be present. However, regarding researcher presence and voice during the research, one of the researcher mentioned that the entire story and the pattern of the research start with the researcher and that in qualitative research this aspect should always be included:

*“I talk about my encounters [with the research subject] in the past and then I talk about what these encounters morphed into during the research. I mean if I write something else, if I can find the time, if they would give time then I have a couple of ideas. If I could do them, they would also evolve like that. I mean I would start by telling why I’m doing a study on that field, and the story would flow with my story in the field.”(Acad-6)*

Regarding the extent of researcher’s voice, Acad-8 explained that her presence in the data differs when she is doing qualitative research in where she is an outsider and when the topic is sensitive. She mentions that when she is communicating the

stories of a community that she is not a part of, she tries to stand back as much as possible. She mentions that she feels more comfortable including her own voice when she has an insider position. The interpretations are constructed according to the experiences, perceptions, prejudices and knowledge of the researcher. However, as mentioned by most of the researchers, what is important is not to eradicate oneself from these perspectives but to be aware of them every step of the way and realize how they affect the analysis process. This aspect of qualitative research has long been dismissed by positivist social scientists as being subjective and, consequently as something that renders qualitative research as “unscientific”. Therefore, the most important strength of qualitative research that opens the doors to the unknown and often ignored inner worlds of individuals is trivialized and demonized.

*“Regarding the thing that you’ve mentioned umm in the perspectives of positivist social scientists there is not much place for humans, or more precisely the human is not the human we not. Umm it is like a mammal. Whereas in the eyes of interpretivist social scientists, humans are comprised of all their values, feelings, motivations I mean there is a real deviance.”(Acad-12)”*

That being said, during the interviews the interviewees mentioned that no research, either quantitative or qualitative could be free of interpretations of the researcher. In fact, while these aspects are evaluated as being subjective by positivist social scientist, one of the anthropologists interviewed elucidated that the interpretation of the researchers were far from being subjective, as it is the product of a particular social formation or the output of the perspectives of previous studies conducted in the same field:

*“I mean our point of view is the perspective of a certain sociological formation, I mean who am I, as a person who conducts qualitative research and thinks that this research is built upon interaction, who prefers and uses post structuralist methods I look at it this way... Some other person might construct it another way. Why, because, let’s say, they are standing in a position which they think is objective or I don’t know it can be built from another perspective. I mean so I don’t see what I do as subjective, I think that it is from a certain perspective. You can accept or do not like this perspective. You might want it or not that can be subjective but I mean that is a perspective ...”(Acad-11)*

During the interviews, the interviewees also elaborated on the interview and the analysis processes. As mentioned by some of the interviewees, in qualitative research, the data generation process starts with the first contact of the researcher with the data source. Therefore, it is not possible to seclude the analysis process from the data generation process. The interaction between the researcher and the participant and with the data plays a crucial role and introduces certain concepts such as positionality and subjectivity. Even though researchers stressed different important aspect that affect the analysis, they all agreed upon the idea that no matter the discipline, subject or the method the analysis of qualitative data is always challenging. With qualitative data, researchers are often left with lengthy data and can feel overwhelmed as to how to interpret these data and construct a pattern while preserving the particularities of every individual. As an initial step, some of the researchers suggested to read the interviews a few times prior to coding and pay attention to different aspect of the participant or the interview in every read. This way the researchers will be able to see different patterns emerging from the data and, thus, have a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon in question. As mentioned before, analyzing lengthy and complex qualitative data can be challenging. Every researcher has a unique way of tackling the analysis process and usually choose what best works for them. In the recent years, technological developments have also led to changes and novelties in the field of qualitative research. With the aim of facilitating the analysis process and help researchers to be more organized with their data, Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDAS) gained considerable recognition. That being said, the impact of the software on the analysis process is still much discussed. The interviews revealed different opinions and practices about QDAS. During the interviews, the majority of the interviewees stated that they did not use any software during their analysis process. Only one of the interviewees who is currently doing her first qualitative research expressed that she was using Nvivo for her analysis. Other interviewees mentioned they were not proficient at analysis programs and that they would not prefer these programs as these programs distance themselves from their data. During the development process of these programs, some of the researchers mentioned that they did try to learn them however after getting introduced with the programs they could not get used to carrying out the analysis process using these

programs. While, the researchers did not argue whether or not these programs should be used, they simply stated that it was not suitable for their own research practices. These interviews showed that the power of doing analysis by hand using pen and paper is often times preferred over the QDAS. In fact, the use of these programs were evaluated as a hindrance to the thinking process. Acad-7 explained this situation with an example from her own professor saying that the thinking process of human being and the process of machines do not match:

*“And I didn’t like it, I tried and I did not like the qualitative analysis programs. I like working at hand because one time my professor told me that the speed of the mind and the speed of the hand should be close to each other, the mind flies away and in fact misses many points therefore it is good to do it by hand” Acad-7)*

Similarly, Acad-2 who prefers to carry out her analysis by hand also explained that human mind could not and should not be as systematic as the algorithm of computer programs and that it might render the analysis process mechanic as it tossed aside the human factor:

*“Like artificial intelligence. They can be developed in a way that there won’t be any need for researchers. I feel like they would carry out the research with those robotic things. I mean is the mental capacity of human beings that algorithmic? I’m not so sure. Because there is an algorithm in our minds but the smallest of things can trigger us and carry us somewhere else. I mean I feel like it tosses aside human beings, the software.” (Acad-2)*

Even though researchers mentioned that the use of such programs for analysis is not in line with the research practice that they build throughout the years, they also mentioned about the time consuming and difficult aspects of qualitative analysis. For instance, Acad-1 who prefers doing analysis by hand reminded that in such cases when the research project included a large sample then she considered using some type of a program. Yet even in these cases, she explained that she preferred using Word for the coding process. Using different programs was also mentioned by Acad-10 who has been carrying out qualitative research since the 80s, stated that she preferred using software rather than doing by hand. She explained the use of technology in qualitative research was an important asset and continued reflecting that *“back in our times we did not have these kind of opportunities”*. Furthermore, different from some of the



researchers she highlighted that even though software facilitates the analysis for researchers, it does not do the work for the researcher:

*“But still the driving force has be you, it does not do the analysis for you. You need to ask everything and try everything and see what comes your way. I mean it does not eliminate you it cannot.”(Acad-10)*

The reason why this reflection is different from some of the other researchers is that some of the interviewees explained the use of software in analysis as surrendering the data to a program and that the software relies heavily in counting words rather than focusing on the meaning. For example, Acad-7 who is not favorable towards software likened the qualitative data to dough and the qualitative analysis process to the act of *“kneading dough”*. She continued her words by stating that software would not allow her to touch and mold the data the way she wants:

*“Yes, yes I want to touch it I mean in order to understand. It is not about the words. The program look too much at words”. (Acad-7)*

On the other hand, the only researchers who is currently using a QDAS stated that *“not only on computer but I also printed out the hardcopies and wrote notes at side of the papers.”* Regarding the issue of not opting for technology for qualitative analysis, three main factors come to the forefront; the idea that software renders the situation more distant and mechanic, the relationship of the researcher with technology in general, and the reluctance of changing the already established research practices. However, it is important to note that most of the interviewees did not use software especially QDAS for their analysis.

Related to both the field and analysis process of qualitative research which consists of a highly interactive process that dwells deep into the lives of individuals and unearth the perspectives and emotions that are often times unknown even to the participant, places great responsibility on the researcher and brings forth ethical discussions. The interviewees mentioned about different aspects of ethical issues to be considered by researchers. In large, the researchers elaborated on the ethical considerations during the interviews, the reporting of the data, and how they tackle the traumatic and sensitive issues encountered during the interviews. The most important factor mentioned in the interviews is that researchers should always value and respect

the lives of their participants. Acad-4 who values the precious aspect of qualitative research that allows the researcher to interact with the participants on another deeper level, expressed that even though she wants to learn more about the experiences and the lives of the participant, her priority is to respect her participants at all costs:

*“My stance in that situation is that firstly I should not harm the person. My aim is not to get that information at all costs. So my priority is the person in front of me.” (Acad-4)*

The interview process is a dynamic and unknown process and very traumatic and difficult experiences can come up even though the research topic is not about a sensitive issue. When asked about where they draw their ethical boundaries when it comes to traumatic experiences, almost all of the researchers highlighted that they can ask about the traumatic experiences as long as the participant is willing to share.

*“So you have to have respect for one another. Just like the way you expect respect from other people. For me it is that simple. I mean it is not very complicated. For example if they can be exposed even if you don't give their names, I mean if that will cause them harm or hurt. You need to establish compassion you need to establish a friendship and you should not objectify them, you need to see them as humans. Ethics are all about these. So you can't say something like “you can't ask these questions or like even if you ask those you cannot include those information in your study. Because it is an interactive thing. You would know where to stop.” (Acad-7)*

*“For instance a family biography, for instance a child did bad thing like using drugs or something and the family puts that child in to a black envelope and they would not like to remember what's inside that envelope. Now I don't think that forcing them to open that envelope is a good thing. In a humanitarian sense it is not good.” (Acad-6)*

These reflections suggest that even with traumatic issues, the researchers should not assume anything about the participant and be natural throughout the interviews. As mentioned extensively above, qualitative research flourishes with natural human interaction. Even though at times a natural flowing interview could be difficult to obtain due to the researcher identity, the researchers should endeavor to keep an equal balance rather than a hierarchical one. This issue also brings forth a discussion on the emotional burden of qualitative research on the researchers. The interviewees all mentioned that their experiences with qualitative research have led to

transformative changes in their lives. As Acad-10 explained the interactive process does not only allow the researchers to learn valuable information on their research topic but also learn more about different cultures, ideas, living conditions unrelated to their study, and also learn more about themselves as a researcher and a human being. While talking about one of her researches she mentioned that sometimes the relationships that she build with participants would do beyond the research and turn into a friendship and that the qualitative research process allow both the researcher and the participant to interact and evaluate one another:

*...Also those relationships don't stay in the research. They definitely analyze me too, I mean it is never a one-sided thing. Perhaps it is more strict in quantitative research, one asks, the other one answers but here both sides try to understand each other. They connect with each other at one point and change one another, umm it is an interactive process. You start to think about things that you did not think in the past. [...] They also affect you. I learned so much from them [her participants] on life, on ways of living.”(Acad-10)*

As can be understood from the reflection above, being involved with extremely personal experiences of individuals and being exposed to different perspectives contributes to one's perception on life. Having said that during the course of their carrier some of the researchers mentioned that they were faced with difficult and emotionally challenging issues. However, they accept these kind of encounters as part of qualitative research. Even though certain issues also leaves an impact on the researchers, most of the time they can manage to distance themselves from those experiences. However, Acad-7, Acad-5 and Acad-11 mentioned that during the interviews they also do not hold back on their emotions and respond to certain situations as they would in their own personal lives. Regardless of the topic, one researcher expressed that there is no one way of tackling the interviews and that it all depends on the context and the people with which they are interacting.

*“I mean that all depends on how open the person is. If that person will reject and end the interview there then I do not push it. But isn't that what we do in our personal relationships? I mean friendship is like that and you go around stuff. Sometimes you just say what you want to say, sometimes you say it two days later. It is similar. I mean it is difficult to, I mean it is not something like in this case you do this or that. It is a reciprocal thing. I mean that person does something and you do*

*something in return. You try to pave the way from there and they do the same thing.”(Acad-7)*

Regarding ethical considerations and emotional burden, some of the researchers expressed that they encountered ethical dilemmas during the interviews. The main aim of the researchers is always the having the best interest their participants. However, in some instances it could be difficult to identify what would be the best for the participants. At times, even though the researcher have good intentions, it could be difficult to foresee the possible negative impacts of their decisions during the field:

*“Umm during a study we are sitting side by side and I am not going to hurt them in any way and I won’t tell her stories with her words it is evident, a trusting relationship is very important. But then I saw suicidal patterns. Now what should I do? I shouldn’t tell her parents. I shouldn’t do this and that. But what should I do? Should I let her do it I mean when it comes to ethical issues there is no sole solution [...] One should come up with a formula according to the circumstances. Perhaps one should seek professional help in that case. I mean rigor is extremely important.” (Acad-12)*

At this point, the researchers reflected on the importance of building a trusting relationship with the participants and of assuring them their stories and their identities will be protected. Acad-8 who is very sensitive regarding the issues on ethical consideration and the importance of protecting the participants at all costs explained that even the people who participated in the research should not be able to identify themselves. Therefore, in all stages of research, researchers should always respect the lives of their participants. Another interviewee also stressed on the importance of being diligent during the reporting of the data. Even though reporting on the intricacies of the phenomena is alluring, every researcher should always consider the implications of his/her research on their participants and on the society. Thus, researchers should refrain from being besotted by the important yet sensational aspect of the data:

*“And sometime you need to restrain your greed and hunger for seeking information or sometimes you don’t use certain things that they said. That can happen too.” (Acad-10)”*

*“I always think how they would feel when they read this. So it did happen. I was sure that she would not want to read that, she told me but after a certain point they forget about the recorder. I mean as I said if there is a good interaction they say it but then I know that she will regret it and she would not want to read that. It doesn’t matter if they do not*

*know who that person is, she will know. So I didn't use it. I mean I described it with my own words but I did not include her own words”* (Acad-7)

While many of the examples above highlighted the possible negative impacts of research results on the participants, the researchers are also responsible for producing results that would not hurt any group of the society. Acad-6 whose study topics also include ethnic groups stated the importance of both protecting the individuals and the communities:

*“Ethically I can say that I mean even if that person doesn't think about it much, if I know that the words would instigate a stigma about their community even if the person is anonymous, if I am aware of that then I would think about not reporting it.”* (Acad-6)

Along with all the points mentioned above, one of the researchers drew attention to a lesser known factor regarding ethical considerations. Acad-12 mentioned that researchers should be aware of their limitations and select the suitable path and approach for the research. She also evaluated this aspect as part of the ethical considerations that is not explained in the sources on ethics:

*Also it is very important to know one's place. On my opinion, I mean the books on ethics would like write about it but I think that knowing what you do or don't know is also an ethical consideration.”* (Acad-12)

### **4.3. Teaching Qualitative Research**

It goes without saying that learning various research methodologies is the first step for every researcher. This issue has a more crucial importance for qualitative research. As the sources that explain the intricacies of qualitative research and also the interviews conducted for this study show, qualitative research has a dynamic, fluid yet a systematic process that requires a multi-disciplined approach. This often complex nature of qualitative research renders the education challenging both for the lecturers and the students. Within this context, the academicians interviewed reflected on their experiences with teaching qualitative research, the importance of training and establishing qualitative research literacy, and the difficulties that students face when learning and using qualitative methods. The teaching experiences of academicians

interviewed are not limited to courses on qualitative methodology or on research methodology in general. The interviewees mentioned three different settings where they interact with students: undergraduate or graduate courses on research methodology, supervising theses and workshops on qualitative research. Except for one of the interviewees who is in the course of conducting her first qualitative research, all of the academicians interviewed have experiences in teaching qualitative methods or mentoring/supervising students.

As mentioned by several academicians, there is still a growing interest in learning and using qualitative research from the researchers or students from various disciplines. The interviewees mentioned that they were receiving demands from individuals with different backgrounds to organize workshops on qualitative methodology.

*“Umm people are in search of this. For example, they are going to write their master’s thesis or PhD thesis, they have a topic and they do not want to only use quantitative methods but use qualitative methods but they don’t know how to do it. So we see this issue when we prepare workshops, people are in search of this, we are trying to support them.”(Acad-10)*

Some of the researchers mentioned that even though the courses and workshops on qualitative research have increased in number, their qualities were still questionable. One of the researchers who gives qualitative research methodology classes highlighted the importance of providing high quality education on qualitative methodology. She elaborated on the important task of providing an education faithful to the philosophical and methodological requirements of qualitative research and explained that the education given to students affected the overall quality of researches produced and the criticisms that qualitative research receive from the scientific community. Another researcher who gives courses and also organizes workshops for students from various disciplines mentioned that the “low quality qualitative researches” stemmed from the education or better yet the low quality education provided to the students. She also mentioned that it was challenging to change or correct the wrong or insufficient information given to the students.

*“Umm qualitative training is also increasing [...] the quality of education is very bad in some places and when people learn from those places I cannot explain it to them. For example, for example I say to someone ‘but this is quantitative’ and when they say to me ‘no this is qualitative’ they showed us like that then you have no where else to go with that (Acad-1)”*

Misinterpreting the paradigms of qualitative research, trying to understand qualitative methodology by comparing it with quantitative methodology and, overall, seeing qualitative research as an easy and quick way of conducting research or as an escape from statistics result in the abundance of researches with low quality. However, one of the academicians who though research methodology courses mentioned that it would not be fair to make generalizations without carrying out a study focusing on the content of qualitative researches. Nevertheless, the studies that she read showed that there were a variety of studies with different strengths and weaknesses.

*“There are also studies that I like, studies that I say they did well, their interpretations were very good. There are studies that make me feel glad that I learned something new. As I said in the beginning, the reason why there are many studies is because people think that qualitative research is easy. Like I said we have a social scientist profile that shudder when they see the sigma. I think that this is the effect of research methodology courses given at universities, for social sciences I mean.” (Acad-9)*

From this reflection, it can be deduced that while conveying correct and comprehensive information on all sorts of research methodologies is crucial, it is also important to teach the individuals to choose the suitable method according to their research questions and not the other way around. As mentioned in the previous sections, even though qualitative research methodology has reemerged as a popular methodology, it is still trivialized by positivist scientist as not being “scientific” and usually tossed aside as a stepsibling. Even though the rigid understanding of science and scientific knowledge have transformed throughout the history and the adamant voice of positivist paradigms that influences many disciplines and approaches have diminished slightly, qualitative research still remains as a misunderstood and misinterpreted approach. The reason for this can be explained with the heavy influence of positivist paradigms ingrained in the minds of researchers, resulting in always seeking to explain the world with big numbers, strict categories and well-formed

boxes, and the difficulty of adjusting to this different approach that is complex, fluid yet extremely systematic. Relatedly, some of the academicians mentioned that the kind of researches that do not comply with the qualitative research paradigm further enforce and provoke the criticisms raised against qualitative research. For instance, Acad-3 who gives lectures on research methodology mentioned about two distinct characteristics when it comes to qualitative studies that were conducted outside the essential aspects of qualitative research and she exemplified the impact of positivist paradigm on qualitative research practice:

*“Sometimes I come across horrible studies, I don’t consider them as research. I mean there is a group that carry out qualitative research with a quantitative mentality. There are other studies that are like journalistic interviews just like the criticism of our professors, like they are not systematic. Qualitative research is also systematic. It is not like I went and I talked with three people and made a research out of it. Right? So there are groups like this but there are also very good studies.” (Acad-3)*

In line with these words, some of the academicians highlighted that due to its fluid and flexible nature there was a misconception that qualitative research did not have a systematic approach and that it was easier than quantitative research. Academicians mentioned that some of the researchers had a tendency of opting for qualitative methods thinking that it takes less time and is easy to conduct. Some of the researchers who highlighted the shortcomings of qualitative education provided and who endeavors to further and better the knowledge on qualitative research through various workshops enunciated that as a result of misinformation the challenging aspects of qualitative research was perceived as easy:

*“I mean it feels like it [qualitative research] is still an unknown field, in terms of its flexibility etc etc. I mean the aspects that are considered as difficult for qualitative researchers are seen as an easy way of conducting qualitative research for people who do not know qualitative research” (Acad-1)*

*“Rather they think that it [qualitative research] is easy. Umm if you ask me the studies conducted with qualitative methods are way more challenging than studies conducted with quantitative methods. Doing qualitative research requires talent. Doing qualitative research requires robust knowledge. [...] when it comes to qualitative research it requires creativity. Qualitative research cannot be carried out*



*without creativity. The reasons why there are many qualitative studies is due to the fact that it is considered as easy and that they are carried out without diligence. [...] [qualitative research] is extremely time consuming so the studies that are completed in two days or so are not qualitative studies in my opinion.”(Acad-9)*

From certain aspects, in some of the interviews, the issue of low-quality qualitative studies was evaluated coupled with the status and also the requirements of academia. Even though academia is one of the main pillars of science and research, some of the researchers reminded that in the current situation of academia the quantity of one’s academic work overshadowed the quality. Researchers were forced to produce more in a relatively short span of time in order to advance in their careers. However, learning about the inner worlds of human beings and making sense of their lives and experiences while deciphering our position and who we are as a person or a researcher require time, patience and a great deal of commitment. In fact, some of the researchers mentioned that most of the time their studies took years to complete. Therefore, the pressure of career and the need to publish many works in order to stay relevant in the academic world have also been tied to low-quality qualitative researches. That being said, even though many negative aspects were mentioned above, this does not mean that there are no good quality qualitative studies. In fact, one of the researchers disclosed that she did not like the discussions revolving around the quality of studies produced. While discussing about the discussions on quality of qualitative research she explained that many factors such as career comes into play but overall she concurred that there are many interesting and good quality qualitative researches:

*There is also the aspect of promotion in universities. I mean going further in the academic career [...] Having these kinds of worries but there are also low-quality quantitative studies too. [...] I think that there are good quality qualitative studies (Acad-2)*

Therefore, while discussing about the improvements required for qualitative research, the researchers also mentioned that there were both good and bad examples of qualitative research. Relatedly, Acad-1 who carries an activist role for the dissemination of correct information on qualitative research explained that even though there were good qualitative studies, they were not easily visible due to the high publishing rate of low quality studies:

*“When you look at the journals there are plenty of low quality studies. But there are also good quality studies too, the problem is the publishing pace of low-quality studies and that of good-quality studies are not equal.” (Acad-1)*

Along with the general outlook on the conjuncture of qualitative research, academicians also shared their opinions on the difficulties faced by students when learning and conducting qualitative research. Some academicians mentioned key issues that students encounter during their journey of qualitative research. Some of these difficulties are related to the essence of qualitative research. For instance, Acad-1 mentioned that due to incorrect education provided for students or the fact that some students did not get acquainted with qualitative research during their education, it was difficult for them to understand the paradigm of qualitative research and realize that there are different approaches for unraveling the hidden worlds of human beings:

*“Looking from this kind of a [quantitative] paradigm and seeing a different paradigm, multiple realities, the subjective nature of this reality and the role of the researcher in reaching this subjectivity etc. and internalizing these aspects are very difficult for them”. (Acad-1)*

The issue of paradigm change or learning and internalizing a new perspective was also mentioned by other academicians. It is understood that the main challenge regarding this issue stems from the strong influence of positivist paradigms. The deeply rooted influence of positivist paradigms on the research practices makes itself apparent during qualitative research practices. Almost all of the interviewees expressed the influence of quantitative methods or “*quantitative mentality*” on the learning process of qualitative research. As was expressed, students would struggle with the issue of generalizability, using a quantitative language or the objectivity/subjectivity discussions and usually reflecting the processes of quantitative methods on qualitative methods:

*“Also the researcher wants to generalize, he/she cannot give up that need to generalize things. Perhaps the researcher wants some kind of a claim. And that claim cannot transform into understanding the issues through dynamic status of the field, that is also a claim. But the other one is something that he/she is familiar with. They say I should generalize this knowledge and render it more acceptable among the scientific community.” (Acad-3)*

Another important point mentioned during the interviews was the importance of imparting knowledge on the philosophical aspects of qualitative research to those who are learning. Acad-1 mentioned that as a group they were organizing many workshops for students or researchers from different backgrounds. The academician mentioned that during these workshops the participants did not understand the importance of focusing on the philosophical and methodological aspects of qualitative research. When the fundamental aspects of qualitative research are not understood comprehensively this impedes the following processes of qualitative research:

*“We teach it [workshops] with two other colleagues and we start with paradigms. I mean it is very difficult to explain paradigms in terms of basic ontology, epistemology, methodology context. I attempt to explain these in one go but when these concepts are not understood fully then the next day they cannot see that the answer to the question of why can't I use these techniques instead of the other one is rooted in the paradigms. Because paradigm shift does not happen easily. It takes time and thus the biggest challenge for them is to understand the paradigm of qualitative research...” (Acad-1)*

That being said, while providing a robust and comprehensive education is extremely important, the crucial impact of practice and experience should not be overlooked. Qualitative research process is an ever-changing, dynamic process that relies heavily on the context. Going out in the field and actually experiencing qualitative methods and building a research practice according to those experiences will improve and facilitate the internalization of qualitative research. That is the reason why Acad-6 suggested that students should have the opportunity to practice with qualitative methods more during their education. Relatedly, some of the academicians mentioned even though students understand the essential aspects of qualitative research on a theoretical level, it was difficult for them to actualize the theoretical information that they learn. Acad-11 mentioned that the best way of learning qualitative research was by doing. This is also the reason why she prefers to incorporate her own experiences in the lectures. Providing concrete example for students or researchers can aid them to conceptualize the intricacies of qualitative research:

*So I want to underline that the difficulty is not related to understanding it is related to the practice of it. I did many mistakes, it's actually*

*incredible. I tell about my mistakes [in classes], I take examples from my studies and read them in class they laugh so hard. (Acad-11)*

In addition to the remarks on the content of the education, some of the researchers also reflected on certain characteristics of students that obstruct the qualitative research process. Both Acad-10 and Acad-12 who have a long experience as researchers and academicians expressed the impatience of students to conduct a study and being sloppy with the task at hand. Both of these characteristics go beyond the issue of university education and are in fact related to the societal particularities. Qualitative research is an intense process that requires the researcher to be curious about phenomena related to the social world, to be open to different perspectives, to be willing to reflect on oneself and to be able to observe, interpret and construct a pattern. All of these aspects of qualitative research and the researcher thrive on lifelong education, intellectual cultivation and personal characteristics. Interestingly, these aspects are also among the ones with which students struggle the most. To start with the fundamental explanation to these problems, Acad-10 expressed that the education system that we have in the country was based on rote learning and standardized tests which, in return, hindered the process of building, analyzing and writing a research:

*“Also there are many problems regarding writing something I mean they are the test generation, all the university entry exams include test. After that kind of an education, writing introduction, the aim of the study, constructing a research all of a sudden these things are extremely difficult for most of the students.”(Acad-10)*

Relatedly, some of the researchers highlighted that there was a tendency among students to reach results fast and with little effort. As was mentioned by some of the academicians these characteristics go against the fundamentals of being a researcher. Being involved with any kind of intellectual activity requires patience and hard work that, often, takes time, as well as personal and professional growth. While discussing about the essential requirements of being a qualitative researcher, Acad-2 explained that intellectual cultivation was extremely important. She continued her words by saying that improving oneself through books, films and art, and exposing oneself to new perspectives, ideas and cultures play a significant role on researchers and their ability to interpret and analyze the data they generate. Along the same lines, Acad-9

also mentioned that a qualitative researcher should harbor creativity in order to be able to follow through with their research practice. Therefore, being hasty and focusing on completing the research without being willing to commit to labor-intensive, arduous process was considered as an impediment to conducting qualitative research:

*“Let me tell it this way, in Turkey I mean I don’t like to say Turkish culture but we have saying getting by you know that right. We do everything sloppy and we get by [...] this issue irritates me so much. I mean for starters we don’t know to work systematically.” (Acad-12)*

*“Also our society wants to acquire things really quickly I mean there is no patience. And in my opinions that, acquiring thing quickly, is against the soul of the research. I mean of course we don’t have endless time but they don’t want to spend too much effort and time but they want to find something.” (Acad-10)*

This aspect also correlates with another issue mentioned by Acad-1 regarding the approaches of students towards research methodology during classes or workshops. She mentioned that some students were expecting the lecturers to tell them what and how to do research rather than incorporating the knowledge that they learn throughout their education. As was told by Acad-1, regarding qualitative research, some of the students wanted to have concise information on what to use and when to use these methods. She explained this behavior as an extent of positivist paradigms and their way of building a research:

*“Umm for the ones who gets acquainted for the first time the main problem is they want to know which techniques to use according to their research question. They want to know how to use the data, which analysis techniques to use tell me this [...] Because spss I mean they go to quantitative research seminars, quantitative research methods are these, you use this this this techniques. Spss is like this. They give you a very good pathway I mean they have recipes but in qualitative research... There are also recipes in qualitative research but dependent on the user. I mean it is not a standardized recipe[...]. Our education [in her own field] has quantitative mentality.”(Acad-1)*

In conjunction and as a result of all of these, students struggle to do problem identification, find a suitable method to answer their questions, to actively listen, to analyze and interpret, and to construct a pattern. The remarks of the Acad-2 highlights that in some instances students cannot manage to harmonize all the data they generate in the field and come up with an end result:

*“I mean generally at analysis. I mean conducting the interviews and going to the depths of to the field, those aspects are good but then they struggle to compile the data and turn it into a thesis and to come up with arguments.” (Acad-2)*

All in all, learning about the shortcomings in qualitative education and the areas that need to be improved plays a crucial role in improving the status of qualitative research.

#### **4.4. Future of Qualitative Research in Turkey**

Looking at the evolution of paradigms over the course of the history of social sciences, even though it is possible to talk about the general progression of certain approaches, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact moment of change. As the societies and their needs transform, social sciences endeavor to follow and adapt to these societal needs. When discussing over the progression of qualitative research in Turkey, the researchers mentioned that it was difficult to be certain of the history of qualitative research. Nevertheless, two main points were put forth regarding this issue. The first one was related to the general progression of qualitative research. The researchers explained that when quantitative methods failed to answer the questions of researchers and to explain the phenomenon occurring in the social world, qualitative methods regained its popularity in many disciplines. The second point made by the researchers was related to the progression of qualitative research in Turkey which reflected that the influence of international literature was strong when it comes to research practice. Therefore, they did not mention a certain reason or a point specific to Turkey that resulted in the proliferation of qualitative research in the country. In a similar manner, they did not put forth strong opinions on to the future of qualitative research as it is not easy to predict the progression of certain methodologies. That being said, various interviewees focused on different aspects regarding the process of qualitative research. For instance, Acad-1 expressed that she was not optimistic about the future of qualitative research in the country due to general negative situation of academia and the shortcomings regarding the education of qualitative research:

*“So when we look at it, the low quality education and the low chance of getting qualitative education is a risk for the future of qualitative research. Umm not having opportunities that is also a risk because we*

*are talking about a large pool. Umm on the other hand the fact that academia is being measured by many external factors, this is also negative and is a risk and having few researchers wishing to do good quality qualitative research and at the same time we are trying to improve these aspects but we are also working this is not my only worry. We don't have enough strength for all of these. Therefore, I don't see a bright future for qualitative research.” (Acad-1)*

While Acad-1 reflected on the general outlook of qualitative research focusing on the concrete points that hinder qualitative research process, and the steps that can and should be taken to further the qualitative research culture, other researchers approached the issue from a different perspective. For instance, Acad-2 mentioned that even though it was difficult to foresee how social sciences will evolve in the future, she discussed that following the rise of qualitative research especially with the influence of feminist methodology, there was shift towards a tendency of explaining the world through comparison and the discussions revolving around big data could lead to the rise of quantitative methods. However, she also mentioned that next wave of feminist movement would have an important impact on qualitative research:

*“I mean post modernism is declining. So, its essential problem was with modernism, with positivism, it was criticizing them. So now feminist standpoint is increasing. I mean the next wave of feminist movement will have an impact especially lgbti will pioneer it, I think. [...] Along with this in qualitative research the subjectivity story will be on the rise but I'm following these big data arguments with very unsettled with this big data arguments with unease.” (Acad-2)*

On another note, Acad-6 associated the need for qualitative research with the needs of the society after enduring serious political and societal changes. Acad-6 who worked with ethnic groups in the past referred to the qualitative interviewing process as a therapy. This aspect of qualitative research was mentioned by other researchers as well. Even when talking about extremely traumatic issues that left a permanent scar in peoples' lives, after talking about their issues with a stranger, some participants shared that they felt relieved. Therefore, in some ways qualitative research has a crucial empowering aspect for the participants. As for the future of qualitative research, Acad-6 expressed that even though the society is not ready to talk about the serious events experienced, some point in the future there will be a need to revisit the impact of these

events on people and this need will be fulfilled through different methods of qualitative research:

*“I mean this kind of an interview process is like therapy both for the participant and the researcher, it is a world reciprocal learning. So, when at the moment when we need this kind of a therapy we will go back to it. [...] so when we inquire the things that happened to us then the social sciences in Turkey will go back to qualitative research either with oral history or something else.” (Acad-6)*

Some of the other researchers that qualitative research methods will continue its popularity in the future. Acad-3 and Acad-10 mentioned that currently they were receiving requests for organizing workshops or courses on qualitative research. Acad-3 mentioned that due to requests from researchers from many diverse disciplines that tend towards quantitative methods, qualitative research methodology would continue its rise and relevance in social sciences. Along with these opinions, mixed methods were also brought up as currently popular methods that could gain more momentum in social sciences. This opinion was also mentioned by one of the researchers working for private research companies. He mentioned that after the introduction of qualitative research methods into the research practices of private research companies when quantitative methods started to fall short to answer the questions, there could be a tendency of opting for both methods to answer the needs and requests of clients:

*“When they couldn’t get the answers that they were expecting they turned into people were offering them something else. They went on and tried that. Then qualitative methods soared. Then the next step is, very few companies are doing this, the studies using both qualitative and quantitative methods. But these are very few because there this kind of an arrogance as to quantitative researchers think that they are the center of the world because they get a certain amount of the budget. The qualitative researchers do not want to get involved.” (Co-2)*

Nevertheless, another researcher who is working for private research companies explained that it was not logical to discuss on the future status of certain methods and reminded the issue of choosing the suitable for the research question. However, she also mentioned that this was the ideal situation and continued that research companies will choose the methods that will earn them more money with minimal interviews:

*“I mean if you ask me the method is set according to the subject that you are going to study, it is not determined with supply and demand. In*



*the past [...] there were no trust toward qualitative methods, they were saying 'what is this' and it was not taken seriously. So everybody was expecting you to do questionnaire and share the results with statistical tables but in time it was realized that this was not the case. At least [qualitative methods] become as reliable and demanded as questionnaires. Umm this does not mean that only qualitative research will be conducted from now on. That all depends on the study and the research question [...] This all depends on the future of social sciences. But the tendency of research companies is to, I mean the reason why they prefer focus group so much, is related to earn more money by interviewing more people in a short amount of time..."(Co-1)*

Overall, considering the remarks of researchers on the future of qualitative research, qualitative research will remain, for the most part, popular among social sciences. That being said, this issue is closely related to the transformation of social sciences and the needs of the social world.

## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to explore the qualitative research culture in Turkey through the experiences and opinions of researchers working in academia as well as in private research companies. The interviews showed that even though qualitative research methods were faced with scrutiny in the past (starting from the beginning of the 80s according to the experiences of the researchers), it seems to have an accepted position and it is employed more predominantly. However, there are certain hindrances to the research practices of researchers. Furthermore, even though the studies and efforts focused on furthering the methodological discussions on qualitative research are increasing, the interviews suggest that methodology is, to a certain extent, still unheeded.

Looking at the research experiences of the interviewees, the fact that some of them mentioned using quantitative methods at the beginning demonstrates that the interviewees opt for qualitative research when they wanted to understand a certain phenomenon with all its particularities. The strict categorization of quantitative methods fails to encompass the diversity of human experience (Flick, 2009). This does not communicate that one tradition is better than the other. In fact, the tug of war between the two major paradigms adds nothing valuable to research practices and ends up diverting the researchers from the essential philosophies and teachings of these two major paradigms. The experiences of the researchers with qualitative research, which span across a 30-year-period, show that qualitative research received various criticism that questioned its scientific aspect. Notably, except for the disciplines with a rooted qualitative research tradition, some of the researchers' accounts on how they had to defend their choice of using qualitative methods against the positivist paradigm and on facing rejection from many areas remain as an important point. However, the interviews also suggest that there have been improvements in terms of the "acceptance" and popularity of qualitative research. Nevertheless, just as Denzin & Lincoln (2008) mentioned in the preface of their book, in our country qualitative research is "*still defined by tensions, contradictions and hesitations*". It is important to mention that even though qualitative research has a subjective research process that takes shape according to many diverse contexts, from some of the interviewees many

criticisms were raised regarding the qualitative research process of other researchers. Even though constructive criticism is one of the most important aspects of improvement, not having a common platform to discuss about the research practices on qualitative research could be seen as a missed opportunity.

The long-lasting and dominant influence of positivist paradigms among social sciences can create a hindrance in terms of qualitative education and render the process challenging for students, novice researchers and even the lecturers. The positivist view of the world embedded in the minds of individuals wishing to learn qualitative methods hampers the paradigm shift and makes it difficult to understand qualitative research. The reflections of the academicians reinforce the need for better qualitative education for all, as students from different disciplines struggle to break loose from the rooted influence of quantitative approaches. Researchers also drew attention to the fact that in some instances qualitative research methods are preferred thinking that it is easy to do or to evade statistics. These understandings are also caused by the misinformation provided to students. Nevertheless, along with the robust education, qualitative research practices are solidified by experience. Therefore, it is also important to provide opportunities for students to experience and practice qualitative research in a class environment.

As for the research practices of researchers from private research companies, there is a similar progression in terms of qualitative research methods. According to the accounts of the researchers from private research companies, qualitative research has proliferated among private research companies which differ from the academia in terms of knowledge production and which can be seen as an important actor of the research culture. The influence of positivist paradigm are also visible in the practices of research companies. However, in the recent years in line with the requests from clients, especially from global companies and international organizations, qualitative research gained a prominent place. That being said, even though this shift can be explained through the needs of the clients for more detailed understanding, for research companies the choice of qualitative research seems to be driven by the current popularity of qualitative research.

Regarding the research practices of researchers it is not possible to present a fixed process for every researcher due to the flexible yet systematic nature of qualitative research that allows the researchers to unravel the depths of human experience through dynamic procedures. The approach and the research practices of researchers take shape according to the subject and the research question of the study. Therefore, it is important to mention that the methods are tools for answering the questions of researchers and they should not be the first determinant factor regarding the research design. However, regarding this issue there is a difference in practice in terms of academia and researchers working in research companies. While, most of the time in academia the method is selected in accordance with the requirements of the research question, the researchers from the research companies interviewed mentioned that most of the time the method was selected first and the research was designed accordingly. The interviewees linked this issue with the tendency of the research companies for choosing the “popular” method and the method that would cost less money and time. Owing to the dynamic and flexible nature of qualitative research, it is not possible to present a fixed research practice for all. As the interviews pointed out, context is always at the center of any research design. It was argued that their research practices take shape and fluctuate according to the context, whether it be institutional context as universities or companies, discipline context, the field context, or personal context as researchers. Another important point regarding the research process is the importance of researcher involvement with the data source. Even though working in teams for diverse reasons have been said to flourish the knowledge building process as it introduces new perspectives to the study, qualitative research practice is often a solitary one that starts with the story of the researcher. In order to see the field and the understand its dynamics, the researchers should experience the field themselves. This issue is not solely related to the field but the entire qualitative research process. One other important aspect mentioned during the interviews was the use of software for qualitative analysis. There are many articles that discuss the content of qualitative analysis and its methodological implications. Miles & Huberman (1994), reflected on the qualitative analysis through software as a time saving activity that facilitates the organization of data analysis. Since the 1994 edition of the book much improvements have been achieved in this field. Similarly, Kuş (2006) also referred to

the software as a facilitating process that is highly dependent on the researchers and that provides the researcher to be more flexible and systematic. That being said the researchers interviewed for this study were not favorable towards the software. Some of them regarded it as a block between the researcher and the data. Some mentioned that these programs probably did not allow the researcher to touch and feel the data and shape it the way they want. In this case, being familiar with technology plays an important role on the perceptions toward the software and that the power and freedom of pen and paper surpasses the time-saving and organizational aspects of the software. That being said, not all the researchers were distant to the analysis of qualitative data through software. For instance, one of the researchers reminded that computers in general facilitated the life of human beings. Therefore, she valued the impact of software on the analysis process.

However, the interviews also pointed out to diverse factors that hinder the research practice of the researchers and prevent them from conducting studies freely. For the researchers from private companies this manifest as factors related to budgeted and time. It seems that the research practices in private research companies are optimized according to the needs of the clients, as well as the budgeted and the time allocated for that project. As mentioned by the researchers, the research companies are usually very competitive that are almost exclusively short on time and budgeted. The issue of time restrictions was also emphasized by the academicians in two aspects. The first one is related to not being able to carry out more studies due to their teaching and administrative responsibilities. This issue has also been mentioned by other studies as a hindrance to the research culture since the researchers are not fully free to create and produce research studies (Deem & Lucas, 2007; Marchant, 2009; Uzuner, 2015). Another aspect is related to the pressures of the academic world to constantly produce in order to move forward in their careers, which was mentioned by Joynson & Leyser (2015) as “*publish or perish*”. The high demand of academia for constantly producing new work has been mentioned among the reasons that enforce low-quality qualitative studies. Due to its labor-intense nature, conducting a qualitative research requires time and dedication from the researchers and this evaluation system of the academia that values quantity over quality creates an obstacle for producing good-quality qualitative

studies. Even though the researchers mentioned that there are many good quality qualitative studies, the lower-quality studies that are not true to the nature of qualitative research enforces the criticism questioning the scientific value of qualitative research coming from positivist sciences.

As mentioned previously, even though qualitative research practices run with conflicts and dilemmas, it gained a prominent place among many diverse disciplines. As the literature suggests, in order to have a rooted research culture, it is important for researchers to share and discuss about their practices. Relatedly, methodological discussions also play a crucial role for improving research practices. In Turkey, there are some studies that focus on the methodological aspect of qualitative research. However, the interviews with the researchers suggests that in Turkey methodological discussions are still not at a satisfactory level. Even though, during some of the interviews the need to have a community that will allow researchers to discuss about their research practices was mentioned, it seems like it could be difficult to bring together a group that are critical of each other's studies. Nonetheless, I believe that in order to have a robust qualitative research culture and to further the methodological discussions in the country, a common platform could be valuable.

This thesis aims to explore different aspects of qualitative research practices and evaluate the current status of qualitative research culture in the country. However, in this study interviews were conducted with academicians from 5 different disciplines. In time, qualitative research has become a rather popular methodology for many disciplines. Therefore, I suggest having further studies that include more researchers from many other disciplines in order to gain integrated insights for qualitative research culture in the country. Furthermore, through the interviews with the researchers from private research companies, I realized that these companies have many diverse structures. However, I conducted few interviews with these researchers. Therefore, more studies should be conducted to reveal the lesser-known world of research companies. Finally, this study does not include the experiences and opinions of students which are also an important part of the research culture. Future studies including the students would contribute to the understanding on the research culture.

Even though the literature is abundant with studies that focuses on the researcher process, there is still a need for overviewing the research culture with an integrated approach and providing various experiences of researcher with the aim of embodying the qualitative research practice. Along with contributing to the existing literature on methodological discussions, I hope that this study will also contribute to the department of social research methodology which aims to train future experts on qualitative and quantitative methodology.

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## **ANNEX A. SEMI-STRUCTURED GUIDELINE**

1. When did you first use qualitative research? (*learning and internalization process, difficulties*)
2. How do you proceed in qualitative research? (*position and approaches, design and analysis process, impact of technological developments*)
3. How did the use of qualitative research changed in the country? (*shifts, intensity*)
4. What is the situation of qualitative research in the scientific community? (*comments of methodological aspects*)
5. What are your thoughts on studies conducted with qualitative research?
6. What do you think about the future of qualitative research in general and in the country?
7. How do you define ethical considerations in qualitative research?
8. Especially with sensitive issues, where do you draw the line?
9. How emotionally involved are you during the interviews?

## ANNEX B. PROFILES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Interviewees	Sex	Qualitative Research Experience
Acad-1	F	Over 15 years/Lecturer on qualitative research methodology
Acad-2	F	Over 20 years/Lecturer on research methodology
Acad-3	F	15 years/Lecturer on qualitative methodology
Acad-4	F	Under 5 years
Acad-5	F	5 years
Acad-6	M	Over 10 years/Teaches qualitative methods in introductory courses
Acad-7	F	Over 20 years/Was a lecturer on qualitative research methodology
Acad-8	F	Over 10 years/Lecturer on research methodology
Acad-9	F	Over 20 years/Was a lecturer on qualitative research methodology
Acad-10	F	Over 40 years/Was a lecturer on qualitative research methodology
Acad-11	F	Over 30 years/Teaches qualitative methods in introductory courses
Acad-12	F	Over 20 years/Lecturer on research methodology and qualitative research
Co-1	F	Over 15 years
Co-2	M	15 years
Co-3	M	Over 5 years

## ANNEX C. APPROVAL OF ETHICAL COMMISSION



T.C.  
HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
Rektörlük

Tarih: 24/05/2018 14:39  
Sayı: 35853172-755.02.01-  
E:00000063661



Sayı : 35853172-755.02.01  
Konu : Akya AKARSU Etik Komisyo izni hk.

### NÜFUS ETÜTLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi : 19.04.2018 tarihli ve 231 sayılı yazımız.

Enstitünüz Sosyal Araştırma Yöntemleri Anabilim Dalı yüksek lisans programı öğrencilerinden Akya AKARSU'nun Doç. Dr. İlknur YÜKSEL-KAPTANOĞLU danışmanlığında yürüttüğü "Nitel Araştırma Geleneği: Sahadan Yansımalar" başlıklı tez çalışması Üniversitemiz Senatosu Etik Komisyonunun 15 Mayıs 2018 tarihinde yapmış olduğu toplantıda incelenmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

e-izmalıdır  
Prof. Dr. Rahime Meral NOHUTCU  
Rektör Yardımcısı

Evrakın elektronik imzalı suretine <https://belgedogrulama.hacettepe.edu.tr> adresinden 7182640f-a2c5-4c8f-9291-29c47ac3803c kodu ile erişebilirsiniz.  
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Hacettepe Üniversitesi Rektörlük 06100 Sıhhiye-Ankara  
Telefon:0 (312) 305 3001-3002 Faks:0 (312) 311 9992 E-posta:yazimd@hacettepe.edu.tr İnternet Adresi: www.hacettepe.edu.tr

