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**Obstacles Facing the Use of Qualitative
Research and Suggestions to Overcome Them
"Bibliometric Study"**

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Obstacles Facing the Use of Qualitative Research and Suggestions to Overcome Them "Bibliometric Study"

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This study aimed to investigate the obstacles to the use of qualitative research in the light of the previous studies and the proposals to overcome them. (16) research studies were analyzed and evaluated critically, within a ten-year period between (2011-2021). The study revealed a number of obstacles to the use of qualitative research, which the study classified into six axes: obstacles related to the administrative aspect, obstacles related to the university professor, obstacles related to the graduate student, obstacles related to the academic course, obstacles related to the nature of qualitative research itself, and obstacles related to the environment and the prevailing educational research culture. The study also reached several proposals to overcome the obstacles to the use of qualitative research, the most prominent of which are the following: spreading the culture of the qualitative curriculum, adoption of qualitative research ideas by faculty members and assigning students to this type of research, in addition to including qualitative research courses within postgraduate programs.

Keywords: *qualitative research, obstacles, suggestions*

Introduction

The use of scientific research is an indicator of the renaissance of nations since it has become a significant part of decision-making and problem-solving in various fields of human knowledge. It contributes to the development of society, its human resources and its development plans. For instance, economic and social development are effective and fruitful if they are based on scientific results stemming from research that is grounded on a sound methodology and a deep understanding of scientific research methodology, steps, tools and procedures (Al-Qahtani, 2017). In recent years, scientific research has developed and its methodologies have diversified providing researchers with various fields to work in accordance with their goals and orientations. Scientific research methods include two basic directions: quantitative research and qualitative research; both directions seek to access scientific knowledge.

In the twenties of the last century, quantitative research dominated scientific research in the fields of humanities and social sciences depending on the field's quantitative data and statistical analysis of this data. Quantitative approach methods spread widely in a way suggesting that those who do not deploy these complex methods are not applying proper methods of scientific research. On the other hand, qualitative research has appeared in the last quarter of the twentieth century as a number of scholars started to criticize the use of statistical quantitative research and identified its limitations as it only focuses on the quantitative side of the data. Consequently, there were calls to turn to the qualitative side of the data while others called to mix quantitative research and qualitative research in order to benefit from the advantages of both approaches resulting in what is known as the mixed research method (Al-Moosa, 2018).

The trend towards qualitative research has grown, especially in the educational field, as a result of diminishing satisfaction with the quantitative approach when studying educational and social problems, particularly where the use quantitative analysis is not suitable. Moreover, qualitative research enables the researcher to obtain direct knowledge from the social and educational reality that the study deals with and it provides a deep view of teaching and learning issues as well as a better understanding of the nature of educational problems in a number of natural contexts (Anderson, 2010). It also offers more accurate results and interpretations due to its adoption of the principle of comprehensiveness in relation to the theoretical construction of the phenomenon under scrutiny contributing to reach results that may lead to solutions of these issues and problems (Al-Qahtani, 2020).

The Concept of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research method represents a major methodology in social research aiming to apply qualitative rather than quantitative research methods in order to reach the maximum possible degree of understanding of the studied social phenomenon through exploring it in details, identifying its potential dimensions

and the factors affecting its continuity and development. This is supposed to be done in the context of the phenomenon and without the researcher taking any action that would modify its course or working in a manner contrary to the truth or adopting a biased and non-objective vision (Muhammad, 2015, p. 142). Al-Jarrah (2014, p. 125) defines the qualitative method as “a type of research that offers an in-depth understanding and comprehensive description of the human phenomenon by which researchers usually provide an in-depth understanding and comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon under study. Qualitative research requires that the researcher does not interpret the data and the results they reach by numerical and statistical methods, but rather by using natural language vocabulary, narrative style and explanatory sentences (Muhammad, 2020)

Furthermore, (Creswell, 2007, p15) states that qualitative method is an investigation process based on distinct traditions of scientific research methodology that is based on a social or human problem and the researcher builds a complex and comprehensive picture of it, analyzes the words and prepares a detailed report stating the views of counselors and then conducts a study on the real situation.” Denzin & Lincoln (2011, p 3) defines it as “the study of phenomena in their natural state where the researcher collects data focusing on every detail in order to provide an adequate description and explanation of the studied problem”.

Researchers who use qualitative method collect data, words or images, then analyze them in an inductive manner focusing on the meanings stated by the participants and describe the process in a convincing and expressive language. Researchers in the qualitative field study things in their natural situations and try to form a meaning or interpretation of phenomena in the light of the meanings that people give to these phenomena. They use various tools such as case studies, personal experience, examination of thoughts, feelings, motives, life history, interview, observation, historical method, interaction and documented texts (Al-Harbi, 2021).

Qualitative Research Designations

Since the rise of the qualitative method in the field of scientific research, it has taken a number of names intending to express a new philosophy that uses different methods and tools that were not used or accepted earlier. Qualitative Research is the most circulated term and it is called qualitative because it is concerned with describing the reality precisely as it is and that indications and evidence are deduced from the events witnessed in their places. It is also called interpretive research method as it goes beyond description to analysis and interpretation; giving meaning to data by linking them together, exploring them from different angles and discovering relationships between them through explanatory research. Moreover, it is called ethnographic or field research, especially in relation to anthropology and field work. Thematic Research is another term referring to the qualitative research when dealing with a main phenomenon that expresses a problem and then uses its tools to analyze it and reveal the relationships between

the different variables included in the phenomenon under study, without neglecting other related phenomena. Therefore, it is concerned with studying a phenomenon and how it is influenced by other phenomena.

In addition, contextual research is another term describing qualitative method when studying a phenomenon or a problem in a specific context where the environment, interactions, external indicators, cultural, scientific and societal background are evident and which have their characteristics in the system in which the problem is being studied as well as other systems of society. When qualitative research studies a phenomenon or a problem as it is in reality and as it occurs in nature without artificial interactions and without distinguishing one variable from another, it is named naturalistic research. Finally, it is called constructive research when analyzing and studying a phenomenon that depends mostly on moving from one point to another. In this case; with the compilation of the results of the different points, more general results are reached and then they are compared to the overall study of the phenomenon in its philosophical framework in order to obtain accurate results (Al-Moosa, 2018).

Common Designs for Qualitative Research Methodologies:

Creswell (2007) identifies five common designs for qualitative research in relation to fundamental differences of the goals of qualitative methodologies. They are the most common and widely used methods in the educational field. They are as follow:

1. *Case Study*: It aims to identify the characteristics of the person, group, organization or events on which the research is conducted to explore the studied problem.
2. *Ethnography*: It is concerned with defining the culture of a group of people and their views in their natural context in relation to the studied problem.
3. *Narrative Inquiry*: It presents the opinions of the participants about the studied problem and their understanding and experiences by studying stories from their lives in relation to the studied problem.
4. *Phenomenological Study*: It focuses on how the participants face the studied problem and deal with it.
5. *Grounded Theory*: It focuses on identifying the theory that can be reached inductively about the studied problem using the data collected from its context.

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is characterized by a number of characteristics ensuring its significance by itself and at the same time distinguishes it from quantitative research. These characteristics were referred to by a group of researchers

including: Al-Moosa, (2018), Al-Qahtani, (2017) and Al-Jarrah, (2014) and they can be summarized as follows:

- Qualitative research explores social phenomena in their natural conditions and contexts and uses its information directly from this natural situation. Naturalness is an essential feature of qualitative research that many of its supporters emphasize.
- It is mainly concerned with the meanings related to how to make people's lives and experiences meaningful as it does not seek to form a partial meaning or extracted from its context such as the relationship between two variables or the effect of a variable on another, however it seeks to understand the meanings that individuals establish to participate in their social life and to form more comprehensive and deeper meanings on the topic of research.
- Researchers who use qualitative research as the main tool for collecting and analyzing data; they observe, participate, record and then analyze and interpret in order to access the meanings of the studied phenomenon.
- Subjectivity: as a researcher himself is engaged in the research: gathering and analyzing information, so that it is difficult for him to separate from the studied phenomenon in order to control his biases that may interfere in his research procedures. Therefore, the concept of reflexivity has appeared in relation to qualitative research to confirm the researcher's awareness of himself, his political and cultural motives and perspective from which he proceeds.
- The absence of prior beliefs and hypotheses for the questions that lead the research. The aim of qualitative research is not to reach theoretical generalizations or to issue judgments and come up with recommendations, but rather to describe and interpret the topic under scrutiny in its cultural, spatial, psychological and social framework.
- The researcher starts with designing a flexible plan that does not literally restrict him, however he may develop and change the research plan in light of the development of the work and the variables that he obtains.
- Paying attention to the process and not just the product. The main goal of qualitative research is to understand the behavior and feelings of the respondents and not just to study the phenomenon by subtracting it from its natural context, so how do students do something is as important as the work itself.
- Totality and complexity as the research begins with the assumption that a social situation to be studied is unique and complex and it investigates the phenomenon on a regular basis as an integrated whole.
- Qualitative research is an interactive research that requires a long time to observe, interview and record information as it occurs in its form and in its natural situation. It also focuses on describing the context without the researcher trying to impose his system or beliefs on the research situation.
- Its methodology and objectives differ from other researches. In terms of methodology, it requires the researcher to live the process of the research

as it requires certain mechanisms for data collection such as recording daily observations, conducting interviews with members of the research sample and analyzing relevant documents and diaries.

- It is characterized by spontaneity such as openness to the variables that appear as a result of unstructured interviews or unregulated observation, so the researcher receives different answers and observations from the participants.
- It is also characterized by research flexibility when dealing with a phenomenon as researchers rarely develop a detailed design for all aspects of the research before starting the study and the design changes whenever the study becomes apparent. Accordingly, researchers modify their procedures and methods according to the data they collect.
- There are many tools that are used to collect data requiring the researcher to carefully review the collected data, understand it and realize its different contents and organize it into categories or topics in order to obtain reliable results that help to understand the studied problem.
- Inductive thinking: starting with the data collected from observation, participation and coexistence with reality as it is and then identifying patterns to be interpreted and analyzed to find relationships aiming to infer initial hypotheses and finally reaching theories that can explain the studied phenomenon.
- Researchers using qualitative method need a degree of sensitivity that enables them to feel the general atmosphere and the interactions within the field of study. This requires the ability to collect data from various sources and link it to the cultural and social context and then convert it into meanings and connotations related to the overall subject of the study.
- Researchers also need to establish a distinguished social relationship with the respondents and to have the ability to gain their trust and cooperation by using less formal tools such as observation, participation, coexistence and integration into the life of the groups they study.

In light of the above, the researcher believes that the characteristics of qualitative research do not always indicate that it the best, but it may be the best in certain situations depending on the nature and objectives of the study.

Justifications for Applying Qualitative Research:

There are many justifications behind the call for the use of qualitative research in education. Some are related to the nature of the educational and human phenomenon and some of them are related to the nature of the research and the efficiency of its tools to provide a more accurate and detailed vision of that phenomenon. These justifications are as follows (Al-Moosa, 2018):

- The nature of the studied phenomenon: the type of variables and the nature of the questions posed by the researcher as well as the knowledge of the

researcher related to the investigated phenomenon or problem assist to determine the appropriate approach of research. If the aim of the study is to reveal precise and deep meanings of the subject or if the topic is social or educational and characterized by its sensitivity and emotional depth, then it is preferable to use the qualitative approach.

- The degree of concept maturity: referring to the amount of knowledge available about this concept or the degree to which it has been studied. If studying previous literature has proven that there are few available studies on the subject, this shows that it has not been studied sufficiently in away allowing the use of the quantitative method in the study. In other cases, there may be a reasonable amount of previous studies on a particular topic, but when analyzing the content of these studies it becomes clear to the researcher that most of them were built on unverified assumptions or they are biased assumptions and here the qualitative approach is adopted in the study.
- Difficulties related to the study's topic or its population: for example, if the study population is limited, elderly or children, it is better to use qualitative research in the study (Al-Khayyat, 2010, p. 70).

Obstacles Facing the Use of Qualitative Approach

There are a number of obstacles that limit the use of the qualitative approach and they are diverse and multifaceted. Some of these obstacles are related to the misunderstanding of this kind of research and the systematic bias towards the quantitative approach at the expense of qualitative research. Others are related to the nature of the qualitative approach and its distinctive characteristics and the time that it consumes compared to the quantitative approach. Other obstacles are related to intellectual schools of methodology and philosophy of science and their implications which create a philosophical and methodological conflict causing researchers to hesitate to conduct qualitative studies. On the other hand, the factors associated with preparing and training researchers have a major role hindering the conduct of qualitative research.

A number of studies have focused on exploring the challenges and obstacles when using the qualitative research methods. For instance, a study by Afshar & Hafez, (2021) investigates the challenges facing postgraduate students of English as a foreign language when conducting qualitative research and the suggested solutions. The study used the interview. It concludes that the most important challenges facing postgraduate students when conducting qualitative research are: difficulty of analyzing data, the focus of educational systems and courses on quantitative research methods and lack of training offered in regard to qualitative research.

Another study was carried out by Al-Harbi (2021) aiming to explore the obstacles hindering the use of qualitative research related to sociology. The study used two tools: the interview and the questionnaire and the questionnaire included two areas: the skills and personal obstacles and the obstacles related to the

characteristics of the qualitative approach. The study reveals a number of results; most notably: that there is a significant impact of the philosophy of the positivist school on sociology in general and on many specialists in sociology and that this influence is still continuing at a large scale. This was reflected by the faculty's members and researchers as they were trained to use the quantitative approach creating an academic culture that promotes the use of the quantitative approach and ignores the qualitative approach, not only in the field of research and scientific studies, but also excludes this approach from the study plans of academic programs.

In addition, Al-Sayed's study (2021) explores the reasons for the absence of Arabic studies using qualitative approach when investigating teaching and learning mathematics. The study identifies various reasons for this absence and classifies these reasons into three categories. First, reasons related to the nature of qualitative research such as that the qualitative research consumes long time and high cost to collect data and the difficulty of conducting qualitative research since it requires high skills and the difficulty of generalizing the results due to the small size of the sample. Second, reasons related to the prevailing educational research environment and culture including: the bias towards quantitative research at the expense of qualitative research, scarcity of sources and references related to qualitative research techniques and methodologies and lack of educational research and studies that deployed qualitative research methods and designs. Third, reasons related to the researcher such as the researcher's belief that it is difficult to conduct qualitative research and the lack of required skills to carry out qualitative research.

Al-Qahtani's study (2020) discloses the most important obstacles facing researchers and faculty members at the College of Education, King Saud University, when applying qualitative research in the educational field. The study used a questionnaire that included (30) items representing obstacles hindering the application of qualitative research. The results show that the sample agreed that most important obstacles are: psychological, training, skills and the fieldwork.

Moreover, Muhammad's study (2020) used the interview to elicit the opinions of a group of faculty members in the Egyptian universities in order to identify the difficulties they face when conducting qualitative research in the field of pedagogy as well as the ways they see suitable to overcome them. The study concludes that there are many obstacles that prevent the conduct of qualitative research in the field of education in general and the field of pedagogy in particular. These obstacles include poor preparation and lack of training and workshops offered to postgraduate students on how to conduct qualitative research, their preference for repeating the methodologies they are accustomed to, fear of how to document the data of qualitative research, the fact that qualitative research needs long time to prepare and analyze its data and lack of interest in the Department of Fundamentals of Education in holding scientific conferences and seminars on qualitative research.

A study by Al-Zaidi (2019) also identifies the obstacles facing the use of the qualitative approach in educational management and leadership research from the point of view of faculty members in Saudi universities. The study employed a

questionnaire that included 20 items representing obstacles to the use of the qualitative approach. It determines that the most prominent obstacles are: lack of training courses on the qualitative approach, lack of focus of postgraduate programs on qualitative approach compared to the quantitative approach, the resistance of change among some faculty members to modern approaches of educational research, lack of references translated into Arabic on the methods of qualitative research and lack of conviction of the importance of the qualitative approach in educational research.

Al-Arini's study (2019) recognizes the difficulties of using qualitative research in education from the point of view of postgraduate students in the Department of Education at the Islamic University of Al-Madinah. The study used a questionnaire that covered four areas: obstacles related to students, obstacles related to faculty members, obstacles related to academic courses and obstacles related to administrative aspect. The study highlights a number of obstacles to qualitative research, most notably: lack of access to research that used the qualitative approach, lack of encouragement of faculty members in educational departments to use qualitative research, the academic courses do not encompass sufficient training on how to conduct qualitative research and lack of knowledge of members of the scientific councils concerned with approving this type of research.

A study by Cypress, (2019) sheds light on the challenges and dilemmas facing Ph.D. students during the application of qualitative research. As revealed by the results, one of the most significant challenges was the difficulty of selecting the topic, the difficulty of choosing the methodology and design of the research and the difficulty of collecting, managing and analyzing large amounts of qualitative data.

Al-Moosa Study (2018) presents a proposal for activating qualitative research in the field of fundamentals of education in Saudi universities in light of the contemporary international experiences and based on the results of diagnosing the reality of qualitative research and the obstacles which prevent its activation there. The study applied a questionnaire that divided the obstacles to activating qualitative research into three areas: obstacles related to the university's administration, obstacles related to university professors and obstacles related to postgraduate students. The most prominent findings of the study are: the predominance of quantitative method over scientific theses (Master's, Ph.D.) in relation to the major of fundamentals of education in Saudi universities by 95% of the scientific theses, and lack of qualitative research in scientific theses, poor preparation of postgraduate students on how to apply qualitative research, poor dissemination of the culture of qualitative research as well as scarcity of experts specialized in qualitative research in Saudi universities, preference of university professors to use quantitative research patterns because it is common.

The study of Queiros, Faria, & Almeida, (2017) highlights the strengths and challenges of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study reached a number of results and the most important challenges facing qualitative research that it requires more time and effort to collect and analyze data as well as the difficulty of generalizing the results, the need to take into account ethical issues

very carefully and the difficulty of obtaining a sample and its representation of the study's community.

Al-Hanu's study (2016a) reveals the obstacles to employing qualitative research methodologies from the perspectives of faculty members of special education departments of Saudi universities. The study used a questionnaire consisting of (27) items that represent obstacles to the use of the qualitative research methodology. The study states a number of obstacles to the use of qualitative research methodologies including that researchers in the field of special education are used to conducting quantitative research, the preference of the editorial boards of Arab scientific journals for quantitative research methodologies and the weak focus on qualitative research methodologies in postgraduate courses.

Musharraf's study (2016) highlights the features of the innovative vision that adopts the use of qualitative research when addressing some aspects of the educational research crisis and the most important challenges facing the application of qualitative research in the field of educational research. The study concludes that qualitative research is of significant effectiveness when addressing some aspects of the educational research crisis in the Arab world and that one obstacle facing the use of qualitative research is that researchers are influenced by the quantitative approach and positivist philosophy. It also states the need of training on how to apply the qualitative research methods and tools and that collecting data, analyzing it and interpreting the results consume more time and effort. Other obstacles include the difficulty of providing validity standards, the difficulty of generalizing the results and lack of confidence in qualitative research expressed by some supporters of the quantitative approach.

A study by Mohammadi & Zare, (2014) discusses the reasons for the lack of use of qualitative research in the field of humanities in Iran. The study deployed the interview tool. The results of the study show that the most prominent reasons for the lack of use of qualitative research are the following: lack of knowledge of qualitative research, the complexity of qualitative research design, the difficulty of data collection and analysis and the ambiguity of methods for validating the results.

Wang's study (2013) explores the challenges and patterns of difficulties facing junior researchers when applying qualitative research for the first time. The study used the interview tool. The most prominent findings of the study are: the low level of gradual practice in the process of analyzing qualitative data, poor skills of analyzing data in a systematic and comprehensive manner due to the difficulty of the process of analyzing qualitative data and the long time this process consumes. Other obstacles include subjectivity in relation the interpretation of qualitative data, poor interpreting skill of the results in an argumentative and persuasive manner based on the presence of clear argument and evidence.

A study by Alexandros & Others (2012) provides an insight into the difficulties facing researchers when applying qualitative research in the field of marketing from the point of view of the researchers and their field experiences. The study used the interview tool. One of the most important challenges is the

ambiguity of qualitative data analysis standards and the huge amount of qualitative data.

A study by Walls (2011) identifies personal, methodological and cultural challenges that researchers face when collecting qualitative data. The study points out that the methodological challenges include: failure to achieve systematic rigor, lack of self-awareness of cultural differences and cultural sensitivity, alienation and sickness. Language barrier was one of the most prominent cultural and personal challenges that the researchers face during the implementation of the study.

The review of previous studies shows that there are many obstacles facing the application of qualitative research and these obstacles are varied. Some of previous studies classified these obstacles differently such as the study of Al-Harbi, (2021), Al-Sayed, (2021) and Al-Arini, (2019). Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct a survey of previous studies that dealt with the obstacles to the use of qualitative research and to analyze their results in order to offer a comprehensive conception of these obstacles and accordingly the idea of this bibliometric study emerged.

The Study's Problem and Questions

There is a global trend towards the use of qualitative research. However, it is noticed that the movement of scientific educational research in the Arab world lacks studies that use qualitative research as many researchers tend to employ quantitative research in their studies. For example, a number of studies have reached this assumption including the studies of Al-Hanu, (2016b), Al-Dahshan, (2015) and Al-Khatib, (2010). These studies extrapolated and analyzed the fields and methodology of researches published in a number of peer-reviewed scientific journals and master's and doctoral theses in a number of universities and their results confirm that most of the studies published in peer-reviewed scientific journals and most of the studies prepared by postgraduate students focused on the use of quantitative educational research.

Due to the importance of qualitative research taking part in producing of educational knowledge and studying human phenomena, which are more profound and complex than quantitative research, the current study seeks to explore the factors that hinder researchers wishing to conduct qualitative research and call for further research and analysis in order to identify these obstacles and then to propose suggestions that would contribute to overcome them. As a result, the use of qualitative research will increase because of its benefit to the research movement in various fields in general and in the educational field in particular. Consequently, this study aims to highlight the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research and to propose suggestions to overcome them.

The researcher also noticed the scarcity of bibliometric studies concerned with analyzing research outcomes in relation to the obstacles hindering the use of qualitative research. After extensive search using the following databases:

the university theses information base “Dar Al-Mandumah”, the educational information database “Edu Search”, Al-Manhal, Shamah or the candle, EBSCO, Google Scholar and the websites of peer-reviewed scientific journals available on the internet. This search showed that there are no bibliometric studies in the field of obstacles to the use of qualitative research. So this study aims to bridge this gap. Therefore, the problem of the study is represented in the following main question: What are the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research and suggestions to overcome them in light of the extrapolation of previous studies? And accordingly, the following two questions stem from this question:

1. What are the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research in light of extrapolation of previous studies?
2. What are the suggestions to overcome the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research in light of extrapolation of previous studies?

The Objectives of the Study

The current study intends to reveal the obstacles hindering the use of qualitative research that were identified by previous studies and presented in educational literature between the years (2011-2021) in order to provide a comprehensive view of these obstacles and to present the suggestions reached by previous studies and educational literature to overcome these obstacles.

The Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is interrelated with the importance of the topic it deals with and this study sheds light on the qualitative research which has received a wide global attention from researchers in the field of education during the past few years. So, this study intends to contribute in activating the use of qualitative research by exploring the obstacles facing its use and proposing suggestions to overcome them as well as providing researchers and those who are interested in educational research with suggestions that may open the way for them to benefit from in their future studies. It also provides decision makers in universities and educational research centers with recommendations that may help spread the culture of qualitative research and overcome obstacles hindering its use.

The Study's Limitations

- *Subject limitations:* The study covered the educational research output published on the subject of obstacles to the use of qualitative research via the following databases: the university database of theses “Dar Al-Mandumah”, educational information base “Edu Search”, Al-Manhal,

Shamah, EBSCO, and Google Scholar. It also used the websites of scientific journals available on the internet as well as master's and doctoral dissertations and studies published in scientific journals and conferences, issued in both Arabic and English, which were (16) studies.

- *Time limitations:* The study covered educational research output published in the period (2011-2021) which the researcher was able to access.
- *Objectivity limitations:* The study covered studies that dealt with the issue of obstacles to the use of qualitative research in different fields and disciplines.

The Study's Methodology

The study deployed the descriptive "bibliometric approach" which seeks to measure intellectual output in a specific cognitive field and analyze it exploring some indicators in order to highlight the characteristics of information circulation and trace the path of development of various scientific fields (Atari, 2004). Applying this approach, the study analyzed the studies that discussed obstacles hindering the use of qualitative research listing those obstacles and offering suggestions of previous studies to overcome them.

The Study's Population and Sample

The study's population consisted of all the published studies in Arabic and English that dealt with the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research including available master's and doctoral dissertations, papers in scientific journals and conferences until the year (2021). The study's sample comprised of (16) studies which were published between the years (2011-2021).

The Study's Terminology

Qualitative research: this type of research usually provides an in-depth understanding and a comprehensive explanation of the field of objective research. It also does not require the researcher to interpret the data and the results by numerical and statistical methods, but it can be done using natural language vocabulary, narrative style and explanatory sentences (Al-Jarrah, 2014, 125).

This study defines it procedurally as a research aiming to explore the phenomenon or the field of objective research and understand it in its natural, unpretentious context and it usually provides an in-depth understanding and comprehensive explanation without relying on statistical or numerical procedures.

Obstacles: they are defined procedurally as a set of difficulties and hindrances that prevent the use of qualitative research and which were referred to by the studies analyzed by the current study.

The Study's Tool

This study used an analysis card in order to analyze the content of the educational research output that dealt with the obstacles to the use of qualitative research and which was carried out as follows:

- Determining the purpose of the analysis card which is the analysis of the educational research output that dealt with the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research in studies published during the period (2011-2021).
- Listing the targeted aspects of the analysis; categories of analysis including: the author's name, year, obstacles to using qualitative research, suggestions made by studies to overcome these obstacles.
- Analyzing, classifying and presenting these obstacles and suggestions to overcome them.

Study's Findings and Discussion

In order to answer the first question: " What are the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research in light of extrapolation of previous studies?, the results of previous educational studies that dealt with the obstacles to the use of qualitative research were gathered. (16) peer-reviewed scientific studies dealing with this topic were found until October, 2021 and then analyzed, evaluated and classified using the analysis card. The study identified the following list of obstacles hindering the use of qualitative research:

First: Obstacles related to administrative aspects

1. Lack of interest in spreading the culture of qualitative research.
2. Scarcity of conferences, seminars, workshops and training courses related to qualitative research offered to postgraduate students.
3. Scarcity of experts specialized in qualitative research at the university.
4. Weak orientation of the university administration's to publishing qualitative research in its scientific journal.
5. The prevalence of the culture of quantitative orientation in educational research at the university.
6. Scarcity of Arab journals specialized in publishing such researches.
7. Lack of Arabic and foreign references and periodicals provided by the university about qualitative research.
8. Lack of incentives to encourage researchers to use qualitative research.

9. Weakness of the role of research centers within the university in supporting the use of qualitative research.
10. The difficulty of getting approval to conduct studies using qualitative research from university scientific councils.
11. Lack of support for qualitative research from the deanships of scientific research and research centers.

Second: Obstacles related to university professors

1. Lack of encouragement from university professors to use qualitative research and they underestimate its value.
2. Teachers of research methods courses do not address this type of research.
3. Lack of specialists in qualitative research among the teaching staff in educational departments.
4. Weakness of the university professor's ability to conduct qualitative research and use its procedural skills.
5. Weakness of the university professors' confidence in postgraduate students' ability to properly apply qualitative research.
6. The university professors prefer to use quantitative research patterns.
7. The desire of the university professors not to violate the general trend toward the use of quantitative research.
8. The scarcity of specialized professors in educational qualitative research.

Third: Obstacles related to postgraduate students

1. Poor preparation of postgraduate students in relation to theoretical aspects of qualitative research.
2. Neglecting to develop the practical side of qualitative research among postgraduate students.
3. Poor competence of postgraduate students in qualitative research patterns and technical methods needed to conduct it.
4. The difficulty of preparing a competent researcher who can employ qualitative research tools such as interviews and standardized observation.
5. Poor ability to analyze and criticize and relying only on statistical and quantitative methods without in-depth qualitative analysis.
6. Lack of self-motivation of postgraduate students to use qualitative research patterns.
7. Lack of access to researches that used the qualitative approach.
8. Getting used to conducting quantitative research.
9. Wrong perceptions about qualitative research.
10. Lack of conviction of the effectiveness of qualitative research.
11. The presence of failed attempts that implemented qualitative research.
12. Poor academic freedom of postgraduate students to choose the appropriate approach to answer the questions of their studies.

13. Postgraduate students fear the difficulty of employing qualitative research and the long time it takes to be implemented.
14. Fear of lack of academic rigor and objectivity when using qualitative research.

Fourth: Obstacles related to academic courses

1. Academic courses do not include sufficient training regarding how to conduct qualitative research.
2. Postgraduate courses focus on quantitative research methodologies.
3. Lack of adequate Arabic dissertations and studies that used qualitative research.
4. Scarcity of Arabic scientific theses that used the qualitative approach.
5. Scarcity of Arabic course books specialized in qualitative research.

Fifth: Obstacles related to the nature of the qualitative research itself

1. Qualitative research requires long time and high cost in the process of data collection.
2. The difficulty of carrying out qualitative research properly, especially by junior researchers due to its need for high skills.
3. The difficulty of generalizing the results of qualitative research due to the small size of its sample.
4. Qualitative research requires special skills to analyze data, interpret events and phenomena and it needs special permits to conduct.
5. Qualitative research consumes long time analyzing data and drawing conclusions and this stage is challenging for some researchers to complete it to the fullest.
6. Low standards of credibility, rigor and objectivity in many qualitative researches compared to quantitative researches.

Sixth: Obstacles related to the environment and the prevailing educational research culture

1. Bias towards quantitative research at the expense of qualitative research.
2. Scarcity of sources and references related to qualitative research techniques and methodologies.
3. Lack of research and educational studies that applied qualitative research methods and designs.
4. Lack of seminars, educational programs and training workshops that are held on the techniques and procedures of implementing qualitative research.
5. Belief that qualitative research is not scientific and that it is less accurate, rigorous and reliable than quantitative research.

6. The novelty of the culture of qualitative research within Arab educational circles in general.
7. Most educators are not convinced of the usefulness and importance of qualitative research and their resistance to change towards adopting a qualitative culture.
8. Scarcity of experts and specialists in the techniques and methodologies of qualitative research and how to employ them, especially regarding the techniques and skills of qualitative statistical analysis.

In order to answer the second question: "What are the suggestions to overcome the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research in light of extrapolation of previous studies?", the study analyzed, evaluated and classified (16) studies using an analysis card. As a result, the study reached a number of suggestions to overcome the obstacles which are as follow:

- Spreading the culture of the qualitative approach and its importance in relation to educational research through holding seminars, conferences and workshops on qualitative research, its philosophy and importance, how to analyze its data and encouraging researchers to attend them.
- Breaking the barrier of fear, apprehension and evasion towards practicing and applying qualitative research by spreading culture of familiarity needed to practice this type of research and encouraging researchers from faculty members and postgraduate students to employ qualitative approach by supporting and encouraging the trend towards educational qualitative research at the college level and scientific departments. Moreover, by improving professional development of faculty members in relation to qualitative educational research and showing the effectiveness of qualitative research at the level of departments, colleges and universities, so that it becomes a scientific approach to be adopted in future scientific research.
- Professors adopt qualitative research ideas and assign students to this type of research.
- Developing positive attitudes of researchers towards qualitative research and developing their skills to handle its tools and data.
- Postgraduate programs for the master's and doctoral levels should include some theoretical and practical courses on qualitative research in education and to train postgraduate students to acquire research skills such as interviewing skills, observation, case studies, data collection, analysis and interpretation in order to achieve balance between the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Encouraging postgraduate students to employ qualitative research methods by using its tools such as interview, observation and document analysis.
- Holding training courses for faculty members and researchers on qualitative research, so that the training courses include both theoretical and practical parts focusing on collecting qualitative data, analyzing it,

presenting its results and interpreting it which will help to develop their conceptions, skills and attitudes towards qualitative research as one of the important approaches in the field of educational research.

- Providing solid scientific references that deal with qualitative research in the main library and making them available to researchers both in paper and electronic forms to benefit from and refer to when needed.
- Studying research methodology books and investigating topics that require analysis of educational issues with societal dimensions as well as analyzing data qualitatively and with solid evidence with the ability to use critical and deductive thinking skills.
- Providing statistical programs for qualitative research and training faculty members, postgraduate students and researchers to use them in analyzing qualitative data.
- Expanding the dialogue on the philosophical models that provide access to knowledge by allocating courses for postgraduate studies concerned only with the philosophy of science as it is noted that discussing philosophical foundations of research in humanities is not common in the Arabic literature which caused a kind of intellectual stagnation in the field of developing research methodologies which lead to decreasing options for researchers.
- Inviting educational research centers and colleges of education to encourage researchers from faculty members and postgraduate students towards expanding the application of qualitative approach.
- Inviting and hosting researchers and experts of using qualitative approach to introduce their experiences and vision of the reality of this approach introducing students to its objectives and training them on its updates which can effectively contribute to supporting efforts to spread the culture of the qualitative approach throughout the academic community.
- Activating research partnerships between those with experience and competence in qualitative research techniques and methodologies and those with modest experience and skills regarding this field in order to produce distinguished qualitative researches and at the same time to practically train those with modest experience and skills.
- Allocating a relative weight to qualitative research, whether in evaluation, incentives or promotions with the same amount and importance as quantitative research within Arab universities and the promotions committees of faculty members.
- Encouraging researchers financially and morally to conduct qualitative research.
- Establishing partnership contracts between the university and international universities to supervise qualitative educational research.
- Establishing an institute or association for educational qualitative research to provide support and training, formulating study plans and programs and supervising the publication of qualitative educational

researches as well as establishing scientific journals specialized in qualitative educational research.

- Unifying efforts and coordination between universities to translate books and articles on qualitative research.
- Benefitting from international websites that offer lessons about qualitative research.
- Providing the necessary facilities for holding conferences, seminars, courses and workshops that focus on qualitative research.
- Universities allocate an annual award for the best qualitative research.

Study's Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study regarding the obstacles to the use of qualitative research and suggestions to overcome them, it recommends the following:

- There is a need to ensure a balance between quantitative and qualitative research.
- Paying attention to the professional development of faculty members in the field of qualitative research and providing modern programs for analyzing qualitative data.
- Including courses for qualitative research within the study program for postgraduate students (Master's and Ph.D.).
- Encouraging faculty members and postgraduate students to carry out qualitative research.
- Holding scientific conferences and seminars that serve the activation of qualitative research.
- Issuing an educational Arabic journal specialized in qualitative research.
- Work on writing and translating books specialized in qualitative research.

Suggestions for further research

Further research on the topic suggested by the current study can be as follows:

- A comparative study discussing the perceptions and attitudes of researchers from faculty members and postgraduate students towards the application of qualitative research and the most important obstacles to the application of qualitative research.
- A comparative study of the obstacles facing the use of qualitative research in the educational field among a group of Arab and foreign universities

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