Instruction: Read the short vignette and try to identify the characteristics related to qualitative research methodology.

John W. Creswell (2013) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*, 3ʳᵈ ed. Los Angeles: Sage

- **Exploratory**
- **Natural setting**
- **Multiple methods**
- **Emergent designs**
- **Complex reasoning through inductive-deductive logic**

- **Reflexivity**
- **Participants' meanings**
- **Researcher as the key instrument**
- **Holistic account**

A short vignette from a qualitative researcher

As a researcher in education, I am interested to know about teaching and learning practice and the people involve in it (the teaching and learning practice). The question of how and why a scenario in teaching and learning practice happens in certain way always intrigue me to explore more. Using qualitative research as a methodology to explore educational issues, one of the ways to collect the data is through listening to my participants' narrations by meeting them face to face. I want to know more about my participants' experiences, thoughts or views from their own narrations. I want to be where the data is and for this manner, I become the tool to collect the data as compared to using a survey as an instrument where my samples can leave their responses. However, it is quite a challenge to know someone's life in details unless I explore it from the narrator's views. As an example, I have a student who belongs to a well-known notorious gang when I was exploring gangsterism in Malaysian schools. From this student's story, I understand more the intricacies of being a member of a gang from the perspective of a member. Such data could not be measured and gained through a survey questionnaire. Even though there are theories which can provide some explanations about gangsterism and being a member of a gang yet, it is hard to be dismissed the fact that the decision to be a member of a gang is not straight forward one. The decision of one member from the another might be similar, yet different. Such uniqueness intrigues me to explore it from qualitative perspective. Like any other participants, I usually meet the student in places where he/she feel comfortable to share his/her experiences, thoughts and feelings. I was invited to his/her school and home. In this regards, I also able to gain data from observing him/her in natural setting. Apart from talking to him/her, I can see how he/she behaves in such settings. Sometimes, he/she shows some pictures or documents. By meeting the participant personally, I have the opportunity to ask him/her about the pictures and documents and its significance in his/her lives. In this regards, I need to be flexible in gathering my data which can be time consuming. This is because the data can be gathered not only through interview which is most likely to be assumed as the main method to collect data in qualitative research. With rich data at hand, I often feel overwhelmed in terms of how to start my analysis. Should I use more than one analysis for the different sets of data or should I stick to one analysis regardless of the data that I have gathered? As a researcher, while looking at the data, I often reflect on the similarities and differences of my participants' experiences, thoughts or views from my own. Even though I have to be reflective, however, I cannot be too overly subjective in interpreting my participants' experiences, thoughts or views with my own. After all, I acknowledge the complexity of one's own experiences, thoughts and views. In this regards, it is not easy to interpret and later on to present the data accordingly because I need to stay true to myself as a researcher while ensuring my participants' narrations are as authentic as the way they mean it without disregarding my own personal constructs as a researcher. I know that even though there is no firm guideline on how I should conduct my research, yet as a researcher, I am subjected upon others' judgment and review while maintaining the transferability of my study. Ah, what an enchanted journey as a qualitative researcher!