The five types of qualitative studies are as follows: case study, *grounded theory* (development of a theory through inductive reasoning from a set of data), *phenomenology* (a simple description of a phenomenon without the use of a theory or any other tool), *ethnography* (attempts to determine the meaning of something through field observation); and *historical study* (a collection of information about historical occurrences used to test hypotheses about the causes of these events). Each of the following methods will be explored in more detail:

- **Case Study**
  - In the qualitative design case study, an attempt is made to understand something through an in-depth study of a case example with an individual, group, event, or institution. According to Yin (2003), a researcher should use—or at least consider—the case study design when the following conditions exist:
    - The study is attempting to answer how and why questions.
    - The behaviors of the study participants cannot be manipulated.
    - The researcher is interested in the contextual conditions because he or she considers them to be related to the study focus.
    - The boundaries between the focus of the study and the context are unclear.

- **Grounded Theory**
  - This is a type of research that allows a theory or theories to flow from the research that is being completed.
  - It was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) when they were researching death and dying. The theorists attempted to develop a procedure that differed from the traditional scientific method.
  - They proposed and demonstrated a method that allowed data to be gathered through systematic methodological procedures and formulated theories from that research. It was said that the resulting theory was *grounded* in the data.

- **Phenomenology**
  - This is a type of qualitative research that is focused on the study of experience from the perspective of a single individual.
  - It often explores the assumptions that are taken for granted and examines the typical methods of perception.
  - It is concerned with (or based in) personal knowledge and
subjectivity. The emphasis is on individual interpretation. This type of research is very useful for understanding subjective experience and for acquiring insight into what motivates the actions of individuals. It helps to remove the distractions of the assumptions that society—and subsequently individuals—are unaware that they are making.

- **Ethnography**
  - This type of qualitative research involves the study of groups or cultures over a specific period of time.
  - The goal of ethnography is to comprehend the group or culture that is being studied. To accomplish this, the researcher (who is most frequently an anthropologist or sociologist) immerses him- or herself into the identified group or culture.
  - The data collection techniques that are used are similar to those in other qualitative research (e.g., interview, observation, etc.); however, because the researcher is so closely involved with the group or culture over an extended period of time, more detailed information is usually collected.

- **Historical Study**
  - This type of research allows an exploration and understanding of past events in the context of the present.
  - It relies on records, diaries, oral histories, photographs, biographies, family traditions, and other sources of historical information to explore, describe, analyze, and explain philosophies, perceptions, behaviors, and past events.
  - The *records* (sources of information) that are used are guided by the focus of the study and the research questions that are derived from it.
  - This type of research uses inductive, logical reasoning to ascertain meaning from the artifacts that are used in the research process.

**References**
