Qualitative Research Methods and Tools

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Objectives

- To become aware of the most common qualitative research designs/methods
- To become aware of major theoretical approaches in qualitative research
- To gain understanding of required components of qualitative research
- To understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research
Workshop Outline

9:00 – 9:20 Definition and Key Concepts

9:20 – 10:00 Qualitative Study Designs

10:00 – 10:30 Data Collection Methods

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 11:45 Data Analysis and Coding

11:45 – 12:00 Writing up for Publication

Group Exercise 1
Group Exercise 2
Group Exercise 3
Group Exercise 4
Definition and Key Concepts
Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. It aims to help us to understand the world in which we live and why things are the way they are. It is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about:

- Why people behave the way they do
- How opinions and attitudes are formed
- How people are affected by the events that go on around them
- How and why cultures have developed in the way they have
- The differences between social groups
The goal of qualitative research is the development of concepts which help us to understand social phenomena in natural (rather than experimental) settings, giving due emphasis to the meanings, experiences, and views of all the participants.

Pope. BMJ. 1995
Features of Qualitative Research

- Data are collected through direct encounters with individuals, through one to one interviews or group interviews or by observation.
  - Data collection is time consuming.
  - Necessitates the use of small samples.

- Qualitative sampling techniques are concerned with seeking information from specific groups and subgroups in the population.
  - Different sampling techniques are used.

Hancock. An Introduction to Qualitative Research. 2002
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The aim is a complete, detailed description.</td>
<td>The aim is to classify features, count them, and construct statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher may only know roughly in advance what he/she is looking for.</td>
<td>Researcher knows clearly in advance what he/she is looking for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended during earlier phases of research projects.</td>
<td>Recommended during latter phases of research projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The design emerges as the study unfolds.</td>
<td>All aspects of the study are carefully designed before data is collected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher is the data gathering instrument.</td>
<td>Researcher uses tools, such as questionnaires or equipment to collect numerical data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data is in the form of words, pictures or objects.</td>
<td>Data is in the form of numbers and statistics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective - Individuals’ interpretation of events is important, e.g., uses participant observation, in-depth interviews etc.</td>
<td>Objective - seeks precise measurement &amp; analysis of target concepts, e.g., uses surveys, questionnaires etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative data is more ‘rich’, time consuming, and less able to be generalized.</td>
<td>Quantitative data is more efficient, able to test hypotheses, but may miss contextual detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher tends to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter.</td>
<td>Researcher tends to remain objectively separated from the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative “vs.” Qualitative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation, prediction</td>
<td>Explanation, description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test theories</td>
<td>Build theories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known variables</td>
<td>Known variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger sample</td>
<td>Smaller sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized instruments</td>
<td>Observations, interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deductive</td>
<td>Inductive</td>
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When to Conduct Qualitative Research?

- When you want to explore topics in more *breadth and depth* than quantitative research

- Your research goal is to *explore* a topic or an idea

- You want to *gain insight* into a target audience’s lifestyle, culture, motivations, behaviours etc.

- You want to understand the reasons *behind* the results of quantitative research

- You want to *get input* from key informants or others
**Deductive Research Approach**

- General to specific
- Informally referred to as “top-down” approach
- Conclusion follows logically from premises (available facts)
Inductive Research Approach

- Specific observations to broader generalizations and theories
- Informally referred to as “bottom up” approach
- Conclusion is likely based on premises
- Involves a degree of uncertainty
Exercise 1: Qualitative or Quantitative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>An exploration of the role of the Practice Manager in the primary health care team: a study of four practices.</td>
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<td>A national survey of patients’ knowledge of the causes of heart disease.</td>
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Group exercises taken from Hancock. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. 2002
http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/pmacintyre/course_pages/MBA603/MBA603_files/IntroQualitativeResearch.pdf
## Exercise 1: Qualitative or Quantitative

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Qualitative Study Designs
Qualitative Designs

- Many types
- Focus on common types:
  1. Phenomenology
  2. Ethnography
  3. Grounded theory
  4. Narrative inquiry
  5. Case studies
- Also consider:
  1. Mixed methods
1. Phenomenology

- A method of inquiry that offers a way of systematically studying and learning about phenomena that are typically difficult to observe or measure.

- Identify the essence of human experiences concerning a phenomenon, as described by participants in a study.
  - Central concern is with the phenomenon itself and with attempting to understand the “object” of the experience of it.

- Involves studying a small number of subjects to develop patterns and relationships of meaning and experiences.

- “Bracketing” – researcher encouraged to identify and remove own biases and predispositions from research arena.
While it is assumed that persons with dementia benefit from being involved in meaningful activity, research examining this claim is limited. In particular, how individuals with dementia perceive this involvement is poorly understood. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine what constitutes meaningful activity from the perspective of persons with dementia, and to explore how they perceive its significance in their lives. We conducted an interpretive phenomenological analysis of multiple interviews and participant observation conducted with eight community-dwelling elders with mild to moderate dementia. For several participants, the single most important driving force in their lives was being active, doing as much as they possibly could. They were involved in a wide range of activities including leisure pastimes, household chores, work-related endeavors, and social involvements. These activities were meaningful in three ways: Through their involvement, participants experienced feelings of pleasure and enjoyment; felt a sense of connection and belonging; and retained a sense of autonomy and personal identity. Findings suggest that familiarity of the social and physical environment promotes involvement in activities. This provides a sense of continuity for people with dementia, with implications for their quality of life and personhood. Further implications of these findings for dementia care and future research are discussed.

1. Phenomenology

- **Other examples**

- **Resources**
  - Wilding. Phenomenological research: An exploration of conceptual, theoretical, and practical issues. *OTJR.* 2005
2. Ethnography

- The study of cultural groups in a natural setting, over a prolonged period of time.
  - Derived from anthropology
  - Emphasis on studying entire culture.
2. Ethnography

**Background**: Case managers make decisions that directly affect the amount and type of services home care clients receive and subsequently affect the overall available health care resources of home care programs. A recent systematic review of the literature identified significant knowledge gaps with respect to resource allocation decision-making in home care.

**Methods**: Using Spradley’s methodology, we designed an ethnographic study of a children’s home care program in Western Canada. The sample included 11 case managers and program leaders. Data sources included interviews, card sorts, and participant observation over a 5-month period. Data analyses included open coding, domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis.

**Results**: One of the key findings was a taxonomy of factors that influence case manager resource allocation decisions. The factors were grouped into one of four main categories: system-related, home care program-related, family related, or client-related. Family related factors have not been previously reported as influencing case manager resource allocation decision-making and nor has the team’s role been reported as an influencing factor.

2. Ethnography

❖ Other examples


❖ Resources

3. Grounded Theory

- Systematic generation of theory from systematic research.
  - Researcher tries to derive a theory of a phenomena of interest
  - Theory needs to be grounded or rooted in observation/views of the participants
In this study we develop a model of how youth experience smoking cessation attempts. We followed 15 adolescent smokers twice monthly over three months. Through six semi-structured interviews, we explored participants’ subjective experiences of making a “quit” attempt. We analyzed transcript data using grounded theory procedures, beginning with open coding, axial coding, construction of matrices, and development of a preliminary theory or model of this phenomenon. We found that only emotionally compelling and inescapable quit reasons were truly motivating. Few parents actively supported their child during quit attempts; smoking friends and other peers undermined them. All successful quitters established new, non-smoking friends and completely redefined themselves. The quit experience was physically uncomfortable, emotionally distressful, and socially isolating. Greater motivation, mature problem-solving skills, and a willingness to supplant their smoking friends characterized successful quitters. Further research is needed to test this model’s efficacy in the adolescent population.
3. Grounded Theory

- Other examples

- Resources
  - The Grounded Theory Institute: [http://www.groundedtheory.com/what-is-gt.aspx](http://www.groundedtheory.com/what-is-gt.aspx)
4. Narrative Inquiry

- Study of the lives of individuals as told by the individuals.
  - The researcher re-tells the information into a narrative chronology, combining views from the participant’s and researcher’s life.
- “Story” and “narrative” used interchangeably but analytically different
  - Story: what people tell
  - Narrative: researcher’s analysis of the story
Endometriosis is a chronic condition of women in which endometrial tissue is present outside of the uterus. It is characterized by pelvic pain. The aim of this prospective study was to explore women’s experience of living with endometriosis. A sample of 30 women was recruited from a dedicated endometriosis clinic. Semi-structured interviews were conducted upon recruitment and after one year, these data being supplemented by diary keeping by a volunteer sample. As a storytelling approach was utilized for data collection, narrative analysis was considered most appropriate. The findings are presented using the concept of uncertainty, which has been found in previous research to be a feature of long-term illness. Uncertainty exists around diagnosis, the course of the disease, and the future. It is argued that the way in which the pain of endometriosis is interpreted and managed by women and health professionals is integral to this uncertainty.

Denny. ‘I never know from one day to another how I will feel.’: Pain and uncertainty in women with endometriosis. Qual Health Res. 2009.
4. Narrative Inquiry

- Other examples

- Resources
5. Case Studies

- In-depth exploration of a case using a variety of data collection methods
  - A case is a bounded system (e.g. a person, a group, an activity, or a process)
- **Intrinsic case study**: interest is only in understanding the particulars of the case
- **Instrumental case study**: interest is in understanding something more general than the case
- **Collective case study**: interest is in studying and comparing multiple cases in a single research study
The value of the single case study is well established in dementia care with the seminal contributions of Alzheimer and Kitwood being based on the study of individuals. This article presents a case study of an elderly married couple living with dementia and explores how their relationship has continued to flourish. In drawing on their story we highlight ways in which both partners seek to ‘maintain involvement’ of the person with dementia (PWD) (Keady, 1999), and consider the various types of ‘work’ that is required. We suggest that whilst the ‘personhood’ of the PWD as an individual has received much recent attention, a consideration of ‘couplehood’ is also essential to a full understanding of how spouses live with and respond to the impact of dementia.
5. Case Studies

❖ Other examples

❖ Resources
## Choosing Appropriate Design – Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
<th>Ethnography</th>
<th>Grounded Theory</th>
<th>Narrative Inquiry</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal</strong></td>
<td>Understand the essence of an experience</td>
<td>Describe cultural characteristics or cultural settings</td>
<td>Inductively generate a theory grounded in observation</td>
<td>Tell the story of experiences</td>
<td>Gain in-depth understanding of case or several cases</td>
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| 1           |                               |                             |                                        |                   |                                    |
| 2           |                               |                             |                                        |                   |                                    |
| 3           |                               |                             |                                        |                   |                                    |
| 4           |                               |                             |                                        |                   |                                    |
| 5           |                               |                             |                                        |                   |                                    |
Sampling

- Regardless of quantitative or qualitative, important to consider sampling

- How will you choose those participants you wish to gather information from for a qualitative study?
  - Convenience
  - Purposeful
  - Theoretical
Sampling Schemes

- **Convenience**: Selection of the most accessible subjects.
  - Limitation: possibility of poor quality data

- **Purposeful**: Investigator actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question. Intellectual strategy based on researcher’s knowledge, literature, evidence.

- **Theoretical**: Sampling is theory-based. Building theories, elaborating on theories by selecting participants that will add to study.
### Design and Sampling Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td><strong>Subjects</strong></td>
<td>People who experienced a phenomenon of interest</td>
<td>Researcher who is a stranger to group</td>
<td>Homogenous or theory based sample</td>
<td>Individuals and archival material</td>
<td>Case or cases May be typical or atypical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scheme</strong></td>
<td>Purposeful Convenience</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>Purposeful Convenience Theoretical</td>
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**Type:**
- **Phenomenology**
- **Ethnography**
- **Grounded Theory**
- **Narrative Inquiry**
- **Case Study**
Exercise 2: What Design?

| The role of Specialist Nurses in community care |
| Developing a primary health care service for the Chinese population in one city |
| What is advocacy in primary health care? |
| An evaluation of the Polyclinic - a one stop primary health care centre |

Group exercises taken from Hancock. An Introduction to Qualitative Research. 2002
http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/pmacintyre/course_pages/MBA603/MBA603_files/IntroQualitativeResearch.pdf
Exercise 2: What Design?

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Mixed Methods

- Integration of qualitative with quantitative methods
  - Involves *collecting* and *analyzing* both qualitative and quantitative data (but not enough)
  - Data need to “mixed” in some way so that together they form a more complete
    - Provides picture of the problem than they do when standing alone
Mixing Data

**Figure 1.2** Three Ways of Mixing Quantitative and Qualitative Data
Mixed Methods

Abstract

Purpose. To identify and model the effects of sleep loss and fatigue on resident–physicians’ professional lives and personal well-being.

Method. In 2001–02, 149 residents at five U.S. academic health centers and from six specialties (obstetrics–gynecology, emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, surgery) were recruited for the study. Residents were all in good standing in their programs. In a mixed-methods design, focus groups consisted of an average of seven (range, three to 14) individuals in the same year of training and residency program, for a total of 60 interns and 89 senior residents. Trained moderators conducted focus groups using a standardized, semistructured discussion guide. Participants also completed a 30-item quantitative questionnaire assessing sleepiness and workplace sleep attitudes that included the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS).

Results. Residents described multiple adverse effects of sleep loss and fatigue on learning and cognition; job performance, including professionalism and task performance; and personal life, including personal well-being and relationships with spouse or significant other and family. Only 16% of the sample scored within the “normal” range on the ESS; 84% scored in the range for which clinical intervention is indicated. Sleepiness was consistent across institution, specialty, years of training, age, gender, marital status, and having children.

Conclusions. More residents perceived that sleep loss and fatigue had major impact on their personal lives during residency, leaving many personal and social activities and meaningful personal pleasures deferred or postponed. Sleep loss and fatigue also had major impact on residents’ abilities to perform their work. This finding further substantiates the growing concern about the potential impact on professional development. These observations should be taken into account in developing new training guidelines and educational interventions for housestaff. Acad Med. 2004;79:394–406.
Data Collection Methods
Data Collection

Your research questions and qualitative framework should drive data collection choices

- Many ways but all are interactive
  - Interviews: structured, semi-structured, in-depth.
  - Focus groups.
  - Qualitative survey/questionnaire.
  - Observation.
  - Written documents (content analysis).
  - Conversation (discourse analysis).
Types of Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Focus: 3 common methods

1. Focus Groups
2. Interviews
3. Qualitative Questionnaire
1. Focus Groups

- Group recruited to discuss particular topic
- **ONE** focus group = **ONE** unit of analysis
- 1-2 hours
- Ideal size: 6 – 12 people (+ moderator/note taker)
- Several groups are needed for validity
- Homogeneity and anonymity are important factors to consider
  - People may open up with others who are perceived to think along *similar* lines and whom they may never see again
Advantages of Focus Groups

- Socially oriented
- Allows the moderator to probe
- Discussions have high face validity
- Can be relatively low cost
- Can provide speedy results
- Enable increase of sample sizes in qualitative studies

Disadvantages of Focus Groups

- Researcher has less control.
- Data are more difficult to analyze.
- Technique requires carefully trained moderators.
- Groups can vary considerably.
- Groups are difficult to assemble.
- Discussion must be conducted in an environment conducive to conversation.

When to Use Focus Groups

Consider using focus groups:
- In exploratory or preliminary studies.
- Where there is an understanding gap between groups of people.
- To uncover factors relating to complex behaviour or motivation.

When to Use Focus Groups

- Consider using focus groups:
  - When the researcher wants *ideas to emerge* from the group.
  - To gather *additional information* to prepare for a large-scale study.
  - When there is *high value* placed on *capturing the open-ended comments* of the target audience.

When Not to Use Focus Groups

- Do NOT use focus groups when:
  - The environment is **emotionally charged**.
  - The researcher has **lost control** over critical aspects of the study.
  - **Statistical projections** (of numerical data) are needed.

When Not to Use Focus Groups

Do NOT use focus groups when:

- Other methodologies can produce better quality information or the same quality information more economically.

- The researcher cannot ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information.

Focus Groups

- Question design – What questions will you ask?
- Methodology - Conducting the focus groups
- Finding a facilitator
- Logistics – Who? When? Where?
Focus Group Requirements

- Participants must feel confident and trust what they say will be treated with the same confidentiality as responses on a survey questionnaire.
- Only the facilitator will have access to the participants’ names and comments.
- No observers are allowed in a focus group.
- Ground rules should be posted and discussed with participants, which includes:
  - Full participation
  - Respecting comments of all participants
  - What is said here, stays here
2. Interviews

- **Informal** - Researcher is required to recollect discussion
- **Unstructured** - Researcher allows interview to proceed at respondent’s pace and subjects to vary by interviewee (to an extent)
- **Semi-structured** - Researcher uses an interview guide, but respondent is given freedom to respond
- **Structured** - Researcher uses identical situation and adheres to interview schedule
Interviews

Same as in focus groups…

- **Question design** – What questions will you ask?
- **Methodology** - Conducting the focus groups
- **Finding a facilitator**
- **Logistics** – Who? When? Where?
Preparing for the Interview

- **Reflection** – What are the study’s goals? What are the interviewers’ biases and opinions around this topic?
- **Logistics** – organizing interviewers, confirm interview details with participant (date, time, purpose of interview, language or other barriers)
- **Tools/materials** – recorder, extra batteries, notebook, pens, 2 copies of consent form, interview script
Preparing for the Interview

※ Anticipate challenges – running out of time, recorder won’t work, too upset to continue, etc.

※ Be familiar with the consent form and interview guide

※ Put other thoughts aside
Interviewer Skills

- Attentive
- Guide (Polite but firm)
- Good communication skills
- Comfortable with emotion
The Role of the Researcher

The researcher is an instrument in qualitative research

Beware of your bias!
Focus groups and Interviews
DERS Full Day Workshop

Jan 27, 2012
9:00-4:00
Central City Tower
Arbutus and Birch Conference Rooms
Presenter: Marla Steinberg, PhD

Details: http://research.fraserhealth.ca
To register: https://ccrs.vch.ca/
Questionnaire/Survey Design Process

1) Define objectives and requirements
   - Keep “need to know” questions, be cautious about “like to know”
2) Consult with experts familiar with, or are part of interest group during development
3) Draft questions while thinking about data collection method and burden on respondent
4) Review/revise the questionnaire
5) Pre-test or pilot the questionnaire

Tip: Focus groups can be used to develop content of survey
Keys points to remember

- Write in everyday terms
- Follow basic writing principles (direct/to the point, no spelling errors, grammar etc).
- Use consistent wording
- Be clear about directions (what you would like the respondent to do).
Things to avoid

- “And” - potential double barrelled question
- “If” - potentially confusing direction/question
Surveys 101
DERs Workshop

9:00-12:00

Presenters: Angela Wolff, PhD and Magdalena Swanson

Details: http://research.fraserhealth.ca
To register: https://ccrs.vch.ca/
Group Exercise 3

Imagine that you are planning a research project looking at:
(a) The impacts of a new provincial program to increase services for “high risk” new moms.
(b) Quality of life of patients who received hip replacements at your hospital 1 year ago.
(c) Patients’ experiences of pain during their post-surgery hospital stay.
(d) Factors that contribute to noncompliance to medication in the outpatient psychiatric population.

Choose and outline your data collection plan: focus group, interview, or survey

Consider the following questions:
1. What is the geographical spread of your potential participants?
2. Are there any specific inclusion criteria for selecting participants?
3. Where or how could you obtain a list of potential participants?
4. Are there any pre-existing groups and what are the advantages and disadvantages of using members?

Group exercises taken from “An Introduction to Qualitative Research” by B. Hancock, 2002.
http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/pmacintyre/course_pages/MBA603/MBA603_files/IntroQualitativeResearch.pdf
Qualitative Data Analysis and Coding
Qualitative Analysis
General Considerations

- Particularly challenging:
  1) No universal rules for analyzing and summarizing qualitative data
  2) Enormous amount of work required
  3) Reducing the data for reports

- Data collection, data analysis and the development and verification of relationships and conclusions are all interrelated and interactive set of processes.

The Qualitative Analysis Process

Four cognitive processes that play a role:

- **Comprehending.** Make sense of the data and learn “what is going on.”
- **Synthesizing.** “Sifting” of the data to see what is typical and what variation is like.
- **Theorizing.** Systematic sorting of data. Develop alternative explanations then see how they “fit” with the data.
- **Recontextualizing.** Development of the theory and its applicability to other settings or groups.
Open-ended Thematic Data coding

- It’s easy to code closed response or rating questions, but how do you code open-ended data?
- **Objective:** to create codes and classify responses into categories respondents would have chosen, had they been offered categories

  **Two phases:**
  - 1) Scan responses
  - 2) Scan responses and then code

  Themes will emerge

Image taken from: [http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/Examples%20of%20coding.php](http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/Intro_QDA/Examples%20of%20coding.php)
Open-ended Thematic Data coding

Coding factors:

1. **Codes** – Classifications of identifiers, concepts, locations, activities themes etc.
2. **Frequency** - Number of times something is mentioned
3. **Emotion** - i.e. Enthusiasm, frustration in responses
4. **Extensiveness** - How many different people said something
5. **Themes** - Identify salient patterns or themes
Emotion and Context

- It is important to take emotion/context into account.
- For example: the phrase “He was alright”.*

- Can be said in a variety of ways and mean something different in every case.
- "He was ALRIGHT" (He was alright, I liked him)
- "HE was alright" (He was alright but I wasn't so keen on the others)
- "He WAS alright" (He used to be but he isn't now)
- "He was alright?" (Well you might think so but I don't)

No straightforward or easy guidelines.
- Most widely used – develop category scheme and code according to categories
- Template sometimes drafted before data collection
  OR
- Develop categories based on the actual data
- Level of detail or specificity depends on the aims of the study

**The quality of the coding scheme determines the quality of your final analysis**
## Data Collection Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of data collection</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FACE TO FACE</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>LONG</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXIT</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>FAST-SLOW</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>SHORT</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TELEPHONE</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>FAST</td>
<td>MEDIUM-HIGH</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAIL</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>SLOW</td>
<td>VERY LOW</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEB-BASED</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>FAST</td>
<td>LOW-MEDIUM</td>
<td>SHORT-MEDIUM</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following text is an excerpt from the transcript of an interview conducted by a community psychiatric nurse with a woman following discharge from hospital. The excerpt deals with the woman's recollection of being admitted and how she felt at that time.

Read the transcript carefully and complete the following tasks.

1) Make a note of all the items of data you consider to be potentially interesting.
2) Identify “categories” of data.
3) How many categories have you identified?
4) Do some items of data potentially relate to more than one category?
5) Can you identify major and minor categories?
Qualitative Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnography</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
<th>Narrative Research</th>
<th>Grounded Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illumination of concepts of how the culture functions</td>
<td>Detailed description of case in setting</td>
<td>Extract essence of experience</td>
<td>Meaning of larger story</td>
<td>Develop story or proposition related to theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterned regularities</td>
<td>Direct interpretation Patterns Generalizations</td>
<td>Important statements Classify statements into units of meaning What happened How it happened</td>
<td>Stories Epiphanies Contextual materials</td>
<td>Open, axial, selective coding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing Up Qualitative Research For Publication
Structure of the Article

- Same standards as for any type of paper
  - link in reasoning from introduction to methodology to findings to conclusion.
- Abstract
- Introduction
  - Brief literature review, rationale, research question
- Methods
  - Framework, design, sampling, data collection, analyses
- Results
- Conclusion
**BOX 6.2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE STUDIES**

a) An article should be provided with a structured abstract (as a minimum: background, aims, sample, methods, results).

b) The sampling should be described and justified, including an explanation of criteria used.

c) The theoretical background of the entire study, or individual methods, should be described, to show that the sample and data collection were consistent with the study's theoretical background.

d) The context (setting) in which the study was carried out should be described. The author must describe the characteristics of the field in which the study was carried out, and what made it different from other settings.

e) A detailed description of the research intervention should be included, and of how study participants responded during that intervention.

f) A detailed description of the analytical methods applied, how they were used, including the tools used for minimising bias, and a validation of the results should be presented.

g) A description of the manner of data processing (e.g., technical aspects and procedures) is needed.

h) Description of outcomes and their interpretation are obviously necessary. This includes a discussion of limitations (contextual validity of results), and an analysis of how the design of the study reflects these limitations.

Source: Des Jarlais et al. (2004)
Target Journals

- Journals that focus on qualitative research
  - Nursing Research, Qualitative Health Research
  - [http://www.slu.edu/organizations/qrc/QRjournals.html](http://www.slu.edu/organizations/qrc/QRjournals.html)

- Journals in specialty area

> Arthritis & Rheumatism (Arthritis Care & Research)
> Vol. 57, No. 3, April 15, 2007, pp 381-388
> DOI 10.1002/art.22609
> © 2007, American College of Rheumatology

**ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

**Experiences of Mothers Living With Inflammatory Arthritis**

CATHERINE L. BACKMAN,1 LINDA DEL FABRO SMITH,1 SHARON SMITH,1 PAMELA L. MONTIE,1 AND MELINDA SUTO2

Objectives. To describe the impact of chronic, inflammatory arthritis on parenting and to develop a conceptual framework for subsequent study of mothering.

Methods. A qualitative, grounded theory design guided data collection and analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 12 women with either rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, or systemic lupus erythematosus who were mothers of at least 1 child living at home. Transcripts were analyzed using a systematic approach of coding and forming concepts and key categories to construct an explanatory framework. Peer checking and member checking enhanced analytical rigor.

Results. Analysis of participants' experiences resulted in 4 interrelated categories describing the impact of arthritis on their role as mothers: participation in mothering tasks, best described as "sometimes I can, sometimes I can't"; different types and levels of support from others; the influence of the mother's arthritis on the family; and the challenge of balancing energy and fatigue. Individuals' arthritis story, life stage, their children's developmental stage, and daily routine described the context in which mothers experienced elements of each of the 4 main categories.

Conclusions. Inflammatory arthritis has a dramatic impact on the experience of motherhood, with both positive and negative influences. The perspectives shared by study participants may inform practice regarding problem identification and adaptive strategies, and the explanatory model generated from the data proposes hypotheses for further study.

KEY WORDS. Parenting; Occupational role; Participation; Grounded theory.

- [http://video.med.ubc.ca/videos/osot/faculty/cb/Experiences_with_Mothers11843.pdf](http://video.med.ubc.ca/videos/osot/faculty/cb/Experiences_with_Mothers11843.pdf)
Box 6.4 COMMON REASONS WHY EDITORS DECLINE QUALITATIVE PAPERS

1. the author has not related the study to earlier (international) literature,
2. the research question is not clearly stated,
3. the structure of the paper is not clear or does not respond to the expected structure of papers in the journal,
4. theories, methods and data analyses are not consistent,
5. the central concepts are not clearly presented or used in a consistent way,
6. the methodology is poor,
7. the size of the dataset is not defended in a convincing way,
8. the data set is not sufficiently contextualised or there is a clear selection bias,
9. the data collection is poor and there is a lack of validity control,
10. the methods and the analyses are not explained clearly enough, which may lead the referees and the editor to regard the article as too descriptive and the analyses based too much on intuition,
11. the author makes unsound conclusions or unfounded generalisations,
12. ethical rules are violated or ethical issues are not mentioned or adequately discussed,
13. the text is too long.

Primary source: Drisko (2005)
More Tips

- Consider the use of **tables** to summarize less exciting details
- Use of **quotes** from participants
- Use **diagrams** to show analyses and framework
- Thoroughly justify and explain your **philosophy/theory** and research method
Important

- Qualitative research is different than quantitative research
  - May not be appropriate to generalize
  - Findings only apply to group of focus
Resources for Writing

- Devers. Getting Qualitative Research Published
  - http://educationforhealth.net/EfHArticleArchive/1357-6283_v14n1s12_713664938.pdf

- Des Jarlais. Improving the reporting quality of nonrandomized evaluations of behavioral and public health interventions: the TREND statement
Thank You!