

Qualitative Design

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Objectives – Qualitative Design

1. Utility of Qualitative Research
2. Writing your Research Question
3. Writing your Research Aims
4. Qualitative Approaches – Phenomenology, Ethnography, Grounded Theory
5. Sampling Technique

Why use Qualitative Methods in your Clinical Research?

1. Understand and explore the social, cultural, and/or economical impacts of health and disease.
2. Understand the meaning of certain diagnosis, situations, and/or experiences.
3. Understand the context and culture that impact patients' decisions and actions.
4. Develop new frameworks or theories.



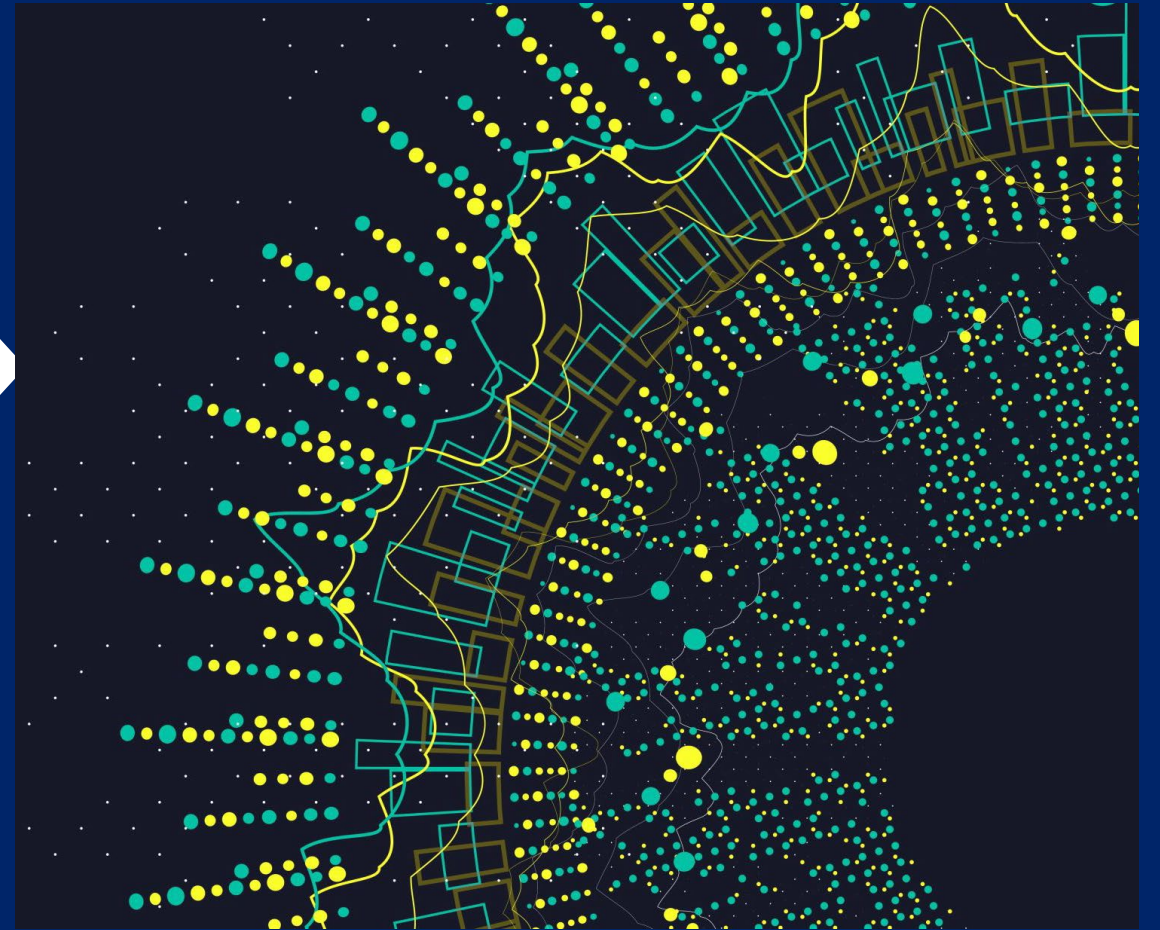
Qualitative Methods are not best for...

1. Generalizable results
2. Hypothesis testing
3. Describing quantity (how much, how many)





Why do you want to do a qualitative study?





Writing a Research Question

1. Identify your main research problem.
 - A. What do I hope to understand from this study?
2. Identify your theoretical or conceptual framework.
 - A. The lens of your study
 - B. What are the underlying theories or concepts that can be applied to the phenomena of interest?
3. Do preliminary research.
 - A. What does the current literature say about this area?
 - B. What are the areas there isn't good understanding of the phenomena of interest?
 - C. What has yet to be studied?
 - D. Are there contradictory findings?



Writing a Research Question

1. The key question that your study seeks to answer.
2. When writing your research question:
 - A. What is the characteristics of the population you want to study?
 - B. What is the phenomena you want to explore?
 - C. What is the setting you want to explore this in?
 - D. Is Qualitative Methods appropriate for this research question?
 - E. Is this feasible?
 - F. Remember FINER Criteria
3. Your research question will help guide qualitative design and data collection.

Creating your Qualitative Research Question

The DOs and the DONTs

DO:

1. Begin with the words “what” or ”how”
2. Be specific on the phenomena
3. Make it feasible
4. Use clear, precise language
5. Open Ended Format (explorative).
6. Use exploratory language (e.g., discover, seek to understand, explore, describe the experiences).
7. Specify the participants/site
8. Remember: the FINER Criteria

DON'T

1. Too Focused/Too General
2. Make Assumptions
3. YES/NO questions



Writing a Research Question

_____ (*How or what*) is/are the _____ (*“meaning”,
“experiences”, ****) of _____ (*a single phenomena*) in
_____ (*the specific research participants*) at
_____ (*the research site*).



Writing a Research Question

When you get
lost in your data,
your research
question will help
be your guide.





Writing Research Aims

1. Research aims are the more specific steps on how you will answer your research question.
2. Tips on writing your Research Aims
 - A. Usually, 2-4 aims related to your research question.
 - B. Your aims should be related, but not dependent on one another.
 - C. Avoid mentioning any new terms or goals in your Aims.
 - D. Aims should be clear and achievable.
 - E. Avoid using redundant phrases.
3. For each aim, briefly describe your methods and approach (e.g., interviews, observations)
 - A. How will it answer your larger research question?

Let's Practice –

Formulate a research question



Approaches to Qualitative Research

- 1. Grounded Theory**
- 2. Phenomenology**
- 3. Ethnography**
4. Narrative inquiry
5. Qualitative Case Study



How to select your approach?

1. Important considerations:
 - What is your research question?
 - What are your research aims?
 - What is your conceptual framework?
 - Who is your audience?
 - What are your resources?
2. For grant applications, JUSTIFY your approach and the method you will use.
3. Adhere to your method!

Grounded Theory

- Grounded Theory is used to develop a theory, model or framework of how and why an event occurred and individuals' behavior.
- Considering using when little is known about the phenomena of interest.
- Methods: interviews, observations, document collection, focus groups
- Strengths: studying and understanding learning, interactions, and processes
- Limitations: time-intensive
- Examples:
 1. Theory of Dying (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) – how patients experience death
 2. Theory of Preserving Self (Charmaz, 2017) – how patients with Parkinson's disease preserve their sense of self
 3. How do cancer patients refuse treatment? (Khankeh, et. al 2023)



Let's Practice – Formulate a research question





Phenomenology

- Phenomenology seeks to understand the *lived experience* of individuals.
 - Seeks to describe the essence of a shared phenomenon through those who have lived it
- Methods: Interviews*, focus groups, documents, observations
- Strengths: Provides an in-depth and unique perspective, rich data
- Examples:
 - Grief Trajectories of Bereaved Parents of Adolescents and Young Adults with Advanced Cancer (Kinglsey et. al, 2022)
 - The experiences of stigma of people living with cancer in rural and urban Zimbabwe (Mandizadza, Moyo 2021)



Let's Practice –

Formulate a research question





Ethnography

- Ethnography aims to learn from study participants of a cultural group
 - Focus on human society and culture
- Methods: Observation*, interviews, document review
- Benefits: First-hand experience of behavior, immersed in a cultural/social group
- Challenges: Time intensive data collection (months - years), ethical considerations
- Examples:
 - Death and dying in elderly care wards (Costello, 2001)
 - Accessing health care for structurally vulnerable populations at the end of life (Stajduhar et. al, 2019)



Let's Practice –

Formulate a research question



Narrative Inquiry

- Narrative inquiry explores individuals' experiences through personal narratives.
 - Uses stories to understand experiences.
- Benefits: provide a more in-depth understanding of participants' point of view
- Methods: Interviews, Text (letters, photographs, diaries, documents)
- Examples:
 - Karlsson (2014) – Explore how people with Parkinson's present their life story

Qualitative Case Study

- A qualitative case study is an in-depth description of a bounded system
- Benefits: Seeks to understand one case well
- Methods: interviews, observations, document review
- Examples:
 - Perry (2008) – case study of the national health policy in Ghana



Quiz - What approach would you choose and why?

1. What are the experiences of young women after receiving a new diagnosis of lung cancer in Nigeria?
 - Phenomenology
2. How do young women cope with a new diagnosis of lung cancer in Nigeria?
 - Ethnography
3. How do young women make decisions regarding lung cancer treatment in Nigeria?
 - Grounded theory



Qualitative Study Design - Sampling

1. Purposeful sampling
 - A. Choosing information rich cases
 - B. Identify and define your selection criteria
2. Types of purposeful sampling:
 - A. Typical
 - B. Unique
 - C. Maximum variation
 - D. Convenience
 - E. Snowball
 - F. Theoretical
3. How many in the sample?
 - A. Dependent on the study, emerges with the data
 - B. Often small

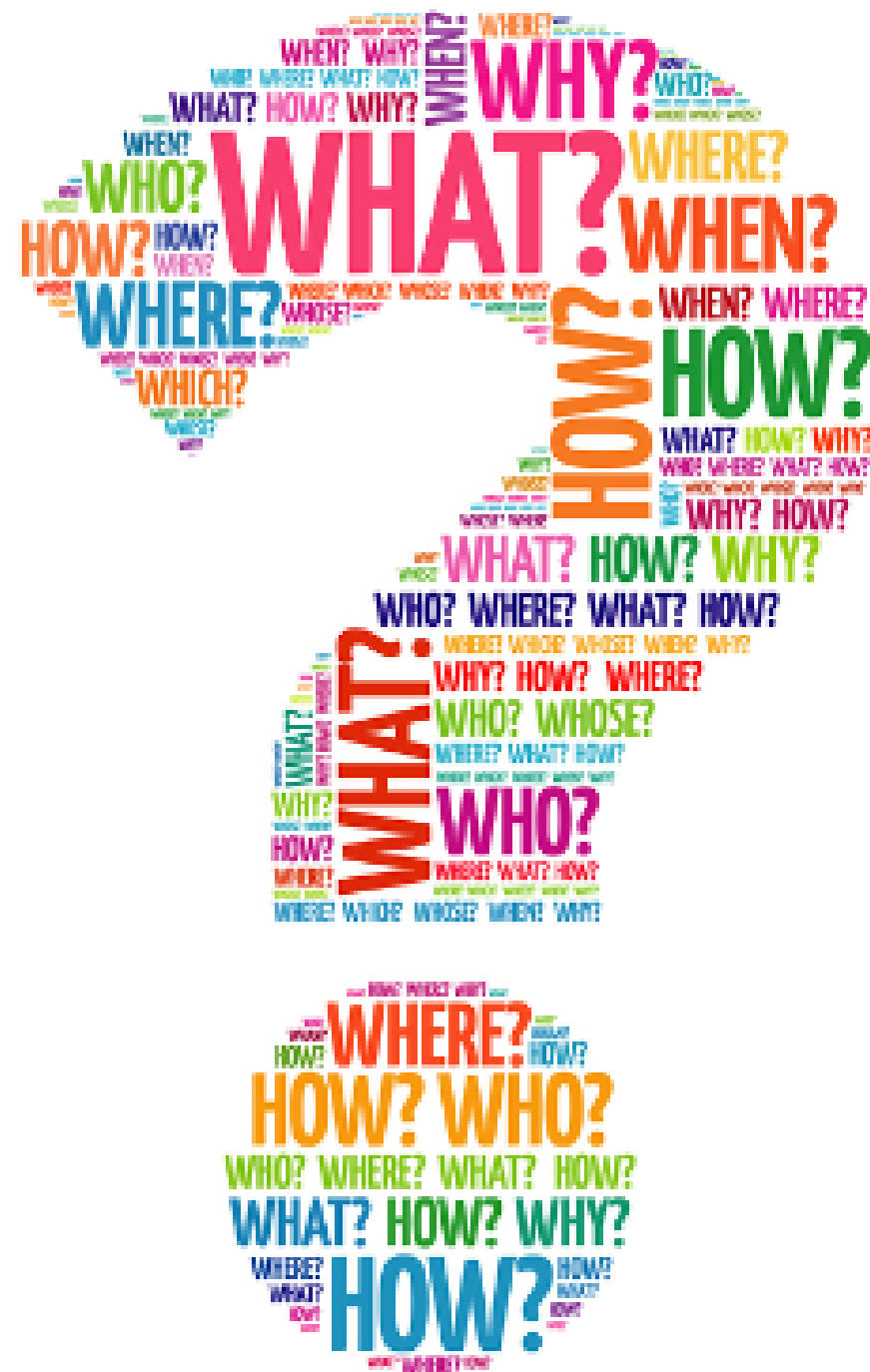
Qualitative Design - Sampling

1. **Typical** - sampling of the average person, experience, or situation as it applies to your research question.
2. **Unique** - Sampling is based on the atypical or uncommon cases or occurrences.
3. **Maximum variation** – Sampling a small number of cases to maximize diversity with the goal being heterogeneity
4. **Convenience sampling** – based location, available sites, or resources.
5. **Snowball** – Identify key participants who met the defined inclusion criteria then ask them for additional participants.
6. **Theoretical Sampling** - identifying cases/participants based on concepts or themes that emerge during data analysis to help develop a theory



Qualitative Design – Sampling Logistics

1. Need a connection or “in” to collection qualitative data through interviews, observations, or focus groups.
2. Key leader – An insider who supports your research and express encouragement towards your study.
3. Recruiting your sample can be time-intensive.
 - A. Requires patience and pleasant persistence.
 - B. You want to dedicate a good amount of time towards developing credibility and creating a connections.
 - C. Consider how will you approach participants (e.g., attend a meeting, outreach, phone call)



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