

Qualitative Analysis

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DATA COLLECTION

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 - In-Depth Interviews and Conversations
 - Observations
 - Projective Techniques

Comparison between Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Selection of data sources (study participants)

Qualitative Research

- Nonprobability sampling
 - Availability sampling
 - Purposive sampling
- Small n
- Data saturation, sequential sampling

Quantitative Research

- Probability sampling
 - Simple random sampling
 - Stratified sampling
- Large n
- Sample size predetermined

Data collection:



Qualitative Research

- Observation
- Asking primarily open-ended questions
- Scalar items seldom used
- Unobtrusive data collection
- Data: words, pictures, behavior
- Greater ethical issues

Quantitative Research

- Asking primarily closed-ended questions
- Scalar items primarily used
- Statistical databases
- Data: numbers
- Fewer ethical issues

Data Collection:



Qualitative Research

- Researcher interacts at personal level with respondents
- Personal values made explicit
- Flexible
- Unstructured

Quantitative Research

- Researcher seeks to keep personal values, beliefs, and biases separate
- Personal values avoided
- Not flexible
- Structured

Data collection:



Qualitative Research

- Researcher must be able to fit-in with events/people studied
- Data collection environment not controlled
- Same questions not necessarily asked to all participants
- Data collector may improvise

Quantitative Research

- Researcher can be distant from events/people studied
- Data collection environment controlled
- Same questions asked to all participants
- Data collector should not improvise

Data Collection:

Qualitative Research

- Subjectivity focus
- Adaptive data collections
- Exact replication not possible
- Theory is “data driven”
- Probing
- Information per respondent is substantial

Quantitative Research

- Objectivity focus
- Predetermined data collection
- Exact replication possible
- Data are “theory driven”
- Limited probing
- Information per respondent varies

Data collection:



Qualitative Research

- Hardware: tape recorders, video, cameras
- Training of researcher: psychology, sociology, consumer behavior
- Conversation, unstructured

Quantitative Research

- Hardware: computers, telephone
- Training of researcher: psychology, sociology, consumer behavior, statistics
- Structured observation, interviews, questionnaires

Data collection:



Qualitative Research

- Contextual variables critical to study
- Collect verbatim responses
- More limited to collection of data on current patterns
- More flexible

Quantitative Research

- Contextual variables not necessarily critical to study
- Collect responses to structured items
- Less limited to collection of data on current patterns
- Less flexible

Data Collection Methods

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- Quantitative

- Objective
- Numeric
- Statistical analysis
- Large Ns
- Structured data collection
- Table/graphs to display results

- Qualitative

- Subjective
- Non-numerical
- Non-statistical analysis
- Small Ns
- Open ended data collection
- Narrative for results

Core Activities in Qualitative Research

Core Activities in Qualitative Research

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- Literature Review- a cursory review may be done initially to focus the study, otherwise it is conducted after the data has been collected and analyzed.
- Rationale for delaying the L.R. is to avoid leading the participants in the direction of what has already been discovered.
- Purpose of L.R. is to show how current findings fit into what is already known

Explicating Researcher's Beliefs

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- Bracketing - setting aside one's biases and personal views on a topic
- Investigator keeps a diary of personal thoughts and feelings about the topic
- Purpose is to make known to the researcher her/his beliefs about the topic so that the researcher may approach the topic honestly

Criteria for Evaluating the validity of Qualitative Data

To give ***quality, credibility, and trustworthiness*** to a qualitative research, certain methods are used which include:

- Triangulation
- Saturation
- Member checking
- Self-disclosure (Reflexivity)

Triangulation

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- Is the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon-data sources, sample groups or investigators
- Area under investigation is looked at from different perspectives
- By combining multiple observers, theories and methods, researchers can hope to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method, single-observer, single-theory studies

Triangulation

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- This is equivalent to reliability in a quantitative research
- Triangulation involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce deeper understanding.
- **Methods triangulation** - checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods.
- For interviews, findings will be more robust and credible if your observations are backed up by comments that participants made in the interviews.

Saturation

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- How does a qualitative researcher know that he has collected enough data?
- Theoretical saturation is the term used to describe the point at which no new information or concepts emerge from the data and when the themes or theories that have emerged from the data have been well-supported.
- Usually based on personal comfort level of the researcher as well as contextual considerations regarding their resources and limitations.

Saturation

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- A situation in data collection in which participants' descriptions become repetitive & confirm previously collected data
- An indication that data collection is complete
- Similar to adequate sample size in quantitative research

Member checking

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- This is when data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions are tested with members of those groups from whom the data were originally obtained.
- This can be done both formally and informally as opportunities for member checks may arise during the normal course of observation and conversation.
- In this way, the participant can revise and clarify earlier statements
- Typically, member checking is viewed as a technique for establishing to the validity of an account.

Self disclosure (Reflexivity)

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- While researchers may not be able to put aside their own beliefs, biases, and feelings about the area they are studying, they can be critical in their disclosure of those biases and in describing how those biases impact the study.
- One way to foster reflexive research is by **designing research that includes multiple investigators**
- This can foster dialogue, lead to the development of complementary as well as divergent understandings of a study situation and provide a context in which researchers' - often hidden - beliefs, values, perspectives and assumptions can be revealed and contested.

Interpretive Way of Thinking

WHAT IS THE INTERPRETIVE WAY OF THINKING?

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- Multiple Realities
- Data versus Information
- Subjects versus Research Participants
- Values

Multiple Realities

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- Many ways of “knowing”
 - The researcher’s reality
 - The research participant’s reality
 - The mutual reality created when researcher and research participant interact
- These multiple realities are dynamic (constantly changing)

Data Versus Information

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- Data – units of evidence (such as facts, numbers, pictures) that are collected for the purposes of answering a research question
- Data is the plural of datum
 - In a paper write, the data were collected, and NOT the data was collected
- Information – derived from data; it is the meaning or interpretation given to data

Subjects Versus Research Participants

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- Qualitative research places high value on the link between the individuals being studied and the data that they provide
- Data are considered in the context of the research participant's reality

Values

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- Value Awareness – the ability to put aside your own values when you are conducting research studies or when you are evaluating the research results of others (sometimes called *disinterestedness*)
- Qualitative research involves an immersion in values so that their inevitable effect can be better understood

Setting for Data Collection and Sampling Considerations

Sampling in Qualitative Research

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- Sampling in qualitative research
- Data collection in qualitative research

Setting for Data Collection

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- The *field* is the natural world where participants live
- The *field* requires *reciprocity* in terms of decision making
- The participant & researcher determine what data will be shared
- Participants must understand & be willing to share their thoughts & feelings about the phenomenon
- Contrast this with quantitative studies where data are collected in controlled settings & the researcher is removed from the subject

Selection of Participants

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- *Participant* or *informant* refers to the individual who informs the research study (vs subjects or respondents)
- They are active participants & equal partners
- Must have 1st hand experience with research phenomenon (vs. random selection)
- They want to help others understand their lives & the social contexts in which they live & create meaning

Common Features of Qualitative Research

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- Sampling
- Data Collection
- Triangulation

Sampling - How people are selected?

- From the “population” – e.g. mental health trusts in Wales, teenage smokers in Newcastle
- “Target population” – inclusion/exclusion criteria applied
- “Sample population” is selected - purposeful sampling (size and specific cases depend on the study purpose; theoretical sampling (guided by emerging theories))
- Convenience - near to hand/ available
- Snowball - people known to other participants
- Volunteer - keen and eager

Considerations in sampling

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- In deciding on sampling method
 - Depth of analysis versus breadth (across people/cases)
 - Rich understanding of a specific context rather than generalising to a population
- Based on conceptual rather than statistical power issues
- The notion of purposive sampling

Purposive Sampling Strategies

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- Heterogenous samples
 - Sample diverse cases with diverse characteristics with goal of exploring common patterns
- Homogenous samples
 - Obtain similar cases to obtain an in-depth understanding of a particular group
- ‘Deviant’ samples
 - Focus on cases that are unusual in some identified way (e.g. very high level leaders)
- Typical case samples
 - Attempt to elucidate what is typical in a given context or setting

Sampling types

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- Purposive
- Convenience
- Quota
- Snowballing

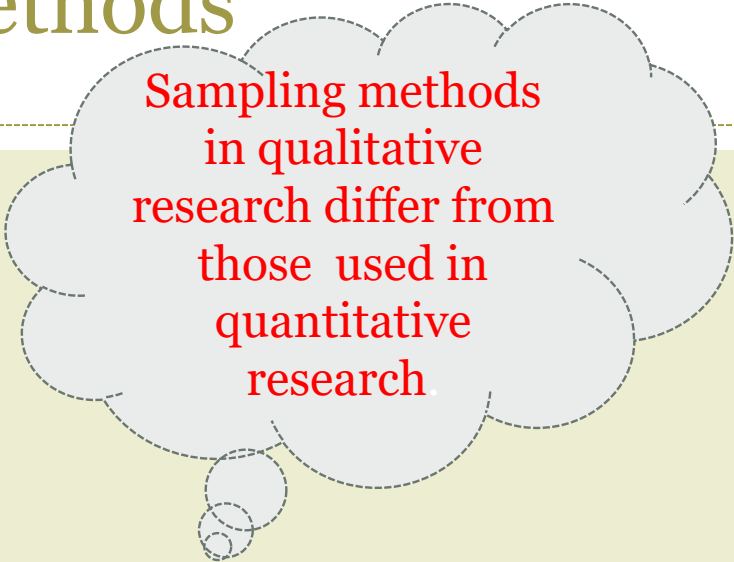
Sample size in Qualitative Research

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- An effective sample is not determined by size, but by:
 - Saturation
 - Redundancy
- Aim to obtain small samples to provide a sound basis for studying the phenomenon of interest

Sampling Methods

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Sampling methods
in qualitative
research differ from
those used in
quantitative
research.

- The sampling numbers are generally smaller than in quantitative research
- To get random, representative samples from target population is seldom possible (or the aim) of qualitative research
- It is not intended to be statistically representative
- Instead, a sample is chosen because it represents *important characteristics* of a population – characteristics that are the main concern in evaluation of research

Examples of sampling in qualitative research

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Purposive sampling – the participants are chosen on the basis of particular characteristics that will help the researcher to explore the research topic. Eg. specific experiences, social roles etc.

-It may be important that there is a diversity – but this is not necessary nor at times possible. Problem – the sample might be biased but this is thought to be lessened if the criteria on which participants were chosen are clearly documented.

Purposive Sampling

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- Participants must have first hand experience with the research experience and be able to talk about it
- Researcher establishes clear criteria & rationale for sample selection
- Goal is not generalization of findings but rich descriptions of phenomenon by those who have experienced it

Snowball sampling

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The researcher simply asks participants in the study if they know any other potential participants

+ time and cost efficient

+ can be used to get hold of hidden populations

- Will most probably lead to biased samples

-Ethics: confidentiality concerns



Convenience samples can also be used

Exercise I

You have been asked to conduct a qualitative research study on football fans' perception of their favourite team.

- What sampling method would be appropriate? Why?
- Could another sampling method be considered? Why?
- What should you consider overall when selecting your sample?

What size should the sample be?

- Does not need to be representative of population - not statistical
- Saturation – recruitment of additional cases no longer provides additional information or insights

Methods of Data Collection

Focus Group Discussion

In-Depth Interviews and Conversations

Observations

Projective Techniques

Qualitative Methods

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- Eight characteristics of qualitative research
 - Takes place in the natural setting: travel to sites
 - Researcher is the primary method of data collection
 - ✦ Observation
 - ✦ Interview
 - ✦ Documents
 - ✦ Audiovisual

Qualitative Methods

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- **Characteristic continued:**
 - Emergent rather than tightly prefigured
 - Based upon interpretation
 - ✦ Hermeneutics: deciphering meaning
 - Views social phenomena holistically
 - Qualitative researchers reflect and are explicitly regarding personal assumptions and values

Qualitative Methods

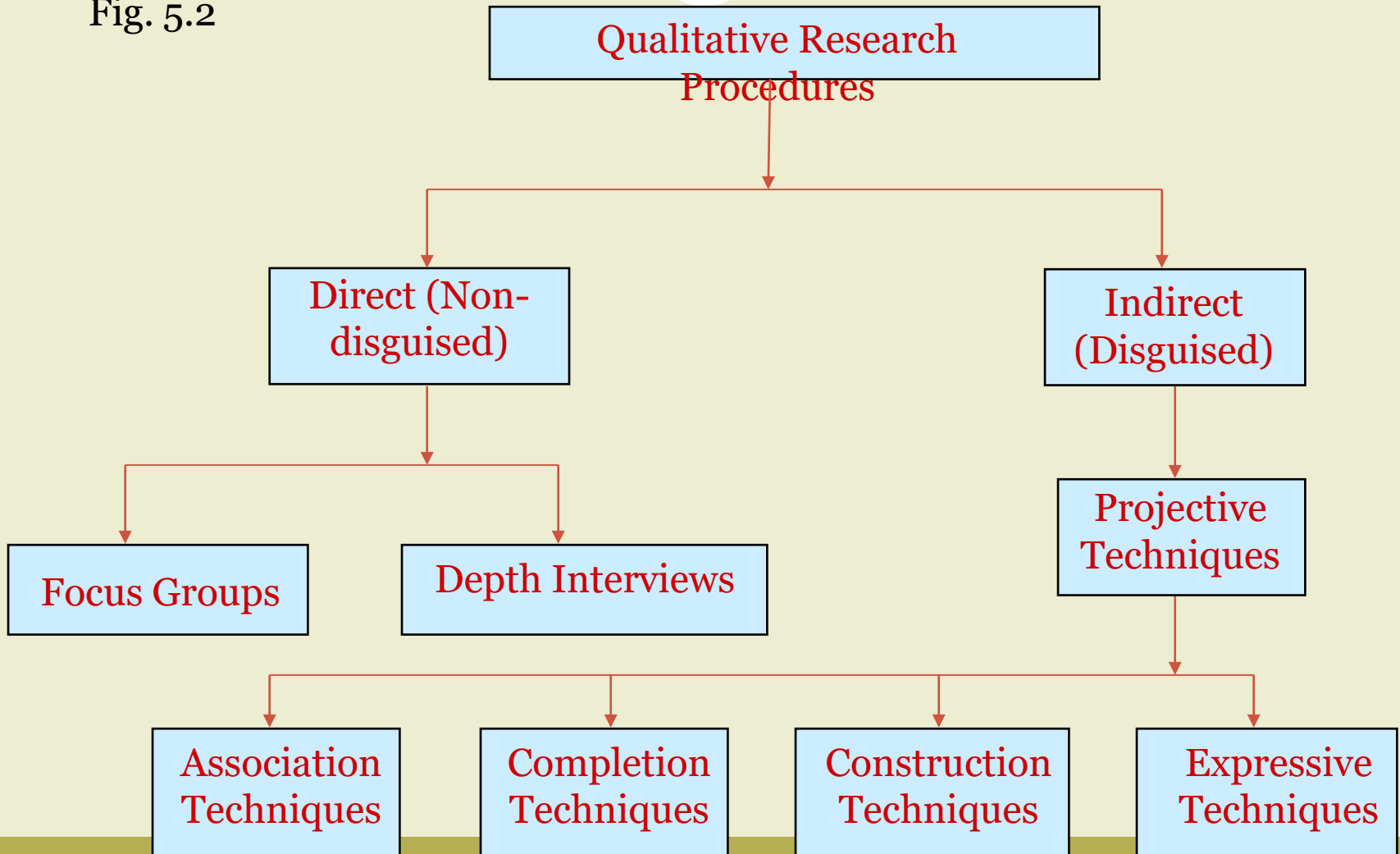
48

- Characteristics continued
 - Uses both deductive and inductive logic
 - ✦ Inductive: going from specific to large
 - ✦ Deductive: Going from broad to specific
 - Can use multiple methods

A Classification of Qualitative Research Procedures

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Fig. 5.2



Different methods of data collection

- **Interviews-** structures or semi-structured, guided, unstructured
- **Focus groups-** researcher(s) plus 2-10 participants - guided group discussion on topic(s)
- **Telephone interviews**
- **Observation** - researcher may be just observing or sometimes more part of the group - “participant observation”
- **Covert observation** - two-way mirrors or hidden camera

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TOOLS

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1. Focus group interviews (discussions)
2. Depth interviews
3. Conversations
4. Semi-structured interviews
5. Word Association/Sentence completion
6. Observation
7. Collages
8. Thematic Apperception Tests (TAT)/Cartoon Tests

Techniques of Data Collection

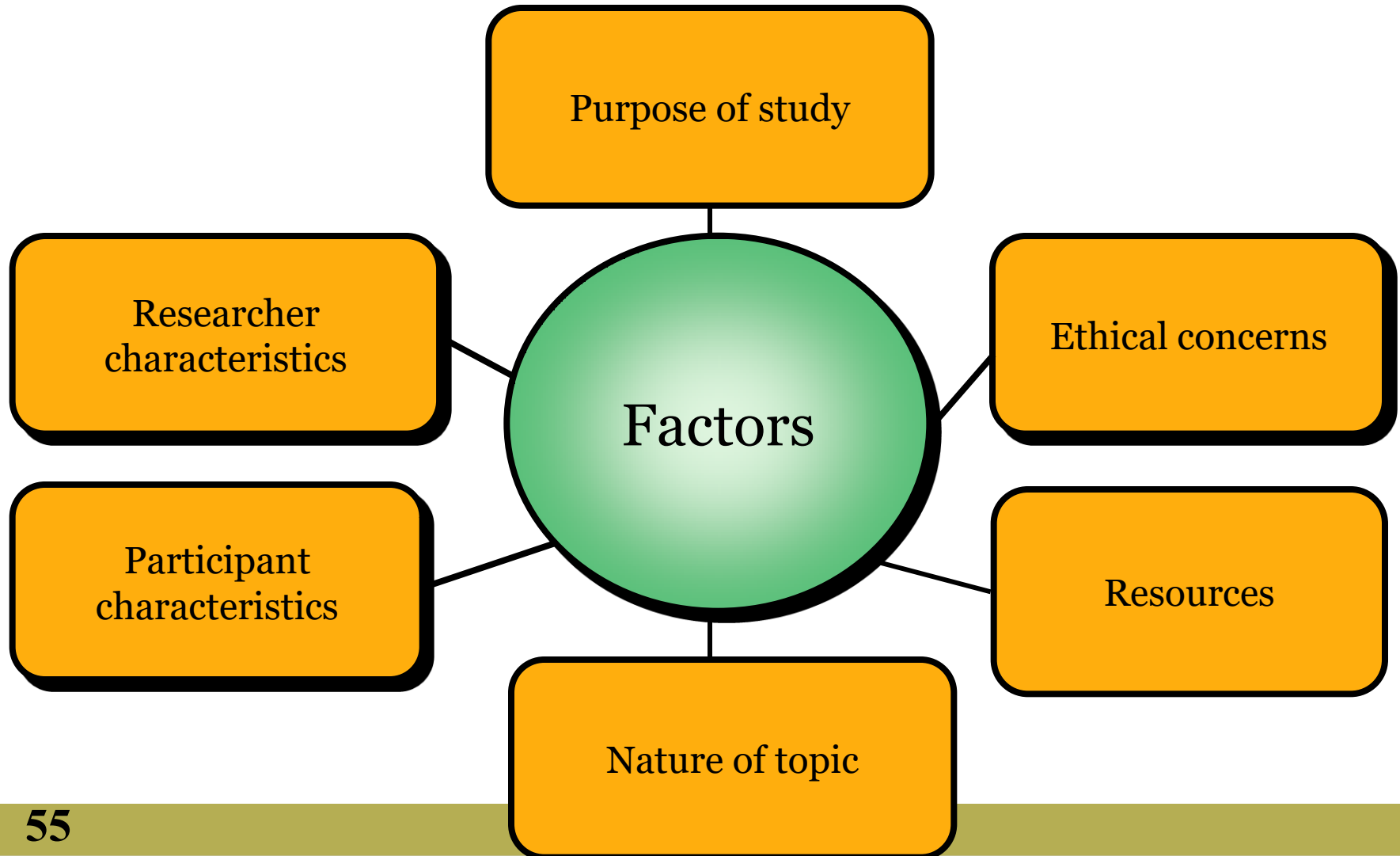
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- Once you have identified that a qualitative methodology best fits your research question, there are numerous data collection strategies to select from....
- Focus Group Discussions
- In Depth Interviews
- Conversations
- Observation
- Projective Techniques

Tool	Description	Type of Approach (Category)	Key Advantages	Key Disadvantages
Focus Group Interviews	Small group discussions led by a trained moderator	Ethnography, Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be done quickly • Gain multiple perspectives • Flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results dependent on moderator • Results do not generalize to larger population • Difficult to use for sensitive topics • Expensive
Depth Interviews	One-on-one, probing interview between a trained researcher and a respondent	Ethnography, Grounded Theory, Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain considerable insight from each individual • Good for understanding unusual behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results dependent on researcher's interpretation • Results not meant to generalize • Very expensive
Conversations	Unstructured dialogue recorded by a researcher	Phenomenology, Grounded Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain unique insights from enthusiasts • Can cover sensitive topics • Less expensive than depth interviews or focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to get off course • Interpretations are very researcher-dependent

Tool	Description	Type of Approach (Category)	Key Advantages	Key Disadvantages
Semi-Structured Interviews	Open-ended questions, often in writing, that ask for short essay-type answers from respondents	Grounded theory, ethnography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can address more specific issues • Results can be easily interpreted • Cost advantages over focus groups and depth interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack the flexibility that is likely to produce truly creative or novel explanations
Word Association/Sentence Completion	Records the first thoughts that come to a consumer in response to some stimulus	Grounded theory, case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economical • Can be done quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack the flexibility that is likely to produce truly creative or novel explanations
Observation	Recorded notes describing observed events	Ethnography, grounded theory, case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be inobtrusive • Can yield actual behavior patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be very expensive with participant-observer series
Collages	Respondent assembles pictures that represent their thoughts/feelings	Phenomenology, Grounded theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible enough to allow novel insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly dependent on the researcher's interpretation of the collage
Thematic Apperception/ Cartoon Tests	Researcher provides an ambiguous picture and respondent tells about the story	Phenomenology, Grounded theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projective, allows to get at sensitive issues • Flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly dependent on the researcher's interpretation

Choosing a Qualitative Method



1. Focus Group Interviews (Discussions)

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- Unstructured, free-flowing interview (discussion) with a small group of people about the subject area of the research
 - Unstructured
 - Free flowing
 - Group discussion
- Group Composition
 - About 6-10 people
 - Relatively homogeneous
 - Similar lifestyles and experiences
- Now sometimes conducted online – “Online Focus Groups”
- **Approach:** Ethnography,, Case studies

The Focus Group Moderator

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- The person in charge of “moderating” the group discussions
- Usually he:
 - Develops rapport - helps people relax
 - Interacts
 - Listens to what people have to say
 - Everyone gets a chance to speak
 - Maintains loose control and focuses discussion
 - Stimulates spontaneous responses

Focus Group Methodology

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- Independent investigation
 - Principal data source
- Multi-method study or program
 - Qualitative & quantitative methods
 - Triangulation
- Supplement
 - Interpretation of quantitative data

Traditional Focus Groups

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- 8-12 participants
- Under direction of *trained* moderator
- Formal, directive, structured
- 60-150 minutes
- Recorded, supplemented by field notes
- Observed by scientific team

Traditional Focus Groups

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- Participants
 - Break characteristics – populations
 - Control characteristics
- Number & nature of groups & sessions
 - Purpose
 - Design complexity
 - ✦ Break characteristics
 - Resources

Data – Qualitative/Textual

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- Tape recordings
- Transcriptions
 - 2 hour session: 40 to 50 pages
- Field notes

Data Analysis

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- Driven by underlying research question
- Qualitative
 - Interpretive, constrained by context
 - Topics – linked to group guidelines
- Steps
 - Mechanical – organizing, subdividing
 - Interpretive – developing subdivisions (code mapping), search for patterns within subdivisions, drawing meaningful conclusions
 - Software:
 - Reliability
 - Repeated review of data
 - Independent analysis by \geq two experienced analysts

Results

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- Qualitative:
 - Themes, Issues, Concerns
 - Substantiating Quotes
- Quantitative:
 - No. of participants who agreed or disagreed
 - Frequency of themes within the group discussion
 - Sample characteristics

Characteristics of Focus Groups

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Group Size	8-12
Group Composition	Homogeneous, respondents, prescreened
Physical Setting	Relaxed, informal atmosphere
Time Duration	1-3 hours
Recording	Use of audio cassettes and Video tapes
Moderator	Observational, interpersonal, and communication skills of the moderator

Key Qualifications of Focus Group Moderators

1. **Kindness with firmness:** The moderator must combine a disciplined detachment with understanding empathy so as to generate the necessary interaction.
2. **Permissiveness:** The moderator must be permissive yet alert to signs that the group's cordiality or purpose is disintegrating.
3. **Involvement:** The moderator must encourage and stimulate intense personal involvement.
4. **Incomplete understanding:** The moderator must encourage respondents to be more specific about generalized comments by exhibiting incomplete understanding.

Key Qualifications of Focus Group Moderators, cont.

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5. **Encouragement:** The moderator must encourage unresponsive members to participate.
6. **Flexibility:** The moderator must be able to improvise and alter the planned outline amid the distractions of the group process.
7. **Sensitivity:** The moderator must be sensitive enough to guide the group discussion at an intellectual as well as emotional level.

Procedure for Planning and Conducting Focus Groups

Fig. 5.3

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Determine the Objectives and Define the Problem



Specify the Objectives of Qualitative Research



State the Objectives/Questions to be Answered by Focus Groups



Write a Screening Questionnaire



Develop a Moderator's Outline



Conduct the Focus Group Interviews



Review Tapes and Analyze the Data



Summarize the Findings and Plan Follow-Up Research or Action

Types of Focus Groups

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- **Traditional**
 - In-person, directive, structured
 - Internet alternative
- **Brainstorming**
 - In-person, nondirective, unstructured
- **Nominal/Delphi technique**
 - Mail, directive, structured
 - Internet alternative
- **Field, natural**
 - In-person, spontaneous, unstructured
- **Field, formal**
 - In-person, directive, semi-structured

Variations in Focus Groups

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- **Two-way focus group.** This allows one target group to listen to and learn from a related group. For example, a focus group of physicians viewed a focus group of arthritis patients discussing the treatment they desired.
- **Dual-moderator group.** A focus group conducted by two moderators: One moderator is responsible for the smooth flow of the session, and the other ensures that specific issues are discussed.
- **Dueling-moderator group.** There are two moderators, but they deliberately take opposite positions on the issues to be discussed.

Variations in Focus Groups

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- **Respondent-moderator group.** The moderator asks selected participants to play the role of moderator temporarily to improve group dynamics.
- **Client-participant groups.** Client personnel are identified and made part of the discussion group.
- **Mini groups.** These groups consist of a moderator and only 4 or 5 respondents.
- **Tele-session groups.** Focus group sessions by phone using the conference call technique.
- **Online Focus groups.** Focus groups conducted online over the Internet.

Focus Group Discussions

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- **Advantages**
 - Efficient/Cost-effective
 - Quality of data enhanced by group participants
 - Can quickly assess the extent to which there is agreement or diversity on an issue

Advantages of Focus Groups

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1. Synergism
2. Snowballing
3. Stimulation
4. Security
5. Spontaneity
6. Serendipity
7. Specialization
8. Scientific scrutiny
9. Structure
10. Speed

Strengths & Limitations

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Focus group methodology is only as useful and as strong as its link to the underlying research question and the rigor with which it is applied.

Strengths

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- Provides concentrated amounts of rich data, in participants' own words, on precisely the topic of interest
- Interaction of participants adds richness to the data that may be missed in individual interviews
- Provides critical information in development of hypotheses or interpretation of quantitative data

Limitations

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- Small number of participants
- Limited generalizability
- Group dynamics can be a challenge
 - Particularly if moderator is inexperienced
- Interpretation
 - Time-consuming
 - Requires experienced analysts

- **Limitations**

- Limits number of questions that can be posed
- May minimise responses made by each participant
- Minority views may not be heard
- Confidentiality cannot assured
- Requires significant group process skills
- Explores broad themes, not subtle
- Views are mediated by group members

Disadvantages of Focus Groups

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1. Misuse
2. Misjudge
3. Moderation
4. Messy
5. Misrepresentation

Conclusions

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- **Focus group methodology**
 - provides rich depth of understanding of the phenomenon of interest
 - can be used in isolation, or to complement or supplement quantitative methods
 - is as useful and as strong as its link to the underlying research question and the rigor with which it is applied.

Online Versus Traditional Focus Groups

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Table 5.3

Characteristic	Online Focus Groups	Traditional Focus Groups
Group size	4-6	8-12
Group composition	Anywhere in the world	Drawn from the local area
Time duration	1-1.5 hours	1-3 hours
Physical setting	Researcher has little control	Under the control of the researcher
Respondent identity	Difficult to verify	Can be easily verified
Respondent attentiveness	Respondents can engage in other tasks	Attentiveness can be monitored

Online Versus Traditional Focus Groups

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Table 5.3, cont.

Respondent recruiting	Easier. Can be recruited online, e-mail, panel, or by traditional means	Recruited by traditional means (telephone, mail, mail panel)
Group dynamics	Limited	Synergistic, snowballing (bandwagon) effect
Openness of respondents	Respondents are more candid due to lack of face-to-face contact	Respondents are candid, except for sensitive topics
Nonverbal communication	Body language cannot be observed Emotions expressed by using symbols	Body language and emotions observed
Use of physical stimuli	Limited to those that can be displayed on the Internet	A variety of stimuli (products, advertising demonstrations, etc.) can be used

Online Versus Traditional Focus Groups

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Table 5.3, cont.

Transcripts	Available immediately	Time consuming and expensive to obtain
Observers' communication with moderator	Observers can communicate with the moderator on a split-screen	Observers can manually send notes to the focus group room
Unique moderator skills	Typing, computer usage, familiarity with chat room slang	Observational
Turnaround time	Can be set up and completed in a few days	Takes many days for setup and completion
Client travel costs	None	Can be expensive
Basic focus group costs	Much less expensive	More expensive: facility rental, food, taping, transcript preparation

Advantages of Online Focus Groups

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- Geographical constraints are removed and time constraints are lessened.
- Unique opportunity to re-contact group participants at a later date.
- Can recruit people not interested in traditional focus groups: doctors, lawyers, etc.
- Moderators can carry on side conversations with individual respondents.
- There is no travel, videotaping, or facilities to arrange so the cost is much lower.

Disadvantages of Online Focus Groups

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- Only people that have access to the Internet can participate.
- Verifying that a respondent is a member of a target group is difficult.
- There is lack of general control over the respondent's environment.
- Only audio and visual stimuli can be tested. Products can not be touched (e.g., clothing) or smelled (e.g., perfumes).

Conversations

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- Unstructured dialogue in which researcher engages the respondent in a discussion of the subject matter of interest
- Combines features of focus group and depth interviews
 - Similar to depth interview (in the sense of engaging one respondent at a time)
 - Similar to focus group discussion in the sense of allowing free discussion rather than asking specific questions
- **Approach:** Phenomenology; grounded theory

Qualitative Interviewing

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Data Collection Methods

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- Field observations
- Interviews
 - Acad Med. 2009.
- Document analysis
 - Teach Learn Med. 2004.

**Burden, Responsibility, and Reward:
Preceptor Experiences With the Continuity
of Teaching In a Longitudinal
Integrated Clerkship**

Arianne Teherani, Bridget C. O'Brien, Dylan E. Masters, Ann N. Poncelet,
Patricia A. Robertson, and Karen E. Hauer

**Introducing First-Year Medical Students to Clinical Practice by Having
Them "Shadow" Third-Year Clerks**

Cynthia L. Alford, Donald M. Currie

Depth Interviews

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- Unstructured, extensive one-on-one interviews conducted with subjects of ultimate concern (typically consumers or customers).
- Purpose is to gain valuable insights for the main study
- May sometimes involve testing aspects of the research design, such as questionnaire clarity, length, etc
- **Approach:** Ethnography, Grounded theory, Case studies

Interviews



- Closed quantitative: Questions and response categories are determined in advance; responses are fixed
- Standardized open-ended: The wording and sequence of questions are determined in advance; same basic questions in the same order
- Interview guide: Topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance, however, the interviewer decides the sequence and wording of questions during the interview
- Informal conversational: Questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course

Qualitative cf. Quantitative Interviewing

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- Quantitative interviewing involves a rigid set of questions with fixed response options
 - Options may have different meanings to participants
 - Items/Options may be irrelevant to participants
 - Participants cannot to speak in their own voice
 - Limited opportunities for fresh insights
 - Researcher bias issue in designing items.

Qualitative cf. Quantitative Interviewing

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- Qualitative interviewing involves an open set of questions; no fixed response options
 - Quests framed by interest and information value of participants.
 - Participants to speak in their own voice
 - Maximized opportunities for fresh insights
 - More difficult to analyze; bias of researcher issue in interview and in analysis.

Dramaturgy

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- Qualitative interviews are unnatural conversations where one participant has a script.
- Stagecraft, stage management, symbols can enhance or bias interview.
- Mutual disclosure—great risk, great potential value.

Problems with Question Formulation



- Affectively worded questions arouse emotional response. Affectively loaded questions
 - Sound judgmental
- Neutralize items. Some wives happen to have affairs. Have you happened to have had an affair?

Problems with Question Formulation



- **Double-Barreled Questions**
 - Two questions in one that may have different answers
 - Have you and your partner had a fight where you yelled at each other or hit each other?
 - Less problematic with unstructured interviews. Participant can give complex answers.

Problems with Question Formulation



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Pretesting



- After you develop your interview schedule you need to pretest it.
- Interview somebody who is like the person you are going to interview.
 - Have additional questions about what was clear/unclear
 - What you asked that was unnecessary
 - Ideas for other questions you should ask
 - Ideas on the order or sequencing of questions

Informed Consent



- You need to have an informed consent for them to sign.
 - Describe the purpose of the interview
 - Indicate the confidentiality of the interview
 - Participation is voluntary, may stop interview or not answer any question
 - No foreseeable risk
 - Indicate approximate time (based on your pretest)
 - Get their signature, printed name, and date
 - This should be a separate page and not attached to your questions or the notes you take.

Methods



- Face-to-Face, one on one allows nonverbal communication
- Telephone best for structured interview with limited response options. May be necessary for qualitative data if only way to do interview
- Web survey can have structured open ended questions. Can have skips so different people have different open ended questions.

Pitfalls



- Bias of interviewer is much more prominent in an unstructured than structured interview
 - Gay activist and Anti-gay activist interviewers may get very different answers from the same participant
- Different ordering lead to different answers.
 - Do you feel your marriage is an equal partnership.
 - Asked first gets different answer than asked after questions on division of household chores

Pitfalls



- Beginners are afraid to ask difficult questions.
 - Participants will tell you things they would never reveal to an intimate.
 - Don't ask, don't tell, means don't learn
- Beginners are afraid of the role of interviewer and want to simply have a conversation.

Pitfalls



- This is not a conversation.
 - You are getting information, they are providing it.
 - In conversations you let people be evasive, but in interview you try not to (respect that they can refuse to answer)
 - Honor their willingness to share information, but remember you are not trying to make a friend.
 - Interviews are intense and you are wringing out as much information from them as you ethnically can.

Field Notes



- Write field notes immediately after completing the interview
- What new questions did you generate for a next interview?
- What questions were unclear and needed probes? Any new probes to keep for future interviews?
- How attentive/interested/motivated was participant? Any ideas for future interviews?

Types: Standardized Interview

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- Set questions, set order
- Wording exactly as written
- No adjustment for language skills, except explanations of words and prompts
- No additional questions
- Similar in format to paper-pencil/web survey

Types: Semistandardized Interview

103

- More or less structured, flexible order
- Wording adapted to participant to maximize understanding
- Interviewer can answer questions without scripted prompts/definitions.
- Additional questions sometimes allowed
- Set of questions may change based on earlier interviews—some new items, some items dropped

Types: Unstandardized Interview

104

- Completely unstructured, starts with initial set of general topics
- No set wording or ordering.
- Interviewer can answer questions without scripted prompts/definitions, adjust to language skills
- Additional questions important
- Set of questions/topics will change based on earlier interviews—some new items, some items dropped

4. Semi-Structured Interviews

105

- Open-ended questions with answers solicited in writing – typically in the form of short essays
- Respondents are free to write as much as or as little as they choose
- Requires the researcher to prepare the questions (opening and follow-up questions) in advance
- **Approach:** Grounded theory; ethnography

Interviewing

106

- Types of questions asked (Patton, 2002)
 - ✦ Knowledge questions: What respondents know about their worlds
 - ✦ Sensory questions: elicit descriptions of what and how they see, hear, touch, taste, smell the world around them
 - ✦ Background and demographic questions: Quest. That elicit respondents' descriptions of themselves

Depth Interview Techniques: Laddering

107

In **laddering**, the line of questioning proceeds from product characteristics to user characteristics. This technique allows the researcher to tap into the consumer's network of meanings.

Wide body aircrafts

(product characteristic)



I can get more work done



I accomplish more



I feel good about myself

(user characteristic)

Advertising theme: You will feel good about yourself when flying our airline. "You're The Boss."

Depth Interview Techniques: Hidden Issue Questioning

In **hidden issue questioning**, the focus is not on socially shared values but rather on personal “sore spots;” not on general lifestyles but on deeply felt personal concerns.

fantasies, work lives, and social lives



historic, elite, competitive activities

Advertising theme: communicate aggressiveness, high status, and competitive heritage of the airline.

Depth Interview Techniques: Symbolic Analysis

109

Symbolic analysis attempts to analyze the symbolic meaning of objects by comparing them with their opposites. The logical opposites of a product that are investigated are: non-usage of the product, attributes of an imaginary “non-product,” and opposite types of products.

“What would it be like if you could no longer use airplanes?”

↓
“Without planes, I would have to rely on letters and long-distance calls.”

Airlines sell to the managers face-to-face communication.
Advertising theme: The airline will do the same thing for a manager as Federal Express does for a package.

Interviewing

110

- Questions:
 - Should be reflective of observations
 - ✦ What did you learn as a participant-observer?
 - Developing questions - Where should your questions come from?
 - ✦ Format?
 - ✦ RAPPORT
 - ✦ Structured?
 - ✦ Open Ended?
 - ✦ Probing?
 - ✦ Non- Verbal Messages from respondent

Interviewing

111

- Requires skill and practice
 - Types of questions asked (Patton, 2002)
 - ✦ Experience and behavior interview questions: What respondents do or have done
 - ✦ Opinion and value questions: How respondents think about their behaviors and experiences
 - ✦ Feeling questions: Questions that elicit how respondents react emotionally to or feel about their experiences and opinions
 - ✦ Continued...

Interviewing

112

- Other aspects of interviews
 - Key informants: possess special knowledge
 - ✦ May add information that researcher would otherwise not have access too.
 - ✦ Can sensitize the researcher to aspects of the particular culture being investigated
 - Possibilities of interviews: rich data, etc.
 - Possible pitfalls:
 - ✦ Interruptions
 - ✦ redirecting
 - ✦ poor questions
 - ✦ researchers inability to follow up/probe

Interviewing

113

- Sequencing of Questions
 - facilitates completeness/comprehensiveness
- Interviewing is not for everyone
 - Nature of interactions will change
 - Strengths/weaknesses
 - Need to be a good listener
- Documents

Interviewing

114

- Interviews allow researchers to
 - Explore participants' perspectives in their own terms
 - Inquire about the meaning people attach to certain events
- Interviews can be:
 - Informal – conversational (handout)
 - Structured - fixed-response
 - Semi-structured

Interviewing

115

- **Where will interview occur?**
 - A convenient location for respondent?
 - When will you meet? Time of day is important- tired /rushed
 - How long do you anticipate it will last?
 - How often will you meet?
 - Audiotaped?
 - Interruptions?
 - Transcribing interviews-long , but meaningful process
- **Documents:**
 - Curricular guides, newsletters, transcripts – corroborate observations/findings **LEADING TO** trustworthiness

What makes a good interview?

116

Brainstorm the actions of interviewer and those of interviewee that make for a good interview

- Role of interviewer
- Role of interviewee

Interview

117

In groups of three, take turns to be

- Interviewer
- Interviewee
- Observer

Roles

Interviewer seeks to understand the research interest of the interviewee, especially the research question

Observer gives feedback to both interviewer and interviewee on their roles

Focus Groups Versus Depth Interviews

118

Table 5.4

Characteristic	Focus Groups	Depth Interviews
Group synergy and dynamics	+	-
Peer pressure/group influence	-	+
Client involvement	+	-
Generation of innovative ideas	+	-
In-depth probing of individuals	-	+
Uncovering hidden motives	-	+
Discussion of sensitive topics	-	+

Focus Groups Versus Depth Interviews

119

Table 5.4, cont.

Characteristic	Focus Groups	Depth Interviews
Interviewing competitors	-	+
Interviewing professional respondents	-	+
Scheduling of respondents	+	-
Amount of information	+	-
Bias in moderation and interpretation	+	-
Cost per respondent		

Note: A + indicates a relative advantage over the other procedure, a - indicates a relative disadvantage.

Comparison of Focus Groups, Depth Interviews, and Projective Techniques

Table 5.5

120

Criteria	Focus Groups	Depth Interviews	Projective Techniques
1. Degree of Structure	Relatively high	Relatively medium	Relatively low
2. Probing of individual respondents	Low	High	Medium
3. Moderator bias	Relatively medium	Relatively high	Low to high
4. Interpretation bias	Relatively low	Relatively medium	Relatively high
5. Uncovering subconscious information	Low	Medium to high	High
6. Discovering innovative information	High	Medium	Low
7. Obtaining sensitive information	Low	Medium	High
8. Involve unusual behavior or questioning	No	To a limited extent	Yes
9. Overall usefulness	Highly useful	Useful	Somewhat useful

Document Review

121

- Obtain access to key documents and records at the outset
- Documents can help to establish what needs to be pursued through other methods (e.g., direct observation, interviews)
- Consider whether the documents are public – ethical issues
- Examples: minutes of meetings, brochures, school reports, school websites

Observation

122

- Unobtrusive data collection method in which the researcher watches a phenomenon and records notes describing the phenomenon (e.g. a behavior)
- Observation can be personal or mechanical; disguised or undisguised; structured or unstructured, etc.
- **Approach:** Grounded theory; ethnography; case studies

Observation

123

- Purpose of observation
 - Describe the context
 - See what is spoken about first hand
 - Confirm reports of respondents
- Requires training, preparation and discipline
- Develop an observation checklist
- Observation as:
 - as outsider - unobtrusive
 - participant observation
- Includes what is not seen
- Generates field notes (narratives: eg drug rehabilitation)

Data Collection Types/Aspects

124

- Observation
 - General methods...
 - ✦ Studying the setting
 - ✦ Describing it in detail
 - ✦ “Making the familiar strange.”
 - ✦ What do you notice about the participants in their natural settings?
 - ✦ interactions? Comparing their words/beliefs to their actions
 - ✦ Non verbal feedback? Gestures?

Field notes

125

- Notebook form
- Needs to be detailed & thorough
- Time consuming when done correctly
- Descriptive and analytic

Field notes

126

- Field notebook – primary recording tool (confidential)
- Describes environment, people, events, activities, interactions, researcher ideas, reflections, questions, exploring researcher bias
- After observation, researcher returns to notes to complete detailed summaries and expand upon observations
- Descriptive and analytic:
 - Accuracy without being judgmental
 - Such detail that you can visualize the moment a year later

Field Notes

127

- **Poor example of Field Notes:**
 - “The class was disorderly and noisy”
- **Good example of Field Notes:**
 - “The 5th grade class contained 15 girls and 12 boys. When I entered they were in groups of 6. One group of 4 girls were trying to see who could blow the biggest bubble with their gum. A group of 5 boys began imitating a martial arts movie they had seen on TV...”

Field Notes

128

- Analytic Notes:
 - Observer comments
 - ✦ Observer Comments to researcher – informal statements the respondent makes
 - Daily reflection
 - ✦ Thoughts, concerns the researcher has with the setting, study, emerging themes, etc.
 - Researcher acknowledges feelings, problems, ideas, etc.

PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES

129

- A collection of exploratory research techniques based on indirect questioning in which respondents are asked to project themselves into a particular person, object, or situation
- Often used where direct questioning is not likely to provide honest responses
 - Word association tests
 - Sentence completion method
 - Third-person technique
 - Role playing
 - T.A.T.
 - Picture frustration version of T.A.T.

Definition of Projective Techniques

130

- An unstructured, indirect form of questioning that encourages respondents to project their underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes or feelings regarding the issues of concern.
- In projective techniques, respondents are asked to interpret the behavior of others.
- In interpreting the behavior of others, respondents indirectly project their own motivations, beliefs, attitudes, or feelings into the situation.

Advantages of Projective Techniques

131

- They may elicit responses that subjects would be unwilling or unable to give if they knew the purpose of the study.
- Helpful when the issues to be addressed are personal, sensitive, or subject to strong social norms.
- Helpful when underlying motivations, beliefs, and attitudes are operating at a subconscious level.

Disadvantages of Projective Techniques

132

- Suffer from many of the disadvantages of unstructured direct techniques, but to a greater extent.
- Require highly-trained interviewers.
- Skilled interpreters are also required to analyze the responses.
- There is a serious risk of interpretation bias.
- They tend to be expensive.
- May require respondents to engage in unusual behavior.

Guidelines for Using Projective Techniques

133

- Projective techniques should be used because the required information cannot be accurately obtained by direct methods.
- Projective techniques should be used for exploratory research to gain initial insights and understanding.
- Given their complexity, projective techniques should not be used naively.

Word Association Tests

134

- A projective technique in which subjects are presented with a word and asked to indicate what other words come to mind, e.g.
- What comes to mind when you hear the following words?
 - Soft drinks
 - Mercedes
- Technique may be used to develop an associative network of words related to a focal word
- Useful in brand name testing and product concept testing

Word Association

135

In **word association**, respondents are presented with a list of words, one at a time, and asked to respond to each with the first word that comes to mind. The words of interest, called test words, are interspersed throughout the list which also contains some neutral, or filler words to disguise the purpose of the study. Responses are analyzed by calculating:

- (1) the frequency with which any word is given as a response;
- (2) the amount of time that elapses before a response is given;
and
- (3) the number of respondents who do not respond at all to a test word within a reasonable period of time.

Word Association

136

EXAMPLE

STIMULUS

washday
fresh
pure
scrub
filth
bubbles
family
towels

MRS. M

everyday
and sweet
air
don't; husband does
this neighborhood
bath
squabbles
dirty

MRS. C

ironing
clean
soiled
clean
dirt
soap and water
children
wash

Sentence Completion Tests

137

- A projective technique in which subjects are given incomplete sentences and asked to complete them with the word or phrase that first comes to mind, e.g.
 1. People who drive sports cars are _____
 2. A man who drinks light beer is _____
 3. Sports cars are most liked by _____
 4. A sports car is _____

Completion Techniques

138

In **sentence completion**, respondents are given incomplete sentences and asked to complete them. Generally, they are asked to use the first word or phrase that comes to mind.

A person who shops at Sears is _____

A person who receives a gift certificate good for Sak's Fifth Avenue would be _____

J. C. Penney is most liked by _____

When I think of shopping in a department store, I _____

A variation of sentence completion is paragraph completion, in which the respondent completes a paragraph beginning with the stimulus phrase.

Completion Techniques

In **story completion**, respondents are given part of a story – enough to direct attention to a particular topic but not to hint at the ending. They are required to give the conclusion in their own words.

Construction Techniques

140

With a **picture response**, the respondents are asked to describe a series of pictures of ordinary as well as unusual events. The respondent's interpretation of the pictures gives indications of that individual's personality.

In **cartoon tests**, cartoon characters are shown in a specific situation related to the problem. The respondents are asked to indicate what one cartoon character might say in response to the comments of another character. Cartoon tests are simpler to administer and analyze than picture response techniques.

Collages

141

- Collage – a pattern (larger picture, story, etc.) made by sticking pictures or materials on a surface
- In this research method, respondents are asked to assemble pictures to represent their thoughts/feelings about a phenomenon
- Collages are then analyzed for meaning
- **Approach:** Phenomenology; Grounded theory

Thematic Apperception Tests (T.A.T.)

142

- A projective technique in which subjects are presented with a series of pictures and are then asked to form a story about the pictures

Picture Frustration (Cartoon) Tests

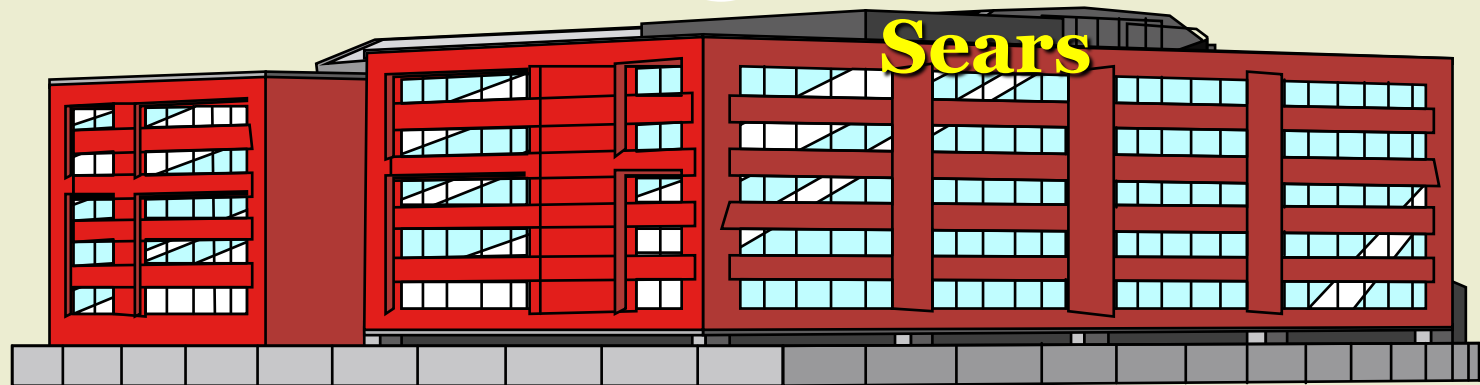
143

- Respondent is presented with a cartoon drawing representing an incomplete dialogue and asked to suggest a dialogue that the characters might engage in

A Cartoon Test

Figure 5.4

144



Why are we
here?



Let's see if we can
pick up some
house wares at
Sears.

Expressive Techniques

145

In **expressive techniques**, respondents are presented with a verbal or visual situation and asked to relate the feelings and attitudes of other people to the situation.

Role playing Respondents are asked to play the role or assume the behavior of someone else.

Third-person technique The respondent is presented with a verbal or visual situation and the respondent is asked to relate the beliefs and attitudes of a third person rather than directly expressing personal beliefs and attitudes. This third person may be a friend, neighbor, colleague, or a “typical” person.

Telling the Story

146

- Maintaining confidentiality – Highest priority
- “Writing is a political act” (Glesne & Peshkin):
 - Intended and Unintended consequences
 - Can respondents be subjected to unwanted publicity?
 - Keeping at it....
- Include...Narratives/vignettes/direct quotations ... support the claims one makes in their findings

QUALITATIVE COMPUTER SOFTWARE

147

- ◎ MAXqda – *“The Art of Text Analysis”*
- ◎ Atlas.ti - *“Tame your Data. Go wild with your research”*
- ◎ QSR NVivo – *“Organize. Analyze. Visualize. Report.”*
- ◎ HyperRESEARCH – *“Simply Powerful Tools for Qualitative Analysis”*
- ◎ Kwalitan

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Thank you very much

