

Qualitative Research Methods: A primer

Department of Family Practice Research
Office

March 3, 2012

Douglas Cave, MSW RSW, PhD, RPsych, MA, AMP, MCFP

Paul Whitehead, PhD, CCC, RPsych

David Kuhl, MD, MHSc, PhD

Outline

- Introductions
- Qualitative and Quantitative Research
- Sample approaches
- Developing a Qualitative Research Project
 - Research Question
 - Data collection
 - Data analysis
 - Reliability/Validity
 - Data presentation

Centre for Practitioner Renewal (CPR)

- How do we sustain health care providers in the work place?
- What is the effect of being in the presence of suffering?
- What would be reparative, healing or restore resilience for health care providers?

Service, education and research/evaluation

Efficiency through relationship

Health care is about curing and healing; art and science, mind and heart, skills and knowledge, technology and compassion, living and dying, life and death

Health care is based on a business model of efficiency, the work we do is about relationship—relationship with self, other and Other

From Today

1. What are you hoping to get from today?
2. What is your experience with qualitative methods?

Researcher/Research Qualities

Researcher

- Curiosity
- Passion/persistence
- Creative
- Focus
- Skepticism/challenging
- Attention to detail
- Patience

Research

- Relevant
- Novel
- Feasible
- Interesting to investigator

Difference between Qualitative and Quantitative

Qualitative

inductive

subjective

impressionistic

holistic, interdependent system

purposeful, key informants

not focused on generalization

aims at understanding, new perspective

case studies, content and patterns

focus on words

probing

Communicability/Consistency/Transparency

Patton, 1990, Chisnall, 2001

Quantitative

deductive

objective

conclusive

independent and dependant variables

random, probabilistic sample

focused on generalization

aims at truth scientific acceptance

statistical analysis

focusing on numbers

counting

Validity/Reliability

Reliability and Validity

Communicability/Consistency/Transparency

Criteria for Judging Quantitative Research	Criteria for Judging Qualitative Research
internal validity	credibility
external validity	transferability
reliability	dependability
objectivity	confirmability

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net>

From Today

1. What is 1 area of interest in your research that qualitative methods may be appropriate?

Three Different Approaches

- Case Study (multiple or single)
- Phenomenology
- Narratology

Gold Standard

- Clarity of approach/theoretical orientation
- Consistent questions/methods
- Multiple evaluators
- Interviewer training
- Manualized, replicable protocol
- Clear rationale for participant recruitment
- Clear description of results
- Compare conclusions with literature

Qualitative Case Study

- Case Study : “An intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon or social unit.”

(Merriam, 1988)

- Case: “A focused and bounded phenomenon embedded in its context.”

(Miles and Huberman, 1994)

Phenomenology

Seeks to:

- extract the nature or meaning of the everyday experience, ie. The everyday experience of.....
- suspend judgment
- understand the experience

Does not seek to predict or control

Narratology

“Far from being one code among many that a culture may utilize for endowing experience with meaning, narrative is a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted”

Hayden White

Structuralist: categorize and to taxonomize,

Dualist: What (story (I/E)) and Way
(discourse)

Research Question

Guiding Principles:

- Informs the research method
- Informs the philosophical approach
- Shows bias
- Not a hypothesis
- Open-ended
- Exploratory

Data Collection Methods

Individual interview

Focus group

Survey

Exploratory

Critical Incident

Data Analysis

Thematic

- Conjoint and disparate themes
- Drawn from transcript

Narrative

- Drawn from transcript
- Use of language
- Story

Reliability and Validity

Communicability/Consistency/Transparency

Criteria for Judging Quantitative Research	Criteria for Judging Qualitative Research
internal validity	credibility
external validity	transferability
reliability	dependability
objectivity	confirmability

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net>

Presentation of Data

List themes

Table themes

Narrative script

Referral Reasons	Frequencies				Examples
	LC	MC	SC	Totals	
Emotional reactions about work	1	7	13	21	Sense of being overwhelmed by work after learning of colleague's severe criticisms
Family/relationship issues	6	1	10	17	Relationship issues related to 20-year marriage & whether to divorce or not
Miscellaneous	5	4	8	17	Feeling apologetic for living
Stress/cumulative stress	5	1	9	15	Stress at work from relationship with colleague
Critical incident	2		10	12	Difficult patient death that she is finding it hard to process
Grief & loss	2	2	3	7	Sense of betrayal "of my own hospital"; loss of faith in colleagues; anger
Work relationship issues	1	1	5	7	Dealing with complex issues & challenging team dynamics
Burnout/exhaustion		1	2	3	Sense of being exhausted & burned out
Communication	1		2	3	Needs to have a difficult conversation with a physician team leader
Self-awareness			2	2	Personal crisis
Self-care			2	2	Loss of self due to caring for others

Underlying issues	Frequency				Example
	LC	MC	SC	Totals	
Work-related incidents	20	8	70	98	Personal betrayal by the organization
Affect issues (work-related)	18	20	44	82	Distressed, anxious, & angry about staff complaints about leadership style
Client characteristics	33	30	16	79	Need for validation from others/Difficulty handling & expressing emotions safely & effectively
Working conditions	6	10	20	36	Several incidents recently where she felt shamed & belittled by her attending physician
Interpersonal challenges	10	2	19	31	Dual relationship between colleagues
Self-esteem/worth	8	8	7	23	Feeling “less than” when comparing himself to
Confidence/competence	4	8	7	19	Core issue of self-doubt
Agency/helplessness	10	4	4	18	Letting others decide her life for her
Expectations/values/cultural	8	2	6	16	Caught between 2 cultures & not sure which one to rely on for decision-making
Cognitive issues	4	4	5	13	Waking & night with thoughts of work
care for others vs. self-care	1	6	5	12	Putting others’ needs before own led to physical & emotional exhaustion
Safety issues/concerns	5	0	7	12	Fear of ongoing assaultive behaviour by co-worker
Failure	4	5	1	10	Afraid of appearing weak or as a failure
Trauma (includes PTSD)	2	3	4	9	Symptoms consistent with PTSD
Overwhelmed	1	3	5	9	Intense overwhelmed feeling from work & home
Perfectionism	3	2	2	7	Struggling with “good enough” & perfection
Boundary setting	2	4	0	6	Struggling to be all things to all people
Incongruence	3	2	0	5	Incongruence between what she is feeling on the inside & her smiling, laughing outer demeanour
Sleeplessness	0	0	5	5	Sleep disturbances and tiredness

