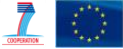




INTREC - INDEPTH Training & Research Centres of Excellence

Qualitative Methodology for Public Health

Research design



Study design

“Most qualitative research is **naturalistic** and **holistic**, in that the focus is generally on studying subjects in naturally-occurring settings, whether these settings are at home or in a particular context, such as an outpatients clinic.

It is also open-ended and flexible, in that the research question may be modified (**emergent design**) as the research progresses and new data collected as new avenues of inquiry are suggested.”

Draper. *The principles and application of qualitative research*

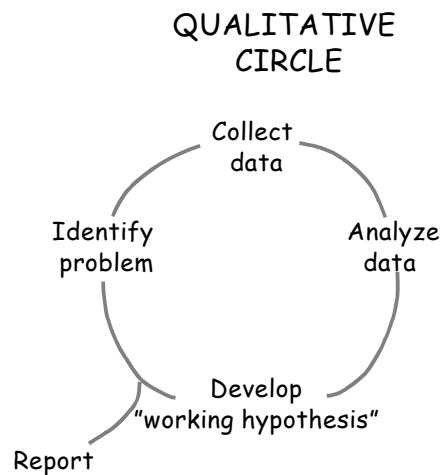




Study design

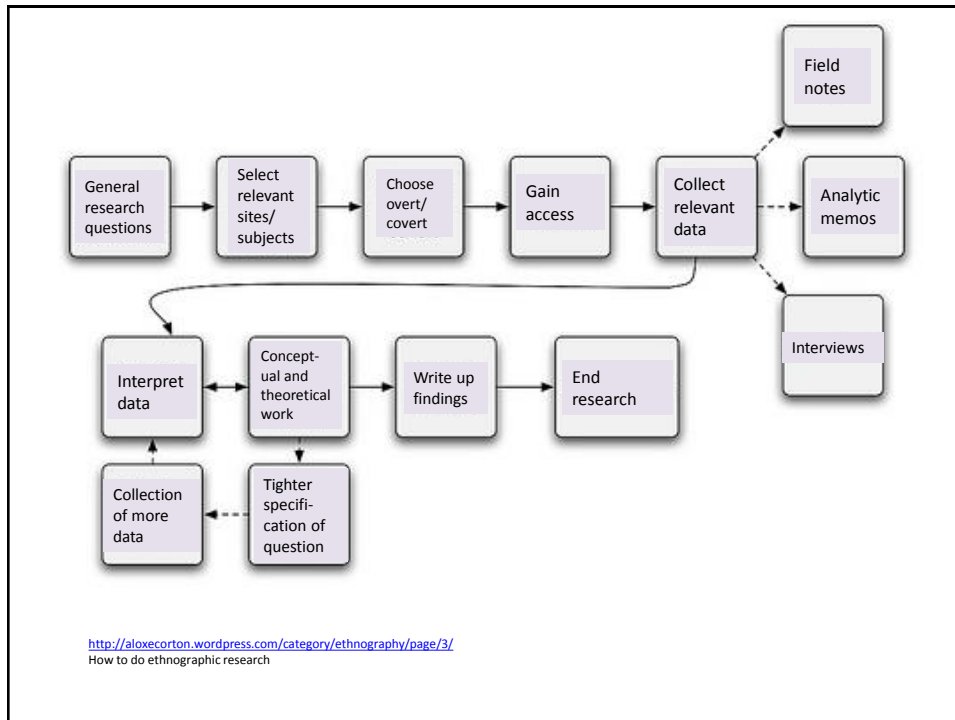
“... the aim of qualitative research is to describe the subjective meaning that a group ascribe to certain activities or phenomena. This means that the research project must be designed so that the context is also in focus.”

Dahlgren et al.



Lars Dahlgren QM 1





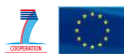
INTREC - INDEPTH Training & Research Centres of Excellence

A. Formulating qualitative research questions

Source:

Principles of Qualitative
Research: Designing a
Qualitative Study
John W. Creswell, Ph.D.
Vicki L. Plano Clark, M.S.

Office of Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research, University of
Nebraska, Lincoln



What do we need to keep in mind when designing a qualitative study?

- Focus on process as well as outcomes
- Let the design emerge
- Use inductive reasoning
- Develop a complex picture of the phenomenon
(studying many ideas with few participants and sites)
- Discuss the context of the phenomenon
- Follow the “scientific method”
(e.g., problem, questions, method, results)

A good qualitative purpose statement:

- What it includes:
 - Single sentence
 - “The purpose of this study . . .”
 - Central phenomenon
 - Qualitative words (e.g. “explore,” “understand,” “discover”)
 - Participants
 - Research site

Scripts to help design qualitative
central questions and subquestions:

Central Question Script: (usually write only one)

**“What does it mean to _____ (central
phenomenon)?”**

**“How would _____ (participants) describe
_____ (central phenomenon)?”**

Sub-Question Script:

**“(What) _____ (aspect) does _____
(participant) engage in as a _____ (central
phenomenon)**

Here is a script for a good
qualitative purpose statement:

**“The purpose of this qualitative study.....
(replace later with type of qualitative tradition)
will be to _____
(understand, describe, develop, discover)
the _____ (central focus) for
_____ (participants: person, process,
groups) at _____ (site).”**

Writing good qualitative research questions

- Questions narrow the purpose
- Two types:
 - **Central question**
 - The most general question you could ask
 - Sub questions
- Sub-divides central question into more specific topics questions

Use good qualitative wording for these questions

- Begin with words such as “how,” “what,”
- Tell the reader what you are attempting to “discover,” “generate,” “explore,” “identify,” or “describe”
- Ask “what happened?” to describe
- Ask “What was the meaning to people of what happened?” to understand
- Ask “What happened over time?” to explore a process

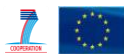
Avoid words such as:

- “relate”
- “influence”
- “impact”
- “effect”
- “cause”



Avoid quantitative language
that might mislead readers

- What is not included in this statement:
 - Not a comparison
 - Not relating variables
 - Not proving hypotheses
 - Not measuring variables

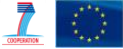




INTREC - INDEPTH Training & Research Centres of Excellence

B. Sampling

Source:



Purposive or theoretical sampling

A purpose of selecting cases according to some specified characteristics:

- To describe the processes involved in a phenomena
- Reach people who can share their unique slice of reality
- All slices together should be able to illustrate in-depth the nature and interpretative processes involved in the phenomena



• Theoretical or analytical representatively





Examples of purposive sampling

Type of sampling	Purpose
Snow-ball or chain sampling	The first selected informant is used as a resource for identifying the next subject
Maximum variation sampling	Informants should be as different from each other as possible to document variation (properties and dimensions)
Extreme or deviant cases	To learn from highly unusual manifestations of the phenomenon of interest, test emerging theories
Homogenous sampling	Select similar types of informants, simplifies analysis, facilitates group interviewing
Convenience sampling	Selecting those who are most easily enrolled, low credibility



INTREC - INDEPTH Training & Research Centres of Excellence

C. Tools for data collection

Source:



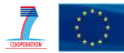
Tools for collecting qualitative information

Interviews (research, open-ended, informal)

Observations (participant, overt, covert)

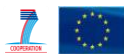
Focus group discussions

Documents (news papers, protocols, internet)



INTREC - INDEPTH Training & Research Centres of Excellence

D. Summary



Qualitative research design

Natural setting

Emergent design

The human as a research instrument

Prolonged engagement

Tacit knowledge

Purposive sampling

.....

Inductive analysis

Saturation or redundancy

Thick descriptions

Triangulation

Negotiated outcome