Introductions

Andrew Hedrick, MPA, CIP
Senior IRB Protocol Analyst
The Ohio State University

Patricia Condon, PhD
Research Data Services Librarian
University of New Hampshire
Disclosure Statement: Patricia Condon

*I have no relevant personal/professional/financial relationship(s) with respect to this educational activity*
Disclosure Statement: Andrew Hedrick

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Agenda

- Overview of qualitative research approach
- Assessing merit and trustworthiness
- Ethical issues presented by qualitative research
- Strategies for researchers to minimize harm to participants
- Q&A
Research Approach to Qualitative Inquiry

Subjectivist Approaches

Objectivist Approaches

Qualitative Approaches

Quantitative Approaches
### Philosophical Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjectivist</th>
<th>Objectivist</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realities constructed by knowers</td>
<td>Reality independent of knowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependent</td>
<td>Detached</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inductive</td>
<td>Deductive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transferable</td>
<td>Generalizable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situated, interpretive portrayal of phenomenon</td>
<td>Objective, value-neutral portrayal of phenomenon</td>
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</table>

**Types of representation**
- Situated, interpretive portrayal of phenomenon
- Objective, value-neutral portrayal of phenomenon

**Approach to inquiry**
- Inductive
- Deductive

**Application of findings**
- Transferable
- Generalizable

**Role of researcher**
- Interdependent
- Detached

**Epistemology**
- Realities constructed by knowers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Quantitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand phenomena</td>
<td>Purpose of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Measure phenomena or explain causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study phenomena in context</td>
<td>Approach to study</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolate phenomena from context</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inductive</td>
<td>Approach to inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deductive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purposive and small sample size</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Representative and large sample size</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detailed descriptions of phenomena</td>
<td>Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generalizable knowledge</td>
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Lichtman, 2014
Example: Studying Domestic Violence

Qualitative approach
Qualitative research question

▪ In what ways do people who witness domestic violence understand how it affects their current relationships?

Quantitative approach
Quantitative research question

▪ How does witnessing domestic violence impact a child’s romantic relationships in adulthood?
Example: Studying Disease in a Community

Qualitative approach
Qualitative inquiry might involve
- interviews/focus groups of patients & providers
- observation in various settings
- documenting media coverage

Quantitative approach
Quantitative inquiry might involve
- surveying community members & health professionals
- analyzing medical records
- collecting community level data
Characteristics of Qualitative Research

- Direct personal experience in real-world settings
- Sensitive to context & attentive to particulars
- Inductive - generally, ends with principles/relationships/grounded theory
- Seeking patterns, pluralism, and complexity
- Emergent, descriptive, and interpretive
- Using the researcher as the data collection instrument
- Small sample sizes
- Often non-linear

Assessing Scientific Merit

• Scientific merit or rigor is the scientific soundness of the study
• It is applicable to both quantitative & qualitative research
• Review for ethical issues may involve questions about the science
Assessing Quantitative Research

- Generalizability
- Internal validity
- Reliability
- Representative sample
Assessing Qualitative Research

- Fittingness or transferability
- Comparability & translatability
- Trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility
Comparison of Criteria for Assessment of Rigor

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<thead>
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<th>Qualitative</th>
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<th>Quantitative</th>
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<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>Truth Value</td>
<td>Internal Validity</td>
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<td>Transferability</td>
<td>Applicability</td>
<td>Generalizability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmability</td>
<td>Neutrality</td>
<td>Objectivity</td>
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Krefting, 1991; Guba, 1981
Strategies for Rigorous Qualitative Research

• Triangulation of data sources
• Extensive time in the field
• Negative case analysis
• Thick description
• Feedback from others
• Respondent validation

Leedy & Ormrod, 2010
Ethical Issues
Research Involving Human Subjects

1. Do no harm
2. Minimize risk & maximize benefit
3. Treat people fairly
4. Obtain informed consent
5. Protect privacy
6. Maintain confidentiality
7. Keep promises
8. Be trustworthy
Ethical Issues
Things to think about

1. Gaining access
2. Establishing rapport
3. Impression management
4. Role management
5. Informed consent
6. Deception
7. Relationships with participants
8. Conflicting obligations
9. Making the private public
10. Disengaging from the field
Ethical Issues

1. General
2. Recruitment
3. Informed consent
4. Privacy & confidentiality
5. Online spaces
6. Risks
Ethical Issues
General

1. Appropriateness of study design & data collection methods
   a. Is the study design appropriate?
   b. Is the data collection method appropriate for the type of data?
Ethical Issues
General

1. Effect of research participation on participants’ everyday life/environment
   a. Assessing if the research may impact participants’ lives and if so, how?
   b. What does ending the study mean in terms of a researcher’s relationship with participants?
   c. As study winds down, start preparing participants for researcher’s departure/change in role
**Ethical Issues**

**Recruitment**

1. **Access to participants**
   a. Is it related to researcher’s position?
   b. Is there a gatekeeper and if so, what role does that person play?
   c. Is this your site, or an external site?
   d. Invasion of privacy? Public versus private information?

2. **Researcher’s relationship with participants**
   a. Existing or new
   b. Role conflict—to close, exploitation?
   c. Misinterpretation/misunderstanding by participants
   d. Power differentials
Ethical Issues
Informed Consent

1. Participant understanding of “research”
2. From whom?
3. Method
4. Emergent nature of study
Ethical Issues
Privacy & Confidentiality

**Privacy:** Access to the person and/or their information. This is everything leading up to and during the act of data collection:

**Confidentiality:** The protection of specimens/data once collected.
Ethical Issues
Privacy & Confidentiality

1. Participant understanding of “research”
2. Access to data & protection of raw data
3. Making promises that cannot be kept (subpoena, mandatory reporting)
4. Identifiers in field notes & recordings
5. Use of quotations
6. Balancing confidentiality when reporting detailed information
7. Small “samples,” unique individuals, & demographics
8. Pseudonyms vs. identifying participants in reporting
9. Identifying study sites
10. Making the private public
11. Responsible data sharing – (agency requirements, consent)
12. Re-identifiability
Ethical Issues
Online Spaces

1. Public space versus private space
2. Obtaining permission & gaining entry
3. Authenticity; who is the person on the other end?
4. Integrity of data
5. Consent
6. Privacy/Confidentiality
7. “Interpreting” emotion/text/words/jargon
8. Ability to intervene with participants during study

Im & Chee, 2006; Convery & Cox, 2012; Gerber, Abrams, Curwood & Magnifico, 2017
Ethical Issues
Risks
• They can be real, and serious
• Largely tied to breaches of confidentiality
• Can be psychological, social, financial, criminal, cultural
• Can apply to an individual or a group (group harm)
Ethical Issues
Strategies for Researchers to Minimize Harm

• Be reflective throughout study
• Do not make promises that cannot be kept
• Identify potential issues and think about contingency plans
• Ensure you explain how you will minimize participant confusion about research & role conflicts--Informed consent
• Set boundaries for data collection
Ethical Issues
Strategies for Researchers to Minimize Harm

• Consider different requirements for consent for different levels of participation
• Use one-on-one methods for sensitive data collection
• Be realistic about impacts of making the private public
• Adhere to The Belmont Report principles & the tenets of the Golden Rule
• When deemed necessary, make consent as an ongoing, active process
Attribution & Thank You

• For borrowed content
  • Julie Simpson, Director, Research Integrity Services, University of New Hampshire
  • Julie Slayton, Director, Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS), University of Southern California

• For the invitation to present to you today
  • Casey Jackson
Thank You!

Questions?
Resources - Journals

1. Qualitative Research ~ http://qrj.sagepub.com/
2. The Qualitative Report ~ http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/web.html
4. Qualitative Health Research ~ http://www.sagepub.com/journalsProdDesc.nav?prodId=Journal200926
References


Popay, J., Rogers, A., & Williams, G. (1998). Rationale and standards for the systematic review of qualitative literature in health services research. *Qualitative Health Research, 8*(3),341–51.