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Klinik für Forensiche Psychiatrie, February 3rd

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What is Qualitative Research?

Dr Jack Tomlin

Klinik für Forensiche Psychiatrie, February 3rd

What do we typically think of when we think about qualitative research? A brainstorm

This is Mr Smith, he's head of our Qualitative Department.

Contents

- Key features of qualitative research
- Some history
- Some philosophy
- The role of interpretation
- Methodology
- Methods
- Sampling
- Assessing quality

Defining Qualitative Research

- Qualitative methods involve:

- “[…] the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or observation. [They are] used in the exploration of meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals themselves” (Malterud, 2001: 483).

Some Examples

- To what extent does self-confidence mediate the relationship between symptom severity and treatment/recovery?
- What are the barriers and enablers to implementing a therapy dog into a forensic clinic?
- How do doctors give bad news to patients?
- Does intervention A or treatment as usual (TAU) improve patient quality of life more?
- How does intervention A improve patients' quality of life?

Some Examples

- To what extent does self-confidence mediate the relationship between symptom severity and treatment/recovery? QUANT
- What are the barriers and enablers to implementing a therapy dog into a forensic clinic? QUAL
- How do doctors give bad news to patients? QUAL
- Does intervention A or treatment as usual (TAU) improve patient quality of life more? QUANT
- How does intervention A improve patients' quality of life? QUAL (quant)

General Features

- Individuals
- Rich, thick data
- Non-experimental
- Exploratory
- Theory construction

- Concept development
- Attitudes, beliefs, motivations
- Non-generalizable (?)

Qualitative vs Quantitative

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Approach	Inductive	Deductive
Goal	Depth, local meanings, generate hypotheses	Breadth, generalization, test hypotheses
Setting	Natural	(Quasi) Experimental
Sampling	Purposeful	Probabilistic
Data	Words, images; narrow but rich	Numbers; shallow but broad
Data Analysis	Iterative interpretation	Statistical tests, models
Values	Personal involvement and partiality (subjectivity, reflexivity)	Detachment and impartiality (objectivity)

(Hancock et al. 2007)

Some History

- 400BC – Socrates
- 1800s – Social sciences and positivist methods (August Comte ‘sociologie’)
- Fin de siècle – Freud – case study, interviews and observation
- Early/mid 20th Century – Ethnographies, ‘going native’
- 1960s – Quals grew in scientific legitimacy as they gained philosophical legitimacy
  - Post-positivism / symbolic interactionism / reflecting social changes
- 1990s – increased use of mixed methods and participatory action research (patient involvement)

Some Philosophy

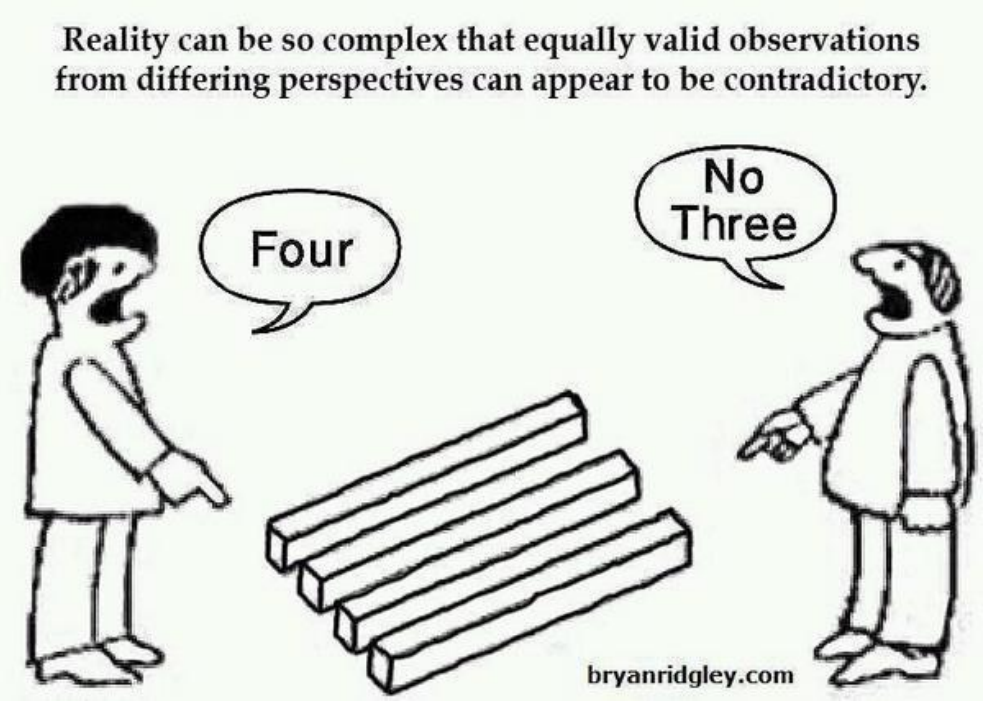
- Ontology
  - What exists in the world? The nature of reality
  - Materialism, **idealism** and **dualism** (Benton & Craib, 2010)
- Epistemology
  - How can we understand the world? What is possible for us to know?
  - **Interpretivism** and positivism (Benton & Craib, 2010)
    - (qualitative and quantitative)
- Interpreting something that interprets you!
  - Knowledge is constructed between people (inc. research subject)

Constructivism / Symbolic Interactionism

- ‘*Social reality consists of the “cultural objects and social institutions into which we are all born, within which we have to find our bearings, and with which we have to come to terms. From the outside, we, the actors on the social scene, experience the world we live in as a world both of nature and of culture, not as private but an intersubjective one [...]”* (Schutz, 1962: 236, quoted in Blaikie, 2007).
- Example ‚Courage‘ (‚Mut‘)
  - Child = stealing a cookie
  - Undergraduate student = presenting project in front of class
  - Refugee = leaving family behind
  - Same word, different understanding

Interpretation is key!

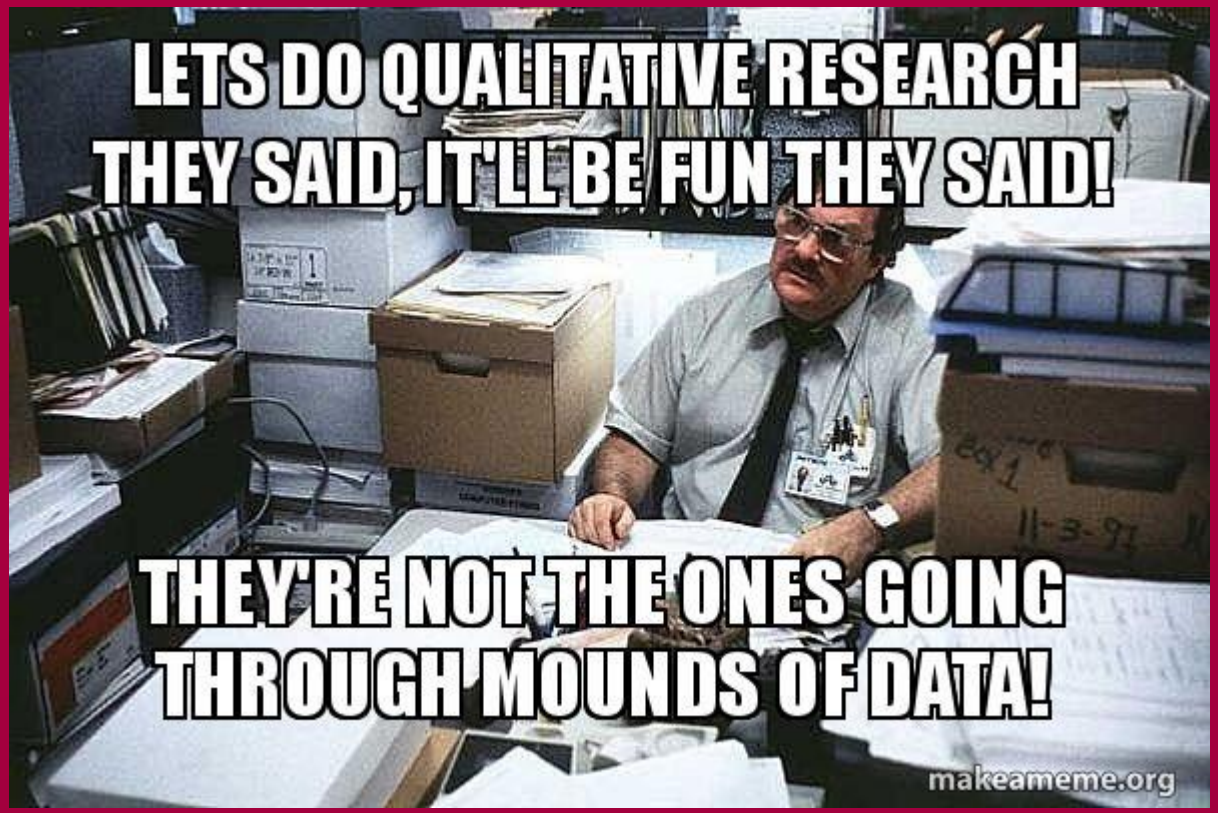
- How to interpret and report interpretations in a scientific way?
- How do we choose an appropriate study design?
- Sampling – who and how many?
- Validity and reliability?
- Reflexivity?



So how do we do qualitative research?

- Methodology:
  - Your research design
  - Examples
    - Ethnography, case study, grounded theory, IPA, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, content analysis & narrative analysis
- Methods:
  - The specific things you will do
  - Examples
    - Interviews, focus groups, observation, collecting documentation, collecting narratives, & open-ended questions in surveys

Methodology



Ethnography

- Aims
  - Describe peoples or culture
- Setting
  - Areas, peoples, groups, clubs, teams, wards or hospitals
- Data collection
  - Formal and informal interviews
  - Note-taking
  - Observation and participation
  - Live in setting
- Strengths and weaknesses
  - Immersive, rich data
  - Become friendly to subjects
  - Cultural definitions do not always translate
  - Time consuming / resource-heavy
  - Going native?

Grounded Theory

- Key features
  - Aims to develop theory
  - Uses interview methods
  - Assumes little to no prior knowledge of subject
  - Inductive
  - Phenomenological
- Data analysis
  - Constant comparative analysis
- Example
  - Stages of grief – Denial, anger, acceptance and resolution
  - Helps to develop a theory of grief through exploring others' experiences of loss and then help guide others through process
- Strengths and weaknesses
  - Good for theory development
  - Not generalizable outside of sample

Conversation Analysis

- Key features
  - Aims to understand the way people communicate
  - Not what people say to each other, but how
  - Explores how power dynamics, relationships, purpose shape conversation structure
  - Interviews, naturally-occuring conversations
- Data collection and analysis
  - Transcription VERY detailed. Record pauses, ‚erms‘ and ‚uh-huhs‘, turn-taking, inflections
- Examples
  - How doctors give bad news, how job interviews are structured, how powerful people interact with weaker partners
- Strengths and weaknesses
  - Rich, deep analysis
  - Time consuming

Discourse Analysis

- Aims to understand how texts present a world view, or how an argument is made
- Assumes text and talk are social practices
- Data include interviews, policy documents, newspaper articles, political manifestos
- Examples
  - Are forensic patients: mentally ill criminals, individuals suffering from mental distress, criminal justice-involved persons, patients
  - People may say they eat a bar of chocolate everyday but:
    - Do they describe themselves as helpless chocoholics or as individuals with the abilities to control the amount we eat?
- Strengths and weaknesses
  - Can critically reveal biases in how public discourses are framed
  - Data is limited to the texts available (censorship)

Others

- Content analysis
  - Counting how many times a certain theme or topic appears in an interview
- Case study
  - Rich, in-depth focus on single ‘case’ over time. E.g. follow patient through care pathway
- Narrative analysis
  - Investigate interviewee‘s accounts as if they are stories. Look for: chronological order of events; characters; goodies and baddies; tension or twists in narratives
- Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)
  - Investigate in-depth respondents‘ experiences of an event and how they experienced that. See interview as a process of co-constructing knowledge – not an objective account of what happened

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Methods

Interviews

Before an Interview

- Before
  - Information sheets and consent forms, rapport, comfortable location, visit location before, plenty of time, audio recorder, think through content, water
  - Power dynamics, practice first, know who to talk to if things go wrong

During an Interview

- ‚A conversation with a purpose' (Kvale, 2008)
- Knowledge is constructed together (Silverman, 2015)
- *"[…] accounts are not simply representations of the world; they are part of the world they describe*" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 107, quoted in Silverman, 2015).
- (Semi-) Structured or Open
  - Dualist ontology
  - Interpretivist epistemology
- Questions
  - Open-ended, neutral, topic guide, follow up, feedback
- Topic guide
  - Ordered, clouds/themes
- Take notes

After an Interview

- After
  - Ask if they have questions, feedback on next steps, record the whole time!
  - Transcribe with pedal, software, 6:1 ratio, storage and data protection (Hancock et al. 2007)
  - Anonymise or pseudonzmise

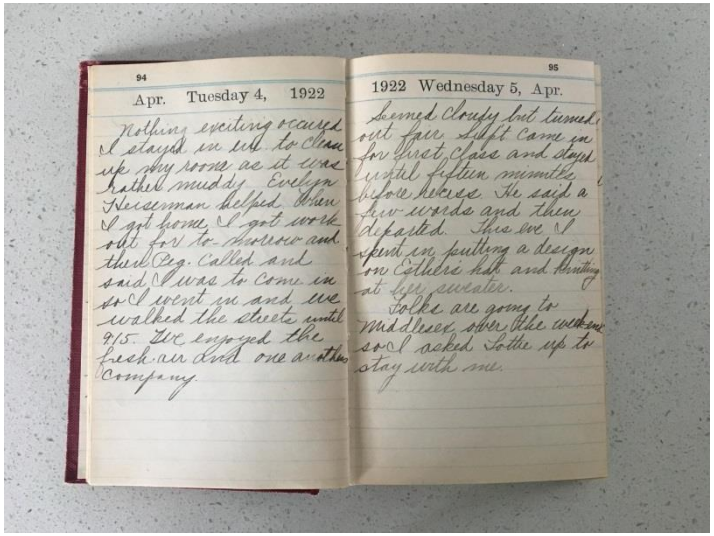
Focus Groups

Focus Groups

- Marketing agencies in 1960s
- A focus group is a group interview where the interviewer leads but allows *"[…]participants [to] share and respond to comments, ideas and perceptions"* generated amongst themselves (Litosseliti, 2003: 1).
- Conversation more co-constructed than interviews. Dependent on characters, political views, moods, reasons for participation of the day (Barbour, 2008)
- Better for opinions than emotions/experiences
- Pros
  - Ellicit range of ideas, test and contrast opinions, see how much agreement there is, less time-consuming than individual interviews
- Cons
  - Dominant voices, minimised accounts, mixing patients, scheduling, group think

Photovoice / Diary / Videos

- Use as prompts for interviews
- Code videos or text for certain themes
- Ethical issues in forensic settings



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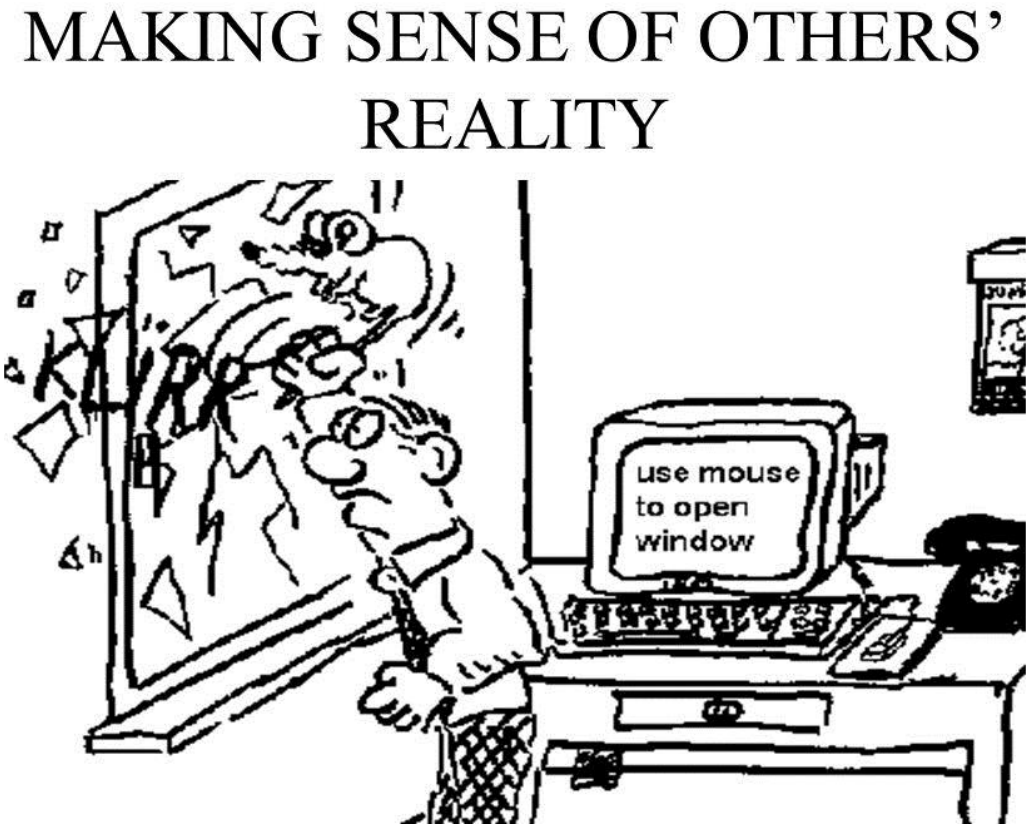
Data Analysis



Data Analysis

- Most common – Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006)
- About reducing a lot of data into a small amount of salient points/themes
- Interview transcripts are coded line-by-line for content
- Inductive – deductive
  - Theory-driven or theory-(free)
- Use software!
  - Nvivo
  - Atlas.ti
- Presentation clearly connects themes to data

Steps in Thematic Analysis

- "[…] method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail" (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 79).

Table 1: Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

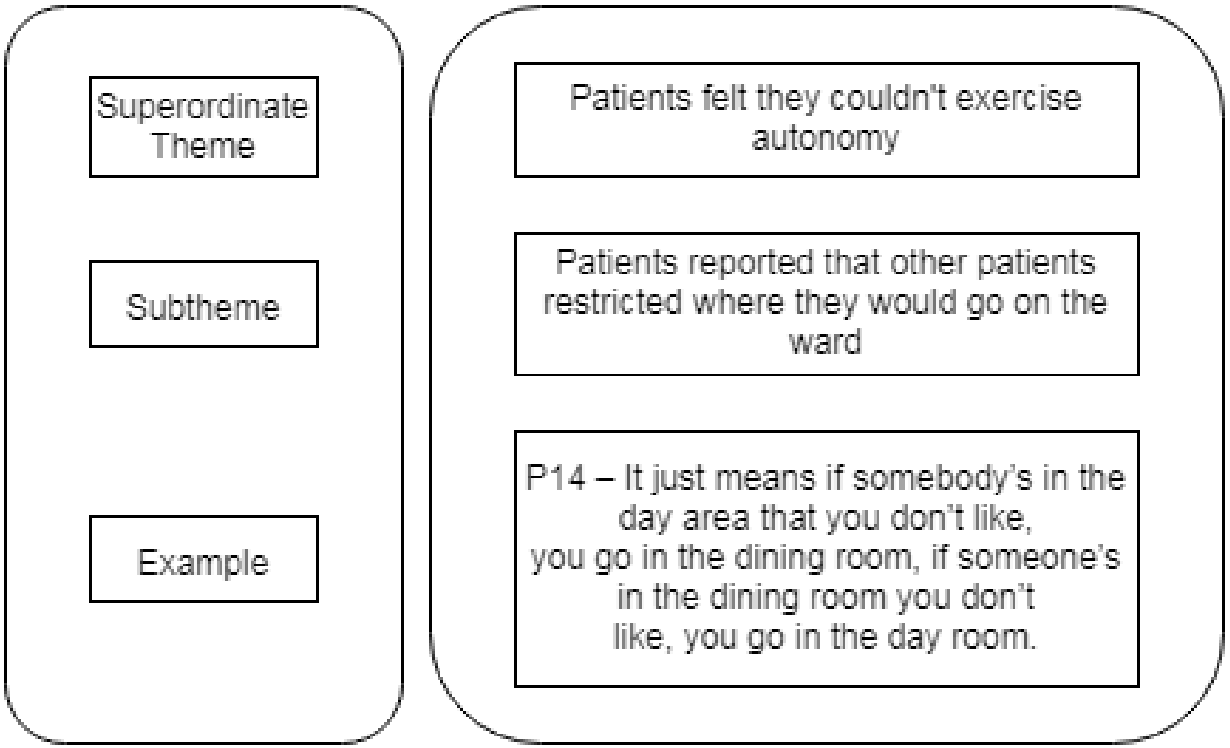
How to Present Results

- Presentation should be like an argument; a story used to convince your reader that your interpretation of the data makes sense
- Argumentation Theory (Attride-Stirling, 2001)

- 1. Main point	2. Why this is the case	3. Example
- 1. Superordinate theme	2. Sub-theme	3. Code

- Excerpts
  - Be clear, representative of theme, examples from all participants

How to present results



AIM: …'to understand the qualities of service that were identified as being important and meaningful to recovery in this forensic hospital.'

1 = Superordinate theme / main point
2 = Subordinate theme / why this is the case
3 = Data / evidence

Involvement 1

The participants' narratives about recovery focused on the ways in which joining in psychosocial programmes in the hospital provided structure, kept them busy and gave them a sense of accomplishment: 2 2 2

[Occupational therapy has] given me some structure 3 to my day. I like to be productive, 3 I like to accomplish things, and it's allowed me to do that. I've done the [school] courses, I've worked on [learning languages] and … cooking skills, I've played music, and it's all given me a sort of a balanced, integrated approach to life recovery (#1). 3

- Nijdam-Jones, A., Livingston, J. D., Verdun-Jones, S., & Brink, J. (2015). Using social bonding theory to examine 'recovery'in a forensic mental health hospital: A qualitative study. Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health, 25(3), 157-168.

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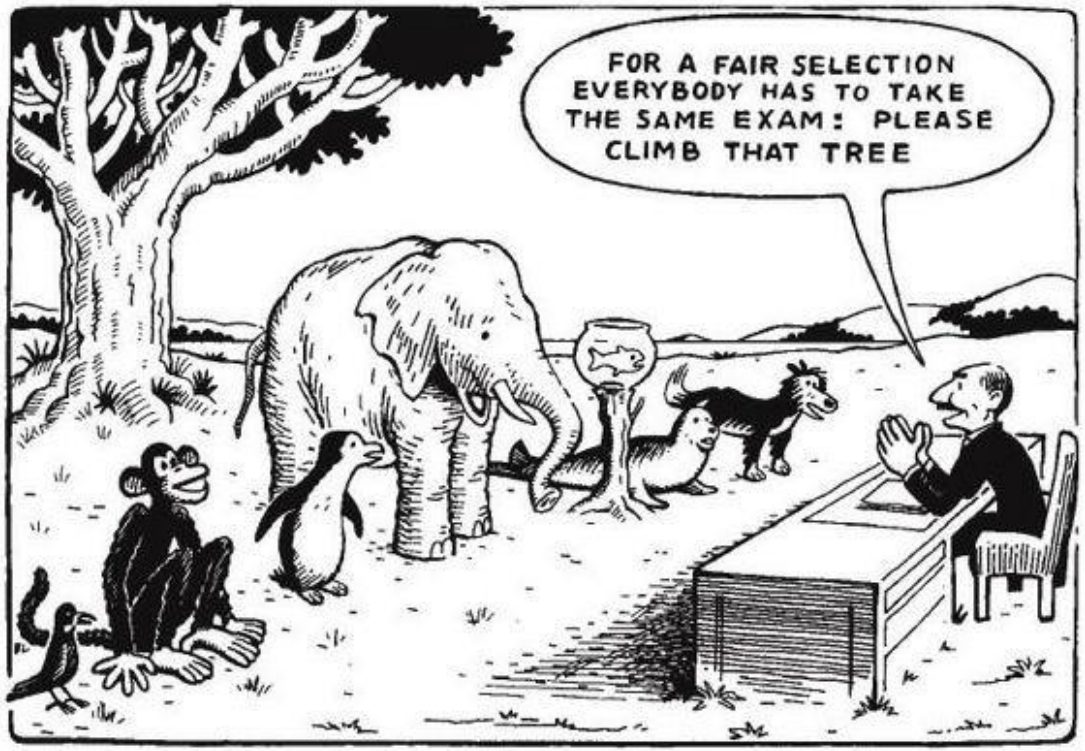
Frequently Asked Questions

Who to Involve / How to Recruit?

- Research Question Key!
- Non-random
- Theory-based
  - Theoretical
  - Convenience
  - Typical case
  - Critical case
  - Maximum variation
  - Intensity
  - Snowballing
  - (Hancock et al. 2007)



How many people to recruit/interview?

- How many participants to recruit
  - Research question is Key!
  - Think about methodology and method
  - Ethnography = whole communities!
  - Semi-structured interviewing = approx. 20
  - IPA = approx. 5
  - Data saturation
    - When new interviews do not introduce new themes
    - (Ness and Fusch, 2015)

What is Quality in Qualitative Research?

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Parents' information and support needs when their child is diagnosed with type 1 diabetes: a qualitative study

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Keywords: parents' experiences, pediatric diabetes, qualitative research, type 1 diabetes

Abstract

Aim and objective The aim of this study was to describe and explore parents' information and support needs when their child is diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, including their views about the timing and chronology of current support provision. Our objective was to identify ways in which parents could be better supported in the future.

Design and participants Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 54 parents of children with type 1 diabetes in four paediatric diabetes clinics in Scotland. Data were analysed using an inductive, thematic approach.

Findings Parents described needing more reassurance after their child was diagnosed before being given complex information about diabetes management, so they would be better placed psychologically and emotionally to absorb this information. Parents also highlighted a need for more emotional and practical support from health professionals when they first began to implement diabetes regimens at home, tailored to their personal and domestic circumstances. However, some felt unable to ask for help or believed that health professionals were unable to offer empathetic support. Whilst some parents highlighted a need for support delivered by peer parents, others who had received peer support conveyed ambivalent views about the input and advice they had received.

Conclusions Our findings suggest that professionals should consider the timing and chronology of support provision to ensure that parents' emotional and informational needs are addressed when their child is diagnosed and that practical advice and further emotional support are provided thereafter, which takes account of their day-to-day experiences of caring for their child.

Quality in Qualitative research?

- Validity, reliability and generalizability? Quantitative standards?
- A framework:
  - Triangulation
  - Respondent validation
  - Clear exposition of methods of data collection and analysis
  - Reflexivity
  - Attention to negative cases
  - Fair dealing
  - Relevance
  - (Mays and Pope, 2000)
  - Data saturation
  - Inter-rater reliability in coding

Conclusion

- Qualitative methods need:
  - Philosophical background
  - Methodology that guides study design
  - Methods that are appropriate and relevant to your research question
- Qualitative research involves:
  - Critical self-reflection / reflexivity
  - Lots of time and effort
  - Theory (when sampling or developing themes)
- Qualitative methods offer:
  - Rich data on culture, emotion, experience, belief, opinion
  - A method to build theory
  - Can go more in-depth than quantitative methods
  - Can complement quants
- Qualitative methods help us ask why things are the way they are

Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit.

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