

A “How To” Guide for Qualitative Analysis: Use, Interpretation, Successful Implementation

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Steps to Perform a Rigorous Qualitative Study

1. Identify and Define the Problem/Research Question
 - a. ensure that the nature of the question lends itself well to a qualitative approach - i.e. addresses how or why and event or behavior occurs
2. Conduct a literature search
 - a. identifies what is currently known about a topic, can help identify a theoretical framework
3. Identify or create a theoretical framework
 - a. a good basic review is Schumacher et al, Academic Medicine, 2013
4. Select a qualitative design aligned with your research question
 - a. case study, ethnography, grounded theory*, historiography, phenomenology*, action research
5. Select the type of data you will be collecting
 - a. interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, free response surveys
 - b. Define your study group
6. Obtain IRB approval
7. Collect data and perform analysis
 - a. techniques include thematic analysis, framework analysis, content analysis, analysis of frequency
8. Demonstrate methodological rigor
 - a. provide evidence of validity and reliability (credibility)
 - i. triangulation, member checking, representativeness of sample, interrater reliability, demonstration of saturation
9. Create your theory/hypothesis/argument
10. Write manuscript to disseminate results

Select Resources

1. Kuper A, Reeves S, Levinson W. An introduction to reading and appraising qualitative research. *BMJ* 2008;337:404-407.
2. Lingard L, Albert M, Levinson W. Grounded theory, mixed methods, and action research. *BMJ* 2008; 337:459-461. (Basics of approach)
3. Reeves S, Kuper A, Hodges BD. Qualitative research methodologies: ethnography. *BMJ* 2008;337:512
4. Sullivan GM, Sargeant J. Qualities of Qualitative Research: Part I. *J Grad Med Educ* 2011;3:449-452. (Succinct description of how & why)
5. Sargeant J. Qualitative Research Part II: Participants, Analysis, and Quality Assurance. *J Grad Med Educ* 2012;1:1-3. (Succinct review of credibility/validity)
6. Turgeon J. Appraising qualitative research articles in medicine and medical education. *Med Teach*. 2005;227:71-5.
7. O'Brien BC, Harris IB, Beckman TJ, Reed DA, & Cook DA. Standards for reporting qualitative research: a synthesis of recommendations. *Academic Medicine* 2014. 89(9), 1245-1251.
8. Chan TM, Ting DK, Hall AK, Murnaghan A, Thoma B, McEwen J, Yarris LM. A writer's guide to education scholarship: qualitative education scholarship (part 2). *Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine*. 2017 May:1-9.
9. Schneider NC, Coates WC, Yarris LM. Taking Your Qualitative Research to the Next Level: A Guide for the Medical Educator. *AEM Education and Training*. 2017 Oct 1;1(4):368-78.
10. Castillo-Page L, Bodilly S, Bunton SA. AM last page. Understanding qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in academic medicine. *Acad Med*. 2012;87(3):386. (Useful synopsis of elements of qualitative research and methods)
11. Frambach JM, van der Vleuten CP, Durning SJ. AM last page. Quality criteria in qualitative and quantitative research. *Acad Med*. 2013 Apr;88(4):552.
12. Qualitative Research in Medical Education. Available at: https://www.med.mun.ca/opd/facdev/teaching_tips/Teaching%20Tips%20-%20Qualitative%20Research%20in%20Medical%20Education.pdf
13. JGME Qualitative Ripout Series: Access at <https://www.jgme.org/page/ripouts>
14. Schumacher et al. Developing the Master Learner: Applying Learning Theory to the Learner, the Teacher, and the Learning Environment. *Acad Med*. 2013; 88(11): 1-11. (Excellent review of common learning theories.)