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Assignment Title: Qualitative research

Course Title: Research Methods in Nursing

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Question

Qualitative research strategy is commonly called the interpretative research that rely heavily on “thick” verbal descriptions of a particular social context being studied. Explain the following concepts used in qualitative research:

1. Trustworthiness
2. Saturation of data
3. Content analysis approach
4. In-depth interview guide

ANSWERS

1 Trustworthiness: Trustworthiness or rigor of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). In each study, researchers should establish the protocols and procedures necessary for a study to be considered worthy of consideration by readers

Data trustworthiness has four key components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility; Triangulation and member checks help establish credibility and contribute to trustworthiness. Other factors include prolonged engagement with and persistent observation of research subjects. Triangulation asks the same research questions of different study participants and collects data from different sources through different methods to answer the same questions. Member checks occur

when researchers asks participants to review the data collected by interviewers and the researchers' interpretations of that data. Participants generally appreciate the member check process because it gives them a chance to verify their

statements and fill in any gaps from earlier interviews. Trust is an important aspect of the member check process.

Transferability; Transferability generalizes study findings and attempts to apply them to other situations and contexts. Researchers cannot prove definitively that outcomes based on the interpretation of the data are transferable, but they can establish that it is likely. Purposive sampling, a form of nonprobability sampling, is used to maximize specific data relative to the context in which it was collected. This differs from the aggregate information that would be the outcome in quantitative research. Purposive sampling considers the sample subjects' characteristics, which are directly related to the research questions.

Dependability; Many qualitative researchers believe that if credibility has been demonstrated, it is not necessary to also and separately demonstrate dependability. However, if a researcher permits parsing of the terms, then credibility seem more related to validity, and dependability seems more related to reliability. Sometimes data validity is assessed through the use of a data audit. A data audit can be conducted if the data set is rich so that an auditor can determine if the research situation applies to their circumstances. Without sufficient details and contextual information, this is not possible. Regardless, it is important to remember that the aim is not to generalize beyond the sample.

Confirmability; Qualitative research can be conducted to replicate earlier work, and when that is the goal, it is important for the data categories to be made internally consistent. Authors Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba stated in their 1985 book "Naturalistic Inquiry" that researchers must devise rules that describe category properties and that can, ultimately, be used to justify the inclusion of each data bit that remains assigned to the category as well as to provide a basis for later tests of replicability.

2 Saturation of data:

Saturation is a core principle used in qualitative research. It is used to determine when there is adequate data from a study to develop a robust and valid

understanding of the study phenomenon. Saturation is applied to purposive (nonprobability) samples, which are commonly used in qualitative research. Saturation is an important concept because it provides an indication of data validity and therefore is often included in criteria to assess the quality of qualitative research. Saturation has its origins in the grounded theory approach to qualitative research, where it is used to determine data adequacy for theory development; however, it is also used outside of grounded theory to justify sample sizes for qualitative studies. Data saturation refers to the point in the

research process when no new information is discovered in data analysis, and this redundancy signals to researchers that data collection may cease. Saturation means that a researcher can be reasonably assured that further data collection would yield similar results and serve to confirm emerging themes and conclusions. When researchers can claim that they have collected enough data to achieve their research purpose, they should report how, when, and to what degree they achieved data saturation.

3 Content analysis approach:

Qualitative content analysis needs to pursue a research objective that can be answered from the content of communications. It is, in this sense, communications-centric. The research problem should be specific enough to inform the type of communication appropriate to the investigation (e.g., a particular set of speeches by a political leader, printed news media in general or, comparisons across different media) as well as the appropriate unit for analysis within the chosen media (e.g., particular sections of a speech, entire newspaper edition, advertisements, segments of TV news). In other words, the research problem needs to be defined sufficiently to allow the researcher to locate suitable sources of communication. The researchers need to familiarize themselves with the determinate universe, including both context and process for the creation of the communications. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within some given qualitative data (i.e. text). Using content analysis, researchers can quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such certain words, themes, or concepts. Researchers can then make inferences about the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of surrounding the text.

Sources of data could be from interviews, open-ended questions, field research notes, conversations, or literally any occurrence of communicative language (for example, books, essays, discussions, newspaper headlines, speeches, media, historical documents). A single study may analyze various forms of text in its analysis. To analyze the text using content analysis, the text must be coded, or broken down, into manageable code categories for analysis (i.e. “codes”). Once the text is coded into code categories, the codes can then be further categorized into “code categories” to summarize data even further.

Three different definition of content analysis are provided below.

Definition 1: “Any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages.” (from Holsti, 1968)

Definition 2: “An interpretive and naturalistic approach. It is both observational and narrative in nature and relies less on the experimental elements normally associated with scientific research (reliability, validity and generalizability) (from Ethnography, Observational Research, and Narrative Inquiry, 1994-2012).

Definition 3: “A research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.” (from Berelson, 1952)

4 In-depth interview guide:

A qualitative data collection method, in-depth interviews offer the opportunity to capture rich, descriptive data about how people think and behave, and unfolding complex processes. They can be used as a standalone research method or as part of a multi method design, depending on the needs of the research. In depth interviews are normally carried out face to face so that a rapport can be created with respondents. Body language is also used to add a high level of understanding to the answers. Telephones can also be used by a skilled researcher with little loss of data and at a tenth of the cost. The style of the interview depends on the interviewer. Successful in-depth interviewers listen rather than talk. They have a clear line of questioning and use body language to build rapport. The interview is more of a guided conversation than a staccato question and answer session. The interview is conducted using a discussion guide which facilitates the flushing out of the

respondent's views through open ended questioning. Projective techniques can be incorporated into the interview too.