

Introduction to Qualitative Research

Rachel Boak
Research Fellow
PHCRED Coordinator
Greater Green Triangle
University Department of Rural Health



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

References

- Ritchie J (2001) Chapter 9: *Not everything can be reduced to numbers* in *Health Research*. Edited by Berglund C. Oxford University Press. Melbourne.
- Patton MQ (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Third edition. Sage Publications. United States
- “Online Qualitative Data Analysis”:
<http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/index.php>

References, continued

- Berglund C (2001) *Health Research*. Oxford University Press. Melbourne.
- Bowling A (2006) *Research Methods in Health: Investigating health and health services*. Open University Press. United Kingdom.
- Greenhalgh T (2006) in *How to read a paper: the basics of evidence-based Medicine*. 3rd edition. Blackwell publishing. London.

In particular: Chapter 11: Papers that go beyond numbers (qualitative research)



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

References, continued

- The NSW Primary Health Care Research Capacity Building Program website:
<http://www.nswphc.unsw.edu.au/events.htm>

PPT: “*Introduction to qualitative research*” Gaynor Heading.
Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research.

[http://www.nswphc.unsw.edu.au/pdf/ShortCResMetRuralSep06/PPTs/Introductionto qualitative research GaynorHeading.pdf](http://www.nswphc.unsw.edu.au/pdf/ShortCResMetRuralSep06/PPTs/Introductionto%20qualitativeresearch%20GaynorHeading.pdf)

Qualitative Inquiry, what do qualitative researchers do?

Psychometricians try to measure *it*.

Experimentalists try to control *it*.

Interviewers ask questions about *it*.

Observers watch *it*.

Participant observers do *it*.

Statisticians count *it*.

Evaluators value *it*.

Qualitative inquirers find meaning in *it*.

From Halcolm's *Inquiry Parables*, cited in Patton MQ (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Third edition. Sage Publications. United States

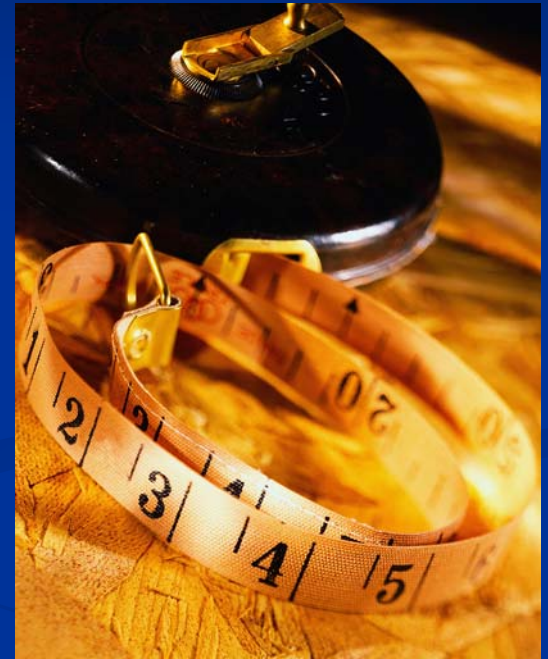
What is qualitative research?

- Investigation
- Deeper understanding
- Finding meaning
- Investigating the subtle interplay of a number of factors



What qualitative research is not...

- Quantitative research



Qualitative Research

- Experiences
- Understanding
- Behaviours

- Politics
- Sensitive or high risk issues
- Non-mainstream ideas or behaviours
- Social and cultural influences



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

Qualitative Research Output

- New theories
- Description of previously unexplained situations or behaviour
- Narratives about experiences
- New ways to comprehend events or behaviours
- New ideas
- Understanding



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

Philosophical approaches to research

Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

- “Paradigm”
- Quantitative philosophical approach
 - “dominant positivist paradigm”
- Qualitative philosophical approaches
 - Phenomenology
 - Ethnography
 - Grounded theory process
 - Feminism
 - Critical social theory

“Validity and Reliability”

Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

- Triangulation
 - Data
 - Investigator
 - Theory
 - Methodological
- Member-checking
- Peer involvement
- Documenting personal reflections on the research process “Reflexivity”



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

Selection and Sampling

Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

- Quantitative: “probability sampling”
- Qualitative: “purposive sampling”
 - Theoretical sampling
 - Convenience or opportunistic sampling
 - Snowball sampling



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

Methodologies

Action research

Ethnomethodology

Memory work

Analytic Induction

Field Research

Mixed methods

Biographical research

Framework analysis

Narrative analysis

Conversation Analysis

Grounded theory

Objective hermeneutics

Constructionism

Hermeneutics

Phenomenography

Comparative analysis

Interpretative
Phenomenological
Analysis (IPA)

Phenomenology

Discourse analysis

Life History

Symbolic interactionism

Ethnography

Life-world analysis

Template analysis

Ref: <http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/index.php>

Qualitative Research Methods

■ Obtrusive



■ Unobtrusive



Qualitative Methodologies

Ref: Patton MQ (2002):

1. Interviews
 - Individual, in-depth
 - Focus group discussion
2. Observations
3. Documents



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

In-depth interviewing



Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

- Individuals
- Unstructured, semi-structured, interactive
 1. Standardised open-ended interview
 2. General interview guide approach
 3. Informal conversational interview

Focus group interviews

Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

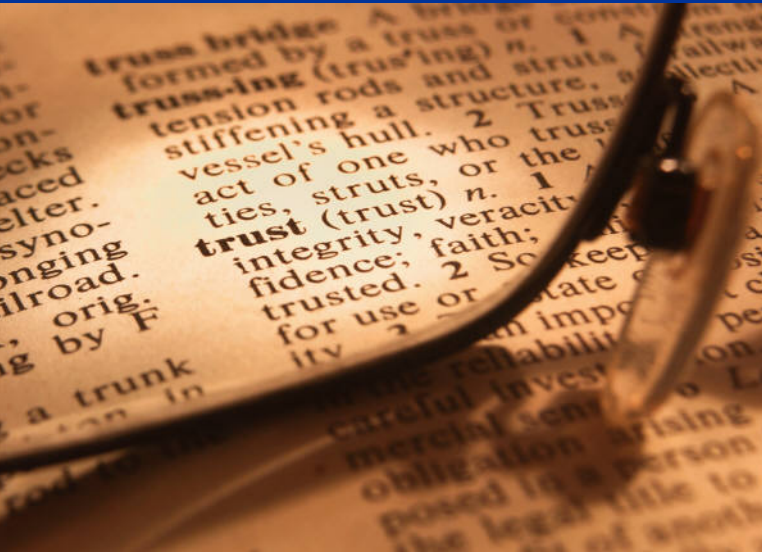
- Social interaction to build on the comments of others
- Group as a whole is the 'unit of research'
- Negative case analysis
- Criteria:
 - Justification for this method
 - Logical sampling structure
 - Moderator
 - Record keeper
 - Group discussion balance
 - Audit trail



Document analysis

Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

- Content analysis
- Discourse analysis
- Historical analysis
- Analysis of pictorial material



Participant observation & Participatory Action Research (PAR)



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE

University Dept. of Rural Health

Data Analysis



Data Analysis

Ref: Ritchie J (2001)

- Structured approaches to analysis
 - Data reduction
 - Data display
 - Drawing conclusions
- Creative approaches to analysis
- Influence of underlying philosophical orientation



GREATER HEALTH

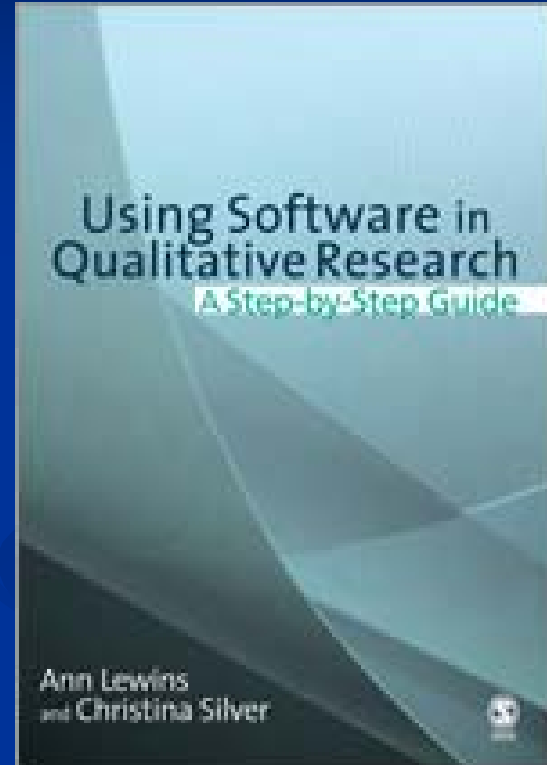
GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

Computer Assisted Data Analysis

- NUD*IST
- NVivo
- MAXqda
- Atlas.ti
- HyperResearch
- Transana

Resources:

<http://onlineqda.hud.ac.uk/>



More resources

- Kellehear A (1993) *The unobtrusive researcher: A guide to methods*. Allen & Unwin. Australia
- Flick U (2002) *An introduction to Qualitative Research*. Second edition. Sage Publications. United Kingdom.



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE
University Dept. of Rural Health

Contact

- PHCRED Coordinators
- Rachel Boak

phcred@greaterhealth.org



GREATER HEALTH

GREATER GREEN TRIANGLE

University Dept. of Rural Health

