**Transcript**

June 25, 2025, 5:07PM

 **Alice Huguet** 0:03  
So the mixed methods piece I am still exploring like how AI would fit into that. I'm not quite as sure, but I think that there's gotta be.  
Some ways that AI might be able to help us better.  
Mesh the two sides of our studies together.  
They still are most often kind of operating as two separate studies, with some bridges between them at different points in in the work.

 **Todd Helmus** 0:24  
What do you mean? Two separate studies?

 **Alice Huguet** 0:26  
Like we often will have like an implementation study and an impact study, at least in education.  
So we're looking.  
There's usually like API Co Pi who's leading, like the interviews observations, the qualitative data collection.  
Then we have somebody else kind of leading the quantitative side.  
And have a lot of opportunities to talk with one another, but I'm not quite sure yet how to leverage AI to make that more.  
Less parallel and more like a a Helix, more like a A enjoined throughout the process.  
Like, how could we bring AI into make the mixed methods truly mixed?  
Instead of what what people might call like multiple methods.

 **Todd Helmus** 1:03  
Yeah. Can we just like, can you just explain to me like mixed methods is a pretty broad term?

 **Alice Huguet** 1:05  
Yeah.  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 1:09  
Like I get the qualitative part.  
I know.  
I know that I I have an understanding on that a little bit, but can you like start off like what is what is the mixed methods part involved?

 **Alice Huguet** 1:15  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 1:18  
Like what does that mean mixed methods?

 **Alice Huguet** 1:19  
It depends.  
Yeah. Well, it really depends.  
We don't have like one approach to mix methods, but there are a lot of different designs, so you could do parallel mixed methods where the design really is like we're just gonna kind of go our separate path clash qualitative data, collect quantitative data at the end of this.  
We'll kind of discuss how it fits together.  
So that's one approach.  
There's more embedded designs where there are more like set time points at which you wanna check in with one another.  
So if I'm designing a mixed method study and I'm reading.  
Side of it, which would be where my work typically falls.  
Having regular meetings with whoever's leading the quantitative side to talk about like what we're learning along the way, so that might inform their own tool development and vice versa, so that it's speaking more to one another.  
There's also like a subsequent designed mix method, so maybe you'd have a qualitative study actually coming 1st and then a follow up to dig deeper using like a survey or something more quantitative in nature.  
Or you could flip that, which is what people often do is they'll have some findings that are quantitative.  
In nature, they'll follow it up with some, like interviews to kind of dig into better understanding what the patterns they see on the quantitative side actually mean.  
So we found these patterns in our outcomes about like student achievement and now we're we wanna know why that looks the way that it does.  
So maybe we'll talk to a handful of teachers and district representatives and people to like, learn more about the patterns that we found in the quantitative side.  
There's a lot of different ways to do it.  
There's not.  
Kind of one.  
Set example.

 **Todd Helmus** 2:53  
So it's basically so, but it's it's not like mixed methods could also be like. Well, we're doing a.

 **Alice Huguet** 2:55  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 3:01  
I mean, what I'm hearing, it sounds like it's not just like some studies that have three methods that are sort of disconnected with each other, right?  
It sounds like there's this interplay of methods that happens.  
That.

 **Alice Huguet** 3:15  
Ideally, I think there's. Yeah. I mean, I think the experts who study or kind of like scholars of mixed methods would say it's better if there's much more interplay.  
But if you just have multiple methods that aren't necessarily interacting at very frequently, but rather they're kind of coming together in a final report that still we're still calling that mixed method and like there's not necessarily anything wrong with that, you just might not be.  
Leveraging what you can learn from each of the different methods.

 **Todd Helmus** 3:41  
I mean, that's most of the studies that we're in, right?  
The majority of the studies that ran, I think our our data showed like there's 1.41.6 methods used per study.

 **Alice Huguet** 3:44  
Yeah.  
Yeah, that's interesting.  
I really want to look at your data.  
I find that very interesting.  
I do think that the majority of our studies, that's the most, most of the studies I've been on and most of them that I've read have been.  
What people might call multiple methods, but we will call it mixed methods.  
But there are a lot of different designs that you can take that would.  
Foster more interaction between the different methods that you're using to make it a little bit more coherent.  
And throughout the process, I don't know that we do that very well.  
I think that's an area that we could definitely grow in.

 **Todd Helmus** 4:27  
It's a big it's a big topic for one center. I mean, you could just do a center just on that and not and have a be a full time job rather than probably what it is for you is a very tiny part time job.

 **Alice Huguet** 4:32  
There should be a center just on that.  
Yeah, it's a very small part of of the work, but I do think we could do that better. And I actually think there might be space there like this might not be the low hanging fruit and how we could use AI. But I think there might be space.  
There for using AI to help us identify.  
Points in time in which our studies can talk to one another, like if I'm doing 1 research project and we're using three different methods like, how can we use an LLM to help us figure out the points in time in which we should be kind of like M.  
What we're learning.  
Like it happened in projects that I'm on because we are having regular meetings. So like if I've just done some interviews that I think might inform a survey or you know how we're interpreting outcomes data, I would be talking with my Co Pis about that. But that's how.  
That interaction becomes joined.  
It's not in.  
I don't know if it's, I don't know if it's the optimal way, so I would be curious to explore how an LLM.

 **Todd Helmus** 5:40  
I also imagine like you could like almost like directly ask an LOL some of these questions right?

 **Alice Huguet** 5:43  
Yeah.  
Yeah, yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 5:45  
Like we just did these focus groups, we did these like here are the four focus groups and now we're gonna divine design this quantitative survey to go more in depth on this. What you know what would be the sort of the key points to address.

 **Alice Huguet** 5:51  
Yeah.  
Yeah, I agree.  
I I definitely agree.  
I also think there might be something like.  
Entering a proposal into an LLM and being like, can you identify like you see the timeline here you see the different approaches we're taking.  
Can you identify like the optimal time points at which we should be coming together to talk about what we're learning to like, maximize that learning going forward? I don't know if that's too esoteric for an LLM, but they seem pretty smart at this point.

 **Todd Helmus** 6:21  
Hmm.  
I mean talking at least like having a conversation with Dulany.  
And like conversation, there was like, we can use these llm's not as like the end all be all.  
But as like Co researchers, in some ways to help us think through issues, just just for idea generation.

 **Alice Huguet** 6:46  
I'm so glad he said that.  
Mm hmm.

 **Todd Helmus** 6:52  
If nothing else, or other ways like like you mentioned, proposals about.

 **Alice Huguet** 6:53  
Yeah.  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 7:00  
You know, we've done like.  
Like we've done, like multiple proposals on various issues.

 **Alice Huguet** 7:06  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 7:06  
And if there's ways to access those different proposals, to draw insights for new proposals, I don't know.  
But there's there's a lot of fertile ground on all this for sure.

 **Alice Huguet** 7:12  
Yeah.  
So much.  
So much.  
I'm really glad Delani also said.  
Like thinking of it as a Co researcher, I feel like that.  
Like I know this is not what you're digging into, but I feel like that needs to be our messaging to Rand researchers generally is like this is you're not like giving over your analysis to this program, it's it.  
Like it?  
Like an intern on your project? Or it is a, you know, a Co researcher who can help you think through ideas.  
But I think my biggest fear associated with it is that we have.  
All different ability levels at Rand, right?  
And in terms of like technological like comfort using something like ranch at.  
And when I hear like our pH. D students talking about using it, I'm not sure that they.  
They are very.  
I don't fluent.  
I got with the technology, but I don't.  
They're not fluent yet with like the like ethical guidelines of research.  
And so then there's like people on the other end of it who've been doing research for a long time, who kind of know a lot about, like, the ethics and the processes of research.  
But they don't know how to use the tech.  
I think it's important that we are not letting people just kind of run free with it and kind of hand over the work I and I think about that especially with qualitative.

 **Todd Helmus** 8:35  
What do you think are the ethical concerns?

 **Alice Huguet** 8:35  
Analysis because.  
I mean, I think that there's a lot.

 **Todd Helmus** 8:39  
Or pitfalls?

 **Alice Huguet** 8:41  
Yeah. And I will make sure that you're invited to this, but I'm hoping to have a panel through C Cam in July or August inviting people from outside of Rand to talk about what their concerns are. I think there's a lot.  
I mean, if we are, if we're using it as.  
A.  
A colleague.  
So someone to kind of like check our coding. If I'm thinking about one specific point in the process right in the research process.  
I think that's an excellent use of it. If I have three people coding plus AI that saved me a lot of time.  
It's more efficient and it can also like place a check on what myself and my teammates are doing.  
But if I am just giving all my interviews to AI to code, I think that risk of it making meaning in ways that we.  
Maybe not checking.  
We're not comfortable with.  
I don't know that we're not looking into further.  
I think that there is a risk in that and I think.  
Just as with humans, there seems to be the potential to like reify biases in your analysis. And like, that's why, as people we.  
Are on teams and a really important part of like the qualitative analysis process is?  
Discussion with team members who might have different perspectives than you do, so I actually think in that way, like bringing AI onto the team at like at at 4th perspective perhaps is another great way to check yourselves and like the meeting that you're making from your data. But.  
Like I wouldn't have one researcher do all the coding for a project because then they're just kind of like injecting their own, meaning making their own biases into what they're finding.  
I wouldn't wanna do that with AI either.  
So I feel like that's a risk and then I'm not sure exactly where we stand in this moment with it, but I've had a lot of conversations with Becky with hspc about.  
You know like.  
Have we told our participant that their interview data might be used to adjust or improve a large language model?  
If we haven't told them that it's a death goal for us to still be using it for that purpose.  
I think there's like a lot of entry points for discussion.  
Around like the ethics of using it, but I think like qualitative work is different from quantitative work and just that it is very process oriented and it's part of like how you build a trustworthy qualitative study and through these like checks you put into place through something like.  
Called trustworthiness, right?  
And there's a lot of different ways to, like bolster trustworthiness, and that could be like checking things with the people that you've interviewed.  
With triangulating your data against other sources, doing all of these other kind of like process oriented things to show that you've done the work to help your readers feel they can trust the findings that you land on.  
And right now, AI.  
What's happening inside of it is for a lot of people, I mean, even experts.  
Like what's happening inside of it?  
Is it still to some extent like a black box?  
And I think that is the entire.  
Piece of qualitative work that qualitative scholars over decades have tried to get rid of that black box like we're not asking you to distrust what we came up with because we came up with it.  
We're telling you in our method section, like the processes that we took, the steps that we took to ensure that this is trustworthy.  
And if we were to just replace that with like I entered these into an AI model and ask people to trust it. Yeah, like it.

 **Todd Helmus** 12:09  
And it came up with these, yeah.

 **Alice Huguet** 12:11  
Just kind of takes apart.  
The entire process that we have created over time.  
Trying to try to build rigor into the process, so I'm hoping to have some people come.  
Pro AI and not nobody anti AI but people who are more cautious to just talk about like what are the guidelines that we need to set in place for qualitative method so that we can trust how it's being used.  
Like what are the things that a researcher should include in their method section when they're using AI in their analysis, like and I'm interested in that not just like within Rand, but I don't think that's a conversation we're having enough like fieldwide.

 **Todd Helmus** 12:39  
That's awesome.

 **Alice Huguet** 12:47  
Yet, but I think it really needs to happen.  
Like what are some, like, consistent guidelines that we can all agree?  
Like signify that this has been done in a quality way.  
Like we just don't.  
Really, we haven't made that agreement yet, so it's tricky.

 **Todd Helmus** 13:05  
Well, it's interesting.  
So we were just at DARPA the other day and talking with them about and so one of their thinking is this role of using AI for surveys like basically developing models of people and then having the AI model what people believe.  
And using that in lieu of your surveys is a very futuristic.

 **Alice Huguet** 13:24  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 13:29  
I don't think we're anywhere near there.

 **Alice Huguet** 13:32  
Some people are doing it.

 **Todd Helmus** 13:33  
But.

 **Alice Huguet** 13:34  
I have to. Yeah. No, I want to hear more about that.

 **Todd Helmus** 13:35  
Yeah, right.  
So.

 **Alice Huguet** 13:39  
But let me just find this one thing real quick. While as soon as you mention that.  
Sorry, because there's somebody who wants to come talk and I'm interested in having them, but I also do feel a little bit like trepidatious about it.  
We find his he has an A company called Chaif Wares that does just exactly that that you're talking about.  
And I'm interested in having him come speak at Rand.  
Because I think it is something interesting and maybe a direction we're going, but I don't want it to appear that I'm like advocating for it because I don't.  
Know enough about it yet?

 **Todd Helmus** 14:12  
Yeah.

 **Alice Huguet** 14:12  
I just put it in the chat chi squared, sorry.

 **Todd Helmus** 14:15  
OK.  
That's awesome.  
All right, I'll check that out.

 **Alice Huguet** 14:18  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 14:19  
I mean, there's. Yeah. So there's there's sort of AI mean and that's certainly an ethical I, I would feel like there's ethical minefield in that as well, even though that may be sort of where things go.

 **Alice Huguet** 14:30  
Yeah.  
Angry, and I think most of the sessions that we've had with the camera over the last year where we have somebody, some expert who's well known in Qual method comes in, I think almost every time there's a question like how do you feel about AI coding, how do?  
You feel about AI doing these pieces of the process and.  
It's interesting because I I had, I had thought more people would be, like, patently against it, but I don't think that that's the case.  
I think people.  
Want us to recognize it as like a Co researcher as a tool and not as the solution to like finding meaning in our interviews and data collection.  
Because people have biases and it's great if we can add in somebody else to, like, check those biases. But.  
It's just like kind of similar if we can just keep that perspective of it that this is not like the authority, but it is like another voice in the conversation.  
I think that it could be really beneficial.

 **Todd Helmus** 15:35  
Can you?  
Can we take a step back?  
Can you walk through the qualitative part?

 **Alice Huguet** 15:38  
Yeah.  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 15:41  
Of brand research methods and I'm just be curious to sort of walk through what what types of methods that involves.  
I just know our data set like identified like, focus groups, subject matter expert, had expert interviews and then interviews.

 **Alice Huguet** 15:55  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 16:01  
And like there are like three or four different variations of what are considered to be an interview.  
But I'd be curious to hear from you like broadly.  
Like what are the different types of qualitative methods that are are at Rand and then and then maybe we can just talk through the process of doing that to think through sort of like you know what where automation or or technology could be supportive of that process or?  
Not.

 **Alice Huguet** 16:34  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 16:34  
So.  
So anyway.

 **Alice Huguet** 16:37  
Yeah, I don't think that our reports necessarily go into a lot of depth like differentiating between types of qualitative methods, which is probably something that you're seeing in your data by kind of grouping together all interviews. But like, if we think about qualitative methods more broadly, there's like.  
Really thick types of qualitative methods, and we don't use all of them at random, but like some of them that we do use would be case studies. Some people do action research or like participant based research.

 **Todd Helmus** 17:05  
What is that?

 **Alice Huguet** 17:06  
Like participatory research?  
It's more like getting the community engaged from early on and I don't think that would necessarily show up in what what your team did, but it's kind of working with the community that you are studying with to, like, develop the questions from the beginning to help develop the.

 **Todd Helmus** 17:22  
OK.

 **Alice Huguet** 17:23  
Protocol kind of partner on the analysis.

 **Todd Helmus** 17:23  
So basically collaborate with the Community and doing the the research in a way.

 **Alice Huguet** 17:27  
Yeah. And we do have a lot of people here who do that work, but that might just show up as interviews instead of calling it like participatory methods. And mostly in, like, the health space.  
I feel like they do that work.  
And then there's case studies, which is a Rand developed method with Robert yen.  
But again, I think that would probably just show up as interviews and not necessarily show up as case studies, so.

 **Todd Helmus** 17:51  
It shows up as case studies. Case studies is like #5.

 **Alice Huguet** 17:53  
Oh, does it? Oh good.  
OK.

 **Todd Helmus** 17:55  
Something like that.

 **Alice Huguet** 17:55  
Case studies is good.  
That's great, 'cause, that's like.  
Put Rand on the map in terms of like qualitative and mixed methods I think.

 **Todd Helmus** 18:02  
So Rand designed case studies.

 **Alice Huguet** 18:05  
Well, they had one of the major thinkers in case study.  
There's like two kind of camps in case studies.  
One is umm Robert yen and one is steak and yin with a Rand researcher.  
And he studies like the way that he developed them are really more mixed methods, but they rely a lot on interviews focus groups.  
It's more of like a anything goes.  
We're gonna collect all the data that we can collect, type of an approach, and often that relies a lot on qualitative work.  
So I would say like if so, when I think about methods, I'm thinking about that high level.  
But then kind of like what are the approaches within the method that we often use and that would be like the interviews, focus groups, observations.

 **Todd Helmus** 18:47  
Yeah, in case studies like incorporate, they're basically a mixed bag of methods, right?

 **Alice Huguet** 18:47  
Some people would.  
Yeah. Yeah. It's like, whatever I can get.

 **Todd Helmus** 18:52  
I mean, you're basically looking at, you're looking at the process of three different events, so to speak.

 **Alice Huguet** 18:58  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 18:59  
And then how you derive the information about those processes is can be like. It's can be often be a bit of a hodgepodge, right?  
We're gonna do interviews.  
We're gonna do observations.

 **Alice Huguet** 19:08  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 19:08  
We're gonna do literature reviews and and from all of that, we'll derive what this process is for this particular case.

 **Alice Huguet** 19:12  
Exactly.  
Exactly. Yeah, exactly.  
So I feel like the what people come to our Center for is more asking about like those specific like data collection methods in an analytic method more so than like the umbrella methods like people aren't coming to me and asking like, how do I do a case study?  
They'll come to the center and say, like, I need some more direction about how to help people do interviews or I need more direction about how to do observation.  
So it's more like those data collection pieces that people are interested in. Then like the method writ large.  
And there's a lot of methods we don't do like.  
We don't do a lot of narrative.  
We don't do phenomenology.  
Some people might say they do grounded theory.  
I don't know if that came up in your.

 **Todd Helmus** 19:54  
What is that?

 **Alice Huguet** 19:56  
Grounded theory is like an inductive approach to research that relies on qualitative data as well as you could use other sorts as well.  
It could be a hodgepodge like case study, but it is not applying like a predetermined framework.  
It is instead like kind of letting your participants lead the way, like going in very open-ended.  
It may have come up.  
I think we've, I think in a couple of reports I've done, we've cited the use of case study, but excuse me of grounded theory.  
But it's less often, and the difference there is just more in how you do the analysis.  
You're not applying like deductive code books. Your inductively like seeing how.  
Different pieces of data fit together and then creating groupings that direction, umm. And you're trying to go in kind of open minded. Umm, which interestingly I actually think the thing that AI is most helpful for is like a grounded theory approach which is not.

 **Todd Helmus** 20:53  
In what way?

 **Alice Huguet** 20:53  
It's just interesting 'cause. It's not something we do much.  
So you probably talked with Pratik right about his tool Muse. Pratik Puri.

 **Todd Helmus** 21:01  
Not yet.

 **Alice Huguet** 21:02  
His yeah.  
So he's developed this, this qualitative analysis tool called mud.  
That he's let me kind of like play with for the last year or so.  
And I have found it really difficult to train with deductive coding.  
So if I have a code book I've already made.  
Training the tool to code based on the code book I already created is not simple.  
It like doesn't always get it right.  
There's a lot of nuance to it.  
It takes a long time, however, where it's really interesting and can see patterns across a huge amount of data that, like humans, might not be able to see.  
Is it can come up with these inductive themes?  
So if I'm asking it to create categories instead of teaching it the categories I want it to code for, it can be really insightful and see things I can't see.  
Like I have a study.  
That was, we have six years of data collection, like thousands of interviews. We've had dozens of people doing coding over all these years.  
It's really hard for us to see. Like, OK, how does this change over time?  
What are the big picture themes?  
That could be something I think AI could do really well that humans.  
It's just harder to do because.  
'Cause the information lives across so many of us because one person just can't do that much analysis by themselves.  
Whereas a tool like the one he's he's working on might be able to at some point.  
So with that one, he's got, he's shown me a lot of detailed models of how he does it and I can't say that I understand the insurance and outs, but it can come up with like, here's how ideas that people talk about, like cluster together and you can.  
Kind of give it feedback and it can sort of reclaster them.

 **Todd Helmus** 22:36  
Did you feed it like the interview transcripts?

 **Alice Huguet** 22:39  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 22:41  
And then it talks about how ideas cluster together. Interesting.

 **Alice Huguet** 22:41  
Umm.  
Yeah, yeah. And it can also do it the other way around where I've already created my code book, which a lot of the work we do at Rand is going to be deductive in that way because we're working for a client.  
So they already have their own like theory of action is how their policy works. So that gives us kind of codes that we're already working with.  
So hit tool. You can also train it to use the code book that you've already developed based on that like theory of action or conceptual framework that they have in mind.

 **Todd Helmus** 23:09  
Does it do the coding?

 **Alice Huguet** 23:11  
It can. I? It's not like it's not perfect yet, but it can do it.  
But for me it takes but it's the same thing as with a person like.

 **Todd Helmus** 23:18  
How does it?  
How does it do the coding?

 **Alice Huguet** 23:21  
Yeah, that's a good question.  
I you enter in, I don't think I can walk you through it yet because I don't actually.  
No, but he can.  
You should reach out to him.

 **Todd Helmus** 23:31  
I mean, I'll follow the petite and get more details on it, but.

 **Alice Huguet** 23:34  
Yes, it's really cool. But so they have a code book with five different codes in it, which is never the case.  
It's usually 50, but I entered these five codes with the definition and then I like set it loose and I say OK, now apply it.  
All the transcripts have entered and it'll do its best.  
And then it'll give me like, OK, given the definitions you gave me for these codes, let's say like one is like interpersonal relationships.  
It'll bring up any excerpts that it thinks fits the definition I gave for interpersonal relationships, and then I'll go through the excerpts and I'll give it a thumbs up or a thumbs down.  
And then you can like send it back to the back to the transcripts.  
Be like now that you've got my feedback, it learns.

 **Todd Helmus** 24:09  
Oh, so it learns.

 **Alice Huguet** 24:12  
And then you can also like adjust your definitions based on like what you're learning. It's getting wrong.  
You can kind of update.  
You meant it.

 **Todd Helmus** 24:19  
So it's much more agile than the large language model than the Rand LLM in the ranch at.

 **Alice Huguet** 24:21  
'S.  
Yeah, yeah. But it's also.  
It's also a tricky process that does take time, but similarly one of the one of the questions I noticed in your protocol was like, what's the most time consuming part of your method? And like it's definitely coding, but not just the coding.  
It's like training people, training your Ra's and your PA to understand what. Sometimes like this like lingo, that's very specific, that they might not have been exposed to.  
Like what did that really means?  
And there's more nuance to it.  
Like you have to do that over a long period of time.  
With these, with your staff members, with your team to all build some consensus around what actually gets coded as something. And I I know Pratik is still working on it but it still does take some time to go through that process with his his model like it would.  
With a human, it's just that once you get it coded up like once you have it trained up like then it can just do a lot of coding pretty quickly.

 **Todd Helmus** 25:22  
Interesting. So bertique's on vacation now, do you know?

 **Alice Huguet** 25:24  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 25:26  
Do you?  
Can I do you know if his that is online that I could tinker with?

 **Alice Huguet** 25:26  
Bummer.  
I think you'd have to request access from him or one of his teammates, but I'm not sure who his team members are at this point.

 **Todd Helmus** 25:38  
All right. I'll send him an e-mail. I'll just.

 **Alice Huguet** 25:40  
But it is online.

 **Todd Helmus** 25:40  
I'll send him an e-mail.

 **Alice Huguet** 25:42  
Yeah, it is online and there's actually.  
I don't own this, but he just started a team for Me's like for people who are testing it out, where they can throw up questions that they're having. It has a channel that's just called like problems, bugs and issues so that he can keep up to date.  
With.  
Like what people are finding is they're testing the beta.  
I don't know if I can invite you to it.  
I don't want it, but I can try.

 **Todd Helmus** 26:09  
OK.  
That's fine.  
I'll I'll e-mail.  
I'm sure he is.  
He'll be online sometime.  
So can I ask you what?  
Like what?  
I've always find this coding thing interesting 'cause. I've developed my own like.

 **Alice Huguet** 26:18  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 26:24  
Way of doing coding but I also feel it's a little slapdash and it's my way and it doesn't it. So I'm always curious how people do this.  
So oh, thank you.  
So when you do, when you do coding, do what programs do aside from use, do you?  
Do you typically use for that?

 **Alice Huguet** 26:41  
Yeah.  
I usually use deduce just because it is easily shared. So like teams in different places can use deduce whereas.  
Prior to coming to ran, I usually used in vivo, but it was a lot more complicated to like merge different people's coding together on a team. They have developed new things within vivo that they say it's easier to do that, but I still don't use it Ded.  
Is just like, it's cheaper.  
It's like a monthly subscription plan.  
It's provided through random all team members.  
Can like see the work that everybody else is doing at the same time.  
So it just makes it easier.

 **Todd Helmus** 27:17  
And when you do that, do you?  
Are you looking to like develop some sort of quantitative metrics on the on the from say focus group say you do 2020 interviews, are you looking to do develop some sort of quantitative like 10 out of 20 said you know had these comments and they said these?

 **Alice Huguet** 27:29  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 27:36  
Comments 15 times.  
Is it that kind of thing you're looking for, or like, how do you? So how do you use it?

 **Alice Huguet** 27:42  
I think that is what lom's could do very, very well.  
That is one of the things that I've requested from Prateek to figure out how to do it like I would like to be able to ask Muse how many teachers fed this was a problem and then it could just like tell me and pull up all the ex.  
But that's separate. I should also say that like there's a lot of.  
Who hate the idea of doing counts like I'm not one of them and I don't think that's the Rand approach, but there are a lot of qual people out.  
We don't count that taking away from the meaning making, etc.  
At Rand, I feel like all the teams I've ever been on are fine with that.  
So if we're not doing counts like let's say as you said, I might wanna say of the 15 teachers we spoke with, ten of them agreed that this was like an effective approach or something.  
I do think that's good to include if we can't get there.  
Just because of how.  
Many humans are involved in the process, like maybe not all of them. Ask the question that they were supposed to ask.  
Maybe it didn't get coded exactly the way it was supposed to be coded.  
Or maybe the response is not a clear yes or no, so you can't always say that specific number.  
We might create a range like.  
Most, like most teachers, agreed.  
And then somewhere in our methods or in a footnote, it'll say most means that it was at least 50% of teachers that we spoke with agreed with this.  
Something along those lines. I think it can strengthen arguments especially.  
Different policymakers who might be skeptical about qualitative methods and like to see something quantitative to like, I don't know.  
It gives you like a footing to hold onto and I think at Rand that it it. I haven't heard anybody push back against doing that. And I do think it's something that, like an LLM, could do a lot quicker and better and easier than humans could do.

 **Todd Helmus** 29:21  
To do that, I'm curious 'cause to do that? It seems like there there becomes a strong onus on applying sort of at least a semi structured model on the interview questions, right? To be able to know if half said one thing or another, you need to make sure.  
You ask everybody.  
That same question, right?

 **Alice Huguet** 29:38  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 29:40  
I know, and I know a lot of like.

 **Alice Huguet** 29:40  
Yeah, exactly.

 **Todd Helmus** 29:43  
Especially my exposure on the DoD side, where I think a lot of people like wing these interviews.

 **Alice Huguet** 29:49  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 29:50  
Right. It's much less structured.  
Then on the domestic side and then if that's your experience.

 **Alice Huguet** 29:54  
Yeah.  
I wonder if that's yes, that's in my experience and I've never worked on DOE, I should say. But just from talking with folks about interviews who have maybe, like, reached out to seekamp for some kind of like support in something, I have felt like it is a lot.  
Less structured for a lot of reasons and sometimes, like you can't even record the interview for, you know, reasons of sensitivity and all of these different things.  
So I think there's a lot of reasons why we don't always do that for me in education where I'm not working on anything classified, it typically is just because, like, oh, we didn't get through all the questions on the interview protocol or this person is new to the.  
Project. They didn't realize that was an important question to ask.  
They skipped it because they were trying to get to something else.  
I don't know.  
There's a lot of different reasons, or just the the truth is that a lot of people don't respond with simple yes and no's that are easy to classify into a category.  
So that also makes it complicated.

 **Todd Helmus** 30:47  
Yeah, well, also like this interview. Like, I'm not, like, going through the interview questions one by one and that that doesn't seem to bode well for doing any sort of quantitative application of the of of, of it even in a general sense.

 **Alice Huguet** 30:52  
Exactly.  
Yeah.  
Yeah.  
Although although I will say you can do, there's something called.  
This is down the road I think for ran quite a ways, but there's something called qualitative comparative analysis that tries to quantify qualitative data to identify, you know, to estimate some form of causality and it does not require like a clear yes or no.  
It doesn't require you to kind of go through a specific protocol and we've done something kind of similar to that where.  
We will kind of assign.  
A0 or A1 based on people's responses, even if it isn't like a clear.  
And I'm just using yes, no as an example, but even if it's not like a clear response that puts you in a category, we might say like is this sentiment generally positive?  
Then it's a one if the sentiment is like overall seems generally negative, then it's a zero and you go through that through a process of just like discussion with your teams.  
And then you can sort of quantify based on that, but it wouldn't be, yeah, unless you're following an interview very carefully, unless like highly structured and everybody's following it.  
And you are pushing to get clear structured responses from your participants like it can be hard to to quantify.

 **Todd Helmus** 32:12  
You know, interesting.  
So I imagine there's there'll be some very well. I'm sure there's gonna be variability in how people code these things at Rand.

 **Alice Huguet** 32:20  
Yeah.  
Yeah, for sure.

 **Todd Helmus** 32:22  
Which I think might be an interesting value of the focus groups that we do like. Like if we get people that do qualitative stuff in a room together, having them sort of share their approaches to think about.  
You know if if you were to, like, unmute like how is not that we're gonna be making recommendations to muse, but as an example.  
Like, how could that be structured to to to address the broadest array of applications of this?

 **Alice Huguet** 32:44  
Yeah.  
Yeah, I would be really interested in that. And I think it varies a lot by by division.  
How people do it just because I think there's like kind of these histories that have evolved, like in education.  
It's like very constructive. Like we're making a meaning out of this, whereas like in some other divisions, it's a lot more.  
I don't know.  
Kind of like strict.  
Application of of meaning in a different way and I think.  
Because we weren't all trained in like a policy school, some of us are trained in, like education, schools or schools of, I don't know, public health, like just the way that we do it has a different tradition behind it.  
So I think there's gonna be a lot of variation.

 **Todd Helmus** 33:34  
Yeah, it was interesting.  
Part of working at Rand, I think.  
Maybe took a few minutes on the adoption side and just get your some of your thoughts on a few issues.  
You know, what do you think?  
The biggest challenges and barriers researchers face and trying to apply AI to some of these methods.

 **Alice Huguet** 33:56  
Side I think people who aren't super comfortable with technology.  
I don't know what their motivation is right now.  
There's on that side and then I think the other barriers on the other side, people who are like overeager to use it and are not paying attention to.  
Like we talked about, kind of like what the guidelines and ethics should be and like what our agreements should be about, how it's used and how much control you give it.  
I feel like for me, that's what I think about the most, and unless you have a team, unless all of our teams are gonna include people from both ends of that spectrum, like people who.  
Have a lot of like knowledge about the rigor of the processes of like traditional methods like people who are very well versed in technology.  
Then you're gonna have teams that are kind of lopsided with people maybe going all in on tech.  
But not knowing how it fits into an accepted methodology or you'll have people who are just not using it at all because they're not comfortable with the technology. And I think that's, I don't think that's the barrier for us like thinking broadly around.

 **Todd Helmus** 34:56  
Yeah.  
How do you think randa's training people to use these AI tools that are available?

 **Alice Huguet** 35:05  
I think we need to do a lot more and I think we need to be a lot clearer about where it can be used and like what our stance is on its role. Like there's a lot of encouragement to use it right now. But I went to and.  
This is nothing against any of them. I really enjoyed this training, but there was the everyday AI training and I left there feeling.

 **Todd Helmus** 35:25  
What's it?  
What was it called?

 **Alice Huguet** 35:28  
I think it's called everyday AI.

 **Todd Helmus** 35:30  
Uh huh.

 **Alice Huguet** 35:32  
Dive biochi or biochi lett. It was really engaging.  
He's very knowledgeable.  
It was helpful, but I left thinking everybody in that room was gonna just go and.  
Enter all of their interview transcripts into AI and just see what comes out of it.  
But there was no like.

 **Todd Helmus** 35:47  
I tried that and it didn't work.

 **Alice Huguet** 35:49  
Didn't work.  
There's no conversation around like what are the HSBC approvals?  
What are the I don't know.  
Like what are the? How do you prompt it to do this?  
Like all of the different.  
I don't all the different considerations. I think we're missing from that conversation and that wasn't what that conversation was meant to be.  
It wasn't meant to be like an in detail.  
How do we apply AI here in qualitative work?  
It was just meant to be like how do we use AI everyday?  
But that's the only training that I know of so far, and it left me feeling very worried that there were some people in that room who had never used it before and weren't aware of how they could or should be using it. And.  
Left may be feeling very empowered to go.  
Yeah, just like enter everything into it.  
See what comes out of it and go from there instead of.  
I don't know having a little bit more detailed direction about applying it.  
I guess.

 **Todd Helmus** 36:42  
It's a more proactive direct training that offers a bit more details on how this gets applied and maybe provides more guidance and policy.

 **Alice Huguet** 36:43  
I think we can do better.  
Yeah. And maybe more more specialized guidance too. Like someone who's a quant analyst is not gonna care about how to use it for coding.  
So for coding in a qualitative sense, and I'm not gonna be able to, you know, make heads or tails of a conversation around this in quantitative work and how to use it like with my R or data or whatever else work so.  
I think we need to have a little bit more specialization in how we're training people on it.  
And I say that knowing that maybe the method center should be doing that.  
So just to say that's on my radar.

 **Todd Helmus** 37:29  
I mean, I mean, I mean, I can see what you're saying, just in the sense that applying it to qualitative methods is its own shtick, right?

 **Alice Huguet** 37:41  
OK.

 **Todd Helmus** 37:42  
Not that like, I think it's too soon to put the onus on the centers, but you need feel like you need like maybe patiak's gonna be that guy.  
Like the the the guy that or or the gal that that knows like.

 **Alice Huguet** 37:52  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 37:57  
You know, thought through with the policy is and, you know has sort of a best practices approach to using this to say.  
For coding or outline development for reports.  
And is either can share those and and talks or be on hand for.

 **Alice Huguet** 38:11  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 38:16  
You know.

 **Alice Huguet** 38:18  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 38:19  
For, for, for consultation, project, consultation, I mean it seems like like somebody can go and say, OK, I'm ready to do this.

 **Alice Huguet** 38:23  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 38:25  
How do I do it?  
And then they can get on the horn with you and say this this list.

 **Alice Huguet** 38:27  
Yeah, absolutely.

 **Todd Helmus** 38:29  
I know, like, oh, you're doing it wrong.  
We're gonna do try it this way and then do it this way.  
And see how that you know.

 **Alice Huguet** 38:35  
Exactly. Yeah, exactly.  
And I think I think we we just need to do a little bit better about like bringing a lot of different actors together for that process. Like I do think Pratik has been amazing.  
I have nothing but positive things to say about him and how he's working on this tool, but he doesn't.  
He didn't know anything about coding when he started working on it, right?  
Like he's an engineer. And so I've been so lucky to get to work with him and kind of give him feedback as we go.  
Like, well, that's not actually how this process typically work. Then we kind of go back and forth on adjusting and he makes updates and.  
A little bit further, but then on the other side of that, we also need the hspc people involved because.  
I don't actually remember who's coming in next, but Becky Collins was always very worried about, like, what are.  
What are the considerations that we need to keep in mind for people's data? And so we have to pull like all these different parts of the research infrastructure together to create these guidelines that we think are important to follow.  
HSBC has really like a couple of of documents and guidance by how to use AI.  
I post them on the Cam but I don't know if anybody else is seeing them.  
So I just think that conversation needs to be like a little bit more.  
Synthesize collaborative. I'm not sure.  
Just across like the different pieces of our research work, because we've we've we've clearly already agreed that HSBC is an important piece of this of the research process. We know the technology is we have people here who do methods really, really well, not me, but like lots of.  
People, how do we bring all those people together to, like, decide on what our guidelines should be and what the guidance should be to people who are trying this for the first time?  
I think that that.  
'S going to be really important.  
As we move forward.  
And the engineers like Prattik are core to that, yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 40:25  
No, that's that's that's really helpful.  
It's what was my other question.  
Do you see any other ethical concerns we haven't talked about as it relates to AI and research?  
Do you see any concerns about?

 **Alice Huguet** 40:42  
Hmm.

 **Todd Helmus** 40:44  
I don't know ethics.  
Ethics is the right word.  
I mean like when I do coding for interviews, it's like a way for me to become very intimate with my data.

 **Alice Huguet** 40:54  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 40:56  
I'm interacting with it at the at the money at the sort of minute level.

 **Alice Huguet** 41:01  
Yes.

 **Todd Helmus** 41:01  
I'm just curious is there like and it seems to me like this coding piece is the low hanging fruit.  
For AI, right?  
I mean, it's like it's the one piece in the process that everybody shares at some level at some level, everyone has to put all these interviews together to tell a story.

 **Alice Huguet** 41:16  
Mm hmm.  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 41:21  
And.  
You know it.  
We're not in the place right now where AI is gonna replace people doing interviews, and you can probably use llm's to help develop your questions, but that's that capability already exists, right? So.

 **Alice Huguet** 41:36  
Yeah.  
I guess.

 **Todd Helmus** 41:41  
Is there something we miss by going by going to this route in terms of our ability to to, to to fully appreciate and understand and tell the story that their data is trying to tell?

 **Alice Huguet** 41:44  
Yeah.  
I think so, and I think it's what you got at which is like when you were familiarizing yourself with your data, that's like an important piece of making meaning from everything that you've collected.  
And if we're skipping that piece?  
I do think we risk like just getting a little bit further from.  
The reality of what is happening, and I think take it away from our knowledge and like our ability to even talk about it intelligently outside of reports. Like if if we are after the fact, having interviews with media.  
Or we wanna talk to people about the policy if we haven't actually read or know people's words on it. And we're just looking at this, something that AI has extracted.  
I don't think we we can.

 **Todd Helmus** 42:34  
Yeah, a gave me this quote to highlight in my paper. So I highlighted it. But.

 **Alice Huguet** 42:38  
Yeah.  
Yeah, I think we are missing something in terms of the rigor, if we're going that far.  
One thing that I've said in my class is.  
Qual methods classes is like it is great if you want to use like whisper or something.  
I actually really like this idea, like whisper to do the transcription for you so you don't have to pay somebody to transcribe.  
But then you get a big block of text. I feel like that in our current world with AI, that is your opportunity to get intimate with the data is like it's a big block of text. You need to read it, you need to make sure it's correct you.  
Need to put it into a format that actually makes sense, like add some spaces and and you know lines between speakers.  
Then that's their chance to internalize like.

 **Todd Helmus** 43:17  
It differentiates between speakers though, right?

 **Alice Huguet** 43:20  
Yeah, it might now.  
It didn't when I first used it, but I think like just then going through and reading it and checking it, I think it gives you a chance to become more familiar with the data.  
But I think we need those moments like built in somehow. So to make sure that it's not, we're not going straight from an interview to like a theme. And then everything in between is the black box of an LLM.  
I think that's where we risk losing, not just like the rigor of our work, but like losing insights.  
You know, sometimes things emerge from your data that you didn't plan on.  
And if you haven't trained AI to look for it because you didn't plan on it, then you're just completely gonna miss it.  
And and yeah, that piece of like actually becoming an expert.  
Who's credibly able to speak to the content that you have studied?  
I think you also run the risk of missing that kind of dimension as well.

 **Todd Helmus** 44:15  
Yeah, like so, we just like, we just a trip to Africa.

 **Alice Huguet** 44:17  
So.

 **Todd Helmus** 44:19  
We did.  
This is like three countries did like 15 interviews in each place.  
And this is like we ended up implementing the system where after every interview and you clean the notes because we weren't recording any of these.  
So it was all typed.  
Clean the notes and then you type like we had a sort of a A1 pager that identified like what was most interesting.  
What were the key themes for this topic?

 **Alice Huguet** 44:41  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 44:42  
What were the key themes like?  
Right. It was a way of.  
Like that process of of, of working with the interview data immediately after the interview.  
To identify mean like.

 **Alice Huguet** 44:53  
100%.

 **Todd Helmus** 44:56  
Where is where is now like I've done a few of these interviews, and I've done the transcription on it and the transcriptions. So good.

 **Alice Huguet** 44:57  
100%.

 **Todd Helmus** 45:02  
It's really good.

 **Alice Huguet** 45:03  
That's good.

 **Todd Helmus** 45:03  
I I don't need to clean the notes like that.  
There's the imperative to clean the notes is not there.

 **Alice Huguet** 45:09  
Yeah. OK.

 **Todd Helmus** 45:09  
And it's really easy just to OK.  
Just put the notes in the file and I'll get back to it.

 **Alice Huguet** 45:14  
Yeah, yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 45:15  
Which you but you don't have that choice. If you're manually typing and.

 **Alice Huguet** 45:20  
Yeah.  
Maybe. Maybe it's about for us.  
Like maybe upholding the rigors about building those points in the process that are like, I don't want to say non negotiable because I do think everything is negotiable.  
But like here, here are the points in the process that we make sure humans are interacting.  
I think that like summary of a site visit is super important.  
I even like I don't know with your team that you went to Africa with, but like that conversation you have in the car ride home from the site, visit for me to school is like where you're really like.  
Making sense of what you're learning.

 **Todd Helmus** 45:51  
Yeah, that's where the money's made, I think.

 **Alice Huguet** 45:53  
Yeah, I think so too. I really think so.  
So like if we can give things like the transcription to AI, OK, fine. If maybe they can do some of the coding and support our coding, that's great.  
But like, maybe there's points that were like, these are if we want to uphold rigor in this work like we need to have that human side done at these points to make sure that you have a full picture of what it is you're claiming to be an expert.  
On.  
Eventually, you're like what you're studying, you know.  
I think it's really important.  
Yeah, I don't know what those points are yet though, but I think that's kind of one of the things I'm hoping to develop more ideas on through talking with more people over the next few months.

 **Todd Helmus** 46:26  
Interesting.  
Yeah, so this is, this is great. Let's see.  
Another question is just.  
Any obvious and we've talked about these things, about gaps that I think feel like it's not even fair to talk about gaps because we're just we're just developing these tools, but any other sort of final thoughts on like questions I should ask things I should think about people.

 **Alice Huguet** 47:01  
Mm hmm.

 **Todd Helmus** 47:02  
I should talk to anything that comes to mind.

 **Alice Huguet** 47:06  
I think the thing that I think most about is just that we at Rand have such an opportunity to be like setting a standard for what?  
This is in research.  
Like what does this mean?  
And I'm just thinking of qualitative work right now, but like there's a lot of conversations about it happening.  
There's a lot of people who are very much against it.  
There are a lot of people who are very much advocate for it and I I think like Rand, could really play an important role in like being a measured.  
Proponents like how do we use this technology in a way that upholds the rigor of our work?  
Like thoughtfully and like setting some kinds of guidelines or structures that people can trust and can trust our work and not feel like we are just kind of, I don't know, being taken down the stream of AI without being reflective about it.  
Which I know that we are but.

 **Todd Helmus** 48:01  
You know, regurgitating what the LLM tells us.

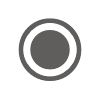
 **Alice Huguet** 48:02  
I'm.  
Yeah, but I I think we need to like be a little bit more like concerted in our efforts around it.  
And how we talk about it, not just internally, but I like, yeah, I I really think there's a space for it for Rand to talk about this externally too.  
'Cause every every organization out there, universities have their own approach and like everybody, has their own incentives to it and like.  
If we can really incentivize like we are this nonpartisan organization, we're interested in maximizing technology without, you know, hurting the rigor of our analysis.  
Like, here's what that looks like to us at this moment, and it might evolve like I think people would listen. I think it's like an important role that we could play.  
So I guess the last thing.

 **Todd Helmus** 48:44  
OK.  
All right.  
Well, thank you.  
I appreciate the time and it was nice catching up with you.

 **Alice Huguet** 48:47  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** 48:49  
Are you doing any information integrity stuff now?

 **Alice Huguet** 48:50  
Yeah.

 **Todd Helmus** stopped transcription