

Qualitative Data Analysis

IT IS 3130-6400-8400

Fall 2023



What types of data can be collected by qual UX research?

Qualitative attitudinal data, such as people's thoughts, beliefs and self-reported needs obtained from user interviews, focus groups and even diary studies.

Qualitative behavioral data, such as observations about people's behavior collected through contextual inquiry and other ethnographic approaches.

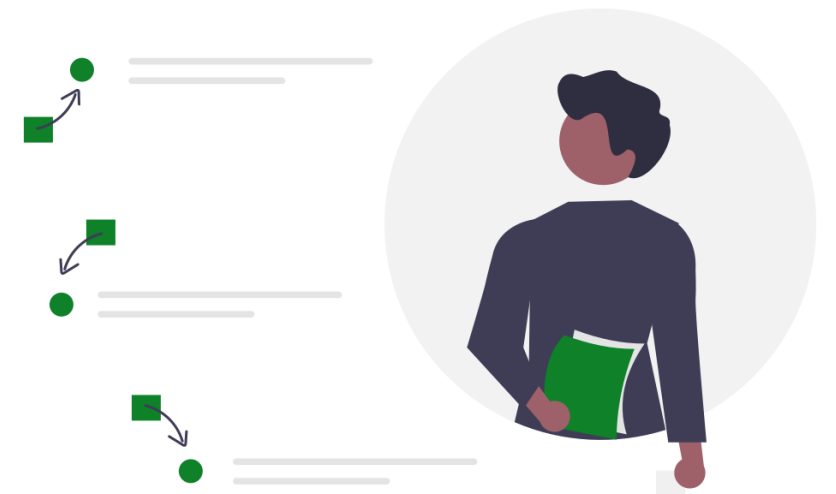


What can we do with qualitative data?

Qualitative data analysis is the process of organizing, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data—non-numeric, conceptual information and user feedback—to capture themes and patterns, answer research questions, and identify actions to take to improve your product.

Some common qualitative analysis methods include:

- Content analysis
- Thematic analysis
- Narrative analysis
- Grounded theory analysis
- Discourse analysis

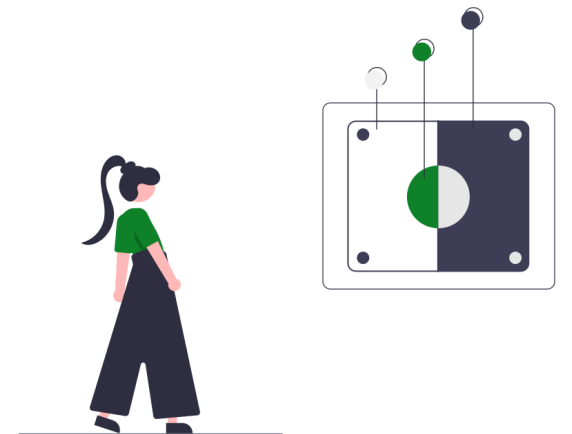


What is Thematic analysis?

A method for analyzing qualitative data that involves reading through a set of data and looking for patterns (themes) in the meaning of the data to find themes.

Some benefits of thematic analysis:

- It's one of the most accessible analysis forms, meaning you don't have to train your teams on it
- Teams can easily draw important information from raw data
- It's an effective way to process large amounts of data into digestible summaries



What are the challenges and consequences?

CHALLENGES

Large quantity of data: Qualitative research results in long transcripts and extensive field notes that can be time-consuming to read; you may have a hard time seeing patterns and remembering what's important.

Rich data: There are lots of detail within every sentence or paragraph. It can be hard to see which details are useful and which are superfluous.

Contradicting data: Sometimes the data from different participants or even from the same participant contains contradictions that researchers have to make sense of.

No goals set for the analysis: The aims of the initial data collection are lost because researchers can easily become too absorbed in the detail.

RESULTING ISSUES

Superficial analysis: Analysis is often done very superficially, just skimming topics, focusing on only memorable events and quotes, and missing large sections of notes.

Analysis becomes a description of many details: The analysis simply becomes a regurgitation of what participants' may have said or done, without any analytical thinking applied to it.

Findings are not definitive: Analysis is not definitive because participant feedback is conflicting, or, worse, viewpoints that don't fit with the researcher's belief are ignored.

Wasted time and misdirected analysis: The analysis lacks focus and the research reports on the wrong thing.