**Qualitative Research**

Limitations:

* Small samples = limited generalisations
* Danger of the researcher biasing the outcome by their own opinions

Strengths:

* The best for getting insights to individual behaviours and experiences
* Generates hypotheses that can be tested with quantitative methods
* Useful when very little is known about the topic

**When to use qualitative methods?**

* Qualitative methods aim to answer questions about the ‘what’, ‘how’ or ‘why’ of a phenomenon rather than ‘how many’ or ‘how much’, which are answered by quantitative methods.
* Is qualitative approach appropriate? Use when you want to understand the perspectives of participants, explore the meaning they give to phenomena, or observe a process in depth.

Analysis of qualitative data often begins with a transcript (e.g., a written record of a conversation)

**Qualitative approach:**

1. **Identify research question**: What is the question you want to answer?
2. **Background**: Why is this an interesting question? What we already know about the topic?
3. **Method:** How was this carried out, with a detailed description of data collection. This includes the setting; the participants; recruitment method; data collection method; plans for analysis
4. **Ethical issues** and how they will be addressed
5. **Time scale:** how long is it going to take?
6. **Output:** Who will you target

**Recruiting participants:**

* Sampling strategies should always be determined by the purpose of the research. Select key demographic variables that are likely to have an impact on participants’ view of the topic.

e.g., age; sex; income; ethnicity, etc

* Saturation point: keep recruiting and interviewing until nothing new comes from the data

Table

Description automatically generated

**Observations:**

* Who does what tasks and where?
* What routines are there in this setting?
* Is there a pattern to the week, or year?

**Qualitative report writing:**

1. Abstract

* Background
* Aims
* Sample
* Methods
* Results
* Conclusion

1. Introduction

* Review of literature
* Research gaps
* State research question

1. Method:

* Participants (describe sampling method and recruitment criteria)
* Procedure
* Analysis (e.g. inductive thematic analysis): Describe the process. Why this analysis was chosen and not another?

1. Results: Key themes identified
2. Discussion (limitations and implications)

Restate main findings and relate them to other research

References:

Bricki & Green (2007) A guide to using qualitative research methodology. *Medecins Sans Frontiers*

Using thematic analysis in psychology (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

How to Write Publishable Qualitative Research (Stenius et al., 2017)