

SOFTWARE TOOLS TO AID IN CLASSIFICATION, ANALYSIS, AND THEORY BUILDING.

Once the unit has been identified it is classified according to a preconceived classification scheme or into classification that emerge from the researchers reading. usually this process involves considerable training and this is crucial if multiple coders are used. in a quantitative content analysis, the reliability of these multiple coders is critical and should be calculated and presented as an important component of any results.

. We have found the use of qualitative analysis software packages such as Atlas Ti, nudi, or hyperqual to be very useful in undertaking the coding process. At their most basic level, these packages allow the text documents to be imported and conceptually organized. Next, the researcher codes the content by highlighting exemplar quotes and assigning them to one or more categories or families of categories.

TIPS FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS

Spend time carefully reading the content of your study before making irreversible methodology decisions. Clearly identify the type of analysis that will best answer your research questions. Initially identify the type of analysis and do pilot coding to see if the unit can be reliably identified and coded. Clearly identify the type of variables that you will be looking for in a data.

Document through memos to your self the processes involved in the selection of unit and coding so that you will be able to train others in the technique to provide for reliability calculations. Identify exemplars of the concepts and discuss these with any other coders. Use a qualitative analysis package to automate identification of some manifest variables and to aid in recall and organization of coded transcripts. Use appropriate analysis techniques, often non parametric tests, when analyzing quantitative content analysis results.