

# Intro to Qualitative Research Methods: Words not numbers

Amy Eyler, PhD  
Professor, Brown School



**I ENJOY**

**KOALATATIVE RESEARCH**

Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numeric data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences.

# Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

## **QUALITATIVE**

- Theory developed during study
- Meaning of concepts
- Process oriented
- Control unimportant
- Rich descriptions
- Basic element of analysis is words
- Uniqueness
- Trustworthiness of findings

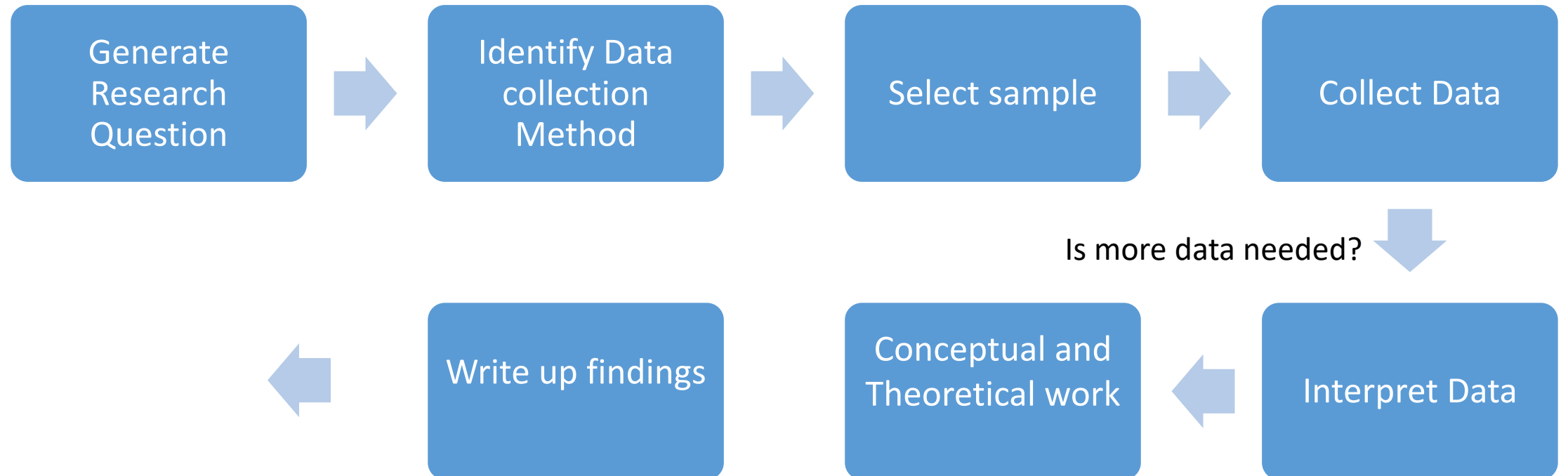
## **QUANTITATIVE**

- Theory developed a priori
- Measurement of variables
- Outcome oriented
- Control important
- Precise measurement of variables
- Basic element of analysis is numbers
- Generalization
- Control of error

# When to use qualitative methods

- For complex phenomena that are difficult to measure quantitatively
- To gain a comprehensive understanding of a phenomena
- To recognize unique aspects of different settings
- To gain insight into causal or contributing factors
- To understand a program or policy from participants' perspective
- To gain understanding about implementation

# The main steps in qualitative research



# Challenges with Qualitative Methods

- Requires time
- Sampling issues
- Generalizability

# Methods in Qualitative Data Collection

- Observations
- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- PhotoVoice
- Case Study
- Ethnography



# Ethical considerations of qualitative research

- Human subjects
- Need to be given information about study, how data will be used, benefits and risks, and who to contact with questions
- Confidentiality

Take a few moments to observe what is around you and write down what you observe.



# Observation Considerations

- Observations vs. interpretations
- Did you tell people you were observing them?
- Did you participate?
- Focus of observation: narrow, single component of the program vs. entire program
- Duration of observation: short vs. long-term

# Interviews

- One-one conversations



# Focus Groups

- Semi-structured group data collection method
- Moderated by a leader
- Usually to collect data on a specific topic from a sample of people who can provide the information



# Research Design: Individual Interview or Focus Groups

Individual Interviews	Focus Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Generating in-depth responses</li><li>•Maximizing items in a list</li><li>•Gathering life histories, narratives, phenomenological accounts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Observe direct interaction between participants</li><li>•Efficient way to generate a range of responses</li><li>•Decrease power differential between researcher and participant</li></ul>
<p>Common myths:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Focus groups are a fast and easy way to generate data</li><li>2. Focus groups should not be used when studying difficult/sensitive topics</li></ol>	

# Interview/Focus Group Guide

- A script
- Important for consistency if more than one person is doing interviews or there is more than one focus group
- Sequence of questions is important
- Include what needs to be asked and what is optional to be asked

What else should be considered?



# Using Photos in Qualitative Research

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# Our Voice

- <https://med.stanford.edu/ourvoice/OurVoiceImpact.html>
- <https://med.stanford.edu/ourvoice/PamJinerQA.html>

# Mixed Methods Design

“An approach to research in the social, behavioral, and health sciences in which the investigator gathers **BOTH** quantitative and qualitative data, **INTEGRATES** them, and then draws interpretations based on the combined strengths of both sets of data to understand research problems.”

-Creswell 2015

# Lessons learned in collecting qualitative data


- Accommodate and incentivize.
- Be a skilled facilitator. Be trained and practice.
- Be aware of group dynamics.
- Non-verbal communication is important.
- Take a back-up digital recorder.



# So you collected data now what?

# Transcription


- Taking the audio files and turning them into text
- 30 minute of conversation is roughly 5-7 single spaced pages
- Many options (AI v. human) but need to factor in the costs into your project
- Reliability checks

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# Analysis Plan

(Goal: Reduce the amount of text)

- Decide on method (software or no software)
- Read over transcripts
- Develop draft codebook
- Practice coding
- Make edits to code book
- Practice again
- Code all text
- Summarize themes\*

*To count or not to count.....*





# Theoretical Approach

- Grounded theory
- Abductive approach
- A-priori approach



# What is reflexivity in qualitative research?



Reflexivity is the process of:

1. Consciously examining your own subjective point of view, and
2. Identifying how your subjectivity could impact the outcomes of your research.

# 1. Develop Codes

- Read over all\* of your data
- Have 2 or more people develop a list of general themes and sub-codes
- Discuss these lists to come to consensus

5.0	Physical/amenities	Built and natural features of the park	[see below]
5.1	Institutions within park	Zoo, Art Museum, History Museum, Visitor Center, Science Center, Steinberg, etc.	"...the Zoo, the Art Museum, all those places that are free."
5.2	Facilities	Sports courts, sports fields, pavilions, etc.	"We don't have basketball courts...we have a tennis center"
5.3	Natural/Green Spaces	Water features, flowerbeds/gardens, forests, prairies	"I think any time you put a lot of greenery in the middle of a cityscape, I think you find that there's a place where there's a respite..."
5.4	Trails	Sidewalks, natural trails, paved trails	"...we also have a population of people who are going to be using the park for sport or recreation. <u>So</u> the paths and the streets."
5.5	Good Quote		
6.0	Use	What people do in the park outside of formal programming, and what impacts that use	[see below]
6.1	Activities/Amenities	Walk, play, run, bike (individual, family, small groups)	"...many people just use it to walk, jog, bike."
6.2	Perceptions of Exclusion/Inclusion	FP's past and current reputations, perceived welcomeness/inclusion, perceived exclusion/unwelcomeness; do NOT code mentions of diversity of park users (see 2.2)	"...the <u>Kingshighway</u> entrance is very difficult...it feels intentional..."
6.4	Perceptions of Safety	Perceptions of personal safety ( <u>e.g.</u> crime and traffic)	"People from St. Charles are just surprised when people come to the park, they think they're going to get shot..."
6.5	Good Quote		
7.0	Access	How people get to the park	[see below]
7.1	To the Park	Transit access (pedestrian, public transit, vehicular) as well as parking; include park border streets ( <u>e.g. Kingshighway, Skinker, Lindell</u> )	"...one of the things that make it better would be more parking closer to event venues..."

## 2. Code Data

- Practice coding 2-3 transcripts
- Discuss the process with team members and make iterations if needed
- Assign transcripts for coding
- Code all transcripts
- If new codes are added, go over each transcript again

Yeah, USER\_8. I own Big Shark Bicycle Company. I'm also have been the state rep for USA Cycling. So we in addition to selling a lot of equipment for cycling in every discipline. We also promote all of the different types of cycling events.

O'Connor, Aine  
1.0

PARCS\_1:

O'Connor, Aine  
1.0

Great, thank you. Finally, USER\_1?

O'Connor, Aine  
3.1

USER\_1:

I'm USER\_1. I'm with the Flora Conservancy of Forest Park. We're a volunteer group that works with the city greenhouses to maintain mostly the areas outside the Jewel Box and Pagoda Circle, which is the big garden in front of the Muny. I started with them about 20 years ago as a volunteer, and I have a part time consulting job with the city I think my title is Program Manager, or something like that.

O'Connor, Aine  
5.1

O'Connor, Aine  
5.1

O'Connor, Aine  
1.0

PARCS\_1:

Great. Thank you all. Very nice to meet you all and sort of in-person, after e-mailing back and forth. So the first sort of formal question I'll throw out there for anybody to take, how would you describe Forest Part for someone who has never visited?

USER\_9:

O'Connor, Aine  
2.0

Diverse. The premier, large, urban park in the United States.

USER\_6:

O'Connor, Aine  
2.0

Yes, number one, because I just heard that on the radio this morning!

USER\_11:

O'Connor, Aine  
2.0

I would tell somebody there's something for everyone.

USER\_4:

O'Connor, Aine  
2.0

I think I would tell everyone there's something for everyone, it's sort of the city's backyard.

USER\_5:

O'Connor, Aine  
2.0, 3.6

The thing is, echoing what everyone said, the park is both a destination and a refuge. Without it, I'm not sure what living in an urban area would be like.

PARCS\_1:

That's a great way to put it. "A destination and a refuge." Yeah, appreciate that. Any other thoughts on describing it?

USER\_6:

O'Connor, Aine  
2.0

Well, going on with what USER\_5 just said, I'm a lifelong St. Louisian and Forest Park has actually played different roles at different times in my life. It's sort of like a good friend who's always there!

USER\_5:

### 3. Summarize

- Group codes together by theme
  - Summarize in bullets or paragraphs
- Put it all together and highlight with quotes\*
- Academic papers are usually longer in text than quantitative papers
- Can put examples in table rather than text
- Who is your audience?

# Member-checking

- Explores credibility of results
- Data or results are returned to participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences.
- Participant validation



# Quotes

- Are a great way to summarize findings
- Excellent ways to add to dissemination materials
- Can be coded as “good quote” so you can easily find
- [SIC] is an abbreviation of 'sic erat scriptum' which is Latin for 'thus it had been written', meaning that the quote was transcribed as it was found in the original source, complete with errors, colloquialisms etc.
- Recommendations vary in how much to use [sic] or add words to quotes.

### 3.2.5. *People who walk are different from and similar to me*

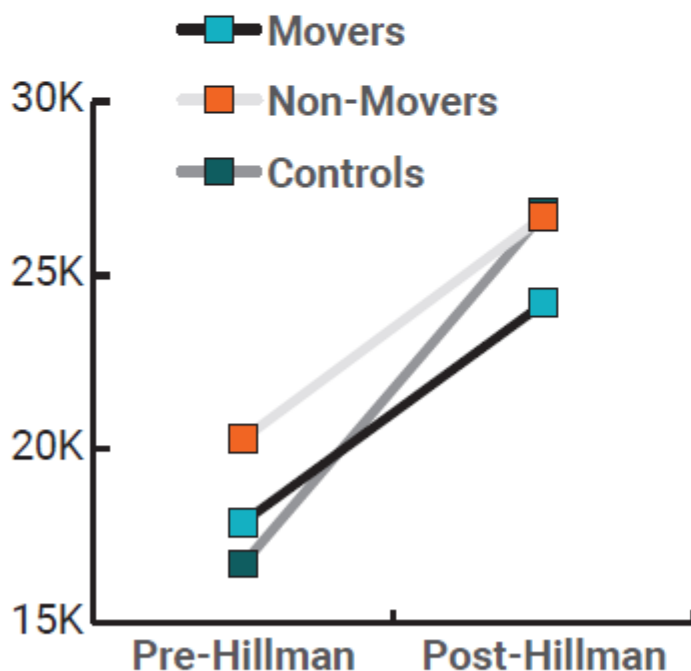
Most focus group participants perceived older individuals as those who *regularly* walked, while some also mentioned “*women*” and “*rich people who live in the suburbs*.” When we asked whether people who walked were similar or different to them, participants’ comments primarily focused on income-status. Some participants said that walkers were different than them because they were “white” or “rich” and had the luxury of time to walk. One participant stated, “*They’ve got all the time in the world*.” Others said that walkers were similar to them because they cannot afford an alternative to walking. One participant stated people walk, “*Because they ain’t got no car*.”

Themes	Subthemes	Representative quote
Current public health problems	Current sick care model	“We have a system that doesn’t encourage healthy behavior in patients and doesn’t discourage unhealthy behavior. In essence, we don’t have a health care system; we have a sick care system.” Delaware, 2012
	Growing health care costs	“I want to take a truly meaningful step toward insuring West Virginia’s working poor—those who are trying hard every day to make a better life for themselves but who just haven’t been able to make enough money to even think about paying for health care. They often wait until they’re critically ill before seeking medical treatment, so they end up in emergency rooms and hospitals. That adds to the unmanaged care bills that increase everyone’s healthcare expenses.” West Virginia, 2009
	Linking health indicators to economic costs	“Another long-standing, costly problem for Kentucky continues to be our smoking rate, among the highest in the nation and directly responsible for \$1.5 billion in health-care costs. The negative impact of our smoking rates—among adults, teens and pregnant women—has been tremendous. Through various efforts, we’ve shown improvement—our smoking rate is now 25 % instead of 28 %. But we can do more. We must do more.” Kentucky, 2010

# Physical Activity

## Average Steps Per Week Increased in All Three Groups

Physical activity levels were consistent between accelerometer and self-reported survey data. The addition of Hillman, a new building and destination, increased steps for all groups.



*"I have a stand-up desk and I have yet to put it down. That doesn't mean I don't sit. I love having that standing desk."*

## Hillman & Brown/Goldfarb Occupants Feel More Supported to Exercise During the Workday

Movers and non-movers were more likely to feel supported than controls if they chose to exercise during the workday.

## Hillman Occupants Move More

% of times moving in past hour by building.



43%

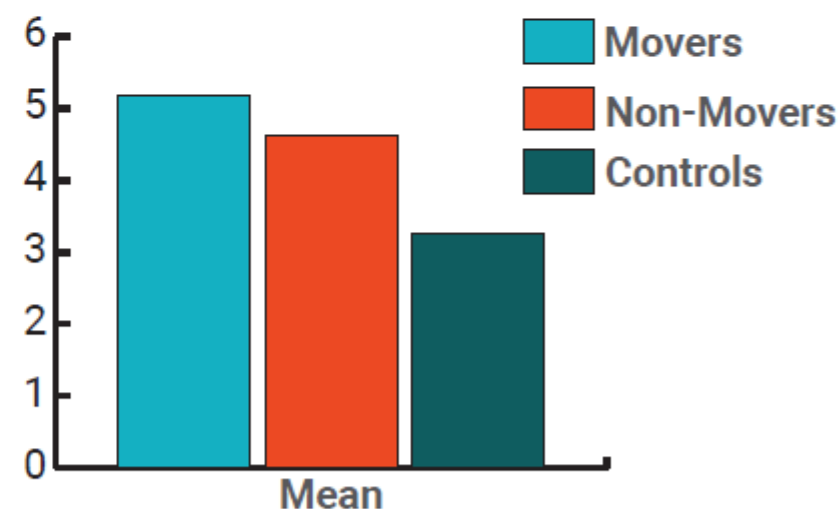
Hillman

39%

Goldfarb

27%

Brown



Scores range from 1-7, where 1 represents strongly disagree and 7 represents strongly agree.



# St. Louis **speaks** about **OPEN STREETS**

Notes from community stakeholders about increasing attendance and community involvement in future Open Streets

**I**N 2011, A RESEARCH TEAM from Washington University interviewed 13 community stakeholders with interests in improving the physical activity and overall health for children and families in St. Louis communities. These stakeholders, in areas such as education, healthcare, and the nonprofit arena, shared their perspectives, providing invaluable information and innovative ideas on how to boost the involvement of their constituents in Open Streets.



**WHEN?** *Community stakeholders suggested days and times that reflected the times that would best work for their constituents:*

**What days and times might draw the most community support?**

Saturday mornings were mentioned as the best for runners, cyclists, and parents looking for activities for their children on the weekends. Saturdays were also mentioned as good days since there is no interference with many church activities.

Sundays were mentioned as good ways for families to engage in healthy activities on a day that in many cases is a family day already. Sunday afternoon events give churchgoers an opportunity to attend also.

Friday evenings were also suggested to provide children and youth with a safer alternative to activities that are usually available on Friday nights in their neighborhoods.

Who is up for a little practice?