

Qualitative Methods



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Objectives



- ❧ At the end of the session you will be able to:-
 - ❧ Define qualitative methods
 - ❧ Types of qualitative methods
 - ❧ Merit and limitation of qualitative methods

qualitative methods



- ❖ Qualitative methods can be used to understand complex social processes, to capture essential aspects of a phenomenon from the perspective of study participants, and to uncover beliefs, values, and motivations that underlie individual health behaviors.
- ❖ Should be considered when the research aim is one or more of the following:
 - to investigate complex phenomena that are difficult to measure quantitatively,
 - to generate data necessary for a comprehensive understanding of a problem,
 - to gain insights into potential causal mechanisms,
 - to develop sound quantitative measurement processes or instruments, or to study special populations

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- ❧ The commonly used methods
 - 1. Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)
 - 2. In-depth Interview
 - 3. Structured Questionnaire
 - 4. Structured Observations

1. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)



- ❧ involve a small number (6-10) of people who share similar characteristics (such as age, gender, or type of work) are brought together by the researchers for a discussion
- ❧ Random selection of participants is not necessary.
- ❧ A trained moderator encourages participants to reveal underlying opinions, attitudes, and reasons for the problem being studied.
- ❧ The discussion is recorded and analyzed systematically to identify key themes and issues.

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❧ The strengths of FGDs are:

- ❧ The method is quick and cheap
- ❧ A greater pool of expertise is tapped than in individual interviews; a more diverse picture of drug use will emerge
- ❧ The contribution of one person often triggers others to share their views and experiences.

❧ The weaknesses of FGDs are:

- ❧ A skilled moderator is required
- ❧ The success of a group discussion is a bit unpredictable
- ❧ In some cases one or more participants dominate; the views of others are not recorded and so are under-represented
- ❧ The depth of information may be limited. It is hard to probe one person's ideas, as others also have to be given a chance to speak
- ❧ Analysis of the information gathered is demanding.

2. In-depth Interviews



- ❧ An in-depth interview allows extended discussion between a respondent and an interviewer.
- ❧ The interview is flexible and often unstructured, allowing an interviewer to encourage the respondent to talk at length about a particular topic of interest.

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- ❧ The in-depth interview is conducted in individual who are not selected randomly rather are selected based on their position in the health system, where their attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge are expected to be similar to that of the bigger target population or group.
- ❧ Only one respondent and one interviewer are present at the time of the session.

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❑ Advantages

- Because it is one-on-one and uses open-ended discussion topics, trust is developed between the respondent and interviewer.
- The interviewer can probe for more in-depth beliefs and attitudes.
- The revelation of unsought but significant data during the interview process.

❑ Disadvantages

- Open-ended topics often generate large quantities of data, which are difficult to manage and can be time-consuming to analyze.
- May introduce bias into the study results.
- The respondents may give answers they think the interviewer wants to hear or that are socially acceptable at the time thus, the interviewer should be well trained.

3. Structured Questionnaires



- ❧ used to quantify the frequency of attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about medicine use
- ❧ Selecting the persons to include as respondents using the questionnaire technique depends largely on the target population, the study objectives, and the intended use of the study findings

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❧ Advantages

- Questionnaires ask questions that are understandable and familiar to the respondents
- Measuring the strength and prevalence of attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge of medicine use.
- Questionnaires can be generalized to a wider population.

❧ Disadvantages

- Questionnaires are not designed to uncover the unexpected.
- Structured questionnaire carries the risk of getting responses that are biased by what the respondent thinks the interviewer wants to hear
 - With a skilled interviewer and well-thought-out questionnaires, however, an investigator can minimize this disadvantage.
- Large structured questionnaire surveys are expensive to conduct.

4. Structured Observation



- ❧ utilizes trained people to observe a series of encounters between health providers and patients, following a structured form or checklist.
- ❧ The observers record behaviors and impressions they witness during the encounters.
- ❧ the exact number would depend on the study objectives.
- ❧ The structured observation method can be used to study behaviors such as the interactions between staff and patients (for example the quality of communication) or the giving of injections.
- ❧ The data can be used independently or as a supplement to other study method.

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❧ Advantages

- Observer's actual behavior as opposed to stated behavior, which may not be the same.

❧ Disadvantages

- may be time consuming and expensive
- observation may cause change in the behavior of health workers
- different observers may observe differently



THANK YOU!!!!