

How to Build a Better Qualitative Study

AN OVERVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES, AS DESCRIBED BY CRESWELL & POTH (2018)

NARRATIVE

Focus on 3 or less individuals

Collect stories told by the individual

Connect phases or aspects of the story in a chronology

Report the story, identifying themes

Explain how the story unfolds

How did speakers interact with or perform the story?

Use reflexive thinking and writing to embed yourself into the study

PHENOMENOLOGICAL

Articulate the phenomenon

Ground the study with primary and scholarly literature about the phenomenon.

Use specific data analysis procedures for this type of study (Moustakas, 1994, or van Manen (1990).

Communicate the essence that the participants experienced. Explain the context if possible.

Explain the process and outcomes of reflexive thinking.

GROUNDNED THEORY

Focus on a process, action, or interaction

Integrate the appropriate coding model that connects to a larger theoretical model

Present the theoretical model in a figure or diagram

Advance the storyline by presenting further questions to be answered

Memo throughout the process to document ongoing thought

Embed evidence of reflexive thinking (such as a research journal or notebook).

ETHNOGRAPHY

Identify a culture-sharing group. Describe in detail.

Specify a cultural theme and explain why you chose it.

Describe the cultural group in detail

Communicate the themes that reveal an understanding of the cultural group

Identify issues that reflect on participant/researcher relationships, the interpretation of the reporting, and anything that creates a credible account of challenges

Identify a working set of rules or generalizations that describe the culture-sharing group functions.

Embed your position in the research and integrate reflexivity by describing background experiences with the group as well as reflections about interactions with the group

CASE STUDY

Identify the case (boundaries, time, single or multiple cases).

Why did you choose this case? Present a rationale.

Describe the case in detail (including setting and context)

Articulate themes within the case

How does this case provide insight into an issue, or how can finding be generalized to other cases?

Use reflexive thinking to establish your position in the study.