

Qualitative Data Analysis

To analyze qualitative data, we will look for patterns in the data by coding and using a particular approach to identify themes. Some of these approaches can be seen below.

- (1) **Collect** data
- (2) **Transcribe** data
- (3) Identify appropriate **approach**
- (4) **Code** data

Transcribing and Coding

If you are unfamiliar with transcribing, please [click here](#).

If you are unfamiliar with coding, please [click here](#).

Approaches

Content Analysis

This type of analysis refers to identifying **patterns** in content (books, newspapers, speeches, photographs, social media posts, and more).

Why? Content analysis is used to uncover intentions, identify bias, and identify differences in communication (to name a few).

How? You can gather both qualitative and quantitative data with content analysis.

Example: You could make an inference after looking for words that are typically used after *bias* to make an inference about the relationship and where that stems from. You could also go through the content and count the number of times a word appears. Let's say I was researching previous presidential speeches and I wanted to quantify how much they cared about a particular issue by seeing how frequently they used terminology related to it when they were speaking to the public.

Narrative Analysis

This type of analysis refers to looking for meaning in people's personal experiences/stories.

Why? Gain insight on people's perspectives and shared experiences.

How? You can shift through transcribed interviews (most commonly) and identify the core narrative that is being shared.

Example: Let's say I wanted to study individuals' perceptions of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic between countries.

Discourse Analysis

This type of analysis looks at how language is communicated in a particular social context. This language can be written or spoken.

Why? You could use this to identify the effect of language, how language is influenced by society/power dynamics, or how language is linked to a typical reaction.

Qualitative Data Analysis

How? You can sift through transcribed interviews, websites, books, government documents, and more to identify themes or patterns that arise in terms of language and social context (options for consideration: vocabulary, grammar, structure, genre).

Example: Let's say I want to study how teenagers talk about their parents on social media platforms. I would do this while looking for cultural background influences and if they came from collectivist or individualistic societies.

Thematic Analysis

This type of analysis is focused on finding themes in the data (it's helpful to think of this as similarities, or what consistently arises).

Why? You can gain insight on people's opinions, perspectives, and experiences.

How? You can sift through transcribed interview or survey responses (to name a few) and identify what is coming up often. Some research questions that may use a thematic analysis could be: How do students perceive the effectiveness of their educators? How do women feel about walking at night?

Example: Let's say I wanted to determine how people felt about the Writing Center. I could send a survey to collect reviews of the center and then determine the most common terms used, such as 'effective' 'quick' or 'helpful.'

Grounded-Theory

This type of analysis lets you come up with your theory to describe a phenomenon. In order to do this, you would need to test, determine a potential theory, test again, re-evaluate, and so on.

Why? It is advantageous when you are researching something that is fairly new and has not been heavily researched.

How? Determine an overarching question and target population. Then find a small sample, interview them, look for patterns in the data, and develop a hypothesis. After this, you would find another sample group, interview them, look for patterns in the data, and determine if your hypothesis stands or if you need to revise it. And so it goes!

Example: I want to develop a theory regarding when students choose to revise their assignments at the graduate level. I might see certain factors arise such as interest in subject matter or respect for instructors. From that, I would create a hypothesis and then find another group to interview. I would compare the findings to see if my theory stands.

Chun Tse et al. (2019) wrote an article on how to design a framework for this type of approach. Please [see here](#)

Common Questions

If you would like to look through answers to common questions, please see [here](#).