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How to Enhance Qualitative Research Appraisal: Development of the Methodological Congruence Instrument

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Abstract

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Keywords

Qualitative Research, Methodology, Congruence, Instrument

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How to Enhance Qualitative Research Appraisal:
Development of the Methodological Congruence Instrument

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In this research report, we introduce a methodological congruence instrument (MCI) that addresses the five major qualitative research traditions. Methodological congruence is a "fit" between the researcher's chosen methodology and his/her philosophical perspective. The chosen methodology should be aligned with the research question, data collection and sampling procedures, philosophical perspectives and seminal authors, data analysis, and findings. These elements are contained in the MCI. We share information about its inception, development, and application, and invite our research colleagues to offer critical feedback. It is our hope that qualitative researchers, editorial board members, teachers, and students find this instrument helpful and relevant to the application of qualitative research. As the qualitative research community continues to address questions of quality, the MCI may offer an additional layer of transparency that engenders scholarly discussion and furthers ethical writing, production, and publication. Keywords: Qualitative Research, Methodology, Congruence, Instrument

Researchers generally think of the research process as falling into three major phases: designing a study, conducting a study, and reporting on the study results. Within any of these three phases, it is likely that some form of appraisal of the research will take place. Following the design of a study, a dissertation committee, funding agency, or Institutional Review Board may conduct manuscript appraisal. In these cases, the appraisal has the purpose of determining one or more of the following: that the researcher has the knowledge to conduct the research, has outlined steps to ensure the research is ethical, and/or is conducting a study that aligns with a particular funding priority. Appraisal may also occur by advisors or reviewers to confirm that the audit trail supports the research findings. The most common form of research appraisal, however, occurs in the form of peer review by editorial boards and journal reviewers. While research appraisal may receive far less attention in the literature than designing, conducting, or

reporting research, it is critically important to the dissemination of trustworthy findings that uphold methodological rigor.

A variety of high quality instruments exist that support and guide the appraisal process in qualitative inquiry (Cooper, 2011). However, in our review of the literature related to qualitative research appraisal, we did not locate an instrument or rubric that offers detailed guidance on assessing methodological congruence for the five major qualitative research traditions—ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and case study research. In this article, we describe our context as authors and the circumstances that led to the development of the appraisal instrument presented below, which we call the Methodological Congruence Instrument (MCI; see appendix). For the purposes of this article, methodological congruence is defined as a "fit" between research purpose, research question, methodology, data sources and types, and data analysis (Creswell, 2013). To provide some context for the elements and content of the MCI, we briefly review some of the characteristics of major qualitative research traditions and methodologies. In addition, we offer some discussion of how this appraisal instrument might be utilized by a variety of stakeholders, including editorial board members, teachers, students, and the researchers themselves.

Context and Background

The authors of this paper are qualitative researchers who came together to work on this project within the context of a course on appraising qualitative research offered in Nova Southeastern University's Qualitative Research Graduate Certificate Program (QRGP). The authors include students in the course (Alice, Annette, Bruce, and Cynthia), as well as the course instructor (Robin) and the course Teaching Assistant (Doles). The students are all experienced educators and researchers who enrolled in the QRGP to strengthen their qualitative research knowledge and skills. During the course, as the class discussed how to assess quality in qualitative research reports, one of the traits we identified as indicative of quality was that of congruence—consistency between tradition/model and procedures, as well as between tradition/model and reporting conventions.

Annette raised the idea of developing a table to help track the characteristics associated with various methodologies, as a tool to support the appraisal process, and she drafted an initial version. She shared her idea with the class and invited anyone interested to join with her in developing this instrument further. Following the conclusion of the course, the authors of this paper worked together to do just that, and we share the product below (appendix). It was never our intent to create a standardized instrument that would dictate issues of congruence. The intent of the MCI is to assist novice researchers in their learning process, serve as a platform for discussion among mentors and students, and get people thinking about ethics and rigor in methodological congruence.

The Methodological Congruence Instrument (MCI), explained in detail below, is intended to provide a point of reference rather than to be seen as prescriptive or definitive. As we worked on this project, we quickly recognized that there were many possible ways to organize the information, and many different interpretations of how to conduct research within various qualitative traditions. Therefore, we came to feel that this was a conversation and effort that would benefit from wider input within the qualitative research community. In the spirit of transparency, quality, and ethical decision-making, we presented the MCI at the 6th annual conference of *The Qualitative Report*. We received feedback from multiple authors. Mainly, several requests were made to add a generic qualitative research approach, which was included in the final version.

Literature Review

From a developmental perspective, novices must learn to think critically and meet issues of methodological congruence with intention and purpose (Chenail, 2011). Principles of andragogy (Knowles, 1984) state that adult learners have a need to explain, be task-oriented, contextual, and self-directed (Kearsley, 2015). An experiential stance provides the basis for learning and theorizing, but must slowly offer the adult learner an opportunity to move from subject-focus to problem-focus. This orientation to learning is inclusive of cultural differences, affording the adult-learner a platform to enact change and offer solutions to complex questions (Kearsley, 2015). Given the relative newness of qualitative research appraisal, a focus on methodological congruence may offer the novice researcher the next step in the learning process.

Some authors raise concern that excessive detail in the research process can hinder the creativity afforded to us as qualitative researchers, while others continue to voice a concern for rigor and accountability (Bendassolli, 2013; Chenail, 2011; Cooper, 2011). At its foundation, qualitative inquiry involves inductive reasoning, which requires a solid link to theory and an anchor to data. It follows that transparency, by use of a congruence instrument, can allow for theory to inform sampling, data analysis, and findings. This way, terminology such as "theme," "code," and "category" becomes more explicitly defined, and begins to align with the respective methodology (Bendassolli, 2013; Crotty, 1998).

Bendassolli (2013) and Toomela (2011) have offered that qualitative methods will continue to lag behind positivist practices because too many inconsistencies exist. As students engaged in a community of learners, the MCI addresses the need for a developmental framework that encourages critical thinking and inquiry, but it also addresses the concern for ethics and quality (Tracy, 2010).

In an ever-changing landscape, it is important to teach the next wave of scholars about best practices and rigorous qualitative methods. Concepts such as validity (Hannes, Lockwood, & Pearson, 2010), immersion (Green et al., 2007), transferability (Streubert-Speziale, 2007), transparency (Chenail, 2011; Cooper, 2011), objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 2005), trustworthiness (Jeanfreau & Jack, 2010), ethics (Flick, 2007), crystallization (Ellingson, 2008), bracketing (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013), and reflexivity (Jootun, McGhee, & Marland, 2009) have given qualitative research the credibility it deserves. An instrument that complements current best practices and delivers a pedagogical roadmap, embedded in ethical intentions, is not only useful, but necessary for emerging scholars. This is how we commit to a shared responsibility that reaches our colleagues, sponsors, and most importantly, the participants whose stories we share.

The Methodological Congruence Instrument (MCI)

The Qualitative Report (*TQR*) Rubric provides a valuable guide for manuscript development. Performance criteria offer clear guidance for editors to provide meaningful feedback and set reasonable expectations for qualitative inquiry (Chenail, Cooper, Patron et al., 2011). The proposed methodological congruence instrument (MCI) provides additional insight within section five, the *method section* of the *TQR* Rubric, for an additional layer of appraisal. Its function is to delve more deeply into the author's chosen methodology, given one of the six major qualitative traditions (e.g., ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative, case study, and generic) to offer a final product that is methodologically consistent across all sections. Additionally, it can function as a stand-alone teaching and learning instrument. The elements of the MCI are: method characteristics, research question, sampling procedures, philosophical perspectives and seminal authors, data analysis, and findings.

For example, a researcher may want to uncover a theory of how nurses manage grief in intensive care units. Given the MCI, s/he may ask a "process-oriented" research question, conduct theoretical sampling, (Creswell, 2013), and decide to interview nurses in a focus group and then code the transcript. Within the grounded theory approach, however, a novice researcher may develop preset codes from which to categorize the data (Glaser, 2004) and use constant comparison (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to develop a theory. The researcher may add meanings, feelings, emotions, and ideas to connect the participant with her own concept of the nurses in conflict. This would pose a methodological *incongruence*, which would be identified by the MCI. To explain, the act of presetting codes is based on Glaser's (2004) descriptive method of theme emergence while the data analysis is based on Charmaz' (2014) interpretive methods. One portion of the method uses previously established codes while the other portion includes elements of the researcher's own value system.

If used as intended, the MCI offers the researcher a framework to more intentionally build and shape a methodological product that aligns with the philosophical perspective and remains true to the data analysis. This benefits the entire research community because it improves rigor and accountability within qualitative methodologies. The following section highlights the unique terminology within the main methodological traditions. We define similarities and differences, and offer seminal authors as resources for readers.

Six Main Methodological Traditions

Phenomenology

Phenomenological research is an inductive approach that has roots in the existential philosophical work of Edmund Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean Paul Sartre, and Martin Heidegger (Creswell, 2013). Its aim is to uncover completely the "essence" of an experience. The evolution of phenomenological research has included Hermeneutic Phenomenology (van Maanen, 2011), Transcendental Phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994), Descriptive Phenomenological Method in Psychology (Giorgi, 2009), and Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Although these approaches vary with respect to the roles of description and interpretation, there are several important concepts that they all share.

First, in order to fully capture the essence of the lived experience of a given phenomenon, researchers reject the reductionistic perspective, instead opting for a perspective that embodies the multiplicity and multifaceted nature of human experience. Second, a hallmark of phenomenology is the concept of bracketing. Bracketing, also known as *epoché,* is the suspension of the researcher's perspective and bias in order to more fully understand the participant's experience (Giorgi, 2009). Third, data collection includes interviews, written self-report, and other forms of personal expression to obtain the participant's personal views. Minimally structured interviews with general questions offer a participant focus, although probes are important to gather depth and breadth of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2013). Fourth, data analysis allows for codes to emerge from the data rather than having them pre-assigned (a priori) (Creswell, 2013). Overall, the phenomenological researcher should leave the reader with a strong grasp of what it is like to have experienced the stated phenomenon.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is an increasingly popular choice for researchers who wish to generate a theory or test an existing theory grounded in the data. Four seminal grounded theorists created

various interpretations based on differing philosophical viewpoints. Glaser and Strauss (1967) were the first to develop grounded theory, using rather strict and prescriptive methods. Later, Strauss and Corbin (1990) shifted toward a more flexible approach to data analysis in which inductive and deductive methods would build a detailed, emerging theory. The theory is explained and *verified by* participants. In contrast, Glaser (2004) remained true to his original model in which pure forms of induction would uncover the theory *without* the need for verification.

The third perspective is post-modern grounded theory, based on the work of Clark (2003) who coined the terms *situational maps, social worlds, and positional maps*. The situational map is the "human, nonhuman, discursive" elements that require analysis and comparison (p. 554). The social worlds offer the story's agonist and other players, while the positional maps represent the variety of ways people interact, or not, within the story (Clarke, 2003). Clarke (2003) shares a deep commitment to situational context and variability, suggesting that the researcher must *theorize* rather than develop a theory (Clarke, 2003).

The fourth grounded theory perspective is a constructivist approach often viewed as a mid-point between postmodernism and positivism, positing that reality is created by study participants as they interact and interpret the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2014). It challenges the two other philosophical stances because it states that there is no objective truth to uncover; instead, it evolves as the research process unfolds (Crotty, 1998).

One critical detail that *differs* between authors is the purpose of the participant's story. Charmaz (2014) interprets the story by sharing the participant's intended meaning, while Glaser, Strauss, and Corbin focus on the participant's words, behaviors, concepts, perspectives, and social meanings (Creswell, 2013). A critical detail *shared* by these authors is that they embrace researcher bias and support reflexivity as something to be revealed and accounted in the analytical process. Contemporary methodologists prefer a highly interactive exchange with the participant, asserting that objectivity is not possible, even through memoing and other reflexive means (Breckenridge, 2012; Charmaz, 2014).

Data collection and analysis methods for all seminal authors are based on naturalistic data collection that includes interviews with analysis that involves coding, categorization, and systematic and intentional confirmation of a theory. While Strauss and Corbin used three levels of data coding (e.g., open, axial, selective coding), Glaser used two stages of coding (i.e., substantive and theoretical), and Charmaz used three stages (i.e., initial, focused, and theoretical; Cho & Lee, 2014). Finally, the constant comparative method is used in all approaches, which means that coding is circular rather than linear and categorizing occurs simultaneously to capture the meaning of the data.

Ethnography

Ethnography finds its roots in anthropology and sociology, however the primary focus of ethnographic research is to make meaning of a group that shares a culture (Creswell, 2013). Researchers share a detailed explanation of a single or limited number of cases and enjoy a dual role of participant and observer. Researchers must establish rapport within the group so that each member feels invited to share their experience. They conduct unobtrusive, structured observation, unstructured observation, or grand-tour questions for participants. Interviews may be exploratory or semi-structured with significant input from detailed field notes (Creswell, 2013).

Van Maanen (2011) presents three approaches to ethnography: *realist, confessional, and impressionist tales*. The realist tale is a straightforward, descriptive, and often third person account; the confessional tale is a more transparent account of the field experience written from the researcher's perspective; and, the impressionist tale is a representational approach intended

to evoke a response from the reader. Regardless of the approach, the reader should expect to see thick descriptions and specific quotations from participants that describe the interactions, relationships, and meaning of a culture (Creswell, 2013).

Narrative Research

Rooted in sociology and anthropology, narrative research describes the significant events or experiences within participants' lives, including what those experiences mean for them (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1998). Data sets include field notes, journal records, interview transcripts, observations, storytelling, letter writing, pictures, audio, and visual recordings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2005). Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select rich data sources, consider broad interview questions, and focus on establishing collaborative relationships (Patton, 2015). This creates trust so that participants are empowered to tell their stories in detail (Riessman, 2008).

Narrative analysis is more of an umbrella term for a range of techniques and analytical approaches. In other words, the researcher can look for a particular analytical approach that best fits their research topic, question, and data. Three of the most commonly accepted approaches are shared here. The first is the *thematic/holistic-content* approach. It focuses on the "text" or the content of the narrative as whole in order to understand both the written and the spoken language but it can include visual data such as photographs and videos (Leiblich, Tuval-Maschiach, & Zilber, 1998; Riessman, 2008).

The second is the *structural/holistic-form* analysis, which focuses on the relationship between the individual and the social narrative. Therefore, this approach emphasizes the plot, structure, or style of participants' stories (Leiblich et al., 1998; Riessman, 2008). The third is the *interpretative* approach, which focuses on how particular events have been reconstructed or interpreted after they have taken place (Riessman, 2008). Therefore, it is important for narrative analysts to understand who is telling the narrative, to whom the narrative is being told, and the broader social context in which the narrative has meaning.

From an ethical view, narrative analysts must ensure the authenticity of the data, retain permission from participants to retell and report on the stories, and ensure that the account of the stories is made from the participants' perspectives. Therefore, narrative analysts should be sensitive, empathetic, and nonjudgmental while protecting participants' confidentiality and privacy (Reissman, 2008).

Case Study

Seminal case study researchers include Merriam (1998), Creswell and Asmussen (1995), Stake (1995), and Yin (2009). Case study offers a detailed, in-depth data collection process that uses multiple sources of data to form a "bound case" (Creswell, 2013). For example, a campus shooting can be a bound case that explores the response to that shooting from the vantage point of the students, the faculty, and the community at large (Creswell & Asmussen, 1995). Data can be collected by interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisuals, and may result in a detailed case description of the shooting event, with a variety of themes - denial, fear, safety, retriggering and campus planning – centric to the campus' response to the shooting.

Stake (1995) suggests that case analysis research procedures begin with sorting out the type of case analysis as either *intrinsic or instrumental*. Intrinsic cases offer information about a particular case, whereas instrumental cases offer a general understanding of an issue. Alternatively, Yin (2009) indicates that case analysis inquiry is divided into three types:

exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Both authors agree that case study procedures can be single site/case, multi-site/case, and collective/comparative case.

Regarding data collection procedures, Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) generally agree on the reliance of multiple sources of data. However, Yin (2009) expressly requires that theoretical propositions guide data collection sources and methods. In comparison, Stake (1995) supports "a flexible list of research questions" (p. 29). Between the two authors, Yin (2009) offers clear guidelines on how to define and conduct a case.

Beyond data collection, both researchers share robust, yet differing commitments to data analysis procedures. Yin (2009) supports four general analytic strategies: relying on theoretical propositions, working data from the "ground up," developing a case description, and examining plausible rival explanations. Conversely, Stake (1995) approaches data analysis more generally, with commitment to categorical aggregation, searching for patterns in the data, and developing naturalistic generalizations.

Generic Method

Generic methodology is required when other, more focused approaches are not appropriate or when an author prefers not to subscribe to a specific theory or framework in the analysis process. Generic qualitative methodology explores the participant's report of their subjective experience with interview data, questionnaires, or surveys (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). Data analysis can be inductive, theoretical, or thematic, and analysis largely includes searching for repeated patterns of data to create themes. It is often confused with phenomenology, but it is distinctly different. For example, generic methodology explores an experience, such as a person's belief or attitude about their supervisor, while phenomenology explores the experience itself (e.g., anger, disgust, jealousy).

Discussion

As qualitative inquiry continues to gain credibility, the MCI offers one response to the need for methodological congruence. First, the MCI may support editors/reviewers who deliver critical feedback to researchers. In this context, the editor may simply highlight the elements of the table that would indicate how the author's work can improve. Such a tangible and visual sample offers the novice researcher a concrete standard that addresses quality and integrity.

Second, researchers may go to the MCI when they are relatively unfamiliar with a specific methodology. Someone who has published a number of studies using grounded theory may use the MCI to practice case study methodology or phenomenology, to broaden their research toolbox. The MCI offers information on the seminal authors and minimal best practices to make the process less threatening.

Third, as authors, writing the manuscript can be an onerous activity. The MCI may act as a buffer to this process because it offers examples within each part of the methodology section. It provides a step-wise progression to build content using a consistent source and philosophical perspective.

Fourth, it offers faculty members a means to teach the six main methodologies with a vision toward ethics, appraisal, and consistent terminology. This way, teachers function as gate-keepers who elevate qualitative practices. This continues to heighten awareness and insist on excellence in this rapidly growing field.

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Appendix: The Methodological Congruence Instrument (MCI)

Methodological Approach	*Research Question*	*Data Collection/ Sampling*	*Philosophical Perspective/ Seminal Authors*	*Data Analysis*	*Findings/ Discussion*
Phenomenology Phenomenology is inductive exploration of the lived experience of a specific phenomenon. Important concepts: Consciousness as intentionality, bracketing, phenomenological reduction. 4 Types: 1. Transcendental 2. Hermeneutic 3. Descriptive 4. Interpretive	What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon?	Individuals who have experienced the phenomena Criterion sampling 5-15 participants is standard	**1. Transcendental (**Husserl) Moustakas'(1994) approach focuses on the fullness & essence of the lived experience of the phenomenon. **2. Hermeneutic** (Heidegger) van Manen's (1990) approach includes both description & interpretation as a dynamic and iterative process to understand the lived experience. **3. Descriptive** Giorgi (2009) created a modern Husserlian approach to "being-in-the-world" with a focus on describing the phenomenon subjectively/psycholo-gically by the participant & refraining from interpretation. **4. Interpretive** Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) focused on what happens when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for people.	Distill the substance and experience of the phenomenon to the essence as presented in the collective interview data	Presentation of themes that lead to the essence of the phenomenon. The themes include rich thick description exemplified with direct quotes from participants. Intended to leave the reader with a strong grasp of what it is like to have experienced the stated phenomenon.

Methodological Approach	Research Question	Data Collection/ Sampling	Philosophical Perspective/ Seminal Authors	Data Analysis	Findings/ Discussion
Grounded Theory Inductive development of a model, process, or theory based on a problem or gap in the literature; participants respond to a central phenomenon; memo-ing is part of reflexivity. Requires that you validate your findings with member checking. Requires that outliers are explored in more depth and incorporated into the analysis.	Grounded Theory asks "process-type" questions about changing experience over time or its stages/phases; processes involved in change. What is the process of becoming…? How does one…? How is X created? What are the dimensions of X experience?	In grounded theory, theoretical sampling is the process of data collection in which the researcher collects, analyzes, and decides what data to collect next in order to develop a theory. Need homogeneous sample of 20-30 participants	**Strauss & Corbin** *Descriptive GT* based on the reasoning that there is no pre-constructed reality. Recognize bias and maintain objectivity	*Coding occurs in the following process:* Open code Axial code Selective code Thematic Development *Constant comparison throughout process such that codes can change with each round of comparison. Matrices are helpful to keep track of the interplay between conditions and subsequent consequences.	Findings are the interview data/quotes, shared verbatim with explanation as to their significance in advancing the theory. Discussion is a model, method, process, illustration-shared with elaboration and linked to the identified gap in the introduction.
			Glaser, 1992 *Descriptive GT* The code is the central relationship between the data and the theory— the category will show itself from the codes	Coding process: Open code Selective code Categories Theory *constant comparison as above *themes are emergent because codes are assigned, not preset.	Same as above
			Charmaz, 2014 Co-Constructivist & Interpretive. Ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist.	Open code Theoretical code (memo) Include thoughts, feelings, views, ideas. Categories form theory and are	As above but find emotion, simple language, rhythms, timing, stories, evocative writing.

Methodological Approach	Research Question	Data Collection / Sampling	Philosophical Perspective/ Seminal Authors	Data Analysis	Findings/ Discussion
Ethnography To make meaning of a group that shares a culture. Researchers as participant and observer; natural environment; immersive.	Descriptive group determines the direction of the study. This will be further determined by the access of the researcher to fieldwork What do you think about…? How do you think people would react to your views on…? What was it like…?	Selection criteria – can researcher establish a participant-observer role? Clarify units of analysis that are accessible, represent a cultural group, and can reasonably be covered by researcher & research team.	Van Maanen (2011) presents three approaches to ethnography: 1. **The realist tale** is a straightforward, descriptive, and often third person account **2. The confessional tale** is a more transparent account of the field experience written from the researcher's perspective. **3. The impressionist tale** is representational approach to evoke a response from the reader.	**Primary emphasis** on fieldwork and field notes. Collection may include unobtrusive structured observation, unstructured participation-observation, or grand-tour questions. **Interviews** may be exploratory, semi-structured, or grand tour interactions with informants. *Ethnography includes, "Analyzing data through description of the culture-sharing group; themes about the group"* **Focus** is on making meaning/sense of experienced culture. Critical thinking, triangulation, and establishing patterns are some of the expected methods of analysis. May include analysis of supporting archived material.	Study will include a detailed explanation of a singular or limited number of cases. Expect to see thick descriptions & quotations from participants. Presentation of meaning established during experiences within studied culture. Focus on the culture not on the fieldwork; fieldwork is a means to understanding the culture.

Methodological Approach	Research Question	Data Collection/ Sampling	Philosophical Perspective/ Seminal Authors	Data Analysis	Findings/ Discussion
Narrative Narrative methodology emphasizes the description of participants' lives, experiences, and the meaning of those experiences to the participants in their own words Examples of narratives are and not limited to life history, life story, autobiography, biography, and oral history.	The types of research questions are based on the nature of the individual experiences including the meaning of those experiences to the individual. For example: What is it like for doctoral students who failed the compre-hensive exams?	Data Collections includes journal records, interview transcripts, observations, storytelling, letter writing, pictures, and/or audio-video materials. Purposive sampling entails selecting cases that will most benefit the study. A small sample size of 1 to 25 participants. Trusting relationships and collaboration empower participants to tell their stories. Active listening and collaboration is critical.	**Riessman, 2008** Structural Analysis, to examine storyline, sequence, timing, coherence, style. The How, or modus operandi of narration. **Williams, 1984** 1.Definition/Extended Narrative 2.Representation: Attention to Form and language: Lengthy interview excerpts. 3. Analysis 4. Attention to Contexts **Labov & Waletzky, 1967** 1. The abstract summary/ "point of the story. 2. Orientation (time, place, characters, situation). 3. Complicating action (sequence of events or plot, usually with a crisis & turning point). 4. Evaluation (significance of the action). 5. Result or resolution of conflict. 6. Coda (perspective returned back to the present).	***Thematic Analysis,*** allows the researcher to focus on the **content or context**, *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why* of the narrative, holistically.	The findings should be about the researcher's development of the participant's narrative regarding his/her particular story or experience. Therefore, in the findings, there should be a demonstration of adherence to both the thematic and structural analytical process of the transcript with clarity.

Methodological Approach	Research Question	Data Collection/ Sampling	Philosophical Perspective/ Seminal Authors	Data Analysis	Findings/ Discussion
Case Study Researcher obligation is to understand "this one case" or multiple cases. Researchers define and explore a "bounded" system such as a process, activity, event, individual. entity, geographic area, group. The process of bounding requires the researcher to define concrete boundaries as to who is in the system and who is not. Cases need to demonstrate the variation and or extreme; interviews, details, demographics, GPA, work status, to find "epiphanies" and determine the overall meaning of the story.	A case study's research questions typically are formed to answer— who, what, where, how, and why; case study is most appropriate for how and why. Research questions lead to propositions.	Theory guides the sample case selected, choosing one/s that are most purposeful. Sampling logic not appropriate. Where design is multi-case, choice of cases is by replication. Detailed case of 1-4 participants; include the "unusual case" or outlier.	**Stake, 1995** Constructivism	Categorical aggregation through cross case analysis or direct interpretation of the individual instance. -Patterns -Naturalistic Generalizations	Report format with opening and closing vignette; focus on defining the case; context; key issues, assertions. No separate discussion.
			Asmussen & Creswell, 1995 Constructionist Approaches	-Facts of Case - Categorical aggregation through cross case analysis or direct interpretation of the individual instance. -Patterns -Categories -Themes -Naturalistic Generalizations	**Funnel Approach** Context, incident, and identification of issues to be addressed; themes are typical. Separate discussion section; written in a story-like fashion; focused on broader categories in aggregate of themes discovered**.**
			Yin, 2009 Positivism Pragmatism	Reported by type of case (single, multiple, Q/A, etc.),variations, comparison of cases (linear vs non-linear; cross-case analysis); pattern matching	Multiple methods, linear, comparative, chronological, theory building, suspense, unsequenced.
			Lincoln & Guba, 2005 social constructivism	Substantive case report	

Methodological Approach	Research Question	Data Collection/ Sampling	Philoso-phical Perspective or Seminal Authors	Data Analysis	Findings/ Discussion
Generic Method The process of coding and categorizing data sets to establish a theme and a visual display	This type of data analysis works well with a variety of qualitative research questions.	Elements of generic analysis include: · Origination · Verification · Nomination · Temporal designation	none	Codes are · a priori · a posteriori · iterative Steps in the generic data analysis process: · enumerate data set · code data · memo: use track changes to number, date, and label each to define the code and document the thought process · construct a list of codes with definition · construct groupings of codes into categories · display the category heading that defines the codes like a tree diagram · construct a major theme based on the groupings of categories · create a visual representation illustrates your findings	

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