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Proposed Scoring Scheme for Qualitative Thematic Analysis

Brian Rodgers and Mick Cooper, 2006

Drawing on the work of psychotherapy researchers Robert Elliott, Clara Hill and colleagues, the following scheme has been proposed for the write up of qualitative thematic analysis when describing the 'weighting' of codes or categories (i.e. the number of interviews that the code/category appeared in). The intention is to use 'plain English' terms to describe the frequency of occurrence. For example the term 'around half' is used to describe 50% plus or minus one interview, and 'nearly all' is used to describe 100% minus one or two interviews.

The table below sets out the proposed scoring scheme for studies with various numbers of participants, from 6 to 20. It is not envisaged that this scheme is applicable to studies of less than six participants, however the scheme could well be extended beyond 20. The scoring tends to be 'understated', such that 'Around half' equates to a half and slightly more rather than a half and slightly less. Additionally, the 'Nearly all' is restricted to All-1 until there are more than 11 participants in a study.

		Number of participants (6 – 11)					
		6	7	8	9	10	11
'All'	All participants	6	7	8	9	10	11
'Nearly All'	100%-1 participant	5	6	7	8	9	10
'Most'	50%+1 to 100%-1	4	5	5-6	6-7	7-8	7-9
'Around Half'	50%+1 participants	3	4	4	4-5	5-6	5-6
'Some'	3 to 50%+1 participants	-	3	3	3	3-4	3-4
'A couple'	2 participants	2	2	2	2	2	2
'One'	Only 1 participant	1	1	1	1	1	1

		Number of participants (12 – 17)					
		12	13	14	15	16	17
'All'	All participants	12	13	14	15	16	17
'Nearly All'	100%-2 participants	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
'Most'	50%+1 to 100%-2	8-9	8-10	9-11	9-12	10-13	10-14
'Around Half'	50%+1 participants	6-7	6-7	7-8	7-8	8-9	8-9
'Some'	3 to 50%+1 participants	3-5	3-5	3-6	3-6	3-7	3-7
'A couple'	2 participants	2	2	2	2	2	2
'One'	Only 1 participant	1	1	1	1	1	1

		Number of participants (18 – 23)					
		18	19	20	21	22	23
'All'	All participants	18	19	20	21	22	23
'Nearly All'	100%-2 participants	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
'Most'	50%+1 to 100%-2	11-15	11-16	12-17	12-18	13-19	13-20
'Around Half'	50%+1 participants	9-10	9-10	10-11	10-11	11-12	11-12
'Some'	3 to 50%+1 participants	3-8	3-8	3-9	3-9	3-10	3-10
'A couple'	2 participants	2	2	2	2	2	2
'One'	Only 1 participant	1	1	1	1	1	1