Activities

# Chapter 5: Qualitative methodologies: An overview

## Activity 5.1

Identify a topic from practice that you think would be appropriate for a phenomenological study. Why would phenomenology be an appropriate research method to investigate this topic?

For an example of a study using phenomenology read the following paper:

Badakhsh, M. Hastings-Tolsma, M. Firouzkohi, M. Amirshahi, M. and Sadat Hashemi, Z. (2020) The lived experience of women with a high-risk pregnancy: A phenomenology investigation, *Midwifery,* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.midw.2019.102625>

## Activity 5.2

Identify a topic from practice that you think would be appropriate for an ethnographic study. Why would ethnography be an appropriate research method to investigate this topic?

For an example of a study using ethnography read the following paper:

van Belle, E. Giesen, J. Conroy, T. van Mierlo, M. Vermeulen, H. Huisman‐de Waal, G. and Heinen, M. (2019) Exploring person‐centred fundamental nursing care in hospital wards: A multi‐site ethnography, *Journal of Clinical Nursing Studies,*

DOI: 10.1111/jocn.15024

## Activity 5.3

Identify a topic from practice that you think would be appropriate for a grounded theory study. Why would grounded theory be an appropriate research method to investigate this topic?

For an example of a study using grounded theory read the following paper:

Porr, C. Gaudine, A. Woo, K. Smith-Young, J. and Green, C. (2019) How Community Nurses Manage Ethical Conflicts: A Grounded Theory Study, *Global Qualitative Nursing Research,* 6:1–9. [https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2333393619894958](https://doi.org/10.1177/2333393619894958)

## Activity 5.4

Identify a topic from practice that you think would be appropriate for an action research study. Why would action research be an appropriate method to investigate this topic?

For an example of a study using action research read the following paper:

Hickey, S.D. Maidment, S-J. Heineman, K.M. Roe, Y.L. and Kildea, S.V. (2018) Participatory action research opens doors: Mentoring Indigenous researchers to improve midwifery in urban Australia, *Women and Birth,* 31:263–268.

## Activity 5.5

Chose a broad topic, problem or issue that relates to your practice, examples could include breastfeeding, wound care or administration of medicines. Using a mind map, identify all of the issues relating to your chosen topic that could be explored in a research study. Then identify the most appropriate research method to address each issue. Try to identify at least one aspect of the topic for each of the research methods that we have outlined in chapters 4 and 5: randomised controlled trial, cohort study, case-control study, survey, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and action research.

## Activity 5.6

As we have seen, some researchers are firmly positioned in one methodological ‘camp’ and consider the opposing methodology too flawed to be used. Table 1 below outlines other, in some cases more contentious views regarding qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Table 1 More contentious views regarding the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Quantitative** | **Qualitative** |
| Easy to do | Difficult to do |
| Quantity | Quality |
| Top-down approach | Bottom-up approach |
| Hard | Soft |
| Masculine | Feminine |
| Serious | Trivial |
| Evidence | Opinion |
| Scientific | Not scientific |
| Systematic | Disorganized, haphazard |
| Artificial | Natural |
| Rigid | Responsive |
| Hypothesis-driven | Person-centred |
| Quick | Time-consuming |
| Preconceived ideas can lead to bias | Subjectivity can lead to bias |
| The research is a planned journey following a designated route and has a specific, predetermined destination  | The research is an evolving journey, there may be a desired destination at the outset, but there may be an unexpected endpoint |
| Highly regarded | Growing level of regard |

Review Table 1 and provide an argument and counter-argument for the suggested characteristics of qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

## Activity 5.7

The following two papers explore the same topic; patient handover, one is qualitative, the other quantitative. Read and compare both papers:

Reine, E. Rustøen, T. Ræder, J. and Aase, K. (2019) Postoperative patient handovers—Variability in perceptions of quality: A qualitative focus group study. *Journal of Clinical Nursing,* 28(3-4):663–676.

Malfait, S. Eeckloo, K. Van Biesen, W. and Van Hecke, A. (2019) The effectiveness of bedside handovers: A multilevel, longitudinal study of effects on nurses and patients. *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* 75:1690–1701.

The studies were undertaken in different countries and relate to a different practice speciality. Nevertheless, as you read the papers think about the ways in which the studies were conducted and the research findings. Do you think one study is more useful and meaningful than the other? If you think this is the case, explain your rationale.