If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it.

— Abraham Lincoln

Today

• Quick review
  o Assessment and evaluation
    ▪ Why and what

• Qualitative inquiry
  o The QUAL perspective
    ▪ What
    ▪ Why
    ▪ When
  o QUAL in practice
    ▪ How
      – Analysis and synthesis
      – Writing up and reporting
      – Representation and display
Quick Review

**Purposes**

- **Documentation:** The *story* of our organization, program, project . . .
  - What’s *happening*? What’s going on, how *much*, what *kinds*?
    - Who are we, what do we *do*, how do we *do* it, who do we *serve*?
- **Learning, planning, and improvement:** *Practice-based evidence* for *quality* and *performance management*.
  - How can we get *better*? How can we be *nimble* and *innovative*?
- **Effectiveness:** Strategies and activities. *Outputs* and *outcomes*.
  - What’s *working*? What’s *not working*? *Why/why not*?
- **Advocacy:** Find the *case*. Make the *case*.
  - How do we demonstrate *merit*, *worth*, and *significance*?

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**Quick Review**

**What we mean by . . .**

**Assessment**

Assessment is the *organized and ongoing process* of *collecting* and *analyzing* data and *information* so as to *describe* activities, practices, progress, and other dimensions of performance.
Quick Review

What we mean by . . .

Assessment

What’s happening?

Quick Review

What we mean by . . .

Evaluation
Systematic investigations of the merit (i.e., quality, excellence), worth (i.e., value, cost-effectiveness), and/or significance of a project (i.e., impact, importance).

**Quick Review**

**What we mean by . . .**

**Evaluation**

Did it work/not?

How well? Why? How?

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**Quick Review**

**Data & Methods**

*It was a great step in science* when men became convinced that in order to understand the nature of things, they must begin by asking not whether a thing is **good** or **bad**, **noxious** or **beneficial**, but of **what kind** it is?

And **how much** is there of it?

**Quality** and **Quantity** were then first recognized as the primary features to be observed in **scientific inquiry**.

— James Clerk Maxwell

Address to the Mathematical and Physical Sections of the British Association, Liverpool, 15 Sep 1870

The Scientific Papers of James Clerk Maxwell (1890 edition, reprint 2003), vol. 2, 217
Where there are numbers, we also need words.
Where there are words, we also need numbers.

The Wheel of Research

- Theory or Model
- Hypotheses
- Data and Information
- The World is Patterned

Qualitative Research

- Generating Theory
- Inductive Reasoning

Quantitative Research

- Deductive Reasoning
- Testing Theory
Deductive logic or reasoning:
Theory ➔ Evidence

Inductive logic or reasoning:
Evidence ➔ Theory

Myth #1
Quantitative methods are more scientific and/or more rigorous than qualitative methods.

Myth #2
Qualitative methods are easier than quantitative methods.
Quick Review
An evaluation workplan

1. **What** are you evaluating?
2. What will it **look like** if you’re successful?
3. **Data:** What **information**, what **evidence** – will you collect answer your questions?
4. **Methods:** From **whom** and **how** and **when** are you going to collect the data?
5. **Analysis/Synthesis:** What are you going to **do** with the data?
6. **Writing up and reporting** your findings

---

Qualitative Inquiry

The **QUAL** perspective

**What**

**Why**

**When**
What?

Qualitative (data, methods, designs)
Qualitative data is evidence largely in the form of **words** and **texts**.
- Quotes, narratives, and stories
- Descriptions of environments, events, people, etc.
- Things that “work” like texts such as images, media, artworks, places, etc.

What?

In contrast with quantitative research, qualitative studies usually do not involve *a priori* hypotheses or the measurement of **quantified variables**.
- Qualitative researchers seek to **describe**, **interpret**, and **understand** phenomena in a **holistic framework. NO MANIPULATION.**

Not **opinion**, **belief** (religious or otherwise), **hunch**, **received wisdom**, **guess**, **tradition**, **suspicion**, **gut feeling**, etc.
Why?

- Qualitative methods are particularly useful for answering/exploring *What, how, and why* questions.
  - **What**: Descriptive (also QUANT, e.g. % or # of . . . )
    - What happened during our OGP-funded project?
    - What was it like to participate in the Spotlight program?
  - **How and Why**: Process and mechanism
    - Why are people coming to our program?
    - How did we implement our outreach strategies?

Tool:

*Why/When – Patton’s 20 Questions*

*Activity Packet p. 1*
When you need/want to . . .

- To develop an initial understanding of an issue or problem when theory is weak or non-existent
- Explore a range of ideas and feelings people have about an event, experience, policy, etc.
- Understand different perspectives and uncover underlying motivations
- Provide information needed to design a quantitative study
- Explain findings from a quantitative study . . .

Activity 1: Self-Test

Activity Packet p. 3
Qualitative Inquiry

QUAL in practice
How

Qualitative Inquiry
Strategic Themes
(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

- Design Strategies (1-3)
- Data Collection and Fieldwork Strategies (4-7)
- Analysis Strategies (5-12)
How?
Design Strategies
(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

1. Naturalistic inquiry
   - Real-world situations; no manipulation; openness to experience.

2. Emergent design flexibility
   - Adaptive, nimble, elastic; resists rigidity, embraces responsiveness.

3. Purposeful sampling
   - Information rich cases (individuals, events, phenomena, experiences, etc.) are selected as being illustrative and illuminative.
   - Seeks deep and focused insight versus broad and encompassing explanation.
How?
Design Strategies
(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

No formula exists to determine sample size in qualitative research.

- Trade-offs between depth (fewer cases) and breadth (more cases).
- Limitations of time and money.

How?
Design Strategies
(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

Whatever the strategy, a rationale is needed!

- Determine the sample size and scope in advance.
- Emergent sampling design; start out and add to the sample as fieldwork progresses.
- Sample to the point of redundancy (not learning anything new).
  - SATURATION
Tool:
Purposeful Sampling Strategies
Activity Packet p. 4

How?
Data Collection & Fieldwork Strategies
(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

4. Qualitative Data
  - **In-depth:** Interviews, observations, documents, artifacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collecting Qualitative Data</th>
<th>Oral Interviews</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Written or Oral Questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Un- or Semi-structured Interviews</td>
<td>Observational fieldwork Extant documents and artifacts</td>
<td>Open-ended written or oral questionnaires</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collecting Qualitative Data

Use measures such as these . . .

EASIER

• **Observations** (events, relationships, settings, participants, etc.)
• **Document review** (press clippings, letters and emails, meeting minutes, memos, files, etc.)
• **Artifact review** (artworks, artmaking materials, historical influences, etc.)
• **Short-answer** survey items
• **Interviews** (in-person, phone, email, etc.)
• **Focus groups** (patrons, board, staff, artists, etc.)

HARDER

• **Observational fieldwork** Tool: Activity Packet p. 5
  o Multiple places, multiple times: People, settings, objects, contexts, processes, relationships, high/low points, celebrations, events, etc.
  o Descriptions of program or workplace activities; planning and management meetings; formal and informal interactions; routines, behaviors, conversations, official and unofficial places, etc.

• **Review/analysis of documents and artifacts**
  o Official and unofficial documents and records; work products; personnel assessments; grant proposals and reports; formal and informal correspondence and memos; publications, newsletters, media; journals, diaries, letters; artworks (literary and non-literary); photographs, videos, objects; emails and postings; etc.
Collecting Qualitative Data

- **Short-answer** survey items; written or oral questionnaires
  - Open-ended questions or “free comment” spaces often are included in instruments along with scaled surveys.

- **Interviews and focus groups**
  - Program participants, directors, constituents; board, staff, user groups; community members; civic and business leaders; etc.
  - Open-ended, un- or semi-structured, conversational; individuals; facilitated or self-directed focus groups/group interviews.

Building a Text for Analysis

Purpose of QUAL data collection is to build an informational text – a “data corpus” – that will be analyzed and synthesized.
Data Corpus

- Narrative descriptions of events, artifacts, artworks, environments, etc.
- Narrative excerpts from written materials
- Images and other media
- Patron/participant comments and viewpoints
- Feedback and recommendations from artists, staff, board members, patrons/participants
- Patron/participant stories, descriptions, extended observations, ideas

How?

Data Collection & Fieldwork Strategies

(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

5. Personal Experience and Engagement
   - Close, direct contact; the researcher’s personal experiences, background, and insights are valid.

6. Dynamic systems
   - The “case” is always developing; change is constant.

7. Empathic Neutrality and Mindfulness
   - “Vicarious understanding without judgment.”
How?
Analysis Strategies
(Patton, 2002, pp. 40-41)

8. Unique Case Orientation
   - Analysis begins with the true story of a unique case.

9. Inductive Analysis and Creative Synthesis
   - Iterative immersion and imaginative reflection.

10. Holistic Perspective
    - The case is a complex system and cannot be reduced.

11. Context Sensitivity
    - “Naturalistic inquiry preserves natural context” (p. 62).

12. Voice, Perspective, Reflexivity
    - Researcher is responsible for/critical of his/her “voice.”

Activity 2: Self-Test
Activity Packet p. 6
Analyzing & Synthesizing Qualitative Data

• Interpret individual narratives to reveal themes and patterns, composite portraits and promising practices, strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities.

• Use stories, callouts, images, graphics, etc., to describe personal responses and outcomes and illustrate meanings and models that reflect what happened and what participants experienced.

Analyzing & Synthesizing

• **Goal:** To link specific textual data to concepts, constructs, categories, “essential themes,” descriptions, etc.
  o Some categories **precede** data collection
    ▪ Based on constructs of interest, theory, literature
  o Others **emerge** from data itself
    ▪ Unexpected observations, new insights
Analyzing & Synthesizing
Step-by-Step

• Prepare and organize the data for analysis

• **Explore, segment, and code** the data

• Collapse codes into **clusters**

• Sort and organize clusters, develop **descriptions** and **derive/define themes**

• **Interpret** the findings

• **Data display: Represent** the findings

• **Validate** the credibility of the findings

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What’s a “code”?

• “Codes are **tags** or **labels** for assigning **units of meaning** to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study.

  Codes are usually attached to ‘chunks’ of varying size – **words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs**.” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56)
Coding

Codes should stick closely to the data
- Preserve words/phrases of 3-5 words
  - “really got emotional” not “feeling-full and resonant experience”
- Preserve events
  - A “show” not a “theatrical event”
- Portray viewpoints
  - “primary interest”
- Suggest contexts
  - “close-knit community”

What’s a “cluster”?

- After open coding an entire text, make a list of all code words and phrases
- Cluster together related codes and look for redundancy in words and/or content
  - Collapse codes
- Objective: Reduce the list of codes to a more manageable number
  - 5 or 15 or 25 or . . . ? depends on the data corpus
What’s a “theme”?

- Themes represent organized groups of codes and clusters – *types, motifs, categories, frame, unifying ideas, structures, etc.*
- You can’t classify something as a theme unless it cuts across the *preponderance* of the data!

Thematizing

- **Gather** your remaining codes and clusters
- **Assemble and organize them into groups** that reflect similar ideas, structures, needs, meanings, interests, etc.
  - Collapse and reduce, collapse and reduce, collapse and reduce . . .
- **Create theme names** that encompass the groups you’re organizing
Types of Themes

- **Ordinary**: Expected
- **Unexpected**: Surprise!
- **Hard-to-classify**: Not fitting readily into clusters; don’t really match emerging categories
- **Major themes** represent the “big ideas”
- **Minor themes/sub-themes** represent secondary, but still related ideas
  - Minor themes can be included under major themes in a report

Naming Codes & Themes

**Names can come from several sources**

- **The data corpus**: Participants’ actual words, text from documents/artifacts, etc.
- **The researcher**: Terms, concepts, categories, etc., that reflect what s/he sees in the data and/or evaluation questions
- **The literature**: Constructs, phenomenon, models, concepts, theories, etc.
Your Turn!
DIY QUAL Data Analysis
Case Brief: ArtNight Pasadena
Data Corpus: Item 15

Analyzing & Synthesizing Qualitative Data

Getting Started

• Read through all the texts!
  o Obtain a general sense of the data by doing a preliminary, exploratory analysis – reading through the text as many times as you need to familiarize yourself with the data.

• Memo your thoughts/ideas and think about how the data might be organized and/or presented.
Analyzing & Synthesizing Qualitative Data

• Start with one response or set of responses to one item
• Identify text segments – ask “what is this/are these person/people saying?”
• Bracket/circle/underline/highlight/? segments
• Assign code word(s), phrase(s)
• Cluster to reduce redundancy
• Collapse codes into themes

Writing Up & Reporting

“More so than with traditional research, where conventions are already established, one has the freedom to express findings in multiple ways” (Giorgi, 1985, p. 20).

“There are no standard modes of presenting the results of [qualitative] studies” (Kvale, 1996, p. 264).
### Writing Up & Reporting

- Identify text that provides **support for themes**
  - **Quotes** can come from interview/survey data or observations
  - Look for **dialogue** in the participants’ speech, their words/phrases
- Try using **metaphors** and **analogies**
- Locate **multiple perspectives** and **contrary evidence**
- Look for **vivid detail** and **rich, thick descriptions**
- Identify **tensions** and **contradictions** in individual experiences

### Writing Up & Reporting

- **Tailor content to audience**, remove jargon, be concise
- **Create visual interest** through tables, graphs, images
- **Use call-out quotes** from participants, from the literature, from experts in the field
- “**Shape**” the reader’s experience so they get all the way through to the end!
Stuck?

• Introduction
  o Brief description of the project and your evaluation. What was the purpose, what were your goals?

• Methods
  o How was the data collected? Analyzed (coding, clustering, thematizing; representing; interpreting)? And . . . ?

• Findings
  o Descriptive elements: Event, place, people, activities
  o Themes: feelings, experiences, motivations, interests, benefits, etc.
  o **Representation and display**

• Summary
  o New knowledge/understanding, suggestions, applications, etc.

Representation & Display

(Miles & Huberman, 1994)

• Themes, patterns, structures, connections, relationships, etc. are . . .
  o **Discovered/revealed, explored, and visualized** using data presentation approaches such as . . .
    ▪ Matrices, tables, charts, networks, images, clouds, and other graphical formats
Clients are most motivated to buy when MCOL services are perceived to be easy to access, book, and present; of high artistic and educational quality; and culturally and academically relevant.

An Ecology of Creativity

LACAC 2015
Kamella Tate, MFA, EdD