

an activist's guide  
to research and advocacy



RASSP workbook  
centre for civil society

## general introduction

This workshop will begin to examine some of the methodologies most closely associated with the research you have proposed to undertake in your submissions and subsequent interviews. The purpose of this workshop will be to both orientate you to the various aspects of your proposed research and at the same time develop the necessary skills to plan, implement and analyse your research. This workshop will have as a focus on research skills and planning your research by focussing you thinking around core issues. This will all be done in the context of the research topics you have developed in the earlier phases of this project. You will revisit and refine your research questions and work on the design of the research project and develop a fieldwork plan. Skills in field work and data analysis will then be practiced.

There will be a supervisor assigned to your particular project that will mentor and assist you through the process. It is important though that you attempt to solve some of the problems that confront you during the research process as in many respects the generic skills involved in research are problem solving, planning and critical thinking, all of which are developed through exercising them in practice. They are not theoretical constructs.

Thus far we have looked at research through a series of different lenses. We began by stepping back to see the general logic of research as a process of problem solving through asking and attempting to answer questions that relate to a particular problem in a structured way. It has been stressed that research must have a purpose and more specifically in our context this research purpose needs to be linked to the organisation's/campaign's/movement's purpose and incorporated in your research through planning. We have examined the use of research in advocacy processes and also assessed advocacy itself to see where our research efforts may be located in order to have some impact on the issue that is being dealt with.

We have also come to understand that the research process is not neutral at all but is a weapon in the struggle over determining the dominant understanding in society, of society. We can try to make our research objective but we cannot remove it from the power realities of our society, which in all likelihood is the reason the research needs to be done at all. In this process of uncovering the power dynamics that are central to assessing society or individuals within society we have also seen that the complexity and inaccessibility of research is a myth that is maintained to control knowledge production in society. We have witnessed how knowledge is generated, who decides what is important knowledge, and who can access it is a political process usually directed to maintain unequal power relations and distribution of resources in society. Your research projects then are a challenge to the status quo both in terms of the issues that you wish to investigate and how this investigation may be used in concrete actions to bring social change but also because you are doing the research not an academic or specialist research organisation. Congratulations on reaching this point.

## the materials

This workshop has a slightly different approach to the materials. You will work from this workbook and have a separate manual that has new information and materials as well as a compilation of previous materials from the project. The manual should be viewed as a resource book to be consulted whilst undertaking your research project. It also contains useful guidelines for reporting or writing up your research.

## this workshop

You have been grouped by research methods following your submissions and the interviews that were conducted with you. This is done in order to provide the most relevant capacity building to assist you with the specific enquiry that you have created.

This workshop is intended to be a fusion of theory and practice in the context of the research you intend to undertake. In many of the exercises you will focus practically on your own research project in preparation for when you leave to gather information. It is the last of the workshop processes but you will still have access to mentored support. At the same time it is useful to keep in contact with people in your workshop group as this workshop should create a research community, which will be mutually beneficial to all who choose to put effort into it into the future.

## the research process

Throughout the project we have discussed research as a process involving a series of steps you need to go through. It has also been apparent that the process does not simply go in one direction in that it is a process of narrowing issues down, collecting information and filtering it, all the while taking decisions and solving problems. You often need to return to an earlier stage and adjust something during the process. For instance once you have collected some background information it may become obvious to you that the area you wish to cover is just too broad for the time and resources you have for the project and so need to go back and adjust your research questions to cover a narrower area. Maybe this has an impact on the purpose of your research and you need to amend this in the last resort. The research process is a guideline only. You do not need to rigidly follow all the steps in the process in that specific sequence, this is for the actual conditions of the research and its purpose to determine. Remember always in making these decisions that the research is being done for a reason and is not in itself a reason. Always maintain a focus on this reason when making decisions on amending your project.

It is time now to embark on your research process. You should have clarified your research purpose and had discussions with how this links to your organisation during the interview process. This workshop will begin with a brief review of this process and then move into the refining of your research questions.

<b>activity 1</b>	<b>setting the research community</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To establish the research community through the introduction of participants and their intended area of work. To initiate reflection on the research process and its relevance to the organisation that will undertake it.
<b>time</b>	40 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
You have 5 minutes to introduce yourself and your research topic. Prepare a brief introduction that covers all of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who are you? (Your name and a bit about how you ended up here at this point in your life)</li><li>• What is your research topic? (Just be brief give a title or brief description)</li><li>• How will it impact on social change in South Africa?</li><li>• How will you use this research community to contribute to your work?</li><li>• How will you contribute to this research community?</li><li>• What values do you think the research community should demonstrate?</li></ul>	

## section 1

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# focussing the research and dealing with literature

### some key issues

"...Research is a skill that is not about following a methodology blindly. In fact the skill of research is more about anticipating and taking decisions to solve problems and issues as the research process continues. These decisions need to include political, moral, intellectual and practical issues all of which have impact in the decision making process and determine the nature of the research." (Mason 2002)

Mason goes on to identify five key questions to orientate the research process. These questions are quite similar to the way you have been taken through the research process up to this point. You have now selected research topics questions and started to read some literature on the topics you are contemplating. In the introductory exercises we will use Mason's five questions in order to assist you in focusing your research and ensuring its direction. You should already have received the reading and task around this authors five focus points and that is where we shall begin our final workshop together. Once this has been done we will move into discussions around methodology and the practice of research in the context of the projects you have selected.

Before we do however we need to introduce ourselves and congratulate one another for making it this far in the process.

Look around at the other people in the room with you. This is a research community and it will serve an important purpose in developing your research skills. The first thing you need to realize as you look around is that you are not alone. The people that are around you all share a common interest in advancing social issues through the process of research and as such you multiple experiences and abilities to draw on right here in this room. Use the contacts you establish over the next few days to discuss ideas and overcome problems you face in the research. This is important not only for the research projects you are doing but critical in building a community of researches who have as their primary interest strengthening civil society and mobilisation that may develop itself into the future as people develop confidence in their abilities. In the first workshop we discussed the notion of power and exclusion from the research process of the majority of people through the use of various barriers such as language and information secrecy etc. The purpose more broadly of you as a group is to wade into the power struggle of information and access to it on the one hand but also redefining social reality in our own terms that is less open to distortion and dilution in the interests of the power status quo in society. Please keep in contact with one another and start to build alliances through this process. Do not compete with one another as this will only serve to isolate you and decrease your overall power to create change in a society defined by inequality, and exploitation.



intellectual puzzle in words	a picture of the intellectual puzzle

### A reminder of different kinds of puzzles

Research is like solving puzzles. Finding the necessary pieces and putting them in the right place relative to other pieces of information. Picture a jigsaw puzzle in your head and then imagine how research becomes about finding pictures of the puzzle and placing them together. Look at the picture you see on the box of the puzzle. How do you see this picture what do you believe are the important elements that make it up. In the picture above you may say that (find picture and make it up)...this is how you see the world and society being made up.

This view of the world and society is called an **ontological perspective**. It sounds like a complicated term which is no surprise given the fondness with which researchers like to confuse us mere people but you will see it often if you are dealing with research.

The next important element of puzzling is the pieces of information that we construct into knowledge. In research the method we construct knowledge or how we see knowledge being constructed is called epistemological perspective. In our example here epistemology is like studying the individual pieces of the puzzle. Look at the jigsaw puzzle in your head. Look at it more closely now; see how the pieces are different shapes and sizes. In the same way knowledge comes in different pieces and sizes.

As researchers we will engage with different kinds of puzzles. Just like if you go to a shop and find different kinds of jigsaw puzzles, they may be large or small, have many or a few pieces. They may be in 2 dimensions they may be 3 dimensional puzzles.

Mason identifies a number of different types of research puzzle that you may engage with. It is important when designing your research and looking at your research questions to understand what kind of puzzle you are trying to solve.

“Intellectual puzzles can and do take a variety of forms connected to the **ontological** and **epistemological** positions encapsulated in the research, and grounded within the specific context of their research problem.

**Developmental puzzles** First, you might, for example, pose a developmental puzzle - how and why did  $x$  or  $y$  develop? The  $x$  or  $y$  might be anything, onto-logically speaking, for example, racist attitudes, cultural imperialism, the American system of government, a mental illness, and so on.

**Mechanical puzzles** Alternatively, your puzzle might be about how something works or is constituted. How does  $x$  or  $y$  work? Why does it work in this way? Again,  $x$  or  $y$  might be anything - intimate personal relationships, a legal system, a penal institution, the human psyche, and so on.

**Comparative puzzles** Your puzzle might be about what we can learn from comparing  $x$  and  $y$ , and how we can explain differences and similarities between them. This could involve comparing legal or social institutions internationally, different cultural objects or artefacts, or groups of people with different sets of experiences, for example.

**Causal/predictive puzzles** You might be interested in causality, and pose a puzzle about what influence  $x$  has on  $y$ , or what causes  $x$  or  $y$ ? You might extend that into a predictive puzzle - what is the likely outcome of  $x$  or  $y$ , where  $x$  or  $y$  might be a social intervention or programme for example.

Whether or not your puzzle is a version of one of these, a combination of them or a variation on them, you will notice the significance of the words 'what, why and how' in formulating the questions. Indeed, Blaikie (2000) has suggested that all research questions can be distilled down into these three categories of interrogation.

Intellectual puzzles, then, will contain different sets of ontological and epistemological assumptions and prescriptions, and will suggest distinctive types of social explanation. In formulating your own intellectual puzzle, you must ensure that you have thought through what these are, and be confident that they are consistent - that is, that your puzzle is **ontologically** meaningful, and **epistemologically** explainable or workable.

<b>activity 3</b>	<b>focussing our work 2: research questions, purpose and methodological strategy</b>
<b>purpose</b>	to bring focus, clarity and more in-depth understanding to the research process being contemplated by participants. To clearly identify our main research question and a number of sub-questions that make our research more manageable and systematic.
<b>time</b>	60 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>This continues from the previous exercise. You have now established your puzzle clearly and this understanding must now be reflected in the research questions. In groups of 3 or 4 (depending on plenary size) discuss each person's puzzle and research questions. These mini reference groups should reach consensus on the research questions and how they reflect the puzzle.</p> <p><b><i>Your Research Questions</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is your main question?</li> <li>2. What are your sub-questions?</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Do they express or problematise your intellectual puzzle?</li> <li>· Are they consistent with each other? Do they add up to a sensible whole?</li> <li>· Are they coherent and transparent? Would anybody but you understand them? Does the question reflect the purpose of the research?</li> <li>· Is there more than one question in the question?</li> <li>· How wide or narrow is the question?</li> <li>· Is the question over ambitious considering available resources?</li> <li>· Is the question ambiguous at all?</li> <li>· Do the terms or concepts used need operational definitions? (It is important for you to give operational definitions of the concepts you use in your research questions. You should identify the concepts that need definitions but you don't need to give the definitions yet).</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Now the questions have been finalised record them on the attached form.</li> <li>2. Identify those concepts in the questions that are key and will need definition. Record these</li> <li>3. Once this is done you should then write down which data sources and methods you will use to answer different questions stating why you choose these. The justification should be recorded under the section 'justification'.</li> </ol> <p>Your discussions should also bear in mind practical considerations of how broad this research question is and how practical answering them would be as well as the purpose of the research. Each person should then record his or her questions in the space provided which will be used for one on one discussion with your supervisor or the facilitator during the process.</p>	

<b>activity 4</b>	<b>identification and definition of key concepts, linking concepts to theory and the operationalisation of concepts for testing</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To expose participants to the identification and definition of concepts to be used in their study, linking these to theoretical paradigms and operationalis-
<b>time</b>	60 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Pen and Paper/ OHP and pens
<b>procedure</b>	
<p><b>Arising from the previous activity</b>, participants have identified the key concepts relevant to their field of research. It is now necessary to define these in a way that we can either measure them or identify their existence or not in the 'social reality' that we are researching.</p> <p>As part of this you should try to link the concepts to your understanding of the 'social reality' and what constitutes knowledge about it (ontology and epistemology). We shall for speed and ease of reference lump these two concepts together now and call them theory. This is not a strict definition of theory but will help to finalise how you focus your research.</p> <p>Use the table provided to focus your thoughts and fill this in as you work through the exercise on your own.</p>	

<b>activity 5</b>	<b>getting started: identifying and prioritising the literature search</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants compile a list of possible sources and type of information necessary for individual research projects.
<b>time</b>	group: 45 minutes      plenary: 15 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Pen, paper, Research Proposal
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Participants split into groups of three or four as reference groups again and examine their research projects and compile a list of possible sources of information that will be necessary to commence with their research projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants examine their research proposal</li> <li>• Compile a list of sources of information they would consult to get their research started.</li> <li>• Prioritise their search for information and state why they have come to such a priority listing.</li> <li>• At least three participants share their exercise with the rest of the group.</li> </ul>	

<b>activity 6</b>	<b>literature search using the print source</b>	
<b>purpose</b>	To expose participants to a systematic literature search in the Roving Library based on individual research interest.	
<b>time</b>	Individual activity: 120 minutes	Plenary: 15 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Pen, paper, photocopying machine	
<b>procedure</b>		
<p>Participants examine their research topics and break it down into key, sub and related concepts. Thereafter, they browse the Roving Library and select books and articles relevant for their research topic. Participants undertake the following activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Browse the title , table of contents, index of books and journal abstracts for articles relevant to their research topic and the key and sub concepts which they have formulated earlier.</li> <li>• Make a schedule or inventory containing the name of the author, the title, the year in which the book was published, publisher’s details and place of publication, and the page number on which the article appears.</li> <li>• Participants photocopy the relevant material they need to prepare for discussions with supervisors on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> day of the training programme.</li> <li>• At least three participants report to the plenary on the results of their search.</li> </ul>		
<b>participants notes:</b>		
<b>list of sources</b>		
<b>source</b>	<b>content</b>	<b>page</b>

## evening activities day 1 and 2

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<b>activity 7</b>	<b>using the Internet to find information</b>	
<b>purpose</b>	To expose participants to a systematic literature search by undertaking advanced Internet search based on individual research interest.	
<b>time</b>	Individual activity: 120 minutes	Plenary: 15 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Stiffy disks, computer	
<b>procedure</b>		
<p>Participants apply their Internet search skills to locate relevant sites for information based on their research topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They make a schedule or inventory containing details about the exact location of the articles on the Web Site.</li> <li>• They save relevant sites under favourites.</li> <li>• They copy selected articles on their hard drive.</li> <li>• Where necessary, save the relevant articles necessary for the research project to stiffy disk.</li> </ul>		
<b>participants notes:</b>		
<b>list of internet information</b>		
<b>source</b>	<b>content</b>	<b>page</b>

<b>activity 8</b>	<b>(optional) literature review and the formulation of a theoretical framework</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants identify the theoretical assumption upon which their study will be based.
<b>time</b>	Individual activity: 60 minutes                      Plenary: 30 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Pen and Paper
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>In this exercise, participants on the basis of the literature review identify the key concepts upon which their study will be based. Each participant looks at his/her research topic and identifies the key theoretical arguments relevant for their study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants consolidate their activity on literature search through the Roving Library and the Internet and identify the key theoretical arguments upon which their study will be undertaken.</li> </ul>	

## consolidation

This is not an exercise for the workshop but rather a process you must follow through the process of your research. You will be looking for more literature and information during the course of your research all of which you should break down and structure as you have practices. As mentioned earlier operationalising the concepts and reviewing information sources is really a simultaneous process and therefore you must remember to read with an eye to operationalising concepts. Through this process you should revisit your definitions and change them as well as look at what you have considered to be your theoretical perspectives. Does the literature change or confirm your initial thoughts in this regard. As you do this process in the research use a form as that provided for in activity 4 and when you have finished this process take a form 3 and fill it out again from scratch. This should now provide you with a ready reference as to the exact nature of the research you are going to conduct.

## section 2

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# interviewing

The first consideration in selecting your method is whether that method fits with what you are trying to find out in the context of a particular social reality.

## qualitative interviewing

### Method theory and practice

Interviews are one of the most commonly recognised forms of qualitative research method. The term qualitative research refers to in depth, semi structured forms of interviewing. Qualitative interviewing has its own character despite variations in style. A core common feature is the reconstruction of knowledge rather than a facts being reported, in interview settings. Meanings and understandings are created in an interaction between the interviewee and the researcher. It is the job of the qualitative interviewer to ensure that the relevant contexts are brought into focus so that situated knowledge can be collected from the interviewee.

Let us consider some reasons why you might wish to use qualitative interviewing as a method:

- Your ontological position may suggest that people's knowledge, views understandings, interpretations, experiences and interaction are meaningful properties of the social reality that your research questions are designed to explore. You may be interested in their perceptions; this might constitute a humanistic approach or you may be interested in the constitution of language, or in discursive constructions of the social or self.
- You should have an epistemological position which allows that a legitimate or meaningful way to generate data on these ontological properties is to talk interactively with people, to ask them questions, to listen to them, gain access to their accounts and articulations or to analyse their use of language and construction of discourse. You should be aware of the implications of this approach, the interview method is heavily dependent on people's capacity to verbalise, interact, conceptualise and remember. It is important not to treat understandings generated in an interview as though they are a direct reflection of understandings that already exists outside of the interview, as this method is not a simple excavation of facts.
- If your view is that knowledge and evidence are contextual, situational and interactional, then you will need the interview itself to be as contextual as possible in the sense that it draws upon the social experiences or processes that you are interested in exploring. You may want to ask the interviewee to talk through specific experiences in their lives rather than to ask them what they have done under certain circumstances. This approach involves trying to ascertain peoples' reasoning or judgments in certain areas by focusing on events and situations which have taken place in their lives rather than asking them about their views on x, y or z. If you are interested in a process that operates situationally, then you will need to ask situational rather than abstract questions. This method is used in a focus group where you

guide group discussions through a particular set of topics so that you can observe how situational interactions take place and how issues are conceptualised, worked out and negotiated in those contexts. You will want to take your cues from the interviewees about what to ask them next rather than from a pre-scripted format. This will enable you to follow up their specific responses along lines that could not have been anticipated in advance. You may wish to follow the narrative or sequence provided by the interviewee.

- You are likely to make certain epistemological assumptions about the interaction between yourself as a researcher and those you are researching.
- If your view on the way social arguments and explanations can be constructed emphasises on depth, nuance complexity and roundness in data rather than the kind of broad surveys of surface patterns which, for example, a questionnaire might provide.
- You are likely to conceptualise yourself as active and reflective in the process of data generation. It is important not to underestimate the challenge of analysing your own role in the research process.
- The data you want may not feasibly be available in any other form such as documents or observation, so asking people for their accounts is the only way of generating the kind of data you want.
- You may want to add an additional dimension; a different angle or greater depth to your research process and qualitative interviewing becomes one of several methods used to explore your research questions.
- To may have a particular view of research ethics and politics that means you believe interviewees should be given more freedom in and control of the interview situation than is permitted with structured approaches. Qualitative research is more likely to generate fairer and fuller representation of the interviewee's perspectives.

<b>activity 9</b>	<b>method validity</b>
<b>purpose</b>	to check the validity of method
<b>time</b>	30 minutes
<b>materials</b>	manual/notes
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Look at the information you recorded in activity 3 on the form under sources of data and justification. Now examine the materials in the manual around the use of interviews, when they are appropriate and their strengths and weaknesses. In light of this information do any of your items change or even the justification for them. Do this by answering the following questions</p> <p>Before you decide on the use of qualitative interviewing you should ask yourself the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why might I want to use interviews?</li> <li>• Why might I want to speak to or interact with people to generate data in order to answer my research questions?</li> <li>• Why might I want to use qualitative interviewing?</li> <li>• Why this style and approach rather than a more structured form of interviewing or questionnaire?</li> <li>• What are the shortcomings of qualitative interviewing for generation of data that will help me to answer my research questions?</li> </ul>	

participants notes

## are you mining for facts or generating knowledge?

Before we start to interview people and record their answers to our questions there is an important theoretical question to deal with. Do we see the knowledge as already existing in the world as facts that we need to put on a hard hat and go and mine like gold or do we see knowledge being created through social interaction. How we answer this question determines whether we are mining: collecting data (excavation) or generating data (construction).

Qualitative interviewing is generally based on epistemological (what makes up knowledge) assumptions that see knowledge as constructed in a situation through social interaction. I.e. as the researcher you and your interaction make up part of the process of generating data. Interviews therefore generally see knowledge as socially generated and not as simple facts that need to be excavated. Quantitative research in the form surveys may often take the opposite view, i.e. that knowledge can be excavated as facts, and i.e. it is engaging in a process of collecting data rather than generating it. What relevance does this have for the interview? Well it impacts on the kinds of questions you will ask and the type of answers you expect as well as how you will deal with this data in analysis.

Mason (2002) points out that questions that attempt to generate knowledge tend to focus on lived experiences rather than hypothetical scenarios or abstract concepts. As always though you have flexibility you may use mostly questions that attempt to generate

social knowledge but also have some that ask people to relate 'facts about the situation'. It is important though that you know which are which when it comes to analysing your data. This is one of the reasons it is critical to write down questions you ask in an interview.

### A practical example:

#### Generating Data

A set of questions asked about water disconnections in a community. If you follow the sequence of questions that hint at what the answers were you see how knowledge around how people perceive power in interacting with local government begins to be *generated in the interaction*.

- *How did you react when the municipality arrived to disconnect the water?*
- *Can you remember what you were thinking at the time?*
- *Oh I see so when you were chasing the municipal security guard that had been separated from the others what did you intend to do?*
- *How did this make you feel?*
- *If you say for once you felt some power in dealing with the municipality how would you describe experiences of dealing with the officials up to the point of the disconnection teams arriving?*
- *Can you tell me what in your experiences of the two situations is different?*

(You might then ask a hypothetical question such as; given that you felt power in direct physical action in stopping the cut off as opposed to negotiating can you give an opinion on how you believe municipalities should be dealt with in the future.)

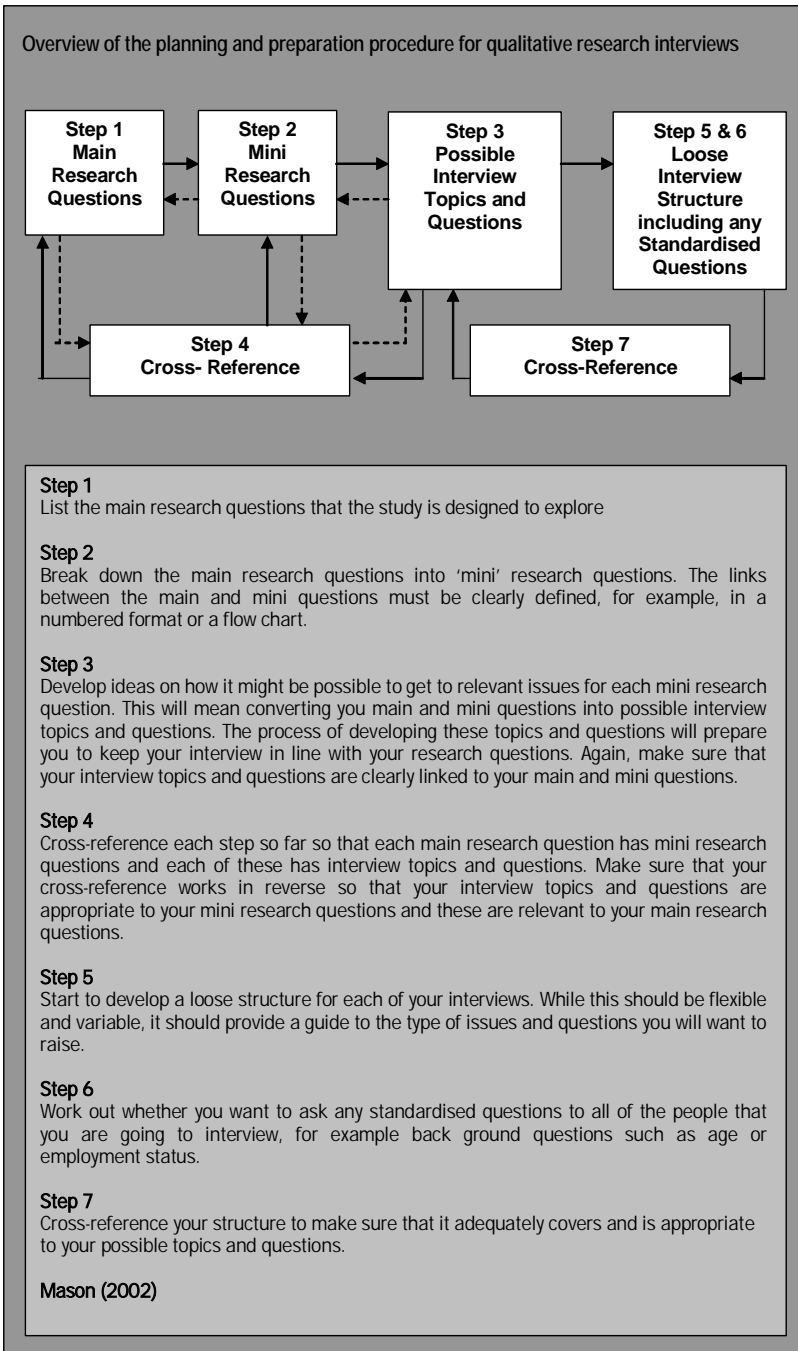
#### Collecting Data

- *Do you think that people in the community feel they have no power in dealing with the municipality?*
- *On a scale of 1-10 rate the violence that took place that day?*
- *Do you think that all local governments are the same?*
- *How should communities deal with the municipality?*

From this example you can see that the different focus of the questions may well deliver quite a different understanding of the event and its meaning. The data may well then result in different conclusions or observations being drawn by the researcher. The example also serves to demonstrate how important it is to respond to the social situation and what is being said rather than just going through a list of prepared questions.

Preparation for an interview then is more than simply writing down a list of questions you wish to ask the respondent but more a form of mental preparation where you make clear what information you are trying to develop how this will be done and what problems you are likely to encounter. Essentially you want your interviews to be focussed and relevant without reading them like a movie script. Remember an interview is a social interaction that can generate meaning and new knowledge for both parties if the process is facilitated correctly. A good interview is where the interviewee learns something during the process as well.

How do you go about doing this preparation? Firstly you will have gone through the process described in section one of this manual where you have brought focus and clarity to your work. You are aware of what you are trying to find out and conscious of how you see the world and what you view as knowledge. Preparation and coding will also help in organising your analysis later on.



## preparing for an interview

A great deal of intellectual preparation is needed for qualitative interviews. As you will not have a structured questionnaire, you will need to develop a system to help you make on the spot decisions on your next question in each interview. While these decisions will need to be made quickly they will need to be strategic and considered in line with your research objectives. It is therefore necessary that your decisions be based on your intellectual puzzle and your research questions. It is important that you are able to recognise issues that are relevant to your research questions and are able to pursue an appropriate line of questioning in your interviews.

The following diagram is meant as a guide of the procedure that you may follow to plan for your qualitative interviews. It will give you an idea of the type of work that is necessary for you to do to prepare for your interviews.

<b>activity 10</b>	<b>interview preparation</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants to plan and prepare for interviews
<b>time</b>	30 minutes individual      30 minutes pair      30 minutes plenary
<b>materials</b>	Pen and Paper
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Individual and then paired work.</p> <p>The participants divide into pairs and then begin the task. The first 30 minutes participants individually prepare their interview framework by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at your (individual projects) main and sub research questions. Write down the main research questions. Place these in a chart or use a numbering system that shows which sub questions relate to which main questions.</li> <li>2. For each sub question develop some ideas about how you may be able to ask around experiences or opinions etc relating to the different issues. During this exercise if there are any concepts you defined with operational definitions you should consult these operational definitions to ensure that your questions and focus topics include how you are trying to assess the key concept. I.e. the operational definition. Again your previous forms you filled in should be useful here.</li> <li>3. Now make sure you know how it all fits together. You could extend your referencing system. You will then know which areas of focus fit which sub questions, which in turn, go towards generating or collecting data on the main research questions.</li> <li>4. Develop a structure or framework from the above. It is really a guide to key questions and topics you wish to examine.</li> <li>5. Around each element you should also decide the following and write it down. These are not decisions you make fully beforehand; remember you are preparing a guide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How deep do you want to go into each of the issues?</li> <li>• What should be the sequence? (Do you want to ask similar questions in different interviews in the same places in all interviews etc?)</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Each participant now explains their framework to the other person who should give input into the work and make suggestions. If you have time to do it and are having difficulty conceptualising the question perhaps ask the questions of your partner and see how the interview flows.</li> <li>7. A plenary session will follow where a few people's work is selected and reported by their partner. This is practicing interview related skills.</li> </ol>	

participant notes

<b>activity 11</b>	<b>listening skills</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants understand the importance of active listening and to strategise ways to improve active listening techniques.
<b>time</b>	Role Play: 45 minutes                      Plenary: 30 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
The facilitator divides participants into two groups. One person from each group will be read a short extract. They are not allowed to make any notes. After they have heard the transcript once they must then tell the next person in the group who tells the next and so on. The two last participants tell the plenary after which the facilitator then reads the transcript.	

## skills

There are various skills involved in the process of interviewing. These are listening, recording and asking meaningful questions. These different skills interrelate. You can't ask an intelligent question about what an interviewee is saying if you haven't listened.

### five ways to improve your listening skills

#### one

*Listen – really listen to what people are saying.*

Most people need a great deal of practice in this. This is important even if you are using a tape recorder in your interviews.

#### two

*Remember what people have said to you and what you have asked them.*

It is very easy to forget what you have been told and what you have said. If you are conducting more than one interview in a day then you might confuse what happened in one and what in the other.

#### three

*Achieve a good balance between talking and listening.* Carefully consider your inputs in the interview, for example if you are interrupting your interviewee, consider why you are doing this, is it helpful?

#### four

*Observe your interviewees verbal and non-verbal cues about issues that you are raising.*

Try to identify your interviewee's mood and body language, this will help you better understand the interviewees interaction with the issue on an emotional level and will also help you to be understanding and show respect to your participants.

#### five

*Record your observations and take notes on the interview.*

A practical approach to assessing your listening skills is to keep notes so that you can review your technique afterwards. It will also help you remember more accurately the non verbal expressions made by the interviewee, provide you with a means to assess your line of questioning and identify key points that the participant made in the interview.

Mason (2002)

<b>activity 12</b>	<b>listening skills</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants to ask questions and record simultaneously and to reinforce for the preparation of interview schedules. This is done using simulation.
<b>time</b>	Preparation 30 minutes    simulation 60 minutes    Plenary 30 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Pen and Paper
<b>procedure</b>	

**Simulation:**

**Research question: What learner researchers find important about research projects they will undertake.**

The class splits into pairs. Each participant records 20 key points about their research project on a sheet of paper. The points they consider to be the most important about their research. **[NB the points must be located somewhere in the research process diagram so as to make the exercise realistic. They should also reflect fairly central issues to the research not obscure side issues. This is the 'playing field.].** After this is done each participant prepares an interview schedule for the other person.

The game is to extract as many of the 20 points from the other person in 15 minutes of interview time as possible.

**[if you are answering the questions you must not try to hide facts/points on purpose just answer the questions naturally. This is important or the simulation won't work.]**

The simulation will start with one participant interviewing and the other questioning and recording. **[You may not ask questions like, what are the 20 most important things about your research project or what is the important points of your research project!!]** After 30 minutes the participants change over. 5 minutes is allowed immediately after each interview to go over the record and tidy it up add in facts remembered etc.

When both people have finished the participants should evaluate each others records to see how many of the 20 points were picked up and then after exchanging the original piece of paper with the 20 points give each other feedback.

Feedback should also include how the participants felt about each other's

- Questions
- Interview style
- The recording that they made

Were questions asked in the interview recorded?

Were the answers recorded?

What is the recording layout look like?

<b>activity 13</b>	<b>interview simulation 2</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants to ask questions and record simultaneously and to reinforce for the preparation of interview schedules. This is done using simula-
<b>time</b>	Preparation 30 minutes    simulation 60 minutes    Plenary 30 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Using your project as a base develop an interview framework for interviews you will conduct in your actual research process. Follow the process identified in activity 11. When you have completed this process the facilitator will choose three projects and act as a subject in each. All participants are to record the interview</p>	

**additional notes**

## section 3

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# observation

### introduction

If you seem to be heading towards observational methodology you will probably find that your ontological perspective sees people, their actions, reactions and understanding of these as the most important elements of understanding. Your epistemological position would view just spoken interviews as inadequate as the only basis for understanding the actions and reactions referred to above but you need to observe interact and experience to understand and analyse.

activity 14	observational methods applicability
purpose	To analyse observation as a method for use in your project
time	Individual activity: 30 minutes
materials	Pen and Paper
procedure	
<p>Participants examine their research puzzles ontology research questions etc you looked at on day 1. Where do you feel observation would fit in as a method and why? This task by answering the following question.</p> <p>Before you decide on the use of observation respond to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why might I want to use observational methods?</li><li>• Why might I want to observe people, their behaviour and interact with them to generate data in order to answer my research questions and solve the puzzle?</li><li>• What are the shortcomings of using observational methods for my purposes? Why might I want to use qualitative interviewing?</li></ul>	

### Are you mining for facts or generating knowledge?

Before we start to interview people and record their answers to our questions there is an important theoretical question to deal with. Do we see the knowledge as already existing in the world as facts that we need to put on a hard hat and go and mine like gold or do we see knowledge being created through social interaction. How we answer this question determines whether we are mining; collecting data (excavation) or generating data (construction).

The focus group tends to come down squarely on the side of generating data. If you are simply collecting data through the focus group it would probably just be better to give a couple of questionnaires out. The interaction process is fundamental to constructing the meaning that is interpreted into data. Very little literal data emerges from focus groups where the only real function of a focus group in collecting literal data is to check reliability of responses internally. For example interviewing a group

of shop stewards in a plant and asking how many hours of overtime are worked a month. If one respondent answered 23 hours you can use other participants by questioning them directly to assess how accurate the figure is.

Focus group interviewing is generally based on epistemological (what makes up knowledge) assumptions that see knowledge as constructed in a situation through social interaction. I.e. as the researcher you and your interaction make up part of the process of generating data. Interviews therefore generally see knowledge as socially generated and not as simple facts that need to be excavated. Quantitative research in the form surveys may often take the opposite view, i.e. that knowledge can be excavated as facts, and i.e. it is engaging in a process of collecting data rather than generating it. What relevance does this have for the focus group? Well it impacts on the kinds of questions you will ask and the type of answers you expect as well as how you will deal with this data in analysis.

Mason (2002) points out that questions that attempt to generate knowledge tend to focus on lived experiences rather than hypothetical scenarios or abstract concepts. In a focus group participants share experiences that tend to spark other experiences and, as these are collected through the facilitator, understanding of the issues in the group tends to grow. The focus group itself can serve as a valuable tool to conscientise people and hence is frequently used in participatory action research methodologies.

<b>activity 15</b>	<b>planning observational methods</b>	
<b>purpose</b>	To plan the use of Observation in your research question	
<b>time</b>	Individual activity: 120 minutes	Individual feedback
<b>materials</b>	Pen and Paper	
<b>procedure</b>		
<p>Look at you research and the areas and where you have identified where observational methods would be of value in resolving your research puzzle. Answer all the questions below and when you are complete work with your partner and discuss each others responses Work with a partner once you have completed the exercise and discuss your answers.</p> <p>You would also discuss this with the facilitator in a pair.</p> <p><b>Generating Knowledge and the Significance of Observational 'Settings'</b></p> <p>Am I collecting data (excavation)?          Am I generating data (construction)?          What does my 'research setting' represent?          What is it telling me about? What type of data can it yield?          What else do I need to know?</p> <p><b>Directing your Gaze</b></p> <p>How do I generate or collect data?          Where do the data come from? What do they look like?          What am I looking for in the setting? What shall I observe?</p>		

### **Finding your Observational 'setting'**

What is the most appropriate setting to choose?

Where are the phenomena in which I am interested located – in time, space and place?

How does immersion in a particular setting shape what I see, and what I do not see?

### **Getting 'In' and Getting By**

Can I gain access to the setting? What does access really mean?

Do I intend to be a participant, an observer, or a participant-observer?

### **Identity Work**

What kind of identity, status or role shall I try to adopt?

What impression should I try to create?

How should I act?

### **Relationship Work**

How should I go about developing relationships in the setting?

How can I gain acceptance?

How will I know whether I have been accepted?

What kinds of limits should I create?

How and when will I negotiate my departure from the setting?

### **Deciding what Counts as Data**

How should I record my observations?

What should I record?

When should I do it, and how often?

### **Making Fieldnotes**

How should I make my fieldnotes?

What am I producing? What is the status of fieldnotes?

<b>activity 16</b>	<b>fieldwork skills</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To expose participants to the art of undertaking fieldwork.
<b>time</b>	Pen and Paper
<b>materials</b>	Individual activity: 45minutes          Plenary: 30 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
Participants break into groups of four and undertake activity 7.	
<i>You are undertaking research on the living realities of refugees and asylum seekers in the City of Durban. Your literature review highlights that certain aspects of research work with refugees are constrained due to a culture of "brotherhood" more arising from a sense of vulnerability (social, political and economic). Their general sense of vulnerability closes on vital information needed by a community researcher like you intending to establish an advocacy network for refugees and asylum seekers in the City.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What fieldwork strategy will you consider appropriate for this study?</li><li>• Based on the choice of your fieldwork strategy, what demands do you think that this will make on you as a researcher?</li><li>• Assuming that you encounter 'sensitive' information about money laundering and drug trafficking amongst certain groups of refugees, how will you react to this knowledge?</li><li>• Based on your fieldwork strategy, how will you go about recording your observations?</li></ul>	

participant Notes

<b>activity 17</b>	<b>observation skills</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To expose participants to the art of making observation notes
<b>time</b>	Group activity: 30mins                      Plenary: 30 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Pen and Paper
<b>procedure</b>	
Participants break into groups. All groups are afforded an opportunity to observe an agreed upon location in the training venue. They are required to make a record of all things that they observe. Each group reports their observation at plenary.	

## section 4

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### focus groups

#### method theory and practice

The focus group methodology operates on the assumption that by collecting people together to discuss a certain term or concept the interaction not just of researcher and respondent as in the interview for example but other people present, tends to create meaning and a way of building understanding both for the facilitator /researcher as well as the participants. A focus group is led by a facilitator but the role of the facilitator is not simply to ask questions and record the answers but to regulate the flow of ideas and information through the group influencing the direction whether necessary to lend focus but not as far as possible determining the outcomes.

This is in itself a skill that requires practice as there is a natural tendency when standing in front of a group of people to lead and a group of people has a natural tendency to want to be led in artificial situations such as this. Think of when this workshop started as we get going everyone looks to the front for direction. So what are we going to do today seems to be the question on everybody's lips. At this point where do you believe power is resting in the room? The process of facilitation is really about shifting that power or energy back to the people in the group in a way that still meets the broad objectives of people coming together in the first place.

I have learnt two true things about facilitation in the last few years. The first is often said and seldom practiced and that is that the facilitator is responsible for the process but participants are responsible for the outcome. It is probably important to try to explain this openly when facilitating any kind of group session and keep explaining it throughout the process. So if you were starting off a focus group session it is useful to clarify the purpose of the gathering and the areas of broad discussion but stressing that where the discussion goes and what comes out of the discussion is really their responsibility and what they bring to the research. People are experts of their own experience.

The second truism is to trust the process. By this is meant, don't be too directive. You are there to focus people's thinking and interaction around a topic. Where that takes them and how they get there is up to the interaction, of which it is always too complex to direct every last element. Besides if you did you may as well then just interview yourself. As the facilitator you are responsible for the process but that is about focussing things when they are drifting into irrelevant paths such as a bilateral discussion between two participants that has no real bearing on the topic, or intervening if it seems that destructive conflict is brewing. It is also about ensuring participation by all and that one or two parties are not dominating the whole discussion and others just following along. Whilst this is bad education practice it is especially problematic in a research setting.

This is not to say that no preparation is necessary for running a focus group. It is not simply a matter of turning up reading a research question and saying, ok who wants to start? Like the process of preparing an interview you need to focus your theoretical and methodological thoughts, know your key concepts and their operationalisation etc. How will you introduce issues for discussions? What issues need to be pursued when they emerge in discussions. How are people likely to engage with the issues and what sort of language and operationalisation will they bring to the concepts.

Facilitating a focus group is also a lot more to manage than an interview as you are now dealing with multiple interactions looking for cues and links to bring focus to the discussion. You should also be taking notes although with a focus group it is suggested that you make use of some sort of recording equipment, as it is extremely difficult to record and facilitate simultaneously. A practical hint video is better for focus groups as you can recognise who is saying what. If you are only using a tape recorder remember to get participants to introduce themselves first every time they speak as you may not recognise who is speaking simply from the voice when you play the session back later.

## **Are you mining for facts or generating knowledge?**

Before we start to interview people and record their answers to our questions there is an important theoretical question to deal with. Do we see the knowledge as already existing in the world as facts that we need to put on a hard hat and go and mine like gold or do we see knowledge being created through social interaction. How we answer this question determines whether we are mining; collecting data (excavation) or generating data (construction).

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Focus group interviewing is generally based on epistemological (what makes up knowledge) assumptions that see knowledge as constructed in a situation through social interaction. I.e. as the researcher you and your interaction make up part of the process of generating data. Interviews therefore generally see knowledge as socially generated and not as simple facts that need to be excavated. Quantitative research in the form surveys may often take the opposite view, i.e. that knowledge can be excavated as facts, and i.e. it is engaging in a process of collecting data rather than generating it. What relevance does this have for the focus group? Well it impacts on the kinds of questions you will ask and the type of answers you expect as well as how you will deal with this data in analysis.

Mason (2002) points out that questions that attempt to generate knowledge tend to focus on lived experiences rather than hypothetical scenarios or abstract concepts. In a focus group participants share experiences that tend to spark other experiences and, as these are collected through the facilitator, understanding of the issues in the group tends to grow. The focus group itself can serve as a valuable tool to conscientise people and hence is frequently used in participatory action research methodologies.

### **Generating Data**

A set of questions asked about water disconnections in a community. If you follow the sequence of questions that hint at what the answers were you see how knowledge around how people perceive power in interacting with local government begins to be

generated in the interaction. Whilst strictly speaking these are interview questions they demonstrate the difference adequately for our purposes here:

*How did you react when the municipality arrived to disconnect the water?*

*Can you remember what you were thinking at the time?*

*Oh I see so when you were chasing the municipal security guard that had been separated from the others what did you intend to do*

*How did this make you feel?*

*Did anyone else who saw this also think about giving chase?*

*Oh you did. Hmm what stopped you?*

*If you say for once you felt some power in dealing with the municipality how would you describe experiences of dealing with the officials up to the point of the disconnection teams arriving?*

*Can you tell me what in your experiences of the two situations is different?*

You might then ask a hypothetical question such as; given that you felt power in direct physical action in stopping the cut off as opposed to negotiating can you give an opinion on how you believe municipalities should be dealt with in the future.

### Collecting Data

*On a scale of 1-10 rate the violence that took place that day?*

*Do you think that all local governments are the same?*

*How many people were cut off that day*

From this example you can see that the different focus of the questions may well deliver quite a different understanding of the event and its meaning. The data may well then result in different conclusions or observations being drawn by the researcher. The example also serves to demonstrate how important it is to respond to the social situation and what is being said rather than just going through a list of prepared questions.

<b>activity 18</b>	<b>methodology</b>
<b>purpose</b>	to check the validity of method
<b>time</b>	30 minutes
<b>materials</b>	Manual
<b>procedure</b>	
Look at the information you recorded in activity 3 on the form under sources of data and justification. Now examine the materials in the manual around the use of focus groups. State what you believe the advantages of the use of focus groups are and why they best fit the areas you wish to use them in your research. How will the use of focus groups help resolve your puzzle? What are the problems you may encounter using focus groups?	
<b>participants notes</b>	

# the facilitator

A Facilitator can be described as:

He/she does not behave like a conventional classroom teacher, and give answers; but will provoke participant's ability, knowledge and experience on the subject, and draw this out for the benefit of all, in the process of learning.

What is Facilitation?

Facilitation means acting as a catalyst to make sure that "things" happen in a more systematic and coordinated manner. The facilitator must at all times ensure that the learning process is clearly understood by the participant.

## six dimensions of facilitation

- 1) **The planning dimension** (goal orientated, end and means aspect of facilitation)
  - Aims and objectives
  - Expectations
- 2) **The meaning dimension** (cognitive)
  - Participants understanding of what is going on.
  - Making sense of their experiences.
  - How to do things and react.
- 3) **The confronting dimension** (Challenge)
  - Raising consciousness about the group's resistance to and avoidance of Things it needs to face and deal with.
- 4) **The structuring dimension** (formal)
  - Methods of learning.
  - What sort of form is given to experiences within the group and with how they are to be structured?
- 5) **The feeling dimension** (effective)
  - Management of feeling within the group.
- 6) **The valuing dimension** (integrity aspect)
  - Creating a supportive climate that honours and celebrates the personhood of group members.
  - Climate in which they can be genuine.
  - Keeping in touch with the true needs and interests.

Characteristics of a good facilitator

- 1 Flexible, open to new ideas and surprises
- 2 Able to respond/resourceful
- 3 Democratic
- 4 Good listener
- 5 Ability to summarise and synthesise
- 6 Use various strategies to get more participation
- 7 Creates a conducive learning environment
- 8 Skilful in encouraging group cohesion
- 9 Communicator

### Issues or problems in facilitation

- 1 Getting people involved (participation)
- 2 Establishing credibility
  - Coming in as known
  - Coming in as unknown
  - Coming in as nonentity / stereotype
- 1 Handling conflict in a group
- 2 Dealing with differences in backgrounds and levels
- 3 Ability to guide and support
- 4 Different levels of commitment, expectations, motivation, etc.
- 5 Valuing the person who is participating
- 6 Placing participant needs and issues first and still achieving the objective
- 7 Participants understanding of what is going on.
  - Making sense of their experiences.
- 1 Attempting to achieve equal participation
- 2 Channelling participants blockages to participation
- 3 Contending values/agenda between the participants and the facilitator
- 4 Achieving mutual responsibility with the participants
- 5 Language

<b>activity 19</b>	<b>facilitation</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To initiate discussion around facilitation and use practical experience of facilitation to ground the discussions
<b>time</b>	45 minutes group:                      30 minutes plenary
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Look at the list of issues or problems in facilitation immediately above. In groups of five discuss how best to approach these issues or problems. A stick/pen will be given to each group. Whoever holds the object must facilitate the group discussion. Whenever the workshop facilitator says change pass the object to someone else. At the conclusion to the exercise participants will share both feedback as well as experiences of the process. Participants should keep notes of the content of the discussion as well as any interesting process issues they notice about facilitation.</p>	

## facilitator styles

John Heron - Dimensions of facilitator style (1977) comments - Tony Saddington

**Directive - Non-directive:** The facilitator takes responsibility for deciding what the group does or delegates this responsibility to the group.

**Interpretative - Non-interpretative:** The facilitator conceptualises and gives meaning to what is going on in the group, or at most indicates behavioural phenomena in the group and leaves conceptualising open to the group.

**Confrontational - Non-confrontational:** The facilitator supportively but directly challenges defensive and distorted behaviour in the group, or creates a climate in which the participant confronts him/herself from within.

**Cathartic - Non-cathartic:** The facilitator elicits cathartic release in the group through laughter, sobbing, trembling, storming or creates a climate in which the participant confronts him/herself from within.

**Structuring - Non-structuring:** The facilitator structures the group process in one or more ways in order to

provide specific types of experiential learning and self discovery, or provides the types of experiential learning that is the consequence of no such structuring.

**Disclosing - Non-disclosing:** The facilitator shares own feelings, thoughts and responses with the group, or is present in the group in silent ways.

**Political - Non-political:** Being political means that the facilitator makes some kind of explicit connection or transfer from what is going on in the group to political and social change and action outside the group. Non-political means that the facilitator makes no such explicit connection or transfer, but at most expects that experiential learning in groups will act, after the group, as a haven on the surrounding political mass.

<b>activity 20</b>	<b>facilitation skills</b>
<b>purpose</b>	to further deepen facilitation skills
<b>time</b>	45 minutes group:                      30 minutes plenary
<b>procedure</b>	
As in the previous exercise take turns in facilitating a discussion by passing the pen when the workshop facilitator says change.	
Discussion topic: what aspects of research worry activist researchers the most and what can be done about this.	
Objective facilitate a 10 point plan to address these issues (your plan should take realistic constraints into account)	
The two plans are compared in plenary and further discuss issues relating to facilitation, this means you have to list the problems, prioritise them and suggest ways of dealing with them.	

## preparation for a focus group

Preparation for an interview/focus group then is more than simply writing down a list of questions you wish to ask the respondent but more a form of mental preparation where you make clear what information you are trying to develop how this will be done and what problems you are likely to encounter. Essentially you want your focus group to be focussed and relevant without reading them like a movie script. Remember a focus group is a social interaction that can generate meaning and new knowledge for both parties if the process is facilitated correctly. A good interview is where the interviewee learns something during the process as well.

How do you go about doing this preparation?

Firstly you will have gone through the process described in section one of this manual where you have brought focus and clarity to your work. You are aware of what you are trying to find out and conscious of how you see the world and what you view as knowledge.

Preparation and coding will also helps in organising your analysis later on.

<b>activity 21</b>	<b>preparing for focus groups</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To practice preparation and conducting a focus group
<b>time</b>	20 minutes preparation 30 minutes plenary on framework 30 minutes role play 30 minutes plenary feedback
<b>materials</b>	OHP slides and pens
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Participants divide into groups of five to six and do the following activity:</p> <p>The group prepares a framework for a focus group discussion:</p> <p><b>The Research Question is:</b> Is unity possible between civil society groupings defending against the impact of neo-liberal policies on the poor?</p> <p><b>Sub Questions:</b> How do neo liberal policies impact on the poor? What activities do civil society activists engage in? Are there obstacles to Unity amongst civil society groupings? How best can civil society oppose neo-liberal policies?</p> <p>What sort of intellectual puzzle is involved here?</p> <p>What are some of the ontological and epistemological positions you may adopt around this research area?</p> <p>For each sub question develop some ideas about how you may be able to ask around experiences or opinions etc relating to the different issues.</p> <p>If there are any concepts that need operational definitions create these. Now make sure you know how it all fits together as well as what sorts of data you will generate with the different questions or themes of discussion.</p> <p>Where will you generate data and are there any areas where you wish to collect data. Develop a structure or framework from the above. It is really a guide to key questions and topics you wish to examine.</p> <p>Around each element you should also decide the following and write it down. These are not decisions you make fully beforehand; remember you are preparing a guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How deep do you want to go into each of the issues?</li> <li>• What should be the sequence? (Do you want to ask similar questions in different focus groups in the same places?)</li> <li>• How will you introduce the discussion and ensure a conducive environment where people will contribute</li> </ul> <p>Groups record the framework on OHP and present this followed by a plenary discussion. Once the group has constructed the framework they will role-play focus group with one or two facilitators.</p> <p>At least one participant should record the discussion.</p>	

<b>activity 22</b>	<b>focus group schedule</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To prepare a focus group schedule
<b>time</b>	30 minutes individual work 30 minutes plenary feedback
<b>materials</b>	pen
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Record your main and sub-questions in a chart linking sub questions to questions.</p> <p>Now in this framework do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For each sub question develop some ideas about how you may be able to ask around experiences or opinions etc relating to the different issues. Remember to check your operational definitions</li> <li>• Now make sure you know how it all fits together as well as what sorts of data you will generate with the different questions or themes of discussion.</li> <li>• Where will you generate data and are there any areas where you wish to collect data.</li> <li>• Develop a structure or framework from the above. It is really a guide to key questions and topics you wish to examine.</li> </ul> <p>Around each element you should also decide the following and write it down. These are not decisions you make fully beforehand; remember you are preparing a guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· How deep do you want to go into each of the issues?</li> <li>· What should be the sequence? (Do you want to ask similar questions in different focus groups in the same places?)</li> <li>· How will you introduce the discussion and ensure a conducive environment where people will contribute</li> </ul>	
<b>participants notes</b>	

<b>activity 23</b>	<b>alternate activity</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To provide participants with exposure to reading, understanding, analysing and interpreting research reports containing focus group method of data collection and demonstrating through role-plays how this method is used to extract important research information.
<b>time</b>	60 min (activity)    30 min (plenary)
<b>materials</b>	Flipchart, Kokis, Diepkloof case study
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>In groups, participants must read case study titled “Massive Cutoffs” – Cost Recovery and Electricity Service in Diepkloof, Soweto by Grace Khunou before this session. Work through the following questions.</p> <p><b>Part A</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identify the methodology used in the case study by the researcher?</li> <li>2) How is the deep reality of service delivery cutoffs highlighted/presented in the report?</li> <li>3) What does this tell you about the nature of the report?</li> <li>4) In the methodology section of the research report (page 63 – 64 of the report), the author claims to have undertaken two focused group interviews made up of six people in each as a data collection method in Mandela Village, an informal settlement in the neighbouring Diepkloof township. Why do you think the researcher used the focus group as a data collection method in this section of Diepkloof?</li> <li>5) Now read the section titled “A different view of consumption and cost: Mandela Village” (p 67-68). In what form is the data presented?</li> <li>6) Do you think that the conclusion drawn from the perception of one respondent is reliable? Explain.</li> </ol> <p><b>Part B</b></p> <p>Participants engage in a role-playing exercise using a focus group interview. The setting is Mandela Village, Diepkloof and the researcher wants to know how people feel about service delivery in general.</p> <p>At the end of the role play,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The interviewer, interviewee and the moderator share their feelings about the focus group role-play.</li> <li>2. Non-participants in the role-play verify the notes taken by the moderator.</li> </ol> <p>The information is now analysed and interpreted by the group as a whole.</p>	

<b>additional notes</b>

## section 5:

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# qualitative sampling

As mentioned there will often be differences in sampling depending on whether you are using quantitative or qualitative methodologies. In qualitative research you are more likely to use smaller sample that are very directed by the research questions, much like purposive sampling mentioned earlier. In this type of research you are normally not trying to create data that you can expand to the whole population but rather finding out something new or gaining deeper insight into an issue.

Qualitative sampling tends to be a little more flexible and tends to emerge during the research process as opposed to quantitative methods. You need to think strategically and theoretically as well as know your ontological and epistemological positions in order to develop a sampling strategy that delivers and fits the research best.

Sampling is integrally tied to analysis. The categories you sample for example will determine the categories you analyse, what you can compare or generalise in your analysis. What and how we sample is deeply tied to the question of are we measuring what we say we are measuring (validity). In qualitative sampling you can not establish either validity or reliability in statistical terms as generally you are not dealing with probability thus you must establish these connections logically. To do this, as the researcher you must make all you sampling logic explicit, i.e. you must write it down.

Many qualitative researchers use a form of theoretical or purposive sampling, which involves selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions, the theoretical framework, how you plan to do the analysis and of course what relevance it has to the argument you are developing. To get to this point you must ask yourself why is it important to speak to or observe the people or sample I am intending to view. You would build in test of the argument you are developing or focus on exceptional cases. You also need to imagine how you are going to deal with the data in advance, whilst being weary of falling into the trap of thinking that the sample is drawn on the basis that it represents the population. It may share common characteristics but this does not mean that it represents the population.

Qualitative researchers sometimes say that the sample just provides an illustration of what may or may not happen in the wider population, which of course can not be established one way or the other as the sample is statistically insignificant.

*It is perhaps best then to view your sampling practice as something that grows and changes based on a set of strategic choices through the research process that the researcher specifically records and reports at the end of the research.*

Firstly then looking at the ontology of issues you need to decide what you are sampling.

### **You could be sampling (data Sources)**

People (individuals, groups, communities) or (feelings experiences etc)

Different group characteristics depending on the research puzzle and questions

Organisations and entities

Texts

Settings and environments

Objects artefacts media products and  
Events and happenings

And so the list can go on....but the guiding logic here is to be found in your ontological perspective and even more importantly in your research puzzle. You set about developing sampling categories may be it is people with all their characteristics or maybe it is just sampling peoples feelings or actions or experiences.

### Example

If you were researching the impact of returning child soldiers on family structures for example your puzzle is one that really tries to look at the impact of the child's experiences on how they relate and are related to by family members. Here we would only be sampling firstly families where a child served in a military capacity on one level and at a more refined level we would be sampling family members (we would need to decide how close e.g. immediate household, which would include the child soldier who just by that name you can see is being seen in terms of experience. This both exposes and validates certain ontological assumptions in the context of the research puzzle. We also are viewing our analysis down the research process where we are suggesting that we need to get data on the Child's specific experiences relating to war along with family experiences of the child before and after military 'service', as well as their experiences of family life before and after the child's abduction. In our strategic decisions to sample particular categories of experiences we would make clear our assumptions and reasons for these decisions. We also see in this process of sample selection emerging thoughts around arguments. The sampling suggests that we theorise the Child's experiences as having a direct impact on subsequent family experiences of family life social integration etc. Lets carry the example along...so after we have conducted a set of interviews and observed these experiences for example in one family and detailed the rich contextual data and then moved onto another family observing similar interactions of the experiences and then another where similar experiential interactions were documented we would begin to get a sense of increasing validity. We would be strengthening our argument of the impact and nature of the impact of one set of experiences on the others. We may then wish to test our emerging or inductive arguments by seeking out family experiences after a child soldiers return that were atypical of what we had observed thus far in our research. Should we find such a set of experiences we would examine these to see why they differed from the others we had documented...maybe the child did not see active combat, maybe the abduction was of very short duration etc. As we find explanations for the anomaly (the experiences that are different to the rest) we may well be strengthening the validity of our research. If we fail to find an anomaly we would document our attempts in the search as part of the strategic sampling process in the report.

We also are viewing our analysis down the research process where we are suggesting that we need to get data on the Child's specific experiences relating to war along with family experiences of the child before and after military 'service', as well as their experiences of family life before and after the child's abduction.

As this exert from the example tends to suggest that our sampling category of experiences of different family members has a dimension of time to it...i.e before and after the abduction. The people are the same people but their experiences are from different periods in time. Again this must be made specific in explaining your sample. Finally the question which many people battle with is the issue of how many, or the sample size?

How many to sample?

The answer to this is situationally dependent and it depends what you want your sample to do. In this type of research setting it is often the relationship between the different categories that you are sampling and how these relate to theoretical issues in your study and understanding the social reality you wish to analyse than generating experiences that can be generalised to the whole population of the study.

So to go back to our example if you have sampled ten families and you are detecting the same patterns in the data then it would probably not develop your argument or understanding of the intellectual puzzle any further to continue sampling in this way, perhaps if time and money allowed you would perhaps look for another comparison such as in another country or as mentioned earlier begin to look specifically for

atypical cases to test your theory.

Or

For example in interviewing one or two people or families who have been evicted, about coping strategies they adopted, and examining the lack of state support through this data generation process, is not the same thing as suggesting that these one or two interviews are representative of evictee experiences or coping strategies but rather serve to focus the research on lack of social support by asking people about some of the alternatives they are driven too. This describes the relationship we see between the sample and the population

The key issue in qualitative sampling is how to focus strategically rather than how to represent a whole population of experiences.

**In summary qualitative sampling is generally strategic as opposed to representative. You make the strategic decisions by linking the your sample decisions to**

- questions
- theory
- argument you are developing
- analysis type

Through these decisions you select sample categories and the size shape and location of the sample on an ongoing basis as the research process unfolds as your arguments may change and as you organise the data and it begins to have meaning..

For methods of sampling such as convenience and snowball sampling please consult your research manuals.

<b>activity 24</b>	<b>qualitative sampling</b>	
<b>purpose</b>	To help participants understand theoretical sampling methods and their difference to probability-based sampling we have looked at in previous workshops	
<b>time</b>	45 minutes group:	45 minutes plenary
<b>procedure</b>		
<p>look at what you have developed in terms of your questions, ontological and epistemological positions, the way you see data and how you plan to analyse it and of course your puzzle. Now develop a strategy for sampling by doing the following</p> <p>Define your population            What is your interest in this population?            Describe what relationship the sample has to the population for the purposes of your research?            (This implies that there are other possible samples that could be drawn from, so in what way does the data from the sample represent the wider population)            What are you going to sample? What are the sample categories (e.g. the child and family experiences in the previous example) you are interested in either from a theoretical, analytical, research questions or argument development perspective?            Are there time frame considerations?            Are there geographic considerations?            How large do you think your sample should be at this point? (this will change through the research process) (you may also think about how much time the process will take including data analysis)            The facilitator will take feedback from participants and enter into group discussions</p>		

participants notes

<b>activity 25</b>	<b>Qualitative sampling Alternative Exercise</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To provide you with a brief overview of the use of sampling techniques, selection and determination of sample size and help you to recognise specific sampling strategies that you may consider in the selection of a sample.
<b>time</b>	15 minutes group:                      30 minutes plenary
<b>procedure</b>	
In a plenary have a quick discussion on the use of samples in qualitative research and the principles underlying their selection. Now break into groups and refer to the case study in the Appendix.	
In groups, work through the following questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the sample categories chosen for the research? Give reasons for this sample selection strategy used by the researcher.</li><li>• Compare the sample selection procedure and the size used in McDonald study to that used in this case study. How would you rate the confidence with which conclusions can be made in the two case studies?</li></ul>	

## section 6:

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# qualitative data analysis

You have done the planning. You have done the preparation and the fieldwork. You must now begin to analyse your data. Various considerations come into the analysis of data including the issues of sampling the research questions, units of analysis, operational definitions etc. These concepts all determine how you will work with the data you have collected.

One of the first considerations that relate to data analysis whether in a focus group, interview or observational methodology is to decide whether you are excavating the data or constructing it. How you answer this will often depend on your ontological and epistemological positions. Constructing data means that you hold the opinion that meaning is developed through interaction and how you analyse and report the data will emphasise the notion that the data has been constructed. If your position were that the researcher is really irrelevant to the interaction and is simply a miner of facts then this too would be reflected in the reporting and analysis process.

Essentially in the analysis we are trying to make a whole lot of recorded data meaningful and reportable. Thus there are various steps to doing this. The process in qualitative and quantitative research is quite different in this regard largely because of how the data is viewed. Your analysis must be integrated with your sampling techniques and research questions using a systematic method draw out trends or construct emerging theories of the different data. Where your analysis is aimed at proving or disproving an original theory or hypothesis this is referred to as deductive analysis whereas if your data is aimed at new understanding or developing a theory of why something is happening it is called inductive analysis. Your literature reading and the ontological and epistemological positions all play a role in the decisions you make around your analysis. It is also necessary to understand that how you organise your data as it is collected is already part of the analysis process and we will start with this. There is no one single methodology in this but rather a number of techniques that can be applied to breaking down the content into something that is reportable and in some way answers the research questions poses at the beginning of the process you have undertaken.

As we approach the data there are some key decisions to be made that can be made during the following process...

### STEP 1

Deciding what is data and what is not

Not everything you collect or generate can be called data or should be. What becomes data goes back to what you see as constituting knowledge, your operational definitions etc. With interviews your position on whether you are collecting data or generating data is key to deciding what counts as data. For example if you are just collecting facts from what people say in the interview then your influence and how you have influenced the process is unimportant you will just want to count how many times this or that was said. On the other hand if you are generating data then it is important to include your interpretations as data as you were part of the interaction.

How you deal with the data can then be broken down into three broad categories

- a. **Literal** – where you are interested in exactly what was said. This becomes the facts which you will report and interpret later. This will result from data collection type questions
- b. **Interpretive** – where you try to see the meaning in the interaction. What did you both understand this to mean for how communities should deal with municipalities.
- c. There is also another way of looking at the data and that is to analyse yourself and your thoughts impressions and interpretations in the interaction. This is quite common to ethnographic research and is sometimes called **reflexive** data. (Mason 2002)

<b>activity 26</b>	<b>data types: literal, interpretive, reflexive</b>
<b>purpose</b>	to provide practice in choosing relevant data for analysis.
<b>time</b>	30 minutes group:                      15 minutes plenary
<b>procedure</b>	
Participants divide into groups. Look at the handout provided. Given the background information explain what you would include as data and what you would leave out giving reasons for your decisions	

<b>activity 27</b>	<b>data types: literal, interpretive, reflexive</b>
<b>purpose</b>	to focus participant decisions on types of data in their own research
<b>time</b>	30 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
Look at your own research and imagine the type of questions you will ask and how they will be asked. What do you think the main kind of data you will select will be and why do you say this?	
<b>participants notes</b>	

## STEP 2

### organising, indexing and coding your data

Whilst you have been doing your research you have been collecting together a variety of materials and data that may include literature, statistics, interview transcripts and notes, focus group transcripts and notes, fieldwork notes, observations you have made. Some rough notes of your thoughts and reflections during the research process etc. Before you can make decisions as to what is data what you will use and how useful it is you will need to organise all this information.

#### Different ways of organising your research materials and data

Again there is no one way of doing it rather it is about picking a way that you have good logical and strategic reasons for doing so and that you apply the method you develop **consistently**. The key to the process is being consistent in how you group issues. In qualitative research especially it will be very rare that two research projects will have exactly the same categories or themes of organising the data

#### An audit of your materials

Before starting to organise your data then you should consult your ontological and epistemological assumptions, your research questions etc. These should begin to hint at the ways you may organise the data. There is also NO substitute for knowing what you have. It is one of the areas that make collaborative work difficult in qualitative research as to do decent analysis everyone should be as familiar as possible with the content of the data. Therefore at the beginning or while information is coming in you should be reading and summarising. If you know and are clear about the intellectual puzzle you are trying to solve is, what the questions are, what you consider to be knowledge and therefore data and are quite clear as to what you have by way of data then you are well on the road to analysis

Read the materials you have and make an index of all of it in the first reading. If you have made summaries of literature read the summaries and index them. By an index we mean an audit of all the bits of paper that may look something like this:

Example of a refugee project looking at documenting the dual struggle of refugees as they struggle to survive and struggle with the state for recognition and support

<b>activity 28</b>	<b>data analysis plenary discussion</b>
<b>purpose</b>	understanding data analysis
<b>time</b>	30 min
<b>procedure</b>	
Your list will probably be a lot longer. If you read this list what can you tell about the research design and some of the perspectives of the researcher without actually seeing any of the materials	
Facilitator note: In plenary get participants to read the index above and say what they can tell about the research project. Have a brief discussion and then get participants to suggest different categories that they may organise this data into giving reasons as to why they might choose these categories.	

## Index of data sources for the research project

1. Document from home affairs – policy on refugees
2. Legislation Statute on refugees
3. Interview with minister of home affairs
4. Interview with police chief
5. Interview with human rights activist
6. UN document on the treatment of political refugees.
7. Interview 1 with a refugee in the Durban area
8. Interview 2 with a refugee in the Durban area
9. Interview 3 with a refugee in the Durban area
10. Interview 4 with a refugee in the Durban area
11. Interview 5 with a refugee in the Durban area
12. Interview 6 with a refugee in the Durban area
13. Interview 7 with a refugee in the Durban area
14. Interview 8 with a refugee in the Durban area
15. Interview 9 with a refugee in the Durban area
16. Interview 10 with a refugee in the Durban area
17. Interview 11 with a refugee in the Durban area
18. Interview 12 with a refugee in the Durban area
19. Interview 13 with a refugee in the Durban area
20. Interview 14 with a refugee in the Durban area
21. Interview 15 with a refugee in the Durban area
22. Interview 16 with a refugee in the Durban area
23. Interview 17 with a refugee in the Durban area
24. Interview 18 with a refugee in the Durban area
25. Interview 19 with a refugee in the Durban area
26. In depth interview 1 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
27. In depth interview 1 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
28. In depth interview 2 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
29. In depth interview 3 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
30. In depth interview 4 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
31. In depth interview 5 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
32. In depth interview 6 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
33. In depth interview 7 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
34. In depth interview 8 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
35. In depth interview 9 with informal traders of South African origin in the Durban area
36. Book Surviving in Foreign Lands (Tom Petini) (summary of chapter 5 dealing with locals)
37. Book Surviving in Foreign Lands (Tom Petini) (summary of chapter 8 The state as a barrier to access)
38. Journal article 'Counting non-residents) Jack Xenophobe summary
39. Pamphlet: Get the foreigners out of South Africa
40. Interview with Jack Xenophobe leader of the Pro South African Campaign
41. Field notes taken while visiting a refugee communities on the 23/9/2003
42. Observation notes of interaction between local traders and some members of the refugee community on the 25/9/2003 (grey street area)
43. Observation notes of interaction between local traders and some members of the refugee community on the 26/9/2003 (grey street area)
44. Observation notes of interaction between local traders and some members of the refugee community on the 27/9/2003 (grey street area)
45. Notes from a meeting attended between a refugee committee and the local police commander. 3/10/2003
46. Notes from a meeting attended between a refugee committee and a representative from local government 4/10/2003
47. Summary of journal article The Experience of Refugees in Malawi, Swaziland and South Africa. 1980-1999
48. SADC statement on refugee status

## Starting to organise the data

Depending on the nature of your analytical puzzle and research questions you may wish to broadly group your information by case study or just order it as a whole e.g. chronologically which is sometimes called holistic grouping or you may need to break the data down into more refined categories and trace these categories across all the data that you have. We will start our discussion here with the latter type of organisation of the data, as this is probably the most common form you will need to engage with.

So which categories will be useful? Will you organise things in terms of themes, e.g. refugee experiences, Government policies and legislation, Response of SA citizens etc, perhaps in terms of your research questions and operational definitions, maybe in terms of interpretive, reflexive and literal data or as is often the case through a system of cross referencing with different categories. Again this is probably not something you will simply decide up front and then rigidly apply for as you analyse the data and read it new categories may emerge for you or a picture/theory begins to emerge that you want to focus more upon by organising your data around various elements of the theory. It is like most of research not a linear process but involves going backwards and forwards between various steps in the research process that normally results in a narrowing of focus a sifting of facts etc. At this point you will also begin to apply categories at a more detailed level than the groupings of materials by title. Whilst the first step can be achieved by simply scanning each of the titles of the different bits of information you have once you start breaking your data down into categories you WILL HAVE TO READ IT ALL. Essentially though by the time you get to this step it should be the second reading of your data. As mentioned earlier nothing helps your data analysis in qualitative research more than a good knowledge of all the data you have and the only way to really get this is to read it yourself.

You may then wish to start your reading process with categories and then add categories as you go along. The more familiar you are with the data the more accurate your original categories will be. If your position taken on the data is that you are using it to generate meaning then the most appropriate method is to develop the categories as you go along. If you are testing an hypothesis then it will be quite natural to start with fixed categories that you need to compare in order to say whether the hypothesis is true or not. Again this is not a method that sits very comfortably in qualitative types of research.

One more practical element; before you start breaking the data down into categories that you need to develop a way of indexing everything. In the previous process the first step in indexing has been taken where the materials have been given numbers from 1-48 in the above example. This can be called data source numbers so the third interview with a refugee would be data source number 9. These numbers should be clearly marked on each document. (Its not the only way to do it you may decide to organise material into broad categories called interviews, field notes, background reading, contextual interviews, statistics, statutes and policies and then within each of these number the documents so interviews may be numbered 1-28 in the interview pile and get a code such as INT 1, INT 2 etc) It's really up to you and what makes sense in the context of your research. The final step at this point would be to number every page, paragraph or line depending on the amount of information you have, and how detailed you want the analysis to be. At the very least though page numbering is essential.

Continuing the example then; let us say that one of the categories you are interested in is Refugee survival strategies as your intellectual puzzle may be to find out ways of assisting refugees to make their way in South African society and this may be linked to one of your main research questions which is how do refugees survive. Another category may be the way the police deal with refugees as this also links to the intellectual puzzle as well as another broad research question in the study which is how do the organs of state respond to refugees? And one of the sub questions was how do the police in Durban respond to refugees. A further category may be local resident attitudes and actions. There would also be a number of other categories but for our purposes here let us focus on these two. What would your next step in the process be...

<b>activity 29</b>	<b>data analysis plenary discussion</b>
<b>purpose</b>	understanding data analysis
<b>time</b>	30 min
<b>procedure</b>	
How would you proceed to organise the data into these categories.	

Thus you would then begin to work through all the materials and break it down into the categories using codes or physically cutting up photocopies coding them and arranging them in piles. You will notice from the table that the categories are already further broken down into data types of literal, interpretive and reflexive. As we proceed with the example we may decide that more refined categories are necessary. For example survival strategies could be broken down into sub groups such as economic survival strategies, social survival strategies or even long term and short term survival strategies.....

There are also bits of analysis within the analysis. In our example above the different interview categories have been subjected to content analysis (the same process choosing categories and then counting the frequency of items in the category. This has tended to produce literal data and is thus recorded in that column.

You could at first code information like the example on the following pages;

- Could these groups be subdivided further that may be useful for the analysis.
- Add a few statements or examples of what you might find in the different data categories i.e. fact/ interpretive etc
- What does this data analysis suggest about the research design and the methods used
- What is the advantage of using more than one data collection method?
- How would you use this in your analysis an reporting?
- Can we say that a certain percentage of refugees are street hawkers from these results?
- What can we conclude from the content analysis figures in the table above?

Category	Code and location	The Facts (literal)	The Meaning (Interpretive)	Researcher opinions/feelings Reflexive
Refugee economic activities	Docs 7-25	<p>Content analysis Categories:</p> <p><b>Self employment</b> Street Hawking 12 Car Guards 8</p> <p><b>Employment</b> Super market 2</p> <p><b>Not working</b> 4</p>		
Refugee survival strategies	Doc 12	"most refugees become traders"	<p>p 6 "I try to sell some vegetables and fruit to make some money. I get them at the market around the corner from here. I also spend time parking cars and watching them but you need a good location for this and these are often taken by the time you get there."</p> <p>This is the main farmers market. The respondent was a lawyer in her country of origin.</p> <p>When asking why so few refugees had no work at all the respondent stated' I have no family here or close friends, if I don't work in some way I wont eat tonight or tomorrow"</p>	
	Doc 14		<p>P7 "I have had enough of peoples attitudes so whilst I used to be quiet if somebody says something against foreigners I let them have it. It makes me feel better than saying nothing, but you must pick you fights"</p> <p>P12 We also talked about self image and the effects of xenophobia and it was in this context that the respondent made this statement p7 suggesting his actions were more based on developing his own self image than fighting a cause.</p> <p>P15 "if any one of us knows of good places to sell goods we get the word to others as quickly as possible. We all rely on this network. if there are too many local traders we are not able to work there"</p> <p>"We help each other with food when there is and try to talk about some of the problems"</p>	
	Doc 18		<p>p 3 "We collect ourselves together at night and live in similar places so that there is some kind of security as the police are no help at all and if they know it is a foreigner then they don't come so we use numbers to defend ourselves.</p> <p>To build a social network there are often meetings where we discuss what is going on and strategies to deal with the problems.</p> <p>I sell shoes I get from the docks and when there is no supply I watch cars. There is a central point where if you pay a fee you get a uniform (car watch reflective vest), you must return this at the end of the day, but this is the easiest way to get work.</p>	

Category	Code and location	The Facts (literal)	The Meaning (Interpretive)	Researcher opinions/ feelings Reflexive
<b>Local resident attitudes</b>	Docs 26-37	Content analysis Number of times a concept mentioned Take jobs from South Africans 15 Untrustworthy 11 Deal drugs 5		
<b>Local resident actions</b>	Doc 42 p2		In the morning the local hawkers set up their stall and were content to sell their produce to the refugees as they came and went to the community centre. But when a group of three refugees set up a fruit stall One of the hawkers kept looking at the new group selling fruit and then going over to talk to a group of other hawkers who would then look around. This carried on for about 40 mins. After that three of the hawkers approached the refugees and asked where they were from because they looked very lost and should therefore go back to wherever it was they came from. P 7 Later in the day there were a lot more of the South African Hawkers in the street and at that point they began to shout insults and jostle the refugees telling them to move or face the consequences. P15 Refugees seem reluctant to be confrontational in such situations attempting to find alternate space to trade in. The refugee group then 1.25 pm moved the stall around the corner where no other hawkers were present and continued to trade	P 9 I felt the situation was very tense when the local hawkers confronted the refugees. P17 I sensed great anger and humiliation in the group of refugees as we moved away from the trading location. My senses were born out by a few grumblings which ewhen later translated expressed various family curses for the affront.
<b>Police attitudes</b>	Doc 42 p19		At about 3pm two patrolling metro police passed the refugee fruit stall at which point two of the sellers approached them to complain about the incident earlier in the day. They were told not to waste the time of the police who had important things to do. One policeman took an apple and said that that was payment for their time that had already been wasted just talking to them. The two policemen then moved off.	
	Doc 11 p4 Interview notes	The police discriminate against refugees	"For us there is no such thing as police we have tried to make an approach to the police to complain but they say the police would not discriminate. So what do you do then?" The discussion revealed absolute frustration and mistrust of the police and even when an example of positive action by the police was cited in the interview the respondent dismissed this as isolated.	

<b>activity 30</b>	<b>data analysis</b>
<b>purpose</b>	understanding data analysis
<b>time</b>	45 min prep 30 min plen
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>In pairs look at the data and answer the following questions</p> <p>Could these groups be subdivided further that may be useful for the analysis?  Add a few statements or examples of what you might find in the different data categories i.e. fact/ interpretive etc?  What does this data analysis suggest about the research design and the methods used?  What is the advantage of using more than one data collection method?  How would you use this in your analysis an reporting?  Can we say that a certain percentage of refugees are street hawkers from these results?  What can we conclude from the content analysis figures in the table above?</p>	

**triangulation**

Triangulation refers to the extent to which independent measures confirm or contradict the findings. Here you can use independent researchers to analyse the data and determine if they are in agreement with the coding or interpretation of the data. Various methods can be used to analyse the data such as observation, quantitative measures, interviews, or documents. Some researchers complement their qualitative findings with data from quantitative measures to determine if similar patterns in the data emerge from both analyses. Different data sources may also be employed. For example, if you wish to research learners with learning disabilities you could also obtain information on the learners from their peers, parents, teachers, and counsellors. If the data from various sources are at times in conflict, do not ignore these findings. Such issues should be reported. These conflicting findings may also be used to broaden the interpretation of the data or enable you to view the research from a new perspective.

Struwig & Stead (2001)

**general considerations when using reliability and validity**

When reporting the reliability and validity of the data, attention should be focussed on:

- The background of the researchers.
- Taking the data back to participants for their comment on its accuracy.
- The use of terminology and interpretation of the data.
- Checking the data coding on different occasions or asking other raters to independently provide their categories and then compare the coding schemas. The use of triangulation can also contribute to the validity of the findings.

Struwig & Stead (2001)

## Steps in analysing transcript data

1. read through the transcript as a whole making brief notes about what the person is saying about different focus areas of the research. Make marks on the transcript giving page numbers and paragraph numbers (some people use line numbers in denominations of 5 or 10) this is so you can find things in the interview easily again.
2. Make a brief summary of the interview. What did the person say in a nutshell.
3. List out your research questions on a form
4. Go through the interview again capturing the different statements made about each research question area in a block next to the research question. (NOTE these are your original research questions and sub questions) While you are doing this add other areas/themes you came across in the interview either through follow up questioning or information the interviewee offered. Put these down as items and collect the statements made by the interviewee into these categories. (NOTE. You should always make a page number reference at least so that you can find the context of the statement again as well as others who may wish to review your work.
5. Go through what you have developed and now try to place the different issues raised around each broad question or theme into categories by naming a category and counting how many times reference is made in this category of response. If you have too many categories with only one or two references (mentions) in the interviews it means that your categories are too narrow. By making the concepts of these categories of response broader more response items will fall into it.

<b>activity 31</b>	<b>interview transcripts</b>
<b>purpose</b>	Provide participants with an opportunity to analyse data
<b>time</b>	60 min prep 30 min plenary 30 min
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>In pairs look at the data and answer the following questions</p> <p>Could these groups be subdivided further that may be useful for the analysis?          Add a few statements or examples of what you might find in the different data categories i.e. fact/ interpretive etc?          What does this data analysis suggest about the research design and the methods used?          What is the advantage of using more than one data collection method?          How would you use this in your analysis and reporting?          Can we say that a certain percentage of refugees are street hawkers from these results?          What can we conclude from the content analysis figures in the table above?</p>	
<b>activity 32</b>	<b>focus group transcripts</b>
<b>purpose</b>	Provide participants with an opportunity to analyse data
<b>time</b>	60 min prep 30 min
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Participants break into groups of four and undertake activity.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Read the focus group transcript provided and analyse it in terms of one of the above methods.          Once you have completed the analysis answer the following questions</p> <p>How would you report these results?          How does the process of analysis help you draw conclusions from research?          How could you increase the validity of your data?</p>	

<b>activity 33</b>	<b>field notes</b>
<b>purpose</b>	Provide participants with an opportunity to analyse data
<b>time</b>	60 min prep 30 min
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Participants break into a group.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Read the field notes provided and analyse it in terms of any one of the above techniques</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Once you have completed the analysis answer the following questions</p> <p>How would you report these results?  How does the process of analysis help you draw conclusions from research?  How could you increase the validity of your data?</p>	

**Alternate exercise for consolidation or to introduce analysis**

**Purpose:** To expose participants to the art of working with transcript notes to

**Materials:** Pen and Paper

**Time:** Individual activity: 45mins Plenary: 30 minutes

**Procedure:** Participants break into groups of four and undertake activity.

Read the extract from a transcript provided.

Participants read the extract on Why men drop out of school and thereafter undertake the following activity:

- 1) From this statement, what impressions do you form about the nature of the study?
- 2) Put yourself into the world of the research subject? If you were put at the back of the class if you got a question wrong, how would you feel? What can you say about way you feel? How does the way you feel links with the concept of self-esteem?
- 2) Examine the statements in bold print in this section. Do you think that the researcher is quoting from one person or many? What does this say about the reasons provided by working class American men for their academic failure? Can you make the assumption that this would be widely held belief amongst most working class men for their scholastic failure?
- 2) This paragraph is the original transcript of response from a mechanic. Read this carefully and then look at the words in bold (**inept, malevolent, or exploitative**). What relationship is the researcher trying to draw? What comments can you make about style used by the researcher to present original information?

## constant comparative method of coding

This method of coding is used when data are inductively analysed. In other words, hypotheses are inductively analysed. In other words, hypotheses are not generated initially but develop as the study progresses. A brief description of the constant comparative method of coding follows:

- Type the data in ASCII format and save the file to disk.
- Make printouts or photocopies of the data.
- Code each transcript page on the top right hand corner. For example, the code O1FU/1 may refer to person number one that was interviewed, female, university (where the interview took place), and page of the data. In the interests of anonymity, do not name the person that was interviewed. Any number of coding schemes may be used. The codes could include categories that are important to the analysis e.g. gender, age, economic status. Such codes are useful when the data is grouped into categories later on.
- Read through the transcripts in their entirety and identify important themes/concepts/ideas. What are the recurring themes in the data? What are the patterns in the data? These broad themes can change as the research proceeds. Write these tentative themes down.
- Identify units of meaning in the data. This is referred to as *unitising* the data. A data unit may comprise of a word, a phrase, a sentence, one or more paragraphs or larger transcripts. Data units stand by themselves i.e. they make sense. They serve as the basis for identifying larger units of meaning.
- When a unit of meaning is chosen, draw a line across the page in order to separate from the next unit.
- Indicate on the left margin where the unit may be found in the text e.g. O1FU/3. this means that the data unit refers to the interview with participant number 1, female, university, and is found on page 3 of the text.
- Beneath the code write a word or code that reflects the essence of the unit's meaning. For example, if a paragraph reflects a participants selection of university courses the code would read: 'O1FU/3 Courses'
- Every piece of writing should be coded i.e. unitised.
- Once the units of meaning have been identified, cut each unit of meaning from the photocopied page using a scissors. Paste codes of the same unit onto a page.
- Compare each unit of meaning with other units. Group similar meanings together into provisional categories. These categories may or may not be similar to those written down in the discovery process. Units of meaning may sometimes be placed into several categories. This would necessitate more than one copy of the data.
- Check that grouped units of meaning are similar to each other. This is an emergent process of categorising the data. Expect the categories names to be altered often.
- When about six units of meaning are placed in a category write a rule for inclusion for other units of meaning to be included in this category. This rule should be a prepositional statement that reflects the essential meaning of all the units of meaning or pages in a particular category. These statements are the roughly formed outcomes of the study. Some propositions stand alone while others can be linked to each other. An example of a rule for inclusion could be "students' worries about selecting a major". An example of a prepositional statement could be "students are worried for a number of reasons about choosing an appropriate major".
- Develop a code that reflects the meaning of a category and place the code (which is in capital letters and in parentheses) on the top of each data page of unit meanings. This will help you with sorting if the data pages get mixed up .
- Finally, determine if there are any connections between prepositional statements. Such connections may enable in-depth interpretations of the data to be made.

At this stage of the research process you have interview transcripts, fieldnotes, unitised data and coded data. All of this combines to form what is known as an audit trail. An audit trail permits your co-researchers and at a later date, other researchers to check the process by which you arrived at your findings and conclusions. Researchers will then determine whether you have made trustworthy or valid interpretations. If there is no audit trail, the scientific community is unlikely to place much value on your findings.

Struwig & Stead (2001)

## section 7

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# quantitative data collection

### Method Theory and Practice

Quantitative research refers to a broad area of investigation that generates and uses information – known as data in the research world – with a distinctive quantitative nature. This means that quantitative research offers data that can be represented by numbers. For example, a quantitative research report tells us that 33% of South Africans are HIV-positive.

Quantitative research usually involves collecting and analysing the responses of a large number of respondents (usually people, households or countries). Quantitative research usually allows researchers to generalise their results beyond just the set of respondents that were interviewed.

Quantitative research is associated with rigorous research design and the survey method of data gathering. Quantitative research methods use data that is in numbers. This makes it possible for us to apply statistical techniques to it. Quantitative research usually has tight and clear research designs, using surveys to gather data. This is usually done with a structured questionnaire as the main research instrument.

**Research design** is a plan that outlines the parts that go into making up a research project, and how the parts relate to each other. It usually consists of four parts:

- The research question (for example: how can we identify and understand the conditions of young people in South Africa today?).
- The data needed to answer the question (for example, data about living conditions, opinions, attitudes, and policy preferences).
- The methods suited to collecting the relevant data (such as survey, focus group discussions, interviews).
- The analytical techniques that will allow the data to answer your research question. This may include analysing the relationship between demographic characteristics of youth (like age, race, sex), their living conditions and its impact on their views, in-depth analysis of textual material from qualitative research, and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data.

**Research method** is the way the parts of your research design can be put into action. Often this has to do with how the relevant data are gathered. For example, the C A S E youth survey used a national sample survey, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews as data-gathering methods. This is a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Research instrument is the tool each method uses to collect data. For example, in survey research the instrument is usually a questionnaire. With focus group discussions the research instrument is usually a discussion guideline with moderating instructions

<b>activity 34</b>	<b>assessing the validity of method choices</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To assess the validity of the quantitative method to the individual research project
<b>time</b>	30 minutes
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Look at the information you recorded in activity 3 on the form under sources of data and justification. Now examine the materials in the manual around the use of questionnaire survey method, when they are appropriate and their strengths and weaknesses. Answer the following</p> <p>Why are you using a survey method?  How does this assist you in answering your research puzzle?  In light of this information do any of your items change or even the justification for them?  What problems do you expect to encounter using this type of method?  What type of data do you expect to collect and how does this fit with your ontological and epistemological questions?</p>	

**Participant notes:**

<b>activity 35</b>	<b>questionnaire development</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To begin the process of questionnaire development for discussion at a latter point in the project
<b>time</b>	120 mins prep    60 mins plen
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Organise into reference groups of three. Your reference groups provide you with an immediate source of feedback should you develop difficulties.</p> <p>Examine what you developed in terms of your research questions and operational definitions on day one as they pertain to your research projects.</p> <p>Decide how you approach the data ie as something that is constructed through interaction or as facts that need collecting.</p> <p>Make decisions as how closed or open you wish your questionnaire to be. Remember you have to take realistic constraints in terms of time and money which will normally impact on the sample size or method.</p> <p>Consider your intellectual puzzle and ontological and epistemological positions.</p> <p>Will you be using inductive or deductive analysis?</p> <p>Perform the actions and answer the questions in the activity and then develop a questionnaire recording reasons for different decisions you take in your questionnaire design.</p> <p>Will you need to do a pilot study? How would you do this</p> <p>What will your sample look like, how does this impact on your research?</p> <p>Some participants will feedback in plenary and a discussion will follow</p>	

**Participant notes:**

## section 8

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# quantitative sampling

Quantitative sampling does tend to be more focused on probability methods that aim to make research results generalisable from the sample to the population being analysed. Previous workshops have dealt with various sampling methods used in quantitative research and we will not repeat this here, but please consult you manual for notes in this regard.

Two core concepts predominate when approaching the quantitative sampling. The sampling strategy and the sample size. Whilst sample size is important in the strategic sense in qualitative research the sample size is of statistical significance in quantitative research and relates quite directly to the reliability with which we can generalise conclusions from data drawn from a sample to the population. The sampling strategy in quantitative research relates to your intellectual/research puzzle, your questions and the research design quite directly.

Here we wish to outline some strategic decisions you will need to make and prepare you

<b>activity 36</b>	<b>strategic thoughts on quantitative sampling</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To orientate participants to the nature of quantitative sampling and how it impacts on their research projects.
<b>time</b>	individual 40 minutes    plenary 30 min
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>Organise into reference groups of three based on your own projects and work you have done on theory intellectual puzzles etc answer the following questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How or what is the population?(what is the unit category of analysis)</li> <li>2. What is the size of your population?</li> <li>3. Where might you find a finite population list (sampling frame)?</li> <li>4. What method of sampling would fit best with your research design?</li> <li>5. What level of reliability will you need from your sample?</li> <li>6. If it is possible to determine at this point what sample size you would draw?</li> </ol>	
<b>Participant notes</b>	

## section 9

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# quantitative data analysis

### are you mining for facts or generating knowledge?

Before we start to hand out or conduct questionnaires there is an important theoretical question to deal with. Do we see the knowledge as already existing in the world as facts that we need to put on a hard hat and go and mine like gold or do we see knowledge being created through social interaction. How we answer this question determines whether we are mining: collecting data (excavation) or generating data (construction).

Qualitative interviewing is generally based on epistemological (what makes up knowledge) assumptions that see knowledge as constructed in a situation through social interaction. I.e. as the researcher you and your interaction make up part of the process of generating data. Interviews therefore generally see knowledge as socially generated and not as simple facts that need to be excavated. Quantitative research in the form surveys may often take the opposite view, i.e. that knowledge can be excavated as facts, and i.e. it is engaging in a process of collecting data rather than generating it. What relevance does this have for the interview? Well it impacts on the kinds of questions you will ask and the type of answers you expect as well as how you will deal with this data in analysis.

Quantitative research is most commonly associated with data mining or data collection given the limited amount of interaction that generally happens in such a research process. That is not to say that there is no or no possibility of data generation in this type of research just that it is not the norm.

### A practical example:

#### Generating Data

A set of questions asked about water disconnections in a community. If you follow the sequence of questions that hint at what the answers were you see how knowledge around how people perceive power in interacting with local government begins to be *generated in the interaction*.

How did you react when the municipality arrived to disconnect the water?

Can you remember what you were thinking at the time?

Oh I see so when you were chasing the municipal security guard that had been separated from the others what did you intend to do?

How did this make you feel?

If you say for once you felt some power in dealing with the municipality how would you describe experiences of dealing with the officials up to the point of the disconnection teams arriving?

Can you tell me what in your experiences of the two situations is different?

#### Collecting Data

How many people live in the House hold

How many taps are there in the house?

What is your average amount of water consumption?

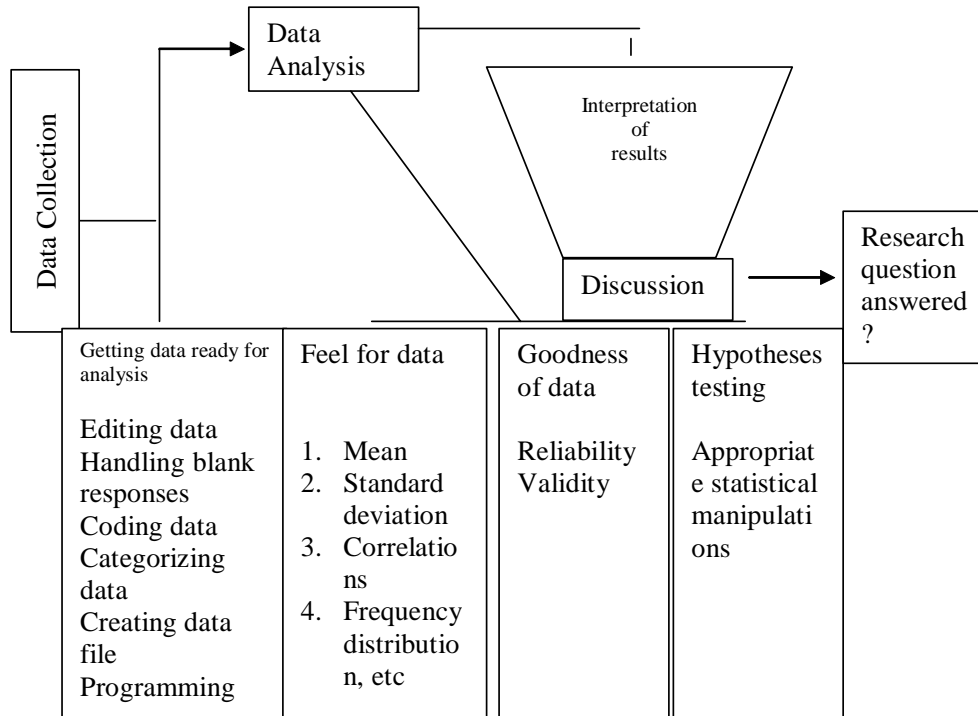
Has your water been cut off?

<b>activity 37</b>	<b>analysis of data set</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To provide practice at analysing data with a specific objective
<b>time</b>	
<b>materials</b>	DTMB data set
<b>procedure</b>	
<p>You have been provided with tabulated data post coding from a semi structured questionnaire that was administered by workers at DTMB during the last week before privatisation. There are both figures from closed ended questions as well as collections of statements and opinions that reflect the more open ended questions in the questionnaire. The instrument was administered by worker researchers. The sample size was 63 out of a staff component of 800. This was a activist researcher project much like what participants here may be engaged in.</p> <p>You are preparing a report to the unions on member attitudes and opinions of the union as a result of this privatisation. Find the necessary information, analyse it and report on the result. You should draw graphs comment on the generalisability of the results and state how you would go about reporting the results. You should also comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the study.</p> <p><b>Alternatively</b></p> <p>You are preparing a report for the anti privatisation forum on the attitudes of workers toward privatisation as well as the impact of privatisation on workers. Find the necessary information, analyse it and report on the result. You should draw graphs comment on the generalisability of the results and state how you would go about reporting the results. You should also comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the study.</p>	

You will have noticed from this data set that there were quite a few open ended questions. You could really say that more than one method was used as some of the questionnaire administrators also did observation, they went and recorded the mayors speech. They found out Yunis schaik facilitated the deal. During this speech. They also interviewed a few workers and got better insights. When all of the data is put together and analysed to see if the different methods support the conclusions made by each this is called triangulation.

<p><b>triangulation</b></p> <p>Triangulation refers to the extent to which independent measures confirm or contradict the findings. Here you can use independent researchers to analyse the data and determine if they are in agreement with the coding or interpretation of the data. Various methods can be used to analyse the data such as observation, quantitative measures, interviews, or documents. Some researchers complement their qualitative findings with data from quantitative measures to determine if similar patterns in the data emerge from both analyses. Different data sources may also be employed. For example, if you wish to research learners with learning disabilities you could also obtain information on the learners from their peers, parents, teachers, and counsellors. If the data from various sources are at times in conflict, do not ignore these findings. Such issues should be reported. These conflicting findings may also be used to broaden the interpretation of the data or enable you to view the research from a new perspective.</p> <p>Struwig &amp; Stead (2001)</p>
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Illustration of Quantitative Data Analysis Process



Introduction to SPSS

In the last training programme you have been introduced to Excel and you have had adequate orientation on data processing, drawing of frequency distribution tables and graphs, calculating measures of central tendency and standard deviation. You have developed skills in analysing and interpreting statistical data.

In the final phase of this training programme, you are exposed to a powerful research tool called the SPSS (Statistical for the Social Sciences). With this package of computer programs, you can analyse data with relative ease, using and adapting similar routine and procedures used in Excel.

A simple set of preformatted data on water disconnection is provided in electronic form. In addition a copy of a pre-coded questionnaire which was administered to 80 respondents appears in the next section which will serve as your reference in understanding the way in which the data has been keyed in for the different response categories.

**Step 1:** Study the questionnaire in detail. You will note that the questionnaire has been pre-coded. Each code represents a response.

**Step 2 :** Open the data file provided in stiffy disk. You should see the following data edit or appear on your screen.

**Step 3:** The facilitator provides participants with a quick overview of the data editor and the different icons that will be used in this training programme.

	gender	age	educat	occupat	annual	durstay	hsecom	hsecost	mthhpse	walcarr	mthcost	waldoco	numdco		
1	1	4	3	7	1	1	5	2	2	4	4	1	4		
2	1	3	3	6	8	3	1	2	3	4	3	1	3		
3	2	4	3	3	1	2	2	1	2	4	2	1	2		
4	1	4	3	7	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2		
5	1	2	6	7	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	3		
6	2	2	3	7	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	3		
7	1	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	4	1	2	1		
8	2	3	4	3	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	2	3		
9	1	3	3	3	9	3	4	3	2	4	3	1	3		
10	2	6	3	6	3	2	6	3	4	1	1	1	1		
11	2	4	3	3	6	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	1		
12	1	2	4	3	1	2	2	4	4	1	1	2	1		
13	1	4	3	4	10	1	5	4	2	4	4	1	4		
14	2	3	3	3	8	2	2	4	2	1	2	2	2		
15	1	3	3	4	2	3	2	4	3	4	2	1	2		
16	1	3	6	1	9	3	3	4	4	4	5	2	5		
17	1	4	3	1	1	2	2	4	3	2	3	2	3		
18	1	3	4	2	11	3	2	5	4	2	1	1	1		
19	2	3	3	7	1	1	4	2	2	2	1	1	1		
20	1	3	3	7	1	1	6	2	2	2	1	1	1		
21	1	2	3	7	1	3	1	4	8	1	1	1	1		
22	2	2	3	8	3	3	1	4	4	1	1	1	1		
23	2	6	3	7	1	1	6	2	2	2	2	1	2		
24	2	4	3	1	2	3	2	1	4	1	4	2	4		
25	2	2	3	4	1	3	2	3	4	2	3	1	2		
26	1	4	3	3	8	3	5	2	2	2	2	2	2		
27	2	2	3	7	1	3	1	1	2	4	3	2	3		
28	1	3	3	3	8	3	2	4	3	1	1	1	1		
29	1	3	6	1	11	3	2	3	4	2	1	1	1		
30	2	3	3	9	1	3	3	4	3	1	4	1	4		
31	2	3	3	7	1	1	1	5	4	4	3	1	3		
32	2	4	3	7	5	3	1	2	4	2	2	2	2		
33	2	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2		
34	2	2	4	3	6	3	2	4	4	4	4	1	4		
35	1	4	6	1	11	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	2		

<b>activity 38</b>	<b>analysis of data set</b>
<b>purpose</b>	To introduce participants to different forms of data analysis using descrip-
<b>time</b>	
<b>materials</b>	Computer printer disk and projector
<b>procedure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile a frequency distribution for each variable. Participants analyse each frequency distribution table and comment on trends and patterns in the distribution.</li> <li>• Participants select the most appropriate graph for each variable and draw these accordingly. They practice editing each graph. Copy this to word and write brief comments on their observations.</li> <li>• Participants continue working with the same set of data. They explore the different icons used for measures of central tendency. They compute the most appropriate measure of central tendency all of the variables and comment on their observations.</li> </ul>



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