

Session 2

1. Sampling
2. Proposal
3. Ethics consideration

Purposeful sampling strategies for qualitative studies

16 types of purposeful
sampling

purposeful sampling

- **Limited number** of informants
- **In-depth information.**
- Often different strategies are **combined**: depending on the topic under study, the type of information wanted and the resources of the investigator (s).

(1) Extreme case sampling

- Selection of *extreme cases*, such as good or very poor compliers to treatment, is a powerful and rapid strategy to identify contributing factors to poor compliance.

opportunistic maximum variation
sampling approach

The **most useful**
strategy for the
qualitative approach is
maximum variation
sampling.

- There are some main occasions for using maximum variation sampling:
 - When the sample size is very small
 - When no population information is available (and it is not difficult to find population members with the selected characteristics)
 - In qualitative research

- Think of some characteristics of people that (a) **differ widely** between people in relation to the subject you're researching, and (b) are **known** to a wide range of other people.

- Often it's useful to have a **preliminary brainstorming session** with an initial group of local informants.

you can use dimensional analysis to create a more comprehensive list.

It's done like this...

- Step 1 is decide what sample size you want. For example, let's say it's 20. This determines the number of dimensions: 20 is 2 to the power of what? The closest answer is 4, because $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 = 16$. So you can use 4 dimensions to get 16 cases, then add a few more factors, such as socially isolated people.

- In order to obtain insight in how **stigma** manifests itself in different cultures
 - in *males (A) and females (B)*
 - in *rural (C)* and *urban* areas (D)
 - in *well-to-do* (E) and *poor* patients (F)
 - in *educated (G)* and *illiterate* one (H)
- ACEG, ACEH, ACFG, ACFH
 BCEG, BCEH, BCFG, BCFH
 ADEG, ADEH, ADFG, ADFH
 BDEG, BDEH, BDFG, BDFH

- if a group of people is extreme in several different ways, it will contain people who are average in other ways.

- All you have to do now is find somebody matching that description - and repeat that task for the 15 other types of people. What if you can't find people who meet some of those descriptions?

- Finally, don't forget to add the 4 people who seldom communicate with others. That brings your sample up to 20.

- however interesting data maximum variation sampling may generate, highlighting different factors and different perspectives, it does **not** provide **representative** data for the **total population**.

- Purposeful sampling should **not** be **haphazard**.
- **Selection rules** are developed to prevent the researcher from sampling according to personal preference.

Homogeneous sampling

- In focus group discussions (FGDs), we usually select homogeneous groups because participants discuss more freely when they are amongst people of similar social status.

Typical case sampling

- It is sometimes illustrative to describe in-depth some cases which are *'typical'* for the group one is interested in.
- They cannot be generalized for the whole group.
- **By key informants or survey**

- ‘Typical’ young school leaver who migrates from the rural areas to town in search of work
- ‘Typical’ family in a rural village

(5) Critical case sampling

- Critical cases are those who ‘can make the difference’ with respect to an intervention you want to introduce or to evaluate.
- **For example**, you have developed a local weaning food that, you hope, is affordable to all mothers. Before propagating it at a larger scale you first interview and observe some low-income mothers as ‘test cases’. If they manage to produce and use it, this will indicate that it is affordable to the whole group.

(6) Snowball or chain sampling

- If a particular person is recommended to you by two or three different people you can be quite sure that he or she will be a valuable key informant.
- The same approach can be used if an in-depth interview leads to discoveries, which seem rewarding to follow-up by a number of interviews with an additional group of informants.

sample at random

- if qualitative researchers can choose from a group of seemingly similar informants they will also sample at random.

- Purposeful sampling is NOT the same as *convenience sampling*.
- **At the beginning** of a study
- Do not (yet) have a preference for specific categories.
- When there seems no other choice (no one else available for an interview)

How many should be in the sample?

- Qualitative researchers use the concept of ***saturation***. This means that data collection continues until the researcher finds that **no new information** about the research question can be obtained from additional cases.

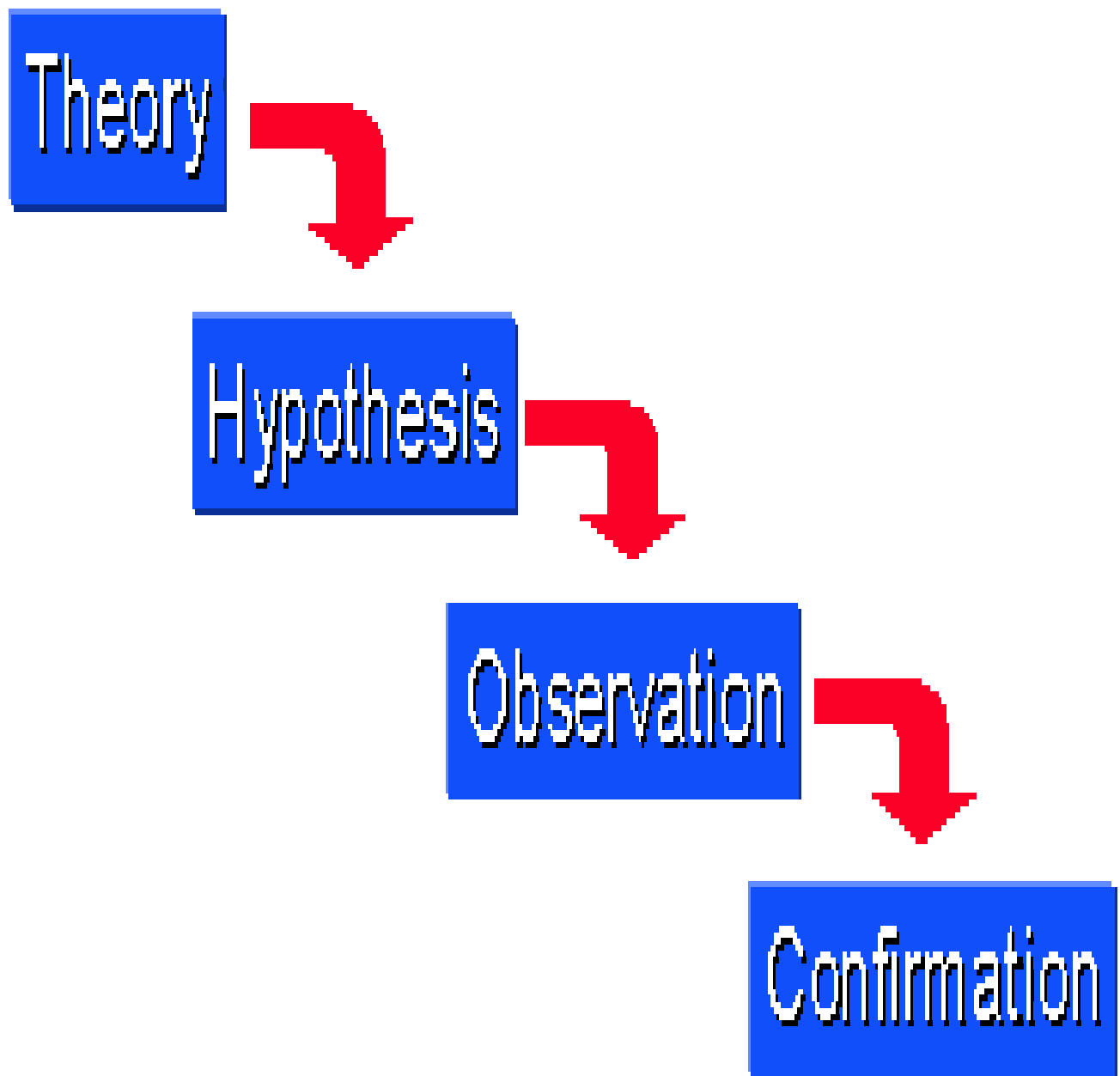
- Since there are no statistical tests for significance in qualitative studies, the researcher bears the burden of discovering and interpreting the importance of what is observed.

The Proposal in Qualitative Research

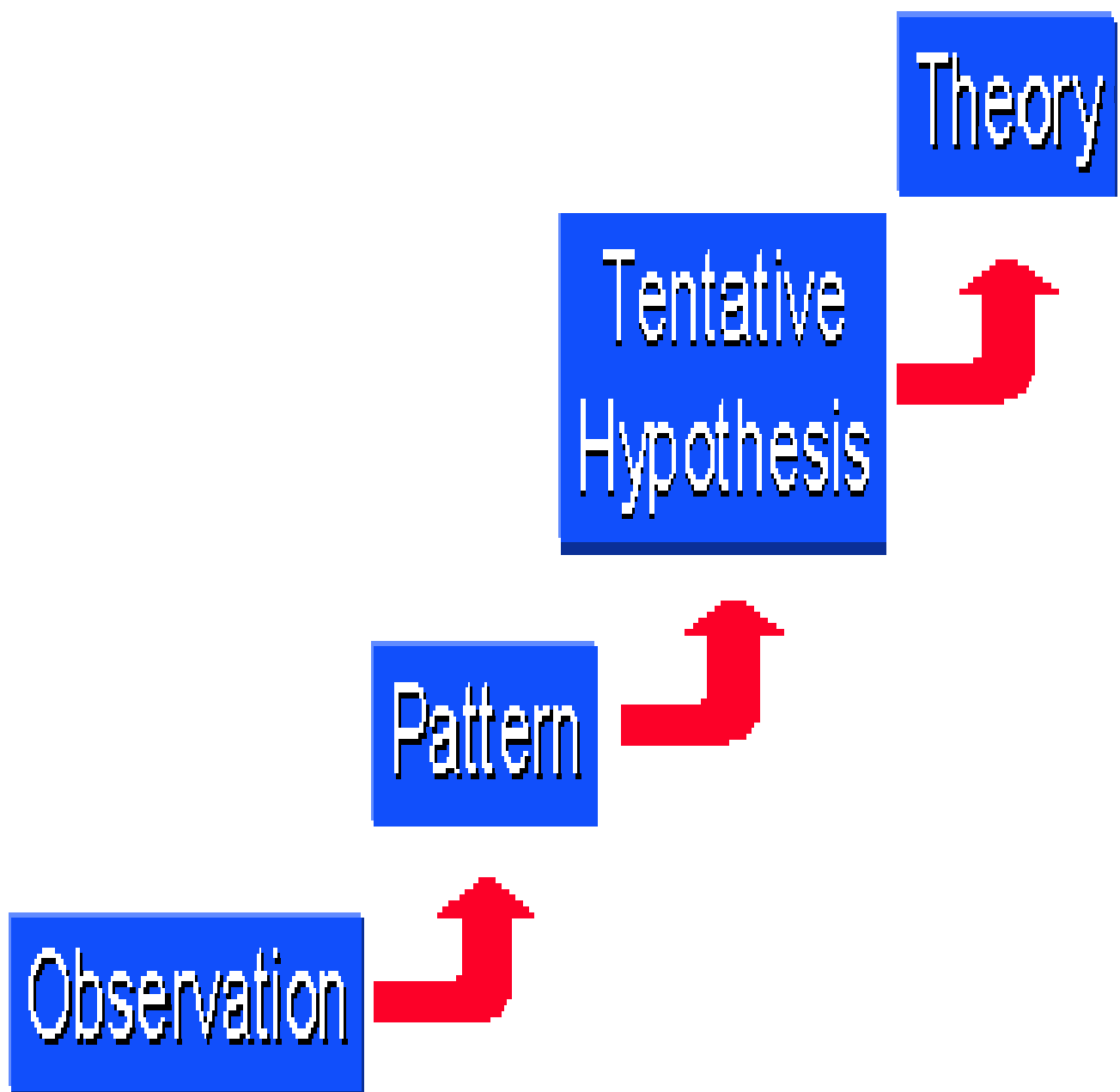
- There is no single accepted outline for a qualitative research proposal or report.

- There are different styles to qualitative and quantitative proposal writing. When utilizing the quantitative approach the proposal tends to be **more detailed** and specific in focus and procedures. This style also encompasses a **more comprehensive literature review** and the entire proposal is more extensive than the qualitative method. **The hypothesis** is noted and defined prior to starting the process and remains relatively **unchanged**.

Deductive reasoning



Inductive reasoning



- The researcher is the primary instrument of inquiry.

Introduction

- Begin with something interesting, e.g., a quote or story, to capture the reader's interest.
- Introduce **your question** or curiosity. What is it that you want to know or understand? How did you get interested in the topic? If your question has evolved since you have begun, describe the process.
- Tell why there's a **need** for the study. Cite relevant literature that calls for the need for the research in this area, or demonstrates the lack of attention to the topic. In your own words, describe how you think this study will be **useful**.
- Describe the intended **audience** for your research (e.g., the public, family therapists).
- Describe your research **product**. What form will the report take (e.g., scholarly manuscript, magazine article for the public, script for a documentary video)?
- Conclude the introduction with an **overview of your proposal**.

Research Paradigm

- Use specific language to name and describe your research paradigm (e.g., post-positivist).

Review of Literature

- Summarize and reference all of the relevant literature that you have reviewed to date.
- Describe how your review of the literature has **influenced** the way you are approaching the research.
- Disclose the **anticipated findings**, your hypotheses and your guesses.
- Describe the procedures you will use to remain **"open" to unexpected information**.

Goals

- what you intend to accomplish through this research (e.g., **expanding** a knowledge base, generating hypotheses for quantitative research, **developing** a grounded theory, **emancipating** informants, **establishing** the trustworthiness of a theory).

Research Methods

- Identify and generally describe your research **methodology** (e.g., ethnographic field study, single case study), and your research procedures or **methods** (e.g., long interviews, observation).
- Cite the **major authors** who have described your research method.
- Describe what you intend to do **in detail**, as you begin your study
 1. **Explain how you will select** informants and gain entry into the research context (if relevant).
 2. Describe the procedures you will take **to protect the rights** of your informants (e.g., informed consent, human subjects approval, debriefing).
 3. Describe the **kind of relationship** you intend to have with the informants. Will you be neutral, collaborative, objective?
 4. Describe the **kind of data** you will collect (e.g., field notes from memory, audio tapes, video tapes, transcripts of conversations, examination of existing documents, etc.).

Research Methods (Rem.)

5. Describe your **intended data collection procedures**. If interviews are to be used, **list your question(s)** or attach as an appendix. Describe any equipment to be used.
 6. Describe the procedures you will use to keep track of the research process.
 7. Describe your intended **data analysis** procedures (coding, sorting, etc.)?
 8. Describe how the research design may evolve as the process unfolds.
 9. Describe how you will organize, format and present your data, interpretations, and conclusions.
- Describe how you will consider and protect **"reliability" and "validity."** Will you use systematic methods and procedures, triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing?

Limitation

- Discuss the limitations of your study in the context of the limitations of all similar studies

- Proposal [proposal format.doc](#)

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- Although ethical consideration and issues impact quantitative research, they do so in **unique and more fragile** ways in qualitative research.
- Ethical implications may be **unclear or unanticipated**.

Process informed consent (Consensual decision making)

- This approach requires that researchers, at varying points in the research process, **reevaluate** participants' consent to participate in the study.
- Participants must know from the beginning of and be reminded throughout the investigation that they have the right of **withdraw** from the research study at any time.

- **Common sense** plays a large part in renegotiating informed consent. If our focus should change, we need to ask participants for permission to change the first agreement.
- Continually informing and asking permission establishes the needed trust to go on further in an ethical manner.

Covert Participant Observation

- The use of **covert participant** observation must be given serious consideration in the conduct of a qualitative investigation. Researchers must consider available alternative solutions for data generation provided those solutions will maintain the integrity of the study.

Beneficence and Justice

- Researchers must assure participants that confidentiality and anonymity will be upheld and that participants will be treated with dignity and respect.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

- The very nature of data collection in a qualitative investigation makes anonymity impossible. The personnel, one-to-one interaction during the interview process allows researchers to know the participants in ways that are impossible and unnecessary in quantitative designs.

- Small sample size and thick description provided in the presentation of the findings can present problems in maintaining confidentiality.

Ethical Considerations related to the researcher-participant Relationship

- The particular data generation strategies necessitate a close, personal relationship with participants. The researcher is the **tool for data collection** and, as such, comes to know participants in a personal way.
- Researchers **must not move** from the role of instrument in the investigation to that of **counselor or therapist**.

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Thanks

Any question?