



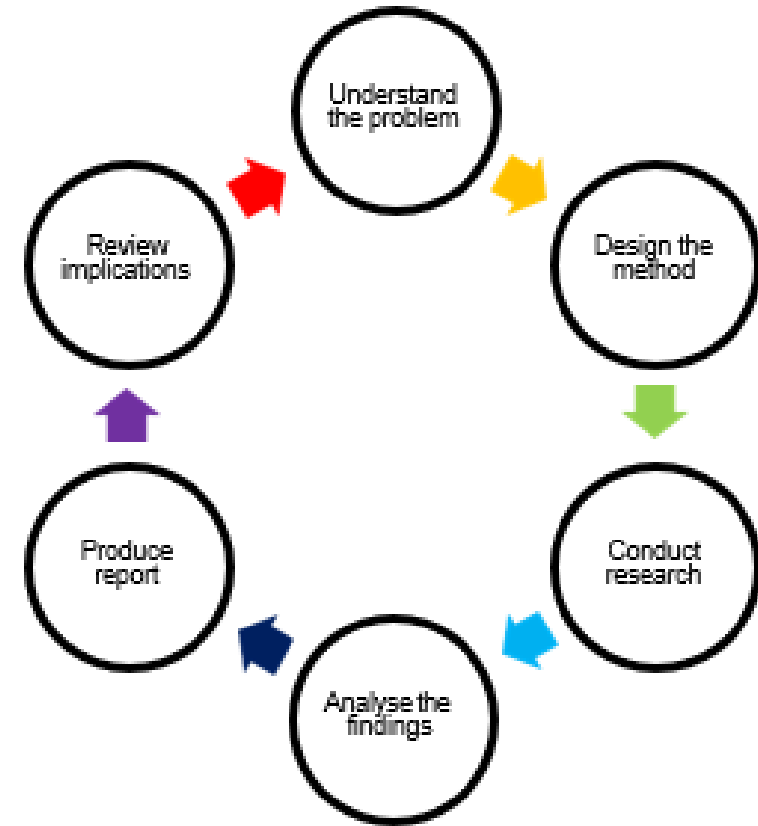
Literature Searching for Qualitative Research

Unit 1



What we will cover in Unit 1

- Identifying qualitative research questions
- Methods used in qualitative research



The trend towards qualitative research

- We are moving away from a traditional medical model to **client focussed care**
- We are “**doing things with people**” rather than “doing things to people”
- So there is an increased need for **Qualitative research**

What is qualitative research?

- “Research that derives data from observation, interviews or verbal interactions and focuses on the meanings and interpretations of participants (From Holloway and Wheeler, Ethical issues in qualitative nursing research”, Nursing Ethics, 1995, Sept; 2 (3):223-232) Year Introduced:2003

The theoretical background...

The following three theoretical disciplines inform and underpin much qualitative research:

- Ethnography
 - Describes social phenomena based on a holistic style of research- uses interviews, observation and other techniques working directly with the subjects wherever possible
- Phenomenology
 - Looks at how events (phenomenon) are experienced first-hand by individuals and seeks to understand the “influence of a person’s consciousness upon perceptions”*. The aim is to understand and describe people’s subjective perception of things rather than making objective observations.
- Grounded Theory
 - Developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss who studied dying patients and from this experience developed the concept of generating theory from data. The process of identifying themes from data is a feature of much qualitative research and contrasts with the quantitative approach of using data to prove or disprove a hypothesis.

What is a qualitative research question?

- Tend to be about people and their feelings/thoughts/ perspectives
- Can still be about effectiveness of interventions...
... but does not seek to produce statistical data on effectiveness
- Instead it can identify theories, themes and trends from data/responses collected

Qualitative Research Questions - some examples...

- The experience of childbirth in first-time mothers who received narcotic analgesics during the first stage of labour.
- The meaning and effect of HIV/AIDS stigma for people living with AIDS and nurses involved in their care in the North West Province, South Africa.
- Positive shifts in the perceived meaning of cardiac pain following a psychoeducation program for chronic stable angina.
- Living with moderate or severe traumatic brain injury: the meaning of family members' experiences.
- Note some of the key words use in these questions: “**experience**”, “**meaning**”, “**perceived**” and “**living**”- they are all quite subjective and personal

Examples of qualitative research methods (1)

- Passive observation
 - The researcher discreetly observes and records the activities of an individual or a group but does not attempt to participate or intervene in anyway.
- Participant observation
 - The researcher observes 'from within' by participating in activities with the research subject/s and documenting the experience

Examples of qualitative research methods (2)

In-depth interviews

These tend to follow a loose structure that is open- ended and flexible and encourages the interviewee to talk freely and at length. Can be conducted in person, by phone or increasingly online.

Focus groups

A group, usually quite small, are brought together for a group discussion on a topic. A facilitator may introduce topics or 'moderate' the group but does not volunteer their own ideas/opinions

Why do qualitative research?

- “ Qualitative research has an important role in evidence-based health care, in that it represents the **human dimensions** and **experiences** of the consumers of health care. ... It also provides a means of **giving consumers a voice** in the decision-making process through the documentation of their experiences, preferences, and priorities.”

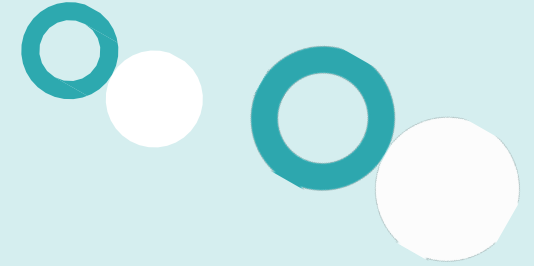
Evans, D. (2002) Database searches for qualitative research . J Med Libr Assn. Jul; **90**(3):290-3.

Why is it important? - 1

- Qualitative research seeks to understand and interpret personal experiences, behaviours, interactions, and social contexts to explain the phenomena of interest, such as the attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives of patients and clinicians; the interpersonal nature of caregiver and patient relationships; the illness experience; or the impact of human suffering. (Wong et al, 2004)

Why is it important? - 2

- “Qualitative”, represents various research methodologies including ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and narrative analysis. Instead of quantifying or statistically portraying the data, qualitative research focuses on the narrative account of the individual and in so doing gives voice to the patient or provider in the health care decision making process (Wong et al, 2004)



FOCUSING QUALITATIVE QUESTIONS



Focused Questions

- Guides the searching process - by making you think about how you can describe your search more specifically
- Helps you to think of synonyms and alternatives - you need to make sure you have thought of every word/phrase/alternative spelling/synonym in order to retrieve all relevant papers
- Saves time – hopefully - by increasing the relevance of the references you retrieve, and reducing the number of search results

Joanna Briggs Institute approach

- “ Questions should be specific regarding, for example, the consumers, setting, interventions or phenomena and outcomes to be investigated. For effectiveness questions, the PICO framework is recommended.....; for other questions, the SPICE framework
- (Setting, Perspective, Intervention/phenomena of Interest, Comparison, Evaluation) [Adapted from Booth, 2006] is recommended”.

A structure for focused questions

- Health services research questions often use
PATIENT - INTERVENTION- COMPARISON- OUTCOME
(PICO) structure
- But within social sciences research the following may be more appropriate:
 - S - SETTING
 - P - PERSPECTIVE
 - I - INTERVENTION / INTEREST
 - C - COMPARISON
 - E - EVALUATION

An example of SPICE

- Our focused question could be: *“To what extent to patients awaiting coronary artery bypass surgery experience uncertainty and anxiety about the procedure?”*
 - **SETTING** – Awaiting Surgery
 - **PERSPECTIVE** – Patients
 - **INTERVENTION/INTEREST** - Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery
 - **COMPARISON** – Not Applicable
 - **EVALUATION** – Uncertainty and Anxiety

An example of SPICE

- Our focused question could be: *“what are the attitudes of patients with primary care patients with diabetes towards good blood pressure control?”*
 - **SETTING** – In Primary Care
 - **PERSPECTIVE** – Patients with Diabetes
 - **INTERVENTION/INTEREST** – Good Blood Pressure Control
 - **COMPARISON** – Not Applicable
 - **EVALUATION** – Attitudes

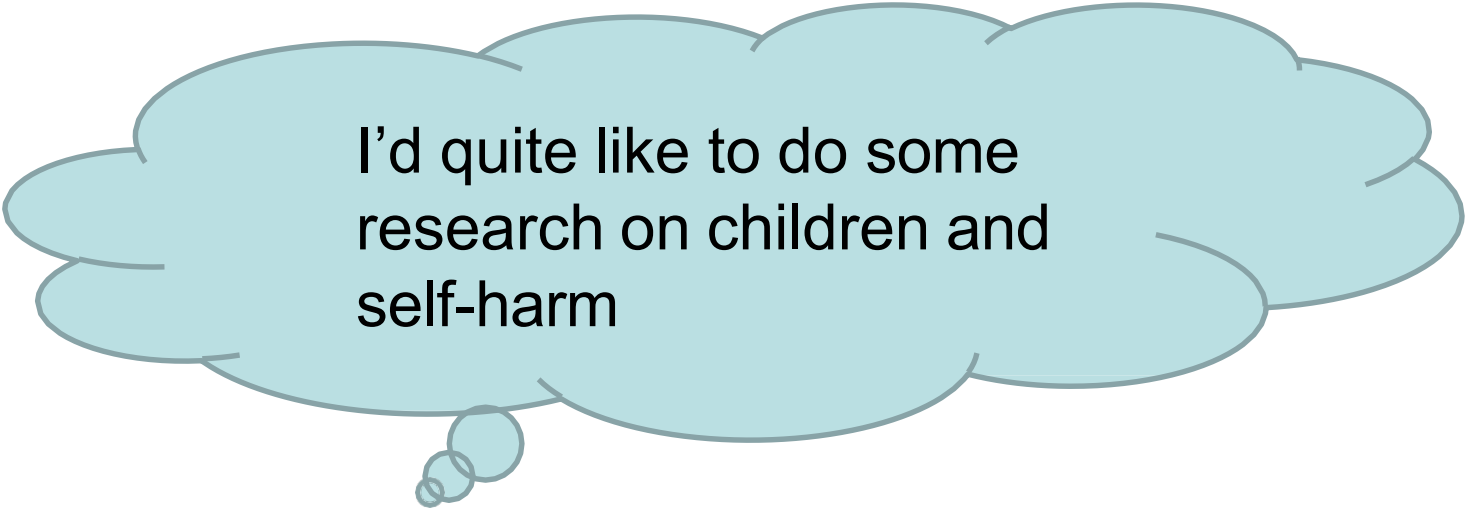
Alternative - ProPheT

- Our focused question could be: *“what are the attitudes of first-time mothers towards breastfeeding in the first six-months after birth?”*
- Using - ProPheT!
 - **Pro** - **Problem** – First time mothers
 - **Phe** - **Phenomenon of Interest** – Attitudes to Breastfeeding
 - **T** - **Time** – Within first six months of birth

Alternative - CLIP

- Another method which can be useful for management or social care questions is:
 - **C** - Client Group
 - **L** - Location
 - **I** - Improvement / Intervention / Information
 - **P** - Profession

CLIP can get you from a vague research idea:

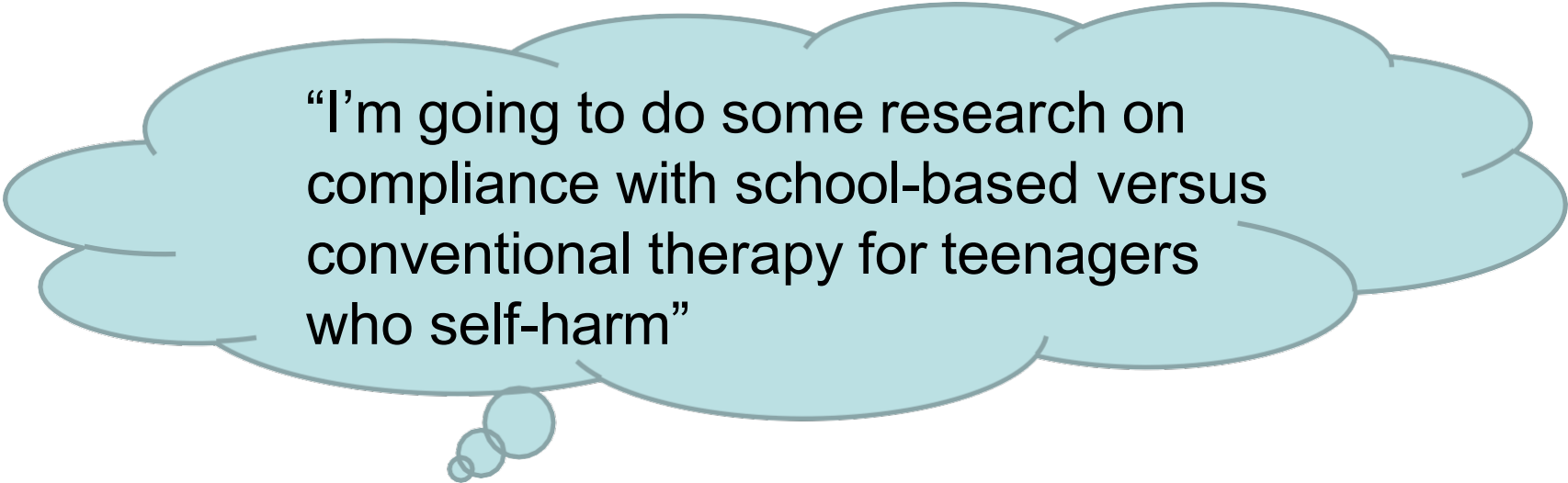


I'd quite like to do some
research on children and
self-harm

Via

- **C - Client Group**- who is the question about?
 - *Self-Harming Children- Teenagers? School-Age children? Boys? Girls?*
- **L - Location**- where is the client group or intervention located?
 - *School-based therapy*
- **I - Improvement** (what outcomes are expected?) **OR** Intervention (what therapy or service is being delivered?) **OR** Information (what knowledge are you delivering to the clients, or hope to gain from them?)
 - *Reduction in self-harming behaviour? Increased compliance with therapy?*
- **P - Profession**- are a specific professional group involved (i.e. social workers, foster carers, psychologists)?
 - *Educational psychologists?*

To:



“I’m going to do some research on compliance with school-based versus conventional therapy for teenagers who self-harm”

Brief Activity 1 :

- Spend five minutes using the SPICE, CLIP or ProPheT frameworks to formulate your own research question
 - try all three if necessary to see which one suits your question best.
- This exercise is just for you to work on before moving on to unit 2