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Conducting and Analyzing Interviews and Focus Groups

For reflection 4, I answer questions based on interviews and discussion, my knowledge, and what I have learned. First, how do “interview” and “focus group” shape our expectations of these research methods? What alternative ways could we describe them to emphasize their purpose and value? Both research methods are very different, giving us more variety in approaching research. Interviews are more one-on-one, where the person can have a deeper conversation in a calmer environment. On the other hand, focus groups have multiple people participating in the same discussion on one topic. Focus groups have a wider variety of people and ideas, because they have more than two people in a conversation for longer, but not as in-depth. Interviews are more personal, not as focused as focus groups, where they are more collaborative with many individuals involved.

Second, when hidden choices do researchers make when designing interview or focus group questions, and how might these choices influence participants' responses and the study's findings? When interviewers design a question, they concentrate on easy-to-answer, simple, and not too complicated questions. One thing they do is approach a question that may make them uncomfortable with a different question they can later reask after making them feel comfortable, breaking the tension or awkwardness.

Third, how can a researcher organize and interpret qualitative data from interviews and focus groups while preserving the richness and diversity of participants' perspectives? When it comes to protecting the individual or group, it depends on whether it's a conversation with multiple people or just one other person. If it's an interview, have an in-depth discussion where it's more like a story. The interviewer has the deep authentication of the responder, showing

their reality in a transcript, showing their emotion and tone from what they faced or overcame based on the question. When it comes to a group, it's different, where you want to share the information but also be able to include everyone's response and views, not leaning too much to one side, but viewing both sides.

Fourth, what strategies can researchers use to ensure fairness and accuracy when analyzing and presenting qualitative data? There are many things they can do, some of which are reflecting on their work, making sure it's not biased, always showing transparency, and giving credibility to people. They can also show their work to other colleagues so they can peer review and provide feedback on the data and make any fast changes if needed before publishing or other.

Finally, after reading and class discussion, I have learned that when it comes to interviews, we always have to dig deeper into the truth of responses and give credit to the people who participated. Start with easy questions, making them feel comfortable.

Cite

Give Methods a Chance. Kyle Green and Sarah Lageson, 2018.