Publishing Qualitative Articles

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Principles

Qualitative researchers:
1. Do not do pilot studies
2. Do not publish *preliminary* findings
3. Do not bother to publish components—literature reviews*, or methods as separate articles
4. Your study must be *finished*
   - complete
   - exciting
   - methodological coherent
   - add something to the literature

*they may do meta synthesis/analysis
Do not ‘salami slice’

• Qualitative researchers argue that
  – QI is holistic, develops theory

  – YET some people (not us, of course) split their research and publish concept by concept

   “This is a part of a larger study. . . .”
Decisions made during the study affects the ‘publish-ability’

What is **methodological coherence**?

Strategies and methods are a set:
- do not borrow
  - e.g., we see constant comparison from GT used in phenomenology
  - do not use methods that “approach”
    - e.g., we read, “approaching GT”
  - complete the process. If using GT, then create the theory. If using and interpretative methods, then be interpretative.
When writing

• First check the journal website
• Look for “instructions for authors”

• Follow these to the letter—why do something twice?
In the introduction

• Make the reader fascinated
  – Interested is not enough
  – Do NOT use the first sentence of the abstract as the first sentence of your article
Literature

• Synthesize with style and flourish
  • No ‘bib-card’ paragraphs

• Reference appropriately
  • 6 pages of references = article from dissertation

• Develop a theoretical context to illustrate significance

• Use pre-existing theory wisely

• Form an intriguing argument for your study, moving towards your question
  – Not too long 2-3 pages
Methods

• Do not be hackneyed; be succinct
• Description of sample
  – Write according to your reason for selection
    • Do not use quan demographics
• Present interview questions, if you used a consistent guide
• Overview of analytic techniques
Results

• Are the BULK of the article
• Tell the story; stay true to qual principles
• Build concepts, label qualitatively
• Make marvelous theory
• Synthesize, do not over quote
• Be true to the *perspective* of your method
**Discussion**

- Briefly remind folks of your questions and how it was answered
- Place your findings in the literature. Claim your contribution very clearly
- Limitations
  - Do not write that QI is not generalizable
  - Do NOT apologize
Abstract

• Write last

• Check your title
  – What is a good qualitative title?
Then

• Have your article EDITED

• Have your article reviewed internally

• Revise and double check

• Submit
QHR review criteria

Please complete the following. If the categories are not applicable, write N/A. This form will be copied and forwarded to the author.

1. **Importance of submission**: What are the manuscript's strengths? Is it significant? Does it contain new and unique information?

2. **Theoretical evaluation**: Is the manuscript logical? Is the theory parsimonious? Complete? Useful?
Methodological assessment: Inductive approach? Appropriate method and design? Is the sample appropriate and adequate? Are data saturated? Theoretical analysis? Linked with theory and/or praxis?
4. Adherence to ethical standards?

5. **Manuscript style and format**: (Please evaluate writing style, organization, clarity, grammar, appropriate citations, etc. Alternatively, comments may be made directly on the manuscript.)
• Advice for the author
• An invitation to resubmit is **great**

• Resubmitting
  
  (not too soon; do not be slow)

Respond to everything.
  
  If you agree, fix it
  
  If you do not, say why
  
  [state changes in a letter to the editor]
Choosing your journal

Look for

– Presence of high quality articles in past issues
– Length restrictions
– Printing of photos, figures
– Digital auxiliary file?
– Consider readership
– Consider impact factor(?)
– Publish ahead of print
Discussion?