

Chapter 13

Presenting Qualitative Results for Dissertation Research

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ABSTRACT

The chapter serves as a guide for students who have chosen to pursue qualitative study for their dissertation. A review of important philosophies and rationales to maintain when implementing the design. The importance of co-alignment with the method and its worldview are explained. Student ability to conceptualize and match study content with the intricacies of the method are noted. An explanation of how qualitative approaches fundamentally differ from quantitative are addressed. A strong distinction from leading philosophers of the method is detailed, along with specific approaches, design aspects, and procedural components. Practical examples from recent student dissertations are referenced. Suggestions are made to encourage student preparedness, awareness, and communication with their supervising faculty. Attention to data presentation, coding, categorizing, the analytic process, iteration, inductive reasoning, technological advancements, and final write-up of results are depicted. Students are guided toward preparing, organizing, and drafting the results chapter

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this chapter is to help inform dissertation research in a practical yet strategic way, for students who intend to complete and/or are currently completing their doctoral research. This approach toward practicality for students completing dissertation study can serve to boost student confidence, while a notable strategy can help to motivate the student to successfully achieve an important milestone, a pinnacle, in their academic journey (Hyatt & Roberts, 2024). Although intimidating to many, the venture can be exciting and filled with rewards, as human capacities are pushed to their limits.

In this chapter, the intent is mainly to inform, through both theory and practical application, for doctoral students engaging in dissertation research. Therefore, key and relevant examples will be interjected throughout the chapter to serve as useful examples of doctoral-level ideas and recent student work produced by students enrolled in doctoral programs in the field of clinical psychology. Study examples range from a study involving positive aging in a group of males over 65 years of age (Ho Berzon, 2019), a study of self-fulfilling prophecy in career trajectory for African Americans brought up in poverty (Rush, 2021), Non-medical treatment of seasonal disorder in adults (Goodarzi, 2023), and an exploration of the connection between childhood and adult attachments, as well as adult relationships for first-generation Latino millennials (Sanchez, 2024). Each of the examples was chosen for the nature of the content, in addition to how they may contribute to the expansion of understanding in this specific area of examining and the organization of qualitative research findings for doctoral research students.

Initial Considerations with Theory Alignment

When presenting the results of a qualitative study, multiple considerations should be made. Depending on the objectives and focus of the research, each study design or approach used, such as Grounded Theory or Phenomenology, possesses its own particular suggestions as far as how the data should be analyzed and presented (Creswell & Poth, 2024). Based on these, often extensive, recommendations, there are a number of intricacies and details to consider based upon the work of early philosophers, like Glaser and Strauss (1967), and the founding principles which they have set in motion.

Generally, quantitative and qualitative research are guided by many factors, which include author worldviews, data handling, data processing, and presentation of the results. More so, qualitative researchers often favor capturing the participant's own sense of meaning or perception (which are often subjective in nature) versus an observation that is measured in an objective manner (Newhart & Patten, 2023).

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