

Qualitative data analysis techniques | example analysis



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This work aims to perform a thematic qualitative data analysis of scripts entitled 'Is abortion right or wrong?' A commentary on qualitative data analysis techniques will be discussed and an interpretation of findings from the scripts (Appendix 1-3) presented. A conclusion summarising the main findings will then be drawn.

Qualitative Data Analysis

It is the range of processes and procedures whereby qualitative data has been put in some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation to search for general statements about relationships among categories of data (Burns and Grove, 2002).

Techniques

Qualitative methodologies are identified by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as non statistical techniques that researchers use inductive logic to analyse yield correlations that are difficult to translate.

Content Analysis

Researchers state that this is the simplest and most popular methodology. According to Carley (1990) it is the systematic description of behaviour by asking who, what, where and how questions. It can also be argued that the process is much more mechanical with the analysis being left until data is collected. Gibbs (2002) further highlight that the researcher then systematically works through each transcript assigning codes, which may be in numbers or words.

Thematic Analysis

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) data is analysed by themes and highly inductive themes emerge from data. Data collection and analysis takes place simultaneously and prior background reading and knowledge on the topic can help to explain an emerging theme. Strauss and Corbin (1998) highlight that thematic analysis aims to understand data rather than know it. The main aim is to end up with key themes that describe the essence of the study. Although it provides meaningful structure and non insightful information it is time consuming.

Strauss and Corbin (1998 p180) highlight that grounded theorists refer to the point when no new themes are being identified as theoretical saturation.

When and how saturation is reached depends on the text complexity and the researcher's experience. More experienced researchers are likely to reach saturation later than novices. Wilson and Hutchinson (1996 p 123) also warn against premature closure where the researcher fails to move beyond the face value of the content in the narrative.

Comparative Analysis

Finlay (2002) describes it as a logical and non statistical methodology. Data is compared and contrasted and the process continues until the researcher is satisfied that no new issues are emerging. Comparative analysis is often used with thematic analysis. The researcher works backwards and forwards, constantly revisiting notes and research literature.

Discourse Analysis

Researchers refer to it as complex and confusing. It was developed by social constructionists and is commonly used in cognitive psychology. According to <https://assignbuster.com/qualitative-data-analysis-techniques-example-analysis/>

Potter (1996) it is also called conversational analysis, a method that look at the pattern of speech, how particular words are used and how people take turns in conversation. Discourse analysis performs an action rather than describe a specific state of affairs and analysis is intuitive and reflective (Potter, 1996).

Triangulation Analysis

Involves strengthening by combining insights from both qualitative and quantitative analyses. According to Gibbs (2007), it contributes to the investigators' efforts to achieve information. Myers (2002) however argues that, there are major concerns with reliability and validity in triangulation and qualitative data. How does one account for good or bad day interviews? This has been criticised by some researchers, for there is no way to evaluate precision on the investigator's judgement.

Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software

New qualitative data analysis software programmes are now available for computer analyses. The Non Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising (QSR'S NUD*IST) software is a popular programme. Lewins and Silver (2007), however argue that, although computers save time, they stop the researcher from becoming familiar with the data. As also highlighted by Alexa and Zuell (2000), a computer can undertake these processes but it cannot think, judge or interpret qualitative data.

Themes

The current parity between prolife and prochoice camp is mirrored in the respondents' views on abortion. Given the attitude of people on abortion and

the dominant images they have on prolife and prochoice, several themes can be traced for communication.

Abortion is wrong in all circumstances (Prolife)

Christians and most religious people's views on abortion are much more in line with the Church and religion teachings that abortion is wrong. The profile sentiment in the respondents' views is very much evident among all scripts.

The official church doctrine does not allow abortion, the underlying dimension of religion being the most predictive of its position on abortion. As stated by Respondent 1 "abortion is murder of helpless innocent babies." Respondent 3 further supports Respondent 1 highlighting that, "God is the giver of life and should be the only one to take it." There seem to be an undoubted consensus that abortion is wrong as also highlighted by Respondents 2 and 5 who both quote "Thou shalt not kill" from the Bible's Ten Commandments.

Respondent 6 sums up this up nicely stating that, "whether raped or not, life is life, no one has the right to take it away." Respondents 1, 2, 4 and 7 also express the view that, the process of abortion is a painful, dangerous procedure that poses a substantial risk to a woman's physical and mental well being.

Abortion is right in all circumstances (Prochoice)

Abortion is a discourse promoted by prochoice movement. Feminists argue that it is an affirmation of women's rights to control their bodies. As Respondent 1 captures, "It is a woman's right to choose what happens to her body ...it is her body not the legislators' or the Church's." It can also

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argue that the foetus is part of her body and utterly depends on her for viability. Respondent 2 further highlights that, “ Only the voice of the pregnant woman should put her future into perspective.” Respondents 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7 partly share the same view that society should not judge or blame any woman who chooses to have an abortion. The respondents clearly bring out that abortion is a paradigm, the ultimate paradigm of right or wrong.

Middle of the road (Prolife/Prochoice)

One striking finding from the analysis is that, some respondents agree to abortion despite being in the pro-life camp. Respondents 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 all state that they agree to abortion when the unborn child poses a substantial threat to the mother’s life and also in rape or incest. The respondents also highlight that abortion should be considered in gross congenital abnormalities. Respondent 5 further states that, “ abortion can be morally accepted only when an unborn baby is suffering from a serious illness or disability.” These factors together with the fact of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom may partly explain how people’s attitude and views has varied over the years and how the balance is consistently favouring abortion rights.

Conclusion

The themes identified illustrate the multiple influences on people’s attitude and behaviour with regards to abortion. Although many issues were raised, there were specific elements of culture and religion that shaped the respondents’ views.