University of Phoenix Material

**Guide to an Overall Critique of a Qualitative Research Report**

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| **Aspect of the Report** | **Critiquing Questions** |
| **Title** | ⮚ Is the title a good one, suggesting the key phenomenon and the group or community under study? |
| **Abstract** | ⮚ Does the abstract clearly and concisely summarize the main features of the report? |
| **Introduction**  Statement of the problem | ⮚ Was the problem stated unambiguously and is it easy to identify?  ⮚ Did the problem statement build a cogent and persuasive argument for the new study?  ⮚ Was the problem significant for nursing?  ⮚ Was there a good match between the research problem on the one hand and the paradigm, tradition, and methods on the other—that is, was a qualitative approach appropriate? |
| Research questions | ⮚ Were research questions explicitly stated? If not, was their absence justified?  ⮚ Were the questions consistent with the study’s philosophical basis, underlying tradition, conceptual framework, or ideologic orientation? |
| Literature review | ⮚ Did the report adequately summarize the existing body of knowledge related to the problem or phenomenon of interest?  ⮚ Did the literature review provide a strong basis for the new study? |
| Conceptual underpinnings | ⮚ Were key concepts adequately defined conceptually?  ⮚ Was the philosophical basis, underlying tradition, conceptual framework, or ideologic orientation made explicit and was it appropriate for the problem? |
| **Method**  Protection of participants’ rights | ⮚ Were appropriate procedures used to safeguard the rights of study participants?  ⮚ Was the study subject to external review by an IRB or ethics review board?  ⮚ Was the study designed to minimize risks and maximize benefits to participants? |
| Research design and research tradition | ⮚ Was the identified research tradition (if any) congruent with the methods used to collect and analyze data?  ⮚ Was an adequate amount of time spent with study participants?  ⮚ Did the design unfold during data collection, giving researchers opportunities to capitalize on early understandings?  ⮚ Was there an adequate number of contacts with study participants? |
| Sample and setting | ⮚ Was the group or population of interest adequately described? Were the setting and sample described in sufficient detail?  ⮚ Was the approach used to recruit participants or gain access to the site productive and appropriate?  ⮚ Was the best possible method of sampling used to enhance information richness and address the needs of the study?  ⮚ Was the sample size adequate? Was saturation achieved? |
| Data collection | ⮚ Were the methods of gathering data appropriate? Were data gathered through two or more methods to achieve triangulation?  ⮚ Did the researcher ask the right questions or make the right observations, and were they recorded in an appropriate fashion?  ⮚ Was a sufficient amount of data gathered? Were the data of sufficient depth and richness? |
| Procedures | ⮚ Were data collection and recording procedures adequately described and do they appear appropriate?  ⮚ Were data collected in a manner that minimized bias or behavioral distortions? Were the staff who collected data appropriately trained? |
| Enhancement of trustworthiness | ⮚ Did the researchers use effective strategies to enhance the trustworthiness/integrity of the study, and was there a good description of those strategies?  ⮚ Were the methods used to enhance trustworthiness adequate?  ⮚ Did the researcher document research procedures and decision processes sufficiently that findings are auditable and confirmable?  ⮚ Was there evidence of researcher reflexivity?  ⮚ Was there “thick description” of the context, participants, and findings, and was it at a sufficient level to support transferability? |
| **Results**  Data analysis | ⮚ Were the data management and data analysis methods adequately described?  ⮚ Was the data analysis strategy compatible with the research tradition and with the nature and type of data gathered?  ⮚ Did the analysis yield an appropriate “product” (e.g., a theory, taxonomy, thematic pattern)?  ⮚ Did the analytic procedures suggest the possibility of biases? |
| Findings | ⮚ Were the findings effectively summarized, with good use of excerpts and supporting arguments?  ⮚ Did the themes adequately capture the meaning of the data? Does it appear that the researcher satisfactorily conceptualized the themes or patterns in the data?  ⮚ Did the analysis yield an insightful, provocative, authentic, and meaningful picture of the phenomenon under investigation? |
| Theoretical integration | ⮚ Were the themes or patterns logically connected to each other to form a convincing and integrated whole?  ⮚ Were figures, maps, or models used effectively to summarize conceptualizations?  ⮚ If a conceptual framework or ideologic orientation guided the study, were the themes or patterns linked to it in a cogent manner? |
| **Discussion**  Interpretation of the findings | ⮚ Were the findings interpreted within an appropriate social or cultural context?  ⮚ Were major findings interpreted and discussed within the context of prior studies?  ⮚ Were the interpretations consistent with the study’s limitations? |
| Implications/recommendations | ⮚ Did the researchers discuss the implications of the study for clinical practice or further research—and are those implications reasonable and complete? |
| **General Issues**  Presentation | ⮚ Was the report well-written, well-organized, and sufficiently detailed for critical analysis?  ⮚ Was the description of the methods, findings, and interpretations sufficiently rich and vivid? |
| Researcher credibility | ⮚ Do the researchers’ clinical, substantive, or methodologic qualifications and experience enhance confidence in the findings and their interpretation? |
| Summary assessment | 1. Did the report discuss efforts to enhance or evaluate the quality of the data and the overall inquiry? If so, is the description sufficiently detailed and clear? If not, was there other information that allows you to draw inferences about the quality of the data, the analysis and interpretation? 2. Which specific techniques (if any) did the researcher use to enhance the quality of the inquiry? Were these strategies used judiciously and to good effect? 3. What quality-enhancement strategies were not used? Would supplementary strategies have strengthened your confidence in the study and its evidence? 4. Given the efforts to enhance data quality, what can you conclude about the study’s integrity, rigor, or trustworthiness?   ⮚ Do the study findings appear to be trustworthy—do you have confidence in the *truth* value of the results?  ⮚ Does the study contribute any meaningful evidence that can be used in nursing practice or that is useful to the nursing discipline? |

Note: The Guide to an Overall Critique of a Qualitative Research Report worksheet is adopted from Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice (pp. 101 & 501), by D. F. Polit, and C. T. Beck, 2017, Philadelphia, PA: Wolters Kluwer. Copyright 2017 by Wolters Kluwer. Adapted with permission.