

NRSG 2502 Research and Scholarship in Nursing

Scholarly Paper Assignment

Qualitative Research Thematic Analysis Paper

Qualitative research is an important paradigm in nursing research as it is the best method in which to explore meaning and understanding as it relates to patient experience, nursing experience, a process within a health environment, or holistic understanding of illness or health from a patient or nursing perspective. Qualitative research is conducted in a naturalistic environment and the data collected is *dialogic* – meaning analysis is co-constructed through conversation between participant and researcher and the stories and narratives that emerge are expressed in the words of the participants. This assignment will ask you to explore a qualitative research question of interest to nurses, health care, illness experience, or nursing education. You will build a discussion about your topic based on primary qualitative research studies and explore how qualitative research can help nurses in their practice with the population of interest in the study. APA format is required for constructing and presenting your paper and will constitute about 8% of your final grade for the assignment.

How to Proceed

1. Decide upon a topic. As most qualitative research takes a constructionist perspective, which values the personal experience, history, culture, and world view of the researcher/writer, your topic should be one you are passionate about or have some experience with. You need to be prepared to discuss your inspiration for your topic in the body of the paper. You may draw inspiration from any of the following sources:
 - a. A personal health experience or a health experience you navigated with a close family member.
 - b. An experience you witnessed in clinical practice as a student, or if you are employed as a health care aid or LPN, an experience you had in that environment.
 - c. A media (newspaper or magazine) article you have read which gives a first-person account of a health experience.
 - d. A novel, a movie, or documentary, other video source where the main theme involves someone living with an illness (e.g. the movie/book *Still Alice* which explores the life of a woman living with early onset Alzheimer's disease).
 - e. Or combine any of the above, as appropriate.
2. Employ your scholarly research skills to locate a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed qualitative research publications on your topic of interest. These 5 articles will all be **primary** qualitative studies. Your research sources will, ideally, be no more than 7 years old. The studies you choose can be from any discipline but at LEAST 2 of your qualitative studies should be nursing studies. **You will want to review these articles with an instructor and discuss the research question you hope to address (worth 1 mark on your final paper grade).** The 5 qualitative studies you choose should have similar (P) Population (e.g. age group, gender, disease process etc.); (S) Situation (e.g. context, phenomenon of interest, focus etc.) components. They do not need to match in terms of study methodology (e.g. phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, qualitative descriptive) but you want fairly robust qualitative studies that incorporate lengthy interviews with participants. Avoid: Survey studies with typed responses, mixed methods studies.
3. You will need other literature as well to build a thorough analysis of your topic, in particular to describe the background to your topic and to discuss how you could integrate your knowledge of your topic into clinical practice. These sources should include other primary research studies including quantitative studies, discussion papers, and books specific to the topic. Website material and textbooks should be used sparingly. You may also find qualitative synthesis, metasynthesis, or review studies which are not considered primary studies. You may include those as extra sources.
4. Write a 5-7 page paper in APA format (page range excludes: abstract, table, appendix, and references). Include the content listed below and headings as appropriate.

Content to Integrate in the Body of Your Paper (in a Logical Order of Your Choosing)

1. Provide some background into the research problem. Why should this topic be a concern to nurses? What benefits could come to the patient populations or nursing staff by being more knowledgeable about this topic. What gap is there in our current knowledge or understanding of your topic? What context does a reader need to understand about your topic? Identify the specific research question you are attempting to address.

2. Write a description of what inspired your topic. Your grader should be able to read your description and understand how you came to the research question you describe in your background section of your paper. In other words, there needs to be a logical congruence between your inspiration, the research question you identify, and the 5 qualitative studies you locate and discuss.

3. Write a transition section to lead into your analysis of the findings of your 5 qualitative studies. In this section you should include a discussion of your process for synthesizing the themes of your studies (describe how you came up with your themes you will discuss in the thematic analysis section). Somewhere in this section, cite the 5 studies you used in your analysis all together in one bracketed citation. Provide a table that outlines the critical components of your 5 qualitative research studies in terms of study design and population of interest. A one-article example has been provided at the end of these guidelines. Please be sure to mention this table in the body of your paper in this section (see Table 1). The only articles you will include in this table are your 5 primary qualitative sources. **(An in-class activity worth 3 marks on this assignment will help you with the description of how you came up with your themes and the analysis itself as described in point 4).**

4. Address maximum three themes you identified from your 5 studies, that were common across your studies. Your discussion of these themes will be built from ONLY the results/findings section of your qualitative studies. You aren't likely to find that all 5 studies support each theme you choose but do ensure that all 5 of your qualitative studies are used somewhere within your chosen themes at least once. Your themes, can have subthemes to them if appropriate. Illustrate your themes with examples from the studies using the words of the participants (quote what participants said to illustrate these themes). You can also incorporate aspects of the story which inspired your topic choice in order to make it clear to the reader why you were drawn to the themes you emphasize in your analysis. We will take some class time to help you work on this thematic organization prior to writing your paper.

5. Now that you are more enlightened on your topic choice how can you and other nurses apply this knowledge in your practice with this patient population? This section should be considered a significant aspect of your paper and be thoroughly described and discussed and supported with the literature with citations from your 5 primary studies but also can be supported with additional peer reviewed literature.

Submit your paper in one file using MS Word (.doc or .docx file format) as file submission formats. Paper should be in the following order with each component starting on a new page (with a page break): Title page, abstract, body of paper, reference list, table

Table 1

Summary of study characteristics qualitative example

Authors	Title of Article	Research Tradition	Phenomenon of Interest	Interview Style	Population	Sample Size
Fahmy et al. (2010)	Female genital mutilation/cutting and issues of sexuality in Egypt	Description	Issues of sexuality	Focus Groups	Men and Women in rural communities in Upper Egypt	102 women 99 men

Note the headings used on the table above are correct APA format for table headings. The column headings here are only a suggestion but are indicative of the standard elements of research design that you should be able to recognize. Depending on your topic of inquiry, you may find including additional columns helpful in describing your studies. Do not include results as those will be presented in the body of your paper.

Abstract

You will be required to write an abstract to accompany your paper submission. The abstract is located following the title page and before the body of your paper. Your abstract should be no more than 150 words in length. Complete your abstract using the following headings:

Purpose: State the purpose of your analysis including identifying the population and situation under study. State the research question you are addressing.

Background: Briefly indicate the significance of your topic to health or nursing practice.

Findings: Identify the themes you chose to discuss in your analysis.

Conclusion: Provide a short conclusion indicating a key practice implication or future direction.

Please upload your completed paper into the “Qualitative Research Paper” Dropbox in LEARN on or before the stated due date and time.

Peer Review Process

1. Partners for Peer Review will be pre-assigned/negotiated based on criteria discussed in class.
2. On the day that the preliminary draft is due, you will also email a copy of the paper you upload in the Dropbox to your assigned partner.
3. You will have one week to read your assigned paper and comment on its quality using the Peer Review Checklist. You may complete this checklist electronically or in handwritten form. You may also provide feedback on a printed copy of your partner's paper or using "Track Changes."
4. Peer Review Class: This time will be used to discuss your papers and your assessments of each other's work. You will also be able to ask questions of the instructor and can modify what you say on the Peer Review Checklist. Once you have discussed the feedback you have received from your peer, together you will score your papers based on the rubric criteria in its current draft form (team effort scoring). You will only be scoring the content rubric (not APA).
5. If you do not finish the peer review form and rubric during class, a couple extra days will be allowed to hand in your completed forms.
6. You will then revise your papers based on the feedback provided using track changes.
7. You have a week between the peer review class and the final due date of your completed paper. On the final paper due date, you will submit a final copy of your paper AND a self-assessed rubric **in separate files**.
8. Your instructor will grade your paper without looking at the score you gave yourself and also score your paper (plus APA). Your final grade on your paper will be the higher of the two content grades. If you score yourself lower than the instructor, you will receive the score the instructor has rated you at. If you score yourself higher than the instructor, you will get the higher grade as long as it is within 2 points of the instructor score (error rate of .05). (If not... well, some compromise will need to be established which will be determined on an individual case basis).

Your 10% peer review score will be decided based on these factors (approximately 2% each):

1. Thoroughness and helpfulness of the feedback you provide to your partner.
2. Timely submissions of your papers and peer review documents and rubrics.
3. Class attendance and participation on peer review day and scoring self realistically on final rubric self-assessment.
4. The degree to which you follow the feedback given and revise your paper accordingly.
5. Your brief reflection of the peer review process on your final rubric submitted.

Criteria	Very Good/Exceptional	Good	Emerging	Inconsistent	Poor	Score Given
Quality of Content Including Introduction and Conclusion and Writing Style 14 points	(Score 12.5-14) Topic choice is advanced, complex, engaging, takes a risk and/or is creative. Describes inspiration for topic choice clearly and the research studies and research question identified are a good fit for that inspiration story. Contains a well developed background providing context to the problem. A research question describing the review is clearly stated and connected to the research articles chosen and synthesis conducted. Thorough, interesting, accurate discussion of content requirements is addressed in exceptional form and at a level beyond the expected. Paper is engaging, cohesive, considers the audience or reader in presentation, and has a logical flow of ideas. Transitions between sections contribute to flow of paper. Themes chosen are well supported by examples and participant quotes	11 points (Score 10-12) Addresses all required content. Meets many of the criteria presented in the category of "exceptional" but may have minor flaws with respect to logical flow, cohesion, statement of research question, choice of themes to highlight, clarity of transitions, (and others). Connection between the stated research question and the studies analyzed may have minor weaknesses in its implementation. Themes chosen to discuss are clearly identified and well supported by examples and participant quotes from the primary studies. Table included correctly labels the required elements from each study according to the assignment guidelines – minor errors only, if any. Abstract is clearly written.	8 points (Score 8-9.5) Relevant topic choice is applicable to nursing. Addresses required content but some content is confusing, lacking depth, or lacking logical flow in its implementation. If all other sections of the paper are effectively written but a section of any content areas is not addressed or absent from the paper (including the table and abstract), this is the category that will be scored. Themes may not be clearly identifiable to the reader or are not well supported with evidence from the primary studies. The paper may contain, to a limited degree, the following flaws: redundancy in content, wordiness or repetitiveness, ideas that are not sufficiently developed, information miscategorized, themes identified that draw from sources beyond the	6 points (Score 6-7.5) Relevant content areas may be missing or may be off focus from the perspective requested in the assignment guidelines. Numerous flaws are present in the paper (see list in "Emerging" category). Lack of connection may exist between the inspiration for the paper and the research articles chosen for analysis. Some research may have been left out of the thematic analysis or information from papers other than the primary studies was included in the thematic analysis. Redundancy or repetitiveness present or over emphasis on unimportant details that don't add to the discussion may be present. No literature was used to support practice implications. Table included may contain many errors or is incomplete or absent.	4 points (Score 0-5.5) Paper written with numerous major flaws not limited to: No inspiration was described; major relevant sections of the paper may not have been addressed (more than one). Some of the peer reviewed articles may be incorrectly identified as primary qualitative studies. Quantitative studies may have been used in the thematic analysis in error. A biased presentation of materials may be present. When reading the paper, the content does not make sense. In general, it may feel, when reading the paper, that the student has written something other than the requested assignment.	/ 14

	<p>from the 5 primary studies. Practice implications discussion thorough and supported by literature. Table included correctly labels the required elements from each study according to the assignment guidelines and may include extra items for comparison. Abstract is clearly written following guidelines.</p>		<p>results/findings of the five primary qualitative studies, a discussion of practice implications that do not draw any conclusions from the five primary studies, table included may have minor errors.</p>			
<p>Synthesis and Critical Analysis of Research Articles 12 points</p>	<p>(Score 10-12)</p> <p>Clear and consistent synthesis of data and critical analysis. The discussion of the inspiration and the primary studies is clear and balanced. The discussion of the process used to identify themes is clearly and succinctly described. It is clear when the student is discussing the research perspective versus the inspiration. Study results are described within in their context (P, S). A clear conclusion exists summarizing the analysis presented. Practice implications discussions are synthesized and cohesive and</p>	<p>8 points (Score 8-9.5)</p> <p>Contains many of the characteristics described under the Exceptional category with minor flaws. Organized synthesis attempted in most content areas of the paper including thematic analysis of research articles and practice implications but may be flawed in its execution (e.g. choppy, or not all articles chosen are a clear fit for he research question). Results of the studies may not be consistently presented with PS components. How the student arrived at their final theme choices is traceable by the way they are</p>	<p>7 points (Score 6.5-8.5)</p> <p>Synthesis of data inconsistent in the paper. Sometimes feels like a random selection of points were chosen for inclusion in the analysis rather than an integration of ideas from the sources used. May present study results but not within their PS context. Paper will lack flow/cohesion, reads as rambling or disconnected rather than concise and relevant. May overuse direct quotes where paraphrasing would be more a more relevant discussion style.</p>	<p>5 points (Score 4-5.5)</p> <p>Primary studies are summarized one at a time rather than analyzed thematically or articles are too diverse from one another to synthesize adequately. No obvious connection between the inspiration scenario and the research has been made. No critical analysis evident. Study results discussed without PS context. Some sections written by using random points from articles with no connections between ideas. Analysis of content may be addressed with many inappropriate direct quotes.</p>	<p>3 points (Score 0-3.5)</p> <p>Paper lacks an inspiration scenario. Critical analysis of all literature (primary and secondary sources) does not make sense or is attempted from portions of the articles that are not relevant. Paper reads choppy with random points with no obvious connection to one another. Paper constructed with many long direct quotes.</p>	<p>/ 12</p>

	insightful. Paper is an engaging read.	presented in the process described in the transition.				
Research Depth 4 points	<p>(Score 4)</p> <p>Goes above and beyond in research expectations and number of sources cited and integrated (10 or more peer reviewed sources including the required 5 primary qualitative studies). Inspiration source is acknowledge where applicable. Thinks outside the box on how to research topic and support ideas. Other peer reviewed articles are included e.g., review articles (meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, systematic reviews, and other), quantitative studies as applicable. Uses peer reviewed studies to support background and practice implications. Terms defined using primary sources rather than web sources. Any web sources used are strong, credible, web sources or if not credible are used as not credible to form an argument. May use organizational web documents (PDFs) for statistics or information</p>	<p>2.5 points (Score 2-3.5)</p> <p>Meets minimum expected source requirements (5 primary qualitative studies) but includes other relevant sources -- review articles, quantitative research. Chooses to cite stronger peer reviewed sources over web based sources or textbooks most of the time. May use organizational web documents (PDFs) for statistics or information about an organization. Number of peer reviewed journal sources total 6 - 9. Research is current (less than 7 years old).</p>	<p>1.5 points (Score 1.5)</p> <p>Only uses minimum expected sources as research material (5 peer reviewed research studies and inspiration source as applicable) If any additional sources are included they are weaker sources such as textbooks or organizational websites. OR, background and/or nursing significance were addressed within the paper citing web sources rather than peer reviewed sources. Paper may have been constructed using too many "old" studies (greater than 7 years).</p>	<p>1 point (Score 1)</p> <p>Only uses minimum expected sources as research material (5 primary qualitative studies). Uses several older sources (greater than 7 years old). OR -- Misuses sources (e.g. cites non research studies in thematic analysis section, or uses quantitative studies in analysis section) -- if this is observed extensively then this category will be automatically chosen regardless of number of sources used.</p>	<p>0 points (Score 0-0.5)</p> <p>Does not meet requirements for minimum expected sources, or attempted to meet requirements but misidentified sources as primary when they were secondary (reviews or discussion articles). Or identified quantitative studies as qualitative (or vice versa). Paper uses all "old" research (greater than 7 years old).</p>	/ 4

	about an organization. Research is current (less than 7 years old).					
Content Mechanics 3 points	(Score 3) Very few grammar, spelling, typographical, sentence structure flaws, or wordiness/redundancy errors. Strong paragraph construction. Errors made are not distracting.	2 points (Score 2-2.5) Minimal grammar, typographical, or spelling flaws. Or errors made are repetitive in nature (same error is made everywhere). Sentence structure flaws absent or rare (e.g. no run-on, fragment sentences) Minimal wordiness/redundancy. Paragraphs used consistently.	1 point (Score 1-1.5) Many grammar, spelling, typographical errors. More frequent sentence structure errors, or occasional paragraph errors are present which are distracting to the grader. Paper has occasional colloquial or slang presentation.	0.5 points (Score .5) Numerous grammar/spelling, sentence structure errors which are very distracting to the grader. May be no consideration of paragraph construction.	0 points (Score 0) Difficult to read assignment due to large numbers of errors and poor sentence structure.	/ 3
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Use this section to write comments about your peer review. Describe what edits you made. Were there any comments you didn't address and why? (It is possible your reviewer gave you bad advice that didn't work with your topic).

Peer Review Checklist

Instructions: Read your partner's manuscript and look for the presence of content addressed in the table. Each content point is numbered. Highlight the section (or the first sentence of the section if it is lengthy) in the paper when you think that your partner has addressed or is attempting address that point and place the number in the table at that point in the text for easy location.

Now, having addressed an assignment requirement does not always mean that it has been addressed effectively so please comment on issues such as a) lack of clarity; b) incomplete descriptions or where the writer could have been more thorough; c) incorrect information or approach; d) where they missing or haven't fully addressed requirements; e) positive comments such as where they have been effective and why.

You can also make note of grammar or sentence structure problems or incorrect APA on the manuscript itself.

		√ X	Comments
	Introduction and Background		
1	Abstract is written and includes all the headings in the assignment guideline: Purpose, background, findings, conclusion.		
2	The introduction provides the reader with interesting points of background necessary to understand why the topic is significant. Are you left with any questions about the topic after reading the introduction and background?		
3	Author provides at least one sentence that links the topic to its importance to nursing practice.		
4	Author identifies gaps in research community knowledge on the topic (A problem statement is present - "Little is known ..." or "little past research exists on...").		
5	Author identifies their specific research question for their synthesis.		
6	Background and introduction supported by most citations coming from peer reviewed journal sources or research.		
	Personal Narrative of Inspiration for Topic		
7	Author tells a compelling story in first person (as appropriate) of their clinical, personal, or		

	media/literature based topic choice. Are you left with any questions about their story or how it connects to the topic described in the title and in the background/introduction to the paper after reading their story? Did you have an emotional response to their story or can you relate to their experience in any way?		
	Method (Transition) Section		
8	Author introduces their five primary qualitative studies by citing them all in one location. These 5 studies match the studies addressed in the table.		
9	Author alerts the reader to the table they have created which briefly summarizes the content of the table and tells the reader to see Table 1.		
10	The Author provides a clear description of the process they used to come up with their themes (e.g. the index cards or other process). Is their description complete or did they leave any gaps or questions for the reader as to how they decided on their themes.		
11	Author provides a transition sentence which lists their themes they are about to discuss.		
12	Examine table: At minimum the table identifies, Authors names, title of paper, research tradition (methodology), phenomenon of interest, interview style, population, sample size. The information provided there is the correct information for the heading, all boxes on the table are filled, and the responses provided seem congruent with the characteristics of the qualitative paradigm.		
	Qualitative Synthesis (Results)		
13	Author has clearly identified 2 - 3 themes which have their own headings. These themes may or may not have subthemes. Does the author's description of their themes leave the reader with any questions or does it require clarification in any way?		
14	The themes chosen represent elements that appear in their personal narrative.		

15	The themes (or subthemes) are constructed with support from more than one study. All 5 studies are used at least once to support a chosen sub/theme. Each sub/theme is supported by at least 2 studies.		
16	The themes are built from the results sections of the 5 primary studies only. You can tell this because the author is describing what the participants SAY as opposed to general theory points. They may also describe researcher interpretations of what the participants say here as well (e.g. from the discussion sections of their primary studies).		
17	Themes chosen are supported by at least one quote from a participant in a study. More quotes are better. Authors may also describe pieces of their personal experience in these sections (as applicable) but this is not required.		
18	Scan the citations in this section. The only papers cited in this section should be the author's 5 primary qualitative studies.		
19	Results of the studies are presented by describing the P-S components of a qualitative study. If the studies are from different countries, this is reflected in the analysis. E.g. Jones (2018) interviewed mothers from India and found....		
	Practice Implications		
20	Author describes how the findings represented in their themes can be used to benefit patient care or nursing interactions with patients from this population. Are you left with any questions after reading this section? Has the author described what changes to practice or health care might benefit this population? Authors can use a combination of citing their 5 primary studies and the practice/policy suggestions made by the research authors there, or they may cite any review or discussion articles talking about nursing practice with this topic, or they may have their own ideas in addition to support from the literature.		
21	Most importantly, this section must have a flow to		

	reading. It shouldn't read as if several disconnected sentences have been thrown together to make a paragraph. The author should create a coherent paragraph that argues for better nursing practice which is synthesized from a variety of sources.		
22	Author provides a brief conclusion which supplies the essence of their findings and thoughts about future directions.		
	References		
23	Qualitative studies are all published within the last 7 years.		
24	Reference list contains mostly peer reviewed sources (10 for full marks)		

General comments about other issues observed (e.g. grammar, APA, extraneous information, incomplete information, engaging read, how the paper holds your attention, or anything not addressed by the points above). There is a creativity, engaging read, risky topic element that appears in the content section of the rubric. How does the author meet those requirements? (e.g. choosing a risky topic often means choosing a topic that is difficult to research).