

Specialist Unit for Review Evidence (SURE)

Questions to assist with the critical appraisal of qualitative studies¹

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Citation:

Study Design:

1. Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis	Yes	Can't tell	No
Setting?			
Perspective?			
Intervention or Phenomena			
Comparator/control (if any)?			
Evaluation/Exploration?			
<p>2. Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate?</p> <p>Is it an exploration of eg behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?</p> <p>Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?</p>			
<p>3. Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified?</p> <p>Is it clear how participants were selected?</p> <p>Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?</p> <p>Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?</p>			

<p>4. Is the method of data collection well described?</p> <p>Was the setting appropriate for data collection?</p> <p>Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (eg, focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (eg notes, audio, audio visual recording).</p> <p>Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (eg how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances? Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?</p> <p>Is there triangulation of data (ie more than one source of data collection)?</p> <p>Do the authors report achieving data saturation?</p>	
<p>5. Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored?</p> <p>Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data).</p> <p>Were any potential power relationships involved (ie relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?</p>	
<p>6. Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?</p> <p>Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants?</p> <p>Was ethical approval sought?</p> <p>Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?</p>	
<p>7. Is the data analysis/interpretation process described and justified?</p> <p>Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data?</p> <p>Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?</p> <p>are negative/discrepant results taken into account?</p>	

<p>8. Are the findings credible?</p> <p>Are there sufficient data to support the findings?</p> <p>Are sequences from the original data presented (eg quotations) and were these fairly selected?</p> <p>Are the data rich (ie are the participants' voices foregrounded)?</p> <p>Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?</p> <p>Are the results of the study compared with those from other studies?</p>	
<p>9. Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest reported?</p>	
<p>10. Finally...consider:</p> <p>Did the authors identify any limitations?</p> <p>Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and the full text?</p>	

This checklist should be cited as:

Specialist Unit for Review Evidence (SURE) 2015. Questions to assist with the critical appraisal of qualitative studies available at: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/specialist-unit-for-review-evidence/resources/critical-appraisal-checklists>

¹ Adapted and updated from the former Health Evidence Bulletins Wales (HEBW) checklist with reference to the [NICE Public Health Methods Manual](#) (2012) and previous versions of the [Critical Appraisal Skills Programme](#) (CASP) checklists.