The Social Science Review A Multidisciplinary Journal. September-October, 2026. Vol. 4. Issue 5. 388-395

Published by: Pather Dabi Educational Trust, (Regn No: IV-1402-00064/2023), Under Govt. of West Bengal, India

The Social Science Review
A Multidisciplinary Journal
ISSN: 2584-0789
(Open-Access, Peer-Reviewed, Refereed, Bi-Monthly, International e-Journal)
Homepage: www.tssreview.in

CRAFTING, CONDUCTING, AND COMPLETING THE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW: A PROCESS-ORIENTED FRAMEWORK

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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DOI:
https://doi.org/10.70096/tssr.260405056

Abstract

A crucial strategy for ensuring quality in interviews is comprehensive pre-screening. In this study, researchers aim to understand participants' backgrounds, beliefs, perceptions, emotions, and opinions while attempting to interpret their true meanings. The initial step in this research process involves obtaining consent from participants and fostering a trustworthy environment that enables them to express their thoughts freely and without hesitation or disruption. Quantitative research primarily focuses on numerical data and measurement, whereas qualitative interviewing is centered on subjective analysis. Through interviews, researchers gain access to participants' inner worlds and explore how individuals construct their social realities. Qualitative interviewing is vital in fields such as social studies, education, psychology, and the social sciences, where assessing lived experiences holds more value than merely measuring variables. Even though qualitative research is relatively straightforward and offers numerous benefits, it does have limitations, including subjectivity, being time-intensive, and challenges in generalization. Despite these issues, this method yields rich and meaningful contextual information. The paper also examines four categories of interviews: structured, unstructured, semi-structured, and focus group interviews, each serving distinct research purposes. When conducting qualitative interviews, the researcher's analytical and ethical responsibilities are emphasized. The paper also discusses data interpretation methods such as coding and thematic analysis. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of qualitative interviewing in grasping complex issues and understanding people's experiences and opinions in fields like sociology, anthropology, and education.

Keywords: *Qualitative interviews, interview method, interview guide, research design, reflexivity, data analysis, thematic analysis, research ethics*

Introduction

"Qualitative research focuses on words, meanings, and interpretations rather than numerical data" (David Silverman, 2020). The interview is a cornerstone of qualitative research because it provides access to the human meanings and experiences behind social, psychological, cultural, educational, and other phenomena. Its flexibility and depth make it important across a wide range of academic disciplines. An interview is a formal or informal interaction or conversation between two or more people where questions are asked to gather information, experiences, opinions, perspectives, or views. The interview is one of the most widely used tools in qualitative research and acts as a key tool in social sciences. Qualitative interviewing is an important and effective technique of qualitative research. In this research technique, a good relationship unites the researcher as well as the participant, which helps the researcher gain deep insights into the participant's feelings and experiences. Since the interview process is directed one-on-one or through other ways of communication, the researcher can closely examine the participant's perspectives and explore social reality in depth.

"Although generally structured by a topic guide, in-depth interviews allow for flexibility and openness throughout the interview interaction and are based on open and non-leading questions that are designed to get the interviewee to talk freely and at length, and to explore the width and depth of his or her views and experiences" (Ritchie et al., 2013). According to John W. Creswell (2014), a researcher asks one or more participants open-ended and natural questions based on the research and records their responses. According to Earl Babbie (2013), a qualitative interview is a type of data collection process in which one person asks another person questions based on the research, and the other person expresses their thoughts and experiences in their own words in response to those questions. "A conversation with a purpose, specifically directed toward gathering information" (Bruce L. Berg and Howard Lune, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Researchers from Social Science and Humanities background often use Qualitative interviewing as an effective data collection tool. But it also has been seen that the newcomers often misjudge the practical and ethical guidelines of Qualitative interviewing procedure. Existing literature mainly have focussed on the very dimensions of Qualitative interviewing, such as the foundations and types of interviews in separate approaches, rather than in a single unified tone. This paper has tried to address this gap by consolidating all the necessary dimensions into one process-oriented structure.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the conceptual and philosophical foundations underlying qualitative interviewing.
- To identify and describe the major types of qualitative interviews.
- To outline the step-by-step process of conducting a qualitative interview.
- To examine the researcher's ethical and reflexive responsibilities in qualitative interviewing.
- To explain the methods used for coding and thematic analysis of interview data.
- To identify the strengths and limitations of qualitative interviewing as a research method.

Significance of the Study

This article is designed to act as both a practical and conceptual guide for early-career researchers, postgraduate students, and academics in fields such as social sciences, education, psychology, and anthropology, who rely on interviewing as a key method of data collection. By integrating theoretical underpinnings, procedural advice, and ethical considerations into a cohesive process-oriented framework, the article seeks to aid in the development of more rigorous, credible, and ethically responsible qualitative interview studies.

Research Methodology

This paper is conceptual and review-based, rather than an empirical study that involves collecting primary data. It employs a descriptive and analytical research design, relying on secondary sources such as peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and foundational methodological texts by prominent qualitative researchers like Kvale & Brinkmann, Creswell, Patton, Merriam & Tisdell, Denzin & Lincoln, and Braun & Clarke, among others. The relevant literature was examined and thematically organized to create a process-oriented framework that addresses the philosophical foundations, types, procedural stages, ethical considerations, and analytical techniques of qualitative interviewing. As a study grounded in literature, it does not include human participants, sampling, or the use of primary data collection tools.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This paper is dedicated to a conceptual and theoretical exploration of qualitative interviewing as a research method, without presenting empirical results from any specific field study. It primarily examines individual and group interview formats, including structured, unstructured, semi-structured, and focus group interviews, along with their specialised variations, specifically as they are used in the fields of social sciences, education, and anthropology. The paper does not delve deeply into quantitative survey-based interviewing or into computer-assisted and online interview technologies, as these are beyond its scope.

Conceptual Foundations of the Qualitative Interview

The systematic application of interviews as a distinct method in social research to explore how individuals perceive their lives and experiences emerged more prominently in the latter half of the twentieth century. During this time, the conceptions of social reality and the means by which we can acquire knowledge about it became intertwined with the methodologies of conducting and interpreting interviews. A significant issue in the history of qualitative interviewing is how researchers, participants, and the research process should interact with one another. Discussions have concentrated on several critical areas, such as the foundations of truth, bias and standardization, reflexivity and construction, and the dynamics of difference and power. In the discussion that follows, we briefly explore various philosophical perspectives on knowledge, illustrating how they impact the production of knowledge and shape differing perceptions of interviews.

- **Positivism and Interviews:** Positivism primarily differentiates between the external world and the observer, focusing on observable evidence and employing objectivity to distinguish systematically acquired, value-neutral knowledge from personal beliefs, emotions, and moral perspectives (Williams, 2000). This foundational approach considers interview knowledge to be deductive, objective, and devoid of values. It prioritizes tested methods, standardization, and the practice of posing identical questions to all interviewees. Researchers are expected to maintain impartiality and limit their influence to prevent bias and ensure the collection of accurate data. In essence, the positivist approach regards questions as stimuli and answers as responses.
- **Interpretive Approaches and Interviews:** Interpretivism encompasses several phenomenological philosophical methods, such as constructivism, symbolic interactionism, and ethnomethodology, all of which aim to comprehend social phenomena through the viewpoints of those involved. This perspective holds that knowledge arises from understanding how individuals perceive and interpret their daily experiences and interactions. Within interpretive frameworks, human interaction and

negotiation are seen as the bedrock of social life, meaning that knowledge is co-created through the interactions between researchers and participants during interviews.

- **Constructivist Approaches and Interviews:** Constructivism posits that individuals actively build knowledge through their experiences, interactions, cultural backgrounds, and social contexts. In an interview setting, both the researcher and the participant work together to create meaning, rather than the participant merely recounting a pre-existing truth. The questions posed can be adapted and adjusted in response to the participant's answers. Researchers take into account how their own roles and influence might impact the research process. The context is vital, as meanings can vary among different individuals and situations.
- **Phenomenological Paradigm:** Phenomenology seeks to grasp how individuals experience, perceive, and interpret specific phenomena. During interviews, participants are encouraged to share their personal experiences, feelings, perceptions, and interpretations. The researcher's goal is to comprehend the phenomenon from the participant's viewpoint. Typically, questions are open-ended, enabling participants to articulate their experiences in their own terms. This approach prioritizes understanding the meaning behind people's lived experiences rather than objectively quantifying their behaviour.

Importance of Interviewing as a Qualitative Method

Interviewing is a significant qualitative method. Through interviews, the researcher can understand the participant's experiences, opinions, and perspectives, and by analysing them, can discover their underlying meaning. Compared to quantitative research, qualitative interviews are much more flexible because quantitative research follows strict rules and fixed procedures. Although qualitative research also follows certain rules, in some cases the researcher can make changes according to the needs of the study. Each of us is different from one another, and our thoughts and perspectives are also different. Only qualitative research tries to understand and give importance to these different realities and experiences. Through interviews, researchers obtain new information that helps in developing new theories.

The main objective of interviews in qualitative research is for the researcher to enter into the inner world of the participants, understand the world from their perspectives, and uncover the true meaning of their experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). An important aspect of interviews is that they help researchers gather detailed information directly. In this process, the researcher not only collects information but also analyses the participant's body language, way of speaking, and other non-verbal aspects. In qualitative interviews, open-ended questions are generally used most frequently because these types of questions are designed to allow participants to express their own opinions and perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In qualitative research, open-ended questions are generally used during the interview process for data collection. The use of such questions during the interview process allows respondents to express their viewpoints freely, in their own way and in their own language. The depth of information that researchers obtain from participants is especially important in the fields of education and society.

Qualitative researchers are always interested in understanding the underlying meanings of people's experiences. Researchers try to understand how people make their experiences meaningful through their own thoughts and interpretations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The most significant feature of qualitative interviewing is that participants are given complete freedom to express their own opinions. During the interview, a mutual relationship develops linking the investigator and the candidate, which helps the investigator understand and explore the responses more effectively. Qualitative inquiry gives special importance to people's life experiences and the real meanings attached to the participants' perspectives (Patton, 2015). Grounded theory is a flexible method of collecting qualitative data through which theories are constructed on the basis of the collected data (Charmaz, 2014). Through interviews, not only is information collected, but different aspects of people's lives are also analysed and interpreted.

Characteristics of Qualitative Interviewing

- **Open-Ended Questions:** In this type of question, the participants can explain their answers in their own words and in detail. Through these types of questions, people can easily express and explain their opinions, feelings, and experiences. In qualitative research, these questions are very important because they help to understand the participants' experiences and deep thoughts.
- **Flexibility:** In this interview method, researchers can modify the questions according to the situation. There are no strict rules or restrictions in asking questions. As a result, the researcher is able to collect in-depth information about the participant's experiences, feelings, and opinions. Because of this flexibility, qualitative interviewing becomes more realistic and effective. It helps the researcher to better understand people's experiences, opinions, and thoughts. “Emphasizes flexibility, enabling the interviewer to modify questions, probe responses, and explore emerging themes during the interview process” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).
- **Interactive in Nature:** According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2015), qualitative interviewing is interactive in nature, where the researcher and the research participant jointly construct meaning through conversation. As a result, there is an exchange of opinions between the two individuals, and it also becomes possible to understand the participant's responses and reactions.
- **Contextual Understanding:** In this type of interviewing, the researcher collects information based on the participant's social and personal context, which helps in understanding the real meaning and depth of the information. The researcher must analyse the issue by understanding the whole situation. It focuses on contextual understanding, recognising that participants' responses are shaped culturally and by social and situational elements (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).
- **Descriptive and Understanding:** In qualitative interviewing, the researcher collects information directly from the participants. As a result, an interactive positive relationship develops between the investigator and the interviewees; this

positive relationship helps the interviewees to easily share their feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and experiences with them. Based on the interviewees' feedback, the researcher asks various types of questions to gather more information. The researcher carefully examines and analyses all this information in depth, which helps in understanding the real causes and effects behind a specific event or situation. It produces rich, descriptive, and extensive knowledge rather than numerical or statistical information (Patton, 2015).

- **Researcher Flexibility:** In qualitative research, the researcher must properly analyse and interpret the information gathered from interviewees. The researcher ensures that their own thoughts and behaviour do not influence the investigation procedure. Researchers must always remain aware of their own attitudes and actions. They should be careful that their personal views and perspectives do not affect the findings of the study. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2018), researchers need to be aware of their own role in the research process so that their personal background, behaviour, and assumptions do not influence the research process in any way.
- **Constructed Reality:** In qualitative interviews, the researcher believes that every individual has their own uniqueness. The researcher tries to understand the participant's thoughts, feelings, and experiences through careful analysis. Qualitative interviews deeply explore and attempt to understand different perspectives. According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2015), in qualitative research, the purpose of interviewing is to understand the participants' experiences and thoughts from their own perspectives and in their own way.

Types of Qualitative Interviews

Most textbooks say that interviews can be classified on a continuum from structured to semi-structured and unstructured forms (Bryman, 2001; May, 1997). The major forms of qualitative interviews are structured, unstructured, and semi-structured interviews. Structured interviews are mostly associated with quantitative research and are commonly used in survey methods. Semi-structured and unstructured interviews are mainly used in qualitative research and are characterised by more flexibility and less formal structure. In a structured interview, researchers follow a predetermined questionnaire containing a fixed sequence of questions which are asked in the same sequence, allowing little flexibility for the researchers. On the other hand, semi-structured and unstructured interviews are more flexible; there is no fixed sequence of questions, participants can answer in their own words, and this helps researchers to gain in-depth understanding and provide rich descriptive information, which helps the researcher interpret people's experiences and perspectives.

- **Structured Interview:** Structured interviews are used when there is sufficient knowledge about a topic to identify its main dimensions, making them suitable for quantitative research. Existing knowledge helps researchers develop questions that are clear, specific, and focused. Structured interviews give the participants a restricted range of possible responses, which can then be theoretically related to further develop knowledge in the area being studied. Survey research frequently uses structured interviews. For example, a community development survey might ask respondents whether they have lived in a specific neighbourhood for five years or longer and then ask them to rate their satisfaction with access to amenities such as leisure facilities, grocery shops, and restaurants using a 1–5 scale, with 5 indicating “very satisfied.”
- **Unstructured Interview:** In an unstructured interview, the researcher has clear research aims and a specific topic, but allows the interviewee to express their views using their own experiences, ideas, meanings, and perspectives. Flexibility is the main feature, as the researcher can follow the interviewee's responses, explore their meanings, identify unexpected themes, and adjust the interview or research emphasis accordingly.
- **Semi-structured Interview:** In a semi-structured interview, the researcher uses an interview guide containing questions or topics to be covered, while allowing flexibility in how and when the questions are asked and how participants respond. The researcher can explore points raised by the interviewee through further questions, leading to an ongoing conversation. Such interviews offer greater flexibility for participants to respond in their own terms, but remain structured enough to enable comparison by covering common topics across interviews.

Specialised Forms of Interview

- **Ethnographic Interview:** Ethnography has its roots in early twentieth-century anthropology, where it emerged as an important qualitative method, and it is now commonly used across different social science fields. Ethnography is based on multiple qualitative research techniques, particularly observation and participant observation, while also allowing researchers to collect demographic and other statistical information. However, ethnographic research focuses on in-depth social exploration, extended engagement in the research setting, and the interpretation of local cultures through careful attention to individual experiences and concrete realities (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994; Atkinson et al., 2001). In the anthropological model, researchers spend a long time in the field studying a particular group. Interviews, especially with key informants, are important because these individuals have specialised knowledge of the people, relationships, and processes being studied. They can provide insights into situations and behaviours that researchers may not otherwise understand.
- **Narrative Interview:** A narrative interview is a qualitative research method that focuses on understanding people's experiences through the stories they tell about their lives. Participants are encouraged to describe their experiences, events, feelings, and perceptions in their own words and in their own way. The researcher generally uses open-ended questions and gives participants considerable freedom to decide what aspects of their experiences are important to discuss.

- **Episodic Interview:** An episodic interview focuses on participants' specific experiences, events, or episodes rather than asking them to describe their entire life story. The researcher encourages participants to recall and describe particular situations in detail, including what happened, how they experienced it, how they felt, and how they interpreted the event. Questions are usually open-ended but are directed toward specific episodes or examples.
- **Elite Interview:** An elite interview is used to collect information from people who hold specialised knowledge, expertise, authority, or influential positions in a particular field or organisation. These participants may include politicians, senior officials, business leaders, academics, professionals, community leaders, or organisational heads. The purpose is to gain access to their expert knowledge, experiences, decisions, perspectives, and understanding of important issues that may not be available through ordinary participants. Elite interviews are often flexible and semi-structured, allowing the researcher to ask follow-up questions and explore important issues in depth.
- **Focus Group Interview:** A focus group typically consists of a small number of participants who collectively discuss a subject predetermined by the researcher. Focus groups have their roots in market research, but as a social science research technique, they have faced considerable criticism and have fluctuated in popularity over time (Merton, 1987; Morgan, 1997; Morgan and Spanish, 1984). Focus groups usually consist of six to ten participants, although the appropriate number depends on the research topic and group situation, and some studies use smaller groups. The main value of focus groups lies in the interaction among participants, group dynamics, and the insights and data produced through discussion. The researcher generally moderates the discussion using guiding questions, while stimuli such as photographs, films, vignettes, or games may be used to initiate or focus the conversation. If resources permit, a second researcher can take notes, identify speakers, and assist with transcription. Video recording may also be used depending on the research topic and approach, such as recording children's interactions in primary schools.

The Process of Interviewing

Preparation for the Interview

Probably the most helpful tip within the interview process is interview preparation. This process can help make or break the process and can either alleviate or exacerbate the problematic circumstances that could potentially occur once the research is implemented. McNamara (2009) suggests the importance of the preparation stage in order to maintain an unambiguous focus as to how the interviews will be conducted in order to provide maximum benefit to the proposed research study. Along these lines, Chenail (2009) provides some pre-interview exercises researchers can use to improve their instrumentality and address potential biases. McNamara (2009) applies eight principles to the preparation stage of interviewing, which include the following:

- Choose a setting with little distraction.
- Explain the purpose of the interview.
- Address terms of confidentiality.
- Explain the format of the interview.
- Indicate how long the interview usually takes.
- Tell them how to get in touch with you later if they want to.
- Ask them if they have any questions before you both get started with the interview.
- Don't count on your memory to recall their answers.

Selecting Participants

Creswell (2007) discusses the importance of selecting the appropriate candidates for interviews. He asserts that the researcher should utilise one of the various types of sampling strategies, such as criterion-based sampling or critical case sampling (among many others), in order to obtain qualified candidates that will provide the most credible information to the study. Creswell also suggests the importance of acquiring participants who will be willing to openly and honestly share information or "their story." It might be easier to conduct the interviews with participants in a comfortable environment where the participants do not feel restricted or uncomfortable sharing information.

Pilot Testing

Another important element of interview preparation is the implementation of a pilot test. The pilot test will assist the researcher in determining if there are flaws, limitations, or other weaknesses within the interview design and will allow him or her to make necessary revisions before the implementation of the study (Kvale, 2007). A pilot test should be conducted with participants who have similar interests to those that will participate in the implemented study. The pilot test will also assist the researchers with the refinement of research questions.

Constructing Effective Research Questions

Creating effective research questions for the interview process is one of the most crucial components of interview design. Researchers desiring to conduct such an investigation should be careful that each of the questions will allow the examiner to dig deep into the experiences and/or knowledge of the participants in order to gain maximum data from the interviews. McNamara (2009) suggests several recommendations for creating effective research questions for interviews, which include the following elements:

- Wording should be open-ended (respondents should be able to choose their own terms when answering questions).
- Questions should be as neutral as possible (avoid wording that might influence answers, e.g., evocative, judgmental wording).
- Questions should be asked one at a time.

- Questions should be worded clearly (this includes knowing any terms particular to the program or the respondents' culture).
- Be careful asking "why" questions.

Responsibility of the Investigator in Qualitative Interviewing

In qualitative interviews, the investigator first takes permission from the participants. When the participants agree to help in the research, the researcher creates an atmosphere where participants feel secure and trust the researcher enough to express their opinions and thoughts freely. The researcher listens carefully to the participants and gives proper importance to their views. Before scientific explanations, it is necessary to understand the participant's experiences and perspectives. The main purpose of interviewing in research is to uncover the true meaning of the participant's viewpoints and experiences (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015). In qualitative interviewing, the researcher usually communicates directly with the participant either face-to-face or through other forms of technology. During this process, the researcher not only listens carefully to the participant's words but also closely observes non-verbal signals such as the participant's style of speaking, body language, and gestures. All these aspects help the investigator develop a deeper sympathy for the participant's perspectives. According to Michael Quinn Patton, "The interviewer's task is to understand what the interviewee is saying and to understand what the interviewee means" (Patton, 2015). One of the important tasks of the researcher is to identify the real meaning of the opinions and experiences shared by the candidates. The investigator's work is not only to record the candidates' answers, but also to analyse those answers in order to understand their actual meaning. Knowledge obtained through qualitative research is co-constructed through the interaction between the investigator and the candidates (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher should never allow their own thoughts, beliefs, or personal biases to influence the research.

Therefore, the researcher should repeatedly examine and evaluate themselves. Before starting the research, the investigator should be transparent about their own perspectives, experiences, and biases; only then can the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research be enhanced (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Investigators should have a reflective and aware attitude so that participants' voices are presented clearly and honestly. This ensures the investigator's personal beliefs do not affect the information provided by the respondents. Throughout the interviewing procedure, the investigator must obtain the respondent's consent as well as maintain the confidentiality of the information collected. In qualitative interviewing, one of the researcher's main responsibilities is to maintain ethical sensitivity while collecting data, because during the interview participants often share many personal details and their experiences with the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Finally, it can be said that in qualitative interviewing, the role of the researcher is situational and dynamic. In this context, the researcher does not merely ask questions; rather, they listen attentively to the content and analyse it critically. The researcher also ensures that the respondent feels comfortable and gives special importance to maintaining the confidentiality of the responses. As an investigator, listener, interpreter, reflexive analyst, and ethical practitioner, the researcher plays a vital role in generating meaningful and credible qualitative data. Qualitative interviews largely depend on the researcher's skills, awareness, and ethical consideration.

Ethical Considerations

Qualitative interviewing includes valued interconnection with the candidates as well as investigating particular events, making ethical consideration essential for protecting participants' rights and well-being.

- Before conducting a qualitative interview, it is very important to obtain the respondent's consent. Before starting the interview, the researcher must clearly explain everything about the study to the respondent. Only if the respondent agrees after understanding it properly can the interview be started. Before the research, the researcher will inform the participants that they may participate in the study voluntarily according to their own wishes, and they may also withdraw from the study at any stage during the research process. The participants will never face any pressure or punishment (Creswell & Poth, 2018).
- Secrecy and privacy must be ensured throughout the research process. Researchers should use nicknames and remove identifying information from transcripts and reports. Protecting confidentiality helps build trust and encourages honest responses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
- The researcher should never formulate questions that may place the participants in an uncomfortable situation. "The interviewer must be sensitive to how the person being interviewed is affected by and reacts to different questions and topics" (Patton, 2015).
- Researchers should always value the participants' beliefs, experiences, and opinions. In qualitative interviews, researchers must show respect toward the participants. In research, reflexivity means that the researcher remains properly aware of whether their own personal perspectives and experiences affect the investigation process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).
- First of all, the researcher must examine their own biases so that the research does not become biased because of the researcher's personal prejudice. The researcher must also reflect on their own preconceived assumptions; otherwise, incorrect analysis may occur in the investigation, and as an outcome, the study may fail to provide accurate information.
- In qualitative interviews, the researcher must use the information obtained from participants only for the aim of the investigation as well as store the details securely. The researcher must also ensure that the participants' information and identities are not disclosed in any way outside the research process.

Data Analysis in Qualitative Interviewing

Through the interview process, the researcher collects information from the participants. The collected data are divided into small codes, and later these codes are analysed and interpreted in order to identify their underlying meanings. The main objective of qualitative research is to go beyond the boundaries of codes and themes and understand the broader and underlying meaning of the collected data (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 187). "Transcribing means to transform, to change from one form to another" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 205). The researcher reads the information obtained from the interviews repeatedly and tries to understand it clearly. Then, the researcher identifies the different important parts within the data. This process is called coding. "Codes can be developed inductively, originating from the data themselves, or deductively, from previous concepts, theories, or research questions" (Miles et al., 2020, p. 44).

Thematic analysis is a process through which different themes within the collected data are identified and presented through analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). In qualitative interviewing, data inspection is a most important part of the investigation procedure. The researcher also explains the relationship between the information and the investigation topic. In qualitative research, the researcher and the participants influence each other through communication and interaction. Therefore, the researcher and the subject of the research can never be viewed as completely separate (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37). Researchers use different methods to make the research more credible. In this investigation procedure, the investigator reads the same information repeatedly as well as separates the important parts into different categories; this process is called coding. Since the researcher has to read and analyse the same information again and again, this process is considered a continuous process. By repeatedly examining the same data, the researcher tries to understand and interpret the participants' experiences more clearly.

Limitations of Qualitative Interviewing

- **Subjectivity:** In qualitative research, the researcher's own thoughts and perspectives may often influence the explanation of information. The same information can also be explained differently by other researchers. Therefore, maintaining objectivity in qualitative interviews is a very difficult task. The major problem in qualitative interviews is researcher bias. In this type of research, the researcher may make the study biased through personal values and judgments. The researcher also actively expresses his or her own values and biases (Creswell & Poth, 2018).
- **Limited Generalisability:** In qualitative interviews, research is usually conducted with a small number of candidates, due to which the reliability as well as validity of the study are comparatively low. In qualitative research, researchers are more interested in deeply analysing and understanding a specific subject matter rather than verifying the truth of the information provided by participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).
- **Time-Consuming Process:** Information from candidates needs to be read repeatedly and analysed carefully, which is a very time-consuming process. Therefore, this type of research takes a long time to complete. "Interviewing is a time-consuming method" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).
- **Researcher Bias and Interviewer Influence:** Sometimes, during the interview, the researcher's way of asking questions may influence the participants. In such situations, participants may not be able to express their opinions fully, which can affect the research findings. In qualitative inquiry, the researcher acts as one of the key instruments of the research (Patton, 2015).
- **Limited Reliability and Replicability:** It is very difficult to say that qualitative interviews will always produce the same results because qualitative research generally depends on the researcher's perspective. Qualitative research is primarily interpretive in nature, and the researcher becomes engaged with participants through the establishment of rapport, maintaining a prolonged and in-depth experience with them (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Conclusion

Qualitative interviewing helps to understand people's life experiences, thoughts, and society more deeply. In this research process, data is collected through conversation. Therefore, compared to quantitative studies, this process is much more flexible. The researcher can also change the questions according to the situation during the interview. Before conducting the research, the researcher's primary responsibility is to obtain participants' consent. Along with obtaining permission, maintaining confidentiality and showing respect to the participants are also important responsibilities of the researcher. These practices make the research trustworthy. Although conducting qualitative interviews can be somewhat difficult, the information gathered from this methodology is extremely useful in anthropology research and a powerful method for understanding society.

Acknowledgment: No
Author's Contribution: *Shaini Bhowal:* Literature Review, Analysis, Referencing; *Dr. Mahfuz Alam:* Methodology, Analysis, Drafting,; *Rimpa Mondal:* Data Collection, Analysis; *Jesmin Khatun:* Analysis, Drafting
Funding: No
Declaration: The author/s has/have given consent for the publication.
Competing Interest: No

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