

**BENCHMARK TEXTBOOK CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS PAPER**

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## Chapter One

This is my first experience with qualitative research. This chapter has been extremely helpful. If I am understanding correctly, the researcher plays a vital role in qualitative research, when it comes to the subject's interpretation of the meaning of the phenomenon. I found the dynamic elements of qualitative research a bit overwhelming. I am sure this is natural when learning something new, but it is explained well. I am grateful for the extra effort made by the authors to define many of the terms used. I know now what ontology means, the way we understand reality. One thing that stood out was the mention of how qualitative research is not constrained to only one specific tradition, agenda, discipline, or method, allowing the researcher some freedom. The way they stop and define things made it easier for me to stop and understand these terms before proceeding to the next section.

Understanding the key components from table 1.1 provides something I can reference as I work to develop a better understanding of qualitative research. Understanding that the researcher is the primary component of the research is a new concept for me and I will need to grasp this concept. Defining the values of qualitative research has given me several things to consider ethically I must be aware of biases and inequalities between myself and the subjects as well as between subjects, and the environment all are important factors. Having an opportunity to begin to learn the approaches of qualitative research is important, even if it is only a brief introduction and not all approaches were covered. I found it interesting at how many approaches were not restricted to qualitative only, several were combined methods with quantitative. Understanding and knowing which approach to use will be based on the research question. I feel that after reading this chapter, I can say that qualitative research allows for change to be made based on the data collected through interviews and has the potential for social change.

## Chapter Two

Chapter two has been just as insightful as chapter one for me, as found on page 33, the defining a conceptual framework and explaining that it was somewhat confusing may have been an understatement. This is not something I was familiar with and I can see the importance of it. Developing an understanding of the components of a conceptual framework has been very helpful, Figure 2.1 is very helpful. I will have to read pages 34-36 a few times, as well as reference these when working on my conceptual framework during the writing of my paper.

The roles of the conceptual framework on pages 37-38, remind me of using an outline on steroids, bringing valuable information into an organized system to allow me to tie different aspects together before the actual writing of the paper. Once again, I see that it is the researcher who is the most important aspect of the conceptual framework, as seen on page 39, influencing the research with our beliefs and biases, as they can affect the way you choose to run the study. The researcher is holding a valuable part of the inquiry itself. This is a hard concept for me to take in, but the more I read and learn it becomes more comfortable for me.

The questions given in Tables 2.1 – 2.4 are very helpful and I will add those to my toolbox as well. I am going to take all these questions and put them in a Word document to reference as I am constructing my conceptual framework for my research. I feel that the more I review these, I will develop a better understanding of what it is and the importance of using it. At the same time, it will help me develop my researcher identity as I will become more familiar with the terminology used in qualitative research. The final section of the chapter is amazing, and I am so grateful for the example of what a conceptual framework memo looks like on pages 49-59. I like the idea of creating memos as an informal way to draw out your ideas, collect the data, and share it with other researchers, for their collaboration or just for their feedback.

### Chapter Three

I found this chapter to come in strong as I am learning about developing a research question, and that it is a continuous process. The research design process is well described in Figure 3.1 on page 64. The seven phases will be well used as I plan out my research question. I feel that every phase will be valuable in the process. I found piloting and refining on page 88 to be fascinating, using a pilot study to build off is awesome. I found the identity and positionality memos on page 67, to stand out to me, the example on page 69 was very helpful. I like how the authors share examples of what they are speaking about. I learn more effectively with this type of reading.

I will add table 3.1 page 73 to my researcher toolbox as it will be helpful as I work out issues with my research question by keeping these in mind. The recommended practices throughout the chapter are also great resources that I can refer to and utilize as I develop my identity and research skills. I feel that the development section on the theoretical framework opened my eyes to this concept, by explaining on page 76 that it may be similar to a literature review, they are not the same thing, overlapping each other in the development of the research process. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 will help me to keep these separate and understand how they work together to look for answers to my questions. I will utilize these when processing the literature for the research.

The great detail that goes into sampling sites and participants on pages 81-83 and the design validity of the research design all work together to show the process as it is explained in great detail and I believe that the sample research design memo on page 96 helped me to understand what this looks like and gave me a good foundation for this process that is all new to me. Everything has been so fascinating and has kept my attention through the process.

## Chapter Four

Reflexivity in data collection was a great chapter for me. I am starting to gain a richer understanding of the qualitative mindset that the researcher is a vital part of the research. Being the shaper of the data collected on page 106. I will develop my questions based on my lived experiences, I will then explore the lived and shared experiences that will hopefully relate to my research questions. I like the use of memos as they allow you to triangulate with the research team, the research journal makes sense to me as I feel this along with the memo will help me get some feedback on the development of my questions. I like that the memos can be used in the data collection seen on page 108. The dialogic engagement and researcher interviews will help me to recognize my role as the researcher while data collecting on page 107. This sounds like a way to develop my researcher identity as well.

Table 4.1 on page 109 is going to be helpful in my reflexive data collection. My understanding of how this will help me when I begin my fieldwork was solidified through the example in 4.1 pages 111-115. I will review this example when I begin this point of my research. The research journal will help me to look back on where I started and where I am now, I cannot express how I will tie this into my current research question as I need to revamp it and I may be changing my topic altogether. If I had been journaling through this process currently, I may have realized that my question was not sufficient. Through a self-reflection mentioned on page 116, the journal writings would have made the process smoother along with my memos. The dialogic engagement on specific research subjects will produce my data and I will record these engagements. I would be open to researcher interviews as I feel that it would be helpful for me. I also want to remember that the research participants are the experts of their own experiences.

## Chapter Five

Chapter Five revealed many great aspects of data collection. Although they are all excellent, I feel that only a few of them will be appropriate for me and I would feel comfortable for my research. Interviews will be very important for my case study on the experiences and feelings of those who have spent time with the cats at the rescue. Being relational, person-centered, they are partial, subjective and non-neutral pages 127-130. These will all be key characteristics for interviews for my study. Table 5.1 found on pages 131-133, gives considerations for me to develop and conduct my interviews for the characteristics described earlier. I feel that my interviews will be unstructured to allow for the participants to share fully with me their personal experiences on page 134. There are some good points to take into consideration for developing my interviewing skills on pages 135-141. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 are excellent tools to have and will be helpful, as will Table 5.4.

Observational field notes will be utilized as well, I just don't want to appear too creepy sitting and watching and writing, I will have to work on that. Being a helper at the rescue will help me with participant observation, page 145, because I work there. The two exercises Practice 5.1 and 5.2 are excellent ideas and I will utilize them to help with my concern mentioned earlier. Data and archival data will be important to gain knowledge of if there is any other research related to my topic seen on page 151. I feel that community-based oral testimony will be the participatory method I would like to use found on page 158. Although the other methods sound great, I believe that this method will work best for my research question. Table 5.7 is something that I will print out to have with me as I develop my research to ensure that my question and research method continue to align with each other, this is found on page 159. I truly believe that all the information is great and what I have chosen will aid my research for my question.

## Chapter Six

This chapter is an important one as validity is so important to any research and I will return to this chapter quite frequently throughout my research process. Page 165 presents a good point for me to always remember, I must not approach validity as a checklist of technical fixes. I just cannot review my work with a list and check them off as I explore the validity of my research. The use of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are well discussed and explained in great detail throughout the chapter. I will refer to these as part of my toolbox for validity, to ensure I am doing things correctly. These are found in Table 6.1, this helped me to understand reflexive validity on page 169 with the questions for future use in my research. Table 6.1 also has the types of validity in it and the next several chapters give a brief understanding of these different types of validity. I am not sure what types I will focus on, but I am glad to have this source on pages 172-173.

I would like to use triangulation as I will not be the only one involved with the research, I like the concept of investigator and perspective triangulation. Although this one can be difficult, I would investigate participant validation as well as seen on pages 176-177. I am not sure if I will need to look at strategic sequencing, but it sounds important, as with thick description as they seem to be important for validity, depending on the research type. The dialogic engagement I feel will be important in my validity. Multiple coding is not something I feel I will use in this current research assignment but would consider structured reflexivity to help with rigor as the researcher will be the instrument, creating memos to record important data that can be shared with those who will be part of the triangulation. It is mentioned of rigor, but I am not sure exactly what this looks like and its importance but will look more into it as it is important to making my research valid.

## Chapter Seven

Chapter seven is extremely important to me as I have strong beliefs in ethically sound practices. Research is no exception for me, and I am glad that this chapter was in the book. I look forward to utilizing much of this chapter to not only work to protect myself but also to make sure my participants are safe as well. Learning about IRB's and informed consent for research will be important to my research and I will use what I have learned from pages 195 through 198. From getting permission to use a location, to building rapport are good to know, fortunately my location should be relatively easy, but I will review all the pertinent information to ensure it will be safe for the participants. Knowing and setting boundaries will be important Tables 7.1 and 7.2 give valuable questions for me to consider when thinking about research relationships and boundaries that will need to be established seen on pages 202 to 205. I have learned something new when dealing with reciprocity, I have learned a new use for and definition of this word and how it is used in research, I have a lot to consider as seen on page 207 when looking at reciprocity concerning the participants.

I will review tables 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 concerning the following topics, informed consent, developing a consent form, and ensuring transparency of my intentions to the participants and considerations for data management are all important, they are on pages 211 to 218. I will use the ethical dimensions of the researcher section to help with my identity, by incorporating this information into my way of conducting research, keeping in mind the dialectics of mutual influence in the research development and process seen in tables 7.6 and 7.7, pages 225 and 226. I will finally keep in mind the fidelity to my participants and their experiences, yes the research may be based on my experiences, but I am looking to see if there is a shared and mutual experience in others as well. Responsive research seems to be important and something I need.

## Chapter Eight

This chapter was exactly what I needed, understanding data analysis in qualitative research. I know absolutely nothing about this, but I have many questions as to what it looks like. Chapter eight does just that, I will work to understand all the data that is associated with my research and find themes, begin to narrow down and work to stay focused on the relational data. I will remain focused on the data as it will be continuously processed. I will take into consideration Table 8.1, staying structured and yet fluid and flexible. Interpreting and analyzing the data is important and being intentional when interpreting will be a priority for me. It is discussed that there will be a need to reduce the amount of data collected, reorganize the data, and make sure the data is appropriately represented. Table 8.2 gives me a good overview of the different approaches to data analysis, this is good as I will more than likely struggle with this until I get a better understanding of what I am doing.

The description of the integrative approach on pages 240 -241 explains that I need a greater understanding of the data, this will ensure the validity of my data. For me to better understand this integrative approach, I will consider the five framing notions for data analysis. As found on pages 241-245, my understanding is that the data collection begins with my first piece of data collected, regardless if it will be a part of the final data, it is all-important. There are seven questions I must consider on page 243, concerning the formative and summative notions of data analysis. I will consider all seven as they will make me ensure my data will be valid. Ensuring triangulation for theory and data will be important to me, along with power asymmetries and alternative perspectives will be looked into. I will keep table 8.3 in consideration as it gives ways to resist interpretive authority, controlling my biases and the biases of those who will be working with the data alongside me.

## Chapter Nine

This chapter has highlighted the importance of data collection and what to do with it after I collect it. Figure 9.1 features the three-pronged data analysis process. I found this to be extremely helpful and I will definitely take into consideration this process along with the information from table 9.1 on page 256. Several appendices have provided some great examples. I will be careful when creating my transcripts, I will look into what companies offer the best secure transcribing services. I prefer to transcribe verbatim, I find some words are unclear, I can use participant validation.

I have some idea of how I will code my transcripts, table 9.2 gives some considerations when transcribing. Creating a precoding memo in practice 9.1 is a great tool to help me to understand coding better. Out of the nine ways of reading the data, I don't have one way of reading, but I feel that I would conduct a formative reading first, before moving on, the practice 9.2 memo will be a good format to follow on page 263. Readings by the participants and specific readings may be helpful to my research question.

Tables 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 all give good examples of coding and working with transcripts, I am a bit scared, to be honest, because there is so much information on coding and so many different ways to code. Example 9.1 is a great example of what coding looks like with the codes and definitions, but there are so many coding definitions for inductive and deductive coding seen on pages 269-272.

Open coding feels right to me, but I still need to consider the possibility of using the listening guide, I know that my coding will also be affected by my method of qualitative research, I am looking at a case study, so I have to follow the approach as it was designed.

## Chapter Ten

Now we get into the complicated part, the putting together of all my hard work.

Organizing the data and putting it all together into something that makes sense has always been a problem for me, especially when it is my first time doing something new. This chapter is a blessing and I am looking forward to using the pointers given in it. I never liked outlining, but I have come to see the advantages of setting up an outline by establishing my headers for the different sections. I like to print out my paper and then revise, writing up errors and corrections on the paper, then make corrections, print out again and repeat. I am always getting mad fun of for killing trees because I print but I need that hard copy. I need to learn to use a tablet instead, so this will be something I will have to work on.

Mini presentations seen on page 298, will be a great thing for me as I believe in taking things in baby steps. When I go for the final report, I will follow Example 10.1 on pages 304-308, this will come in handy, as I have never written a research paper of this caliber before. I will also need to follow the methods of reporting associated with the type of case study I will be using. Tables 10.2 – 10.5 are all valuable to me as they give great insight into creating a well-written final report.

There are so many questions to consider for qualitative research, table 10.5 seems important to remember as it shares considerations for writing and representing qualitative data. Page 320 gives some examples of many ways researchers presented their data and findings. I have always thought of research as being presented in written format, but the example of the painting presentation was interesting. I never thought about film or a documentary coming from extensive research on something and then presenting it through this media. I am glad that it ended with reiterating the considerations for ethical research and referring to chapter seven.

## Chapter Eleven

It is hard to believe that we are in the last chapter. I have gained so much knowledge and it all seems to be brought together in this chapter. The research proposal is based on all the things that were discussed in the previous chapters. I found that the questions to ask myself found on page 326, will be helpful. I also found that every proposal will be different based on what I am writing the proposal for and what method I will choose to use. I am looking to use a case study method, but which one I am still working on that. Table 11.1 gives me a basic template to follow. I am grateful for how the chapter describes each section of the template for better understanding. Table 11.2 gives more questions to consider when developing how my data will be processed, I know I will need to follow the method I choose, but there are several different ways, I like interviews, triangulation, and will make sure I am not influencing the study data.

Exercise 11.1 is something I plan on completing to help with my proposal preparation, also table 11.3 gives some great questions to consider when reviewing my research question and how validity can be achieved. The sample research proposal opened my eyes to the length of the proposal, how much detail goes into it, and all the information needed. The continuous use of questioning all throughout is valuable, along with being transparent from the beginning with your research participants and the facility that I will be using, makes a lot of sense. I liked the conceptual framework diagram, I feel this will allow me to have a format to follow and to make sure everything flows. The data table and how the data was collected makes sense to me to incorporate into my proposal. Finally, save the proposal in its original form will be something I will ensure to use, separating my report from the proposal will keep me from losing what I had started with. My proposal is just a guide, there will be many changes before the final is established.

**References**

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2021). *Qualitative Research: Bridging the Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological* (2nd Ed.). Sage Publications.

## Benchmark Textbook Critical Analysis and Synthesis Grading Rubric | COUC750-01 Qualitative Wed 11AM ET

Criteria	Ratings				Points
Quality	140 to >128.0 pts Advanced Shows high levels of evidence of comprehending course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator.	128 to >117.0 pts Proficient Shows satisfactory evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator.	117 to >0.0 pts Developing Shows some evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator.	135 pts Not Present	140 pts
Quantity and Timeliness	70 to >63.0 pts Advanced Submitted on time, all chapters completed and substantial (full page each-not more than one page). Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included.	63 to >58.0 pts Proficient Submitted on time and all chapters included and substantial (full page each-not more than one page). Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included.	58 to >0.0 pts Developing Submitted on time but one or more chapters may be missing, not substantial enough (less than a page) or too substantial (more than one page). Grading Rubric-Self-evaluation may be missing	67.3 pts Not Present	70 pts
Style Formatting/ Structure	90 to >82.0 pts Advanced The Paper properly uses current APA style and reflects doctoral writing quality. In-text citations and references list are formatted correctly. The Paper reflects a graduate level voice and vocabulary. There are very few spelling and/or grammar errors.	82 to >75.0 pts Proficient The Paper mostly uses current APA style and reflects doctoral writing quality. In-text citations and references list are mostly formatted correctly. The Paper reflects generally a graduate level voice and vocabulary. There are few spelling and/or grammar errors.	75 to >0.0 pts Developing The Paper uses some current APA style and reflects doctoral writing quality. In-text citations and references list are sometimes formatted correctly. The Paper review sometimes reflects a graduate level voice and vocabulary. There are some spelling and/or grammar errors.	90 pts Not Present	90 pts
Total Points: 292.3 / 300					

All comments that were given had been taken into consideration, and I have them all saved to help me in the future. One assignment was late as I thought I submitted it, and it did not submit.