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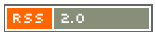



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The Opinions of Researchers on Participant Sampling

Ali Yıldız

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Katılımcı Görüşlerinin KaydedilmesiHakkında Araştırmacıların Düşünceleri

Özet

Çalışmanın amacı, katılımcıların görüşleriyle sağlanan verilerin kayıt altına alınması hakkında araştırmacıların düşüncelerini araştırmaktır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma desenlerinden durum çalışması yaklaşımı ve amaçlı örnekleme türlerinden kritik durum örneklemesi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu, bir devlet üniversitesinin eğitim fakültesinde görev yapan, alan eğitiminde doktorasını bitirmiş 6 kadın ve 4 erkek olmak üzere toplam 10 araştırmacıdan oluşmaktadır. Çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacının hazırladığı bir görüş formu ile yapılandırılmamış görüşme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Görüş formunda nitel araştırmalarda katılımcıların görüşleriyle sağlanan verilerin kayıt altına alınması hakkında araştırmacıların düşüncelerini ortaya koymalarına yönelik sadece bir açık uçlu soruya yer verilmiştir. Yapılandırılmamış görüşmede katılımcılar genelde görüş formunda yazdıkları düşüncelerle ilgili destekleyici açıklamalarda bulunmuşlardır. Katılımcıların yazdıkları fikirleri puanlamalarına göre kayıt altına alma hakkında öncelikli ve önemli bulunan düşüncelere yönelik bir sıralamanın oluşturulması mümkün olmuştur. Ve bu oluşturulan sıralama sayesinde katılımcı görüşlerinin kaydedilmesiyle ilgili en öncelikli ve önemli yöntemin görüntü ve sesin birlikte kaydedilmesi şeklinde en yüksek katılımcı puanlarıyla ortaya çıktığı görülmüştür. Araştırmada önem sırasına göre görüntü ve sesin birlikte kaydedilmesi, sadece sesin kaydedilmesi, sadece araştırmacı tarafından görüşme esnasında yazılması, görüşmelerin bitiminde araştırmacı tarafından katılımcı cevaplarının yazılması ve soruların katılımcının kendisi tarafından yazılarak cevaplanması şeklinde katılımcı düşünceleriyle bir sıralamanın yapıldığı ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Görüşmeler,görüşlerin kaydedilmesi, araştırmacıların düşünceleri, durum çalışması

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The Opinions of Researchers on Participant Sampling

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Abstract
The aim of the study is to investigate the opinions of researchers on recording survey data. The study used the case study approach from qualitative research designs and critical case sampling from purposeful sampling types. The study group consisted of a total of 10 researchers, 6 women and 4 men, who work at the faculty of education of a state university and have completed their doctorates in field education. An opinion form prepared by the researcher and an unstructured interview method were used as data collection tools in the study. The opinion form comprised of only one open-ended question for researchers to provide their opinions on recording data provided by a survey used in qualitative research. In the unstructured interview, the participants provided general elaborations of the opinions they had written on the opinion form. It was possible to create a ranking of the opinions provided about recording, and it was seen that the preferred method was the recording of image and sound together. The complete determined ranking of preference of the researchers is as follows: the researcherrecording the images and sounds together, the researcherrecording just the sounds, the researcher just making notes during the interview, the researcher writing the answers at the end of the interviews, and the participants writing down the answers to the questions themselves.

Keywords: Interviews, recording of opinions, researchers' opinions, case study

1.Introduction

Interviews are often conducted to learn more about unobservable situations relating to people as it is clearly not possible to observe human feelings, thoughts and intentions. Furthermore, behavior that has occurred previously and situations where there is no observer cannot be observed, neither canhow people organize their lives or how they attribute meaning to events that occur in their lives. As well as asking interviewquestions is to learn more these unobservable situations, interviews are also helpful to gain alternative perspectives. Qualitative interviews begin with the assumption that other people's perspectives are meaningful, knowable and revealable. In short, interviews are conducted to uncover what exists in people's minds and to create their stories (Patton, 2018, p. 341), but how far those goals are attained, as well as the quality of data collected through interviews,can be completely attributed to the experience and preparation of the interviewer.

No matter what preparations and precautions are made, participants in surveys may sometimes resort to short-term silences, laughter, and inconsistent expressions when explaining their experiences and ideas. It can also be said that participants sometimes prefer indirect expressions when answering questions which may be related to their different and conflicting ideas, values, and emotions (Salman Yıkmış, 2015). The silences, laughter, and tendency of participants to distort meaning with consecutive inconsistent expressions, as well as the expressing of feelings indirectly,is sometimes due to methods of translating their own experiences in their lives that do not coincide with the patriarchal values of their families. Even if the participants have their own relevant experiences and ideas that are independent of the values prevailing in the institution they work in, the environment they live in, or their families, they may be hesitant to share these with an external researcher (Anderson & Jack, 2016; Salman Yıkmış, 2015). All of these concerns mean that no matter how a researcher plans to behave, or whatever preparations are made, taking the necessary precautions during the interview may not guarantee that they will receive the data they want and expect from the participants.
In qualitative research, it is possible to talk about two basic types of interviews: unstructured and semi-structured. In an unstructured interview, the researcher can ask single or multiple questions and allow the participant to answer in any way they wish. An unstructured interview can therefore be said to resemble a conversation. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher prepares an interview guide consisting of open-ended questions and conducts the interview in line with questions that are generally asked to participants systematically and consistently, sometimes in a specific order. In some cases, the interviewers have the freedom to go off topic

simultaneously, allowingresearchers to manage the process depending on the context. In fact, researchers using semi-structured interviews are expected to conduct research beyond the standard questions prepared (Boşnak, 2022; Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 69).

A consideration of the relevant studies in the literature is helpful for researchers in the conducting of successful interviews.According to Merriam (2023, p.105), there are three ways to record interview data. The first is to record interviews with devices that only record audio. This recording method is usually considered to be the most suitable or convenient method because it ensures that everything said is preserved for analysis. In fact, if the recording device remains fairly silent during the interview, the participant may even forget that their voice is being recorded, which is ideal in the obtaining of naturally collected data.In some casesinterviews are recorded with devices that record both video and audio. In the same study, it is stated that this practice causes the interview to be completed with less talking, that is, less verbal activity. It is also stated that participants generally find video recording to be more intrusive than audio recording.

The second method is to record what is said during the interview in writing. With this method, the interviewer has to both listen to the participant and write down everything that is said. One problem with this technique is that the researcher may miss many things because he may have difficulty deciding which of the participant's words are of importance. If the interviewer also wants to record the participant's physical reactions, that is, body language, the process becomes even more difficult.

The third method of recording interviews is for the interviewer to write down everything that has been said after the interview is over. As there are obvious problems with this method, it should only be used sparingly, although it can be helpful in cases where the participant is ill. When used, what the ill participant says, or the observations and observations made about him/her, should be recorded in writing immediately after the interview. Since the study group of this research consists of academic staff with doctorates, it is anticipated that they have important thoughts about the recording of data provided by the participants' opinions, and that the interviews to be conducted with them will provide valuable data.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the thoughts of researchers on the recording of data provided by the opinions of survey participants.

2. Method

2.1. Design of the study

A case study approach, one form of qualitative research design, was used in the study. The most basic description of a case study is an in-depth investigation of a situation or situations (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021, p. 73). As it is in-depth, small-sized samples are generally preferred (Merriam, 2023; Yıldız, 2023). In this study, critical situation sampling, a purposeful sampling type, was used to reveal the thoughts of researchersabout recording the data which is provided by participants' opinions. It may be possible to make critical situation sampling more understandable by use of an example from the history of science, which is generally thought to be widely known. A famous experiment was conducted to prove that the falling speeds of different types of objects released at the same time at a certain height in an environment where there is no air friction do not depend on their weight. The objects selected for this experimental study, conducted by Galileo Galilei in 1589, can constitute a good example of critical situation sampling, namely that if the time it takes for a chicken feather and an iron ball to fall to the ground at the same height and at the same time in an airless environment is the same, then their speed of falling to the ground will also be the same ($v = gt$). As a result of this experiment, Aristotle's claim that heavy objects fall to the ground faster than light objects was proven wrong. David Scott, one of the Apollo 15 astronauts, showed in 1971 that a hammer and a feather released at the same height and at the same time on the Moon fall to the ground at the same time (Robinson, 2023, p.32). Since the free fall experiment with a chicken feather and an iron ball can be generalized to all other objects, the selection of objects representsa both convincing and critical situation (Patton, 2018, p. 237).

2.2. Study group

The study group of the research consists of 10 experienced researchers, 6 women and 4 men, who have completed their doctorates in field education and work at the faculty of education of a state university. The

sample selection was based on the fact that the participants had completed their doctorate studies in the field of education related to their undergraduate program. Volunteers in this research (3, 3, 1, 1, 1 and 1 respectively) were therefore faculty members who work in the fields of classroom education, mathematics education, science education, social studies education, chemistry education and history education.

2. 3. Data collection

In the study, an opinion form prepared by the researcher and an unstructured interview method were used as data collection tools. The opinion form included only one open-ended question aimed at investigating the researchers' thoughts about recording the data provided by the participants' opinions in qualitative research. In addition, the purpose of the study, and the necessary explanations regarding the answering of the single open-ended question, were provided at the beginning of the opinion form. The researchers were asked to rank, according to importance, their own given thoughts about 'recording' out of one hundred (100). An unstructured interview was conducted with the participants immediately after they had completed the opinion form, thus allowing to explain the views expressed. The opinions of the participants were written down and recorded by the researcher immediately after the interview.

2.4. Data analysis

Description forms the basis of all qualitative research reports. The more the researcher focuses on examining and rereading their data, the more patterns, relationships and categories begin to appear (Patton, 2018, pp. 438-446). Based on this claim, the descriptive analysis method was used to organize the obtained data. In the descriptive analysis method, the data is brought together, organized and defined in a meaningful and logical way (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). The necessary inferences and appropriate comments are then made about the findings. In this study, the similarities of the written answers were taken into account and collected under certain categories. The categories created were re-examined and the ones with common and similar meanings were re-combined. The grouped answers of the participants were transferred to the relevant table prepared in separate lines for each thought. The participant opinions expressed in the unstructured interview were written down and recorded by the researcher immediately at the end of the interview. Five original opinions selected from the explanations and ideas made by the participants for confirmation are presented verbatim under the last subheading in the findings section.

3. Findings

The findings of this study were produced through evaluation of the answers written by the participants to the open-ended question of the study, the scores assigned to the answers, and the confirmatory explanations made to the researcher. The findings section utilized comments and explanations about the descriptive analysis of the answers written by the participants, the arithmetic mean of the provided scores, and an organized version of the confirmatory thoughts expressed to the researcher. The grouped version of the answers provided by the participants to the research question, along with the arithmetic mean of the scores given to the answers, are shown in Table 1. The thoughts of the participants recorded by the researcher for confirmatory purposes were organized by the assigningof a participant code. Five particularly original and interesting participant opinions are presented under a separate subheading at the end of the findings section.

Question 1. In your opinion, how should researchers best record the data provided by the participants' opinions?

Table 1. Responses by the participants to the research question

Views of the Participants	**Importance for participants / Arithmetic mean of scores**	**Female**	**Male**	**Total (f)**
I find it appropriate to record the interviews,after obtaining permission from the participant, using devices that record both video and audio.	42.7	6	4	10
I find it appropriate to record interviews, after obtaining permission from the participant, only with audio recording devices.	25.4			
I think it would be appropriate for the interviews to be recorded, after obtaining permission from the participant, by the researcher only during the interview.	14.2			
I think it would be most appropriate for the researcher to write down the participant's answers, record them, and have them confirmed by the participant at the end of the interviews, after obtaining permission from the participant.	8.9			
After obtaining permission from the participant, I think it would be most appropriate for the questions used in the interviews to be written and answered by the participant himself/herself.	8.8			
Total	**100**	**6**	**4**	**10**

Table 1 shows the ranking formed by the arithmetic average of the ideas written by the study group on the methods of recording the participants' opinions, and the scoring provided for the ideas. It was revealed in the rankingthat the highest score (42.7) was given to the method of "Recording the interviews with devices that record video and audio together". The fact that the study group ranked the recording of opinions with audio and video recording devices first indicates that they felt data collection should be completed during the first interview. In this case, it can be inferred that the effective, accurate and in-depth data collection and evaluation that can be provided by the details that may emerge in the second and third interviews are not considered as important. In studies (Büyüköztürk et al., 2023, p. 235; Creswell, 2023, p. 21; Patton, 2018, pp. 438-446; Yıldız, 2020), it is stated that it is necessary to obtain effective and accurate data from the participants, gain their trust and meet with them several times. Table 1 shows that the lowest score for recording participant opinions was given to the method of "answering the questions used in the interviews by writing them down by the participant himself/herself".

Views of the participants

After the participants wrote down their opinions and provided scoring, they expressed their confirmatory or supportive thoughts about what they wrote in unstructured interviews. The participant opinions gathered from these interviews were immediately written down and recorded by the researcher at the end of the interview. Five original opinions selected among these explanations and ideas are presented below.

In my opinion, multiple audio and video recording tools should be used in the process of recording the interviews. Just writing it down may not be enough most of the time. The participant's tone of voice, accents, facial expressions and gestures can provide important data (P9).

I am against the participant's opinions being written down by the participant, because while the individual says 80% of what he/she thinks of, he/she might only write 20% down. For this reason, I think that audio recordings should be made (P7).

I find it more useful if the questions are written and answered by the participants themselves because I have witnessed that students express themselves more comfortably and easily while writing (P10).

In my opinion, it is quite appropriate to conduct interviews with devices that record video and audio together after the participant has given permission (P3).

The type of recording should be chosen according to the participant's condition. If the participant is visually impaired, video recording devices should be used (P1).

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The participants of this study ranked their written opinions on the recording of opinions in terms of importance. In order to create a ranking of which opinions the participants considered important and at what level, the arithmetic mean of the scores deemed appropriate was taken as a basis. Participants in this study agreed that research should be recorded after obtaining permission from each participant individually. A list of the ranking of the opinions of the 10 experienced researchers who participated in this study about the recording of opinions is shown in Table 1 in the findings section. In Table 1, the arithmetic mean of the scores given by the participants about the recording of their opinions shows that this study group chose the statement "I find it appropriate to record the participant opinions with devices that record video and audio together." as the recording method. It was calculated that the participants gave 42.7 points out of 100 for the method they chose as being the most important.

Recording the interviews with video or audio recording devices provides researchers with evidence in two respects. First, it proves that the interviews were conducted for the research, which is an advantage for the researcher. Secondly, it may be a sign that the participant has filtered his/her views. The latter is not an advantage, but a disadvantage. Although the participant has given permission for the recording, it is unlikely that he/she will be able to express his/her thoughts very comfortably in an environment where recording devices are working without worry, doubts or restriction (Yıldız, 2020). In studios where television programs are filmed, guests are sometimes heard asking "Are we recording?". It is always observed that when the guest hears the expression "We are not on the record", he/she behaves comfortably, speaks as he/she wishes, does not feel any pressure and does not express himself/herself in a particular way. This is evidence that recording participant opinions with devices may prevent the clear, precise and fully expression of opinions. In the studies, it is stated that participants tend to not share their opinions with others (Salman Yıkmış, 2015), and the use of devices that record video and audio together strengthens this participant tendency (Yıldız, 2020). It may therefore be more useful to increase the number of interviews at appropriate times and environments, rather than recording participant views with devices in the first interview. According to Patton (2018, pp. 438-446), the more the researcher communicates and interacts with the data sources, the more details can be captured.

If the researcher is patient, determined and conducts the interviews repeatedly at the appropriate time and place, without the use of video and audio recording devices, he/she can obtain the data he/she wants. One day Diogenes, a cynical philosopher, sees a shepherd boy drinking water from a fountain using his palms. Diogenes stops for a moment and is surprised. He deduces that the wooden cup in his saddlebag is unnecessary and so takes it out of his saddlebag and joyfully throws it away. Diogenes is happy because he has gotten rid of one more burden (Gros, 2019, p. 121). This story tells us that details seen or captured on the spot can provide very important data, making it possible to make effective determinations and permanent inferences.

According to Creswell (2023, p. 21), the researcher should trust the statements of the participants, collaborate, spend time, and become a member of the group. In another study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021, p. 356), it was stated that being close to the data and participating in the process provides significant advantages to the researcher in the collection of meaningful data. According to other documents (Büyüköztürk et al., 2023, p. 235; Patton, 2018, p. 4), qualitative researchers go directly to the setting where they conduct the study and spend a significant part of their time with the participants in the collection of data. The opinion stated by one participant (P10) summarises this idea "I witnessed that students expressed themselves more comfortably and easily while writing" supports this claim.

All this is support for the researcher preferring multiple interviews without recording devices, thus avoiding the filtered and restricted weak opinions that the researcher is likely to receive from the interviewee using video and audio recording devices in the first interview. However, during the second and third interviews that are conducted by the researcher, it is possible for the participants to feel safe and more comfortable, meaning that

detailed and in-depth data can be provided with sincere and sincere behaviors being displayed. In these multiple interviews, the researcher can write the data down at the end of each interview. The data written down by the researcher in the first interview can then be confirmed, supplemented and enriched in subsequent interviews. Accurate and rich data gathered on the spot can enable the researcher to make accurate and correct interpretations and reach correct and permanent inferences.

5. Recommendations

1-It may be more useful for the researchers to conduct repeated interviews at appropriate times and places instead of recording the interviews with video and audio recording devices.

2-Second and third interviews provide many advantages to the researcher, not least in enabling the researcher to obtain detailed important data.

3-In order to make timely and decisive interventions, as well as appropriate interpretations and correct inferences, the researcher should be familiar with the literature related to the study.

4-A researcher who is familiar with the literature and methodology related to his/her study should plan to conduct multiple interviews with the participants while recording their opinions by immediately writing them down at the end of the interview. This method is important as it allows the participants to express their unfiltered views.

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