

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN HEALTH PROMOTION

**REPORT ON STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF HEPRO 303: QUALITATIVE
RESEARCH METHODS**

Compiled by:

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Class Representative, 2014 – 2016

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CONTENT

A. Different approaches to qualitative research (ethnography, phenomenology, etc.)

Students agree that we understood the different approaches to qualitative research. Some however suggested that the lectures on these different approaches could have been more interactive. They felt the lecturer alone doing the talking didn't help much.

B. Different methods and their suitability (interviews, participatory methods, observation, etc.)

All students felt that it was good learning those methods. It was unanimously agreed that understanding of these methods is more improved after these lectures. Students also thought that the methods are suitable for qualitative research. Some students however felt that more explanations on the participatory approaches could have helped. Few students thought the specific methods related to their specific works were not thoroughly dealt with eg. Draw and tell, Photovoice etc.

C. Trustworthiness and reflexivity

All students felt that the concept of trustworthiness is well understood and important to be proven and justified in all qualitative research activities. Some students also felt that learning about trustworthiness has added to their understanding of broader research paradigms as their training had been more in quantitative research concepts in their previous education. Others said they do now understand alternatives to the concepts of validity and reliability as used in quantitative research

D. Ethics throughout the research procedure

All students agreed we now have firm understanding of ethics regarding research and also do understand the seriousness and importance of following ethical principles.

E. Skills like crafting an interview guide, collecting, transcribing and analysing data, peer reviewing the work of other students.

Students expressed confidence now about peer reviewing academic and scientific works of others and about their ability to transcribe and analyse qualitative research data. Some however felt they needed more guidance in crafting interview guides

F. Is there anything you felt was missing, that you would have liked a lecture on?

On this question, some students said they need more lectures and guidance on interview guide development.

TEACHING & LEARNING METHODS

i. The lectures

Students described the lectures as fantastic and said the lecturer made it easy and simple to understand

ii. Mini fieldwork project/ group work

Most students described working in groups on the mini project work as good and that it made what they learnt practical. Some said it was nice experience learning from others in the groups as they learnt to make compromises and communicate well. Others also felt the group was a good investment of time and energy and should have been graded as a unit. One student however felt their group was a “flop”. The student reported friction between the group members and said it was a complete waste of time working in the group.

iii. The peer reviews

All students felt the peer reviewing exercise was helpful. Some students described it as a good learning process which helped them identify gaps in others’ works and made them aware of what to do in their own write-ups. One student said: “it was fantastic, people point out things that you never notice in your own work”.

OUTCOME

A. Foundational knowledge of qualitative methods

Class is confident we have a well-grounded grasp of qualitative research methodology

B. Ability to design a research project, conduct the research and analyse data

Well grasped! Class feels we can design qualitative research projects, conduct them and analyse data. Some students however felt they need more clarifications and practice on identifying basic themes and organizing themes and conducting thematic network analysis.

C. Ability to write up a research project and discuss the findings

Some students feel they need more practice in this aspect. Others feel they can do just fine

D. Ability to write a scholarly paper

The class unanimously agreed that we have gained valuable experience and built on last semester’s assignments on module paper etc. so we can do just fine in this regard.

STRONGEST FEATURES OF THE COURSE/WHAT CONTRIBUTES MOST TO LEARNING

The lectures on research methods were described by the class as particularly good in their delivery. Students also felt the total commitment of the instructors was very encouraging and motivating. Content was comprehensive and some students said the part about participant observation was particularly beneficial. Most students also felt the shared experiences about practical difficulties in the field were an eye-opener and very helpful and so was the role-playing activity.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following suggestions were made:

- i. More interactivity in class

- ii. More time should be spent teaching and practicing Thematic Network Analysis and interview guide development
- iii. Equal emphasis should be given to all qualitative research methods.

THE PACE OF THE COURSE:

Everyone said the pace of the course was just right.