Rights for Time
"Conflict, Memory, and Protection"

A Compendium on Remote Research Methods

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"Conflict, Memory, and Protection"

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Global Challenges Research Considerations in Remote Research

This compendium was produced to assist global challenges researchers and others who are considering adapting their research protocols to collect data remotely, such as by interviewing participants via Zoom or using internet-mediated approaches to survey participants. Global Challenges research aims to promote the economic development and welfare of low-and middle-income countries (LMICs). Generally, such research is conducted using interdisciplinary frameworks and involves capacity building, innovation, and knowledge exchange as part of the agenda. Global challenges researchers collaborate internationally with other academics and partners (e.g., civil society organisations, NGOs). Collaborations might entail LMIC researchers working together, or researchers in LMICs working co-operatively with researchers in the global north (e.g., the UK, Europe). Much of this research is focused on addressing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which concern global challenges, including 'those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice' (4). For instance, SDG5 concerns matters of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Research addressing SDG5 often includes investigating sensitive research topics, such as sexual and gender-based violence, which are ethically complex, especially when working remotely. As such, within the planning and implementation of remote research methods, there are a number of considerations that must be made. Here, specific factors to be aware of regarding understanding context, research conduct, planning data collection, and data collection conduct are addressed in turn. This paper will address challenges in conducting remote research, will then give an example of a recent case study, and will conclude by providing a summary of relevant literature.

Planning Research: Understanding the Context

When conducting research in fragile contexts it is important to identify context-specific potential harms and safety threats which may affect both researchers and participants. Field visits have not been possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, thus meaning that researchers who decide to conduct research remotely must complete important preliminary work to ensure methods of remote research are culturally sensitive and context-appropriate. Alternative methods to ensure the research topic and procedures cause no harm to participants must be found. For instance, in regards to SDG5 and researching sexual violence, a researcher from the UK conducting field research in Kenya with practitioners who support survivors of sexual violence would visit Kenya to gain first-hand experience of the research context in normal circumstances. This would allow for studying and observing cultural practices, recognizing acceptable topics of discussion, and understanding how gender dynamics may impact research participants. Field visits would also normally help researchers identify context-specific harms and devise plans to mitigate them. This is important to ensure not only the safety of the researcher but to also ensure the safety of the participants, organizations, and other individuals that are collaborating with the researcher.

Remote research necessitates that researchers take additional steps towards increasing their cultural competence. Cultural competence includes knowledge about the behaviours, attitudes, and policies that enable effective work in cross-cultural situations (5). For example, when conducting health research, researchers and practitioners must apply knowledge and skills that encourage the desired health goals while also acknowledging the needs of a community to maintain their cultural practices (ibid). One of the main ways to do this is by having partners on the ground who are familiar with the context and can provide information about whether or not a project is feasible. It is difficult to gauge what sort of questions or procedures would be deemed inappropriate in

an unfamiliar culture, which is why having partners embedded in the research community is so crucial. Involvement of the participants in protocol design is also important in gaining cultural competence. Encouraging the affected communities to discuss types of questions they would or would not be willing to answer, as well as what sort of data collection procedures are appropriate, can help avoid problems once data collection has already begun.

Understanding the cultural context is always important, but more so when data collection may put participants in harm's way. This can include the timing of research, such as during times of conflict or unrest, but also depends on the topic of research, such as sexual violence, which may put participants at risk of stigmatization or incrimination if their participation becomes public knowledge (6). Participating in data collection can lead to dangerous consequences in other ways as well. For example, a researcher asking a participant to discuss sensitive topics, such as SGBV, while under the same roof as their abuser could compromise their safety. Privacy issues must be paramount when conducting fieldwork in shared household spaces (7). It is also important, especially concerning sensitive topics or when working with a less-resourced population, that it is made clear from the start that relief is not contingent on participation (8). Additionally, researchers must take care to make sure that participating in a project will not come in the way of participants accessing relief. In regards to sexual violence research, especially when working with a partner organization that helps survivors, participants should be made aware from the start that taking part in the research will neither increase nor decrease their ability to access the organization's resources (8).

To deal with these specific challenges, researchers should identify appropriate support sources in the event of issues, recognize potential barriers to access, and create contingency plans if necessary. Before data collection, such plans should be researched and regularly updated since access to support can change rapidly during humanitarian

emergencies. Equally, to further manage expectations, discussions with partners on the ground regarding what other research has been done in the area, and how participants were (or were not) compensated for their participation should be conducted. Often there is a large financial disparity between researchers and those being researched, which can lead to expectations of financial compensation for taking part in a project. If the time a participant spends taking part in a project would otherwise be spent at work, there will be an expectation that they should be compensated for their losses. Setting firm limits on financial or material compensation from the beginning can help avoid disputes later on. As for the safety of participants, a quick checklist before any data collection begins can help establish the circumstances of the interview and determine if and how the research should continue. For example, if interviewing a sexual violence survivor, before asking any sensitive questions the participant should be asked if they are in a safe and comfortable space and if anyone who should not hear the contents of the interview is nearby. If the participant is not alone, the interview should be rescheduled or the participant should relocate to a safe space (if possible).

Finally, it is important to understand how well-researched communities are in the context. Care must be taken to make sure that participants do not feel that they have been 'over-researched' and that they are being used for information without receiving anything in return. This term has often been found in cases where findings are not appropriately disseminated to stakeholders that can help turn research results into policy and practice in the researched communities (9). The medium of research may exacerbate people's feelings that their data is being extracted without much being received in return. Before designing a research study for a specific community, look into what other research has been done in the area. If your study would be asking the same questions of a community as have been asked before, especially in recent years, and you have no plans on how to make your findings relevant to policymakers or community leaders, perhaps your research should be conducted elsewhere. In addition to searching the academic literature to see

what research has been conducted before, engage with in-country partners to ascertain their feelings on this research. If they feel that these questions have been asked countless times before and they have yet to see the benefits of their participation, your research project should be redesigned or relocated.

Research conduct

Within the research process, there are several partnership issues to be aware of. Power dynamics must be considered to ensure a fair and equitable research partnership, and these can be difficult to assess when conducting research remotely. Efforts must be made to analyse the 'contexts of research governance, implementation and use' (10). This is especially crucial when conducting research between global North/South contexts. An over-reliance on partners from higher-income countries may exacerbate national and regional inequalities in LMICs, which could hinder research capabilities and future partnerships. Furthermore, transparency from the beginning is essential. Each partner and stakeholder involved must be transparent from the start about project administration and budgeting (10). Additionally, the rights of all partners concerning acknowledgement, authorship, intellectual property, and data use must be set out in a code of conduct or memorandum of understanding from the start of the project to prevent confusion or problems down the line (10). Having these official documents from the start of the research project discussed and signed from all involved parties will help ensure transparency throughout the entire process. Additionally, there should be an understanding of and ongoing discussion about what each partner's capabilities are concerning financial involvement, time commitment, and knowledge exchange.

Expectations of the researcher and participant must be established from the beginning of a project. As mentioned previously, it is imperative that taking part in this research does not come in the way of a participant accessing services. Additionally, there must be an

understanding from the start that the participant will not get any special treatment or extra access to relief or support services from taking part in the research (8). This can be done by having clear conversations with all participants before the start of data collection about what will be expected from them and additionally what they can expect from the researchers. If a participant needs to access services, such as support services in the case of sexual violence, the researcher must set out from the beginning how they may or may not be able to help them.

Planning data collection

When planning data collection, researchers must understand the needs of their participants and particularize methods to the topic and context of research. In current times, the range of methods available to researchers to communicate with participants is limited severely by travel restrictions and lockdowns. This creates a reliance on technology, which can bring both benefits and disadvantages. One beneficial element of technological methods is that participants are encouraged to feel a sense of anonymity, which may make them feel safer and more willing to share sensitive information (6, 11). For example, in research investigating the disclosure of sensitive topics in Nigeria and Rwanda, it was found that prevalence of IPV reported varied between reporting methods, with face-to-face interviews leading to the lowest reported prevalence, followed by audio computer-assisted self-interviews (ACASI), and then the anonymous list method leading to the highest reported prevalence (11). One of the main reasons behind this is that face-to-face interviews can lead to social desirability bias, where the interviewee may not reveal the truth for fear of presenting themselves in an unfavorable light (11, 12). Social desirability bias may come into play when investigating IPV because victims are often socially stigmatized.

One of the difficulties that arise with using technology for data collection, however, is that it is more difficult to establish rapport, which is crucial when discussing sensitive topics. Rapport entails a working consensus, a harmonious connection, and often times a sense of empathy and understanding (13, 14). Rapport has been found to be essential to ethical interviewing, especially in terms of building a respect-based research relationship (14). When conducting interviews over the phone or video, however, it can be difficult to establish. When researching in LMICs there are also factors relating to cultural differences further affect rapport building. Switching to remote methods when face-to-face interaction is not an option can further exacerbate difficulties in forming a connection between interviewer and interviewee. The addition of video calling has, however, made rapport easier to establish as it lessens the separation between researcher and participant (14). Some of the ways to establish rapport when conducting video interviews include establishing a video connection before beginning the greeting so as to allow visuals of body language and facial expressions, allowing small talk before beginning the interview, and being understanding of cultural and language differences when speaking without trying to adapt the participant to the interviewer's cultural practices (14, 15).

Data collection conduct

Before any data collection begins, there should be a protocol in place to establish the methodology that will be used and address any possible issues that may come up. The protocol should address procedures to identify adverse events including safety threats and further psychological harm, how to mitigate such harm to safeguard participants from a distance, and how to ensure confidentiality, following data protection guidelines. When designing this protocol, some questions that should be addressed include safety risks to participants, especially if their partner discovers their participation, how the researcher can initiate contact without being detected by an abusive partner, what are the investigator's legal and ethical duties regarding reporting cases, and what can be done to

protect the participant's identity in the data (16). Because data collection, in this case, will be occurring from a distance, it is important that the protocol identifies in-country partners who can help address these issues should they appear. There should be a clear process in place for participants requiring further support as a result of taking part in this research. Additionally, the researcher and their personal network may also be influenced by taking part in sensitive work within the confines of their home. A protocol for the researcher's wellbeing should be set out from the start, including regular check-ins with colleagues or supervisors, to make sure that their wellbeing is not suffering as a result of participating in a project.

Examples of remote qualitative research

Oceans apart, yet connected: Findings from a qualitative study on professional supervision in rural and remote allied health services (2015)
This paper describes the usefulness of and barriers to remote professional supervision for health care providers in rural Australia. These findings can be used when establishing relationships between researchers and in-country partners, especially if interviewers must be trained remotely.

Studying and Designing Technology for Domestic Life: Lessons from Home (2015)
This book provides crucial information about how people interact with technology in their homes and how these interactions may influence research. This book also advises on building rapport with participants and how to deal with varying levels of participant engagement.

Using Technology to Enhance Qualitative Research with Hidden Populations (2008)
This paper provides valuable insight into researching with hidden populations, in their case members of the GLBT community, especially regarding setting parameters about inclusion and exclusion criteria. It also discusses methods to ease data collection and analysis and what ethics are involved when using technology for research purposes.

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Quantitative Masters Research Project in Psychology Goes Remote

Below is an example of an MSc research project focused on the memory accuracy of primary-school-age children. In the wake of a pandemic, the project has been adapted to remote methods of data collection. Here, the process of adaption is detailed and lessons learned are outlined to inform other researchers who may be in the process of adapting research projects or interested in modes of remote data collection.

Case Study

This research project was intended to be conducted in schools with children ages four to eleven. The aim of the research was to investigate how implicit metacognition measures (e.g., gestures, response time) can be used to better predict the memory accuracy of children between the ages of four and eight, compared to explicit measures (e.g., confidence). However, COVID-19 meant that the researcher had to explore whether the study protocol could be adapted for online data collection.

Conducting studies with people, especially children, online raises various methodologically and ethical issues that should be considered and addressed carefully prior to testing. The British Psychological Society signifies the following points as key considerations when planning and executing a remote study online: accessibility of the assessment, security of the technology being used, confidentiality of the data collected, privacy of the chosen location, and the impact of adapting the method (British Psychological Society, 2020).

The primary concern for the project was recruiting enough participants to conclude the hypothesis. The original aim was to recruit 200 children within the age ranges four to five, seven to eight, and ten to eleven. However the researchers recognised that recruiting this number of children online would be difficult, and so the target number of participants was

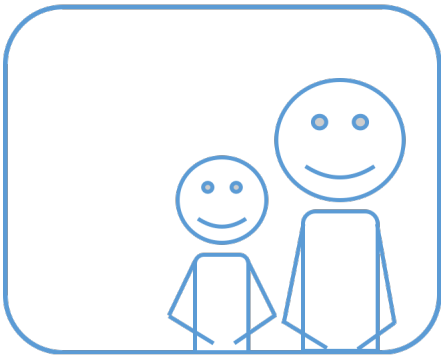
revised to 40. The age range was also modified to four to eight year olds to reflect this smaller sample size; the larger age range would have meant too few participants in each age group.

The study was piloted on several children and reviewed for modification before recruitment. Participants were recruited via social media platforms (Facebook, Mumsnet, Twitter) and participant recruitment websites (Call for participants, Honeybee, Psychological Research on the Net. After expressing interest, parents and guardians were sent detailed information packs containing study rationale, consent forms, and instructions. Sessions were arranged once the consent forms had been signed and returned via email. Verbal consent was carried out with the child before beginning the experiment.

The original study involved filming the participants as they carried out a task on an iPad. Moving the study online meant that computers had to be used instead and that the adult would also be filmed as they had to be present during the study. This was added to the ethics application, as the adults would have to consent to both themselves and the child being recorded. Zoom was used for this project, as it allowed screen sharing and recording, and meetings were password protected. The participant would be asked to share their screen as they worked through the task, and the experimenter would read out the questions to them.

Changes in the technology used to carry out the study meant that the researchers had to think about how to best measure reaction time. Instead of the participant clicking on answer options themselves on an iPad, they were asked to point at their answer on a computer monitor, and the adult would click for them. This ensured there was no mouse use bias between age groups, and the participant's reaction time could be measured from when the question appeared on the screen to when they pointed at the answer. A

detailed 'set up' page (diagram 1) was provided in the information pack to ensure the participant was positioned so that they could be seen clearly during the experiment.



Set up 1

- Child positioned in the centre of the webcam
- Adult sat to either side of the child
- Clear view of child's face, arms and shoulders

Set up 2

- Child sat on adult's lap
- Both positioned in the centre of the webcam
- Child's arms unobstructed
- Clear view of child's face, arms and shoulders

Diagram 1(?): set up page for online experiment

As the modified study meant that the adult would be present for the duration of the task and would also see the stimuli, they were subsequently asked to try and not help the child in any way.

Throughout adapting the study, the following lessons were learned:

- Researchers may find they do not have the same presence on screen as they would when conducting research in person. This can make holding the child's attention difficult and is especially problematic when high engagement required for understanding the task and its instructions. Research also suggests that researcher presence improves performance in participants by lessening noncompliance and complacency (Gomez, 1994). For instance, research protocols ordinarily try to minimize contact between the researcher and participant so as to ensure the child

is not distracted or influenced (Eileen, 2006; Blascovich, 2002). Some studies may require the experimenter to turn off their video during the task so that the child is not distracted or influenced. Whilst this may minimise the potential for the researcher to influence the behaviour of the participants, being unable to gesture when to pause means it is harder to intervene before the participant moves on with the task when instructions are not followed. This results in interruptions and participants being distracted for longer periods in order for instructions to be reiterated.

- It can also be difficult to keep people, especially children, engaged and encouraged over video. The physical presence of the experimenter is sometimes enough for the child to feel encouraged and be motivated to complete the task (Bond, 1983; Meddock, 1971). Whilst this holds positives in the sense that the participant does not feel compelled or pressured to finish, it also means the researcher must plan for a larger portion of unfinished tasks. It could be useful to give participants the option to come back and finish the task at a later time if appropriate.
- When testing young children online it is likely that they will be accompanied by an adult. Researchers should consider the impact of having a parent or guardian present during the experiment. There is evidence that parental/guardian presence lessens the stress the child may be feeling about the task, and may facilitate task completion (Sarason, 1986). However, it can also lead to the child being distracted or helped by the parent or guardian. Adult interference should be monitored and accounted for.
- Lower engagement levels should be taken into consideration when designing the task to ensure maximum engagement when being conducted remotely (Sun, 2011). It is important to consider that participants, especially children, will move around when thinking about the desired set up for the task. If the research requires video recording participants, extra precautions may need to be taken to ensure that video data is valid and not compromised by the participant moving out

of frame. This can be controlled to an extent by timing the study tactically – what time of day is the participant most likely to be engaged? Poor study timing can also account for task complacency if the participant is tired and disengaged (Hourihan, 2013; Ammons, 1995)

- Testing being online means that the participant will most likely do the task whilst at home. The familiarity of the home environment helps ensure the comfort of the participant; indeed, there have been numerous studies that advocate for a relaxed and 'homely' experimental setting as it aids participant performance (Eileen, 2006; Coan, 2007). However, with the home setting comes a myriad of distractions that would not be present in the more clinical setting utilised during in-person testing (Benson, 1988). Set up instructions prior to testing should specify that the task is done in a quiet room with no interruptions.
- Online testing can make studies more accessible to a wider range of participant groups, as it requires no travel. The various social media platforms available also means experimenters can reach their target audience more easily. However exclusionary criteria may extend to whether the participants have the technology and software required to partake in an online study.

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2. A Compendium of Resources on Remote Data Collection

This chapter collates helpful resources ranging from handbooks to case journal articles to blog posts on remote data collection during COVID-19. The compendium first considers longer, more general resources, for those who are new to remote modes before moving on to consider specific methods and alternative, less-utilised modes which are often neglected by researchers. Ethical guidance is addressed last, detailing works specifically focused on the ethics of data collection during COVID-19 and in remote research.

Remote data collection

General

Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Gray, D. (2017). *Collecting Qualitative Data: A Practical Guide to Textual, Media and Virtual Techniques*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
This text introduces researchers to a range of new techniques for collecting qualitative data which extends beyond conventional face-to-face interviews. The aim is to outline methods that are currently under-utilised within research to open up study on methodology in innovative ways. In Part III, contributors concerned with virtual data collection explore methods via email, instant messenger, virtual face-to-face interviews, and online face-to-face focus groups. Guidance is given on each approach and experiences are shared of implementing these methods within research studies. The text is targeted towards student projects and other research which may be time-limited and resourced-limited.

Fielding, N.G., Lee, R.M. and Blank, G. (eds) (2016) *The SAGE handbook of online research methods*, 2nd edn. London: Sage

This handbook updates the previous SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods to cover recent developments including big data, social media and Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS). The text is split into nine sections that address: online research methods; design; online data capture and collection; online surveys; digital quantitative analysis; digital text analysis; virtual ethnography; online secondary analysis; and the future of online social research. Alongside offering an extensive exploration of the possibilities of online research, contributors address ethics issues, data quality, and the appropriate methods required to engage remote marginalized communities. A companion website for the handbook including chapter abstracts and bibliographies has also been designed to further support researchers interested in computer-mediated research: https://study.sagepub.com/onlineresearchmethods2e

Lupton, Deborah. (editor) (2020) *Doing fieldwork in a pandemic* (crowd-sourced document). https://docs.google.com/document/d/1clGjGABB2h2qbduTgfqribHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCl8/edit?ts=5e88ae0a#

A crowd-sourced document that collates the efforts of numerous social researchers conducting fieldwork during a pandemic. Resources are provided which consider ways to adapt previously planned methods to fulfil social distancing regulations as well as materials on 'born digital' research. Brief descriptions of data collection which utilise technologies such as digital diaries, Facebook groups, apps, and podcasts are considered in turn and are complemented by a list of relevant resources to inform further research.

Mann, C & Stewart, F (2000) *Internet communication and qualitative research: a handbook for researching online*, London: Sage https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/internet-communication-and-qualitative-research/book210073#contents

Drawing on a number of studies which use computer-mediated communication, this textbook guides students and researchers on how to harness digital methods to collect good, qualitative data. Some of the chapters included look at online focus groups, the online interviewer, ethical frameworks, and power issues in internet research. The guide reviews basic internet technology that can be employed, details the necessary skills required to conduct online modes of research, and considers ethical and theoretical challenges. In discussing power issues, Mann and Stewart pay attention to gender and identity issues that are present in virtual spaces.

Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, (Ed.). (2011). ***The handbook of emergent technologies in social research*****. New York: Oxford University Press**

The Handbook of Emergent technologies (2011) explores how the latest technologies are altering the ways in which research is designed and conducted. Mobile, internet, and computer-assisted software technologies are all explored within this text for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods data collection. Chapters include online focus groups, emergent digital ethnographic methods for social research, and using emergent technologies for assessing social feelings and experiences. The strengths and limitations of methods are considered and research project examples from the field of social science are provided. Alongside this, ethical and methodological issues are incorporated throughout chapters to highlight the ways in which such technologies may be misused. The guide includes helpful ways for researchers to incorporate emerging technologies into their practice.

1) Video methods

a. Interviews

Ambagtsheer, R C, Archibald, M., Lawless, M., & C G Mavourneed, (2019) 'Using Zoom Videoconferencing for Qualitative Data Collection: Perceptions and Experiences of Researchers and Participants', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 1-8 https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919874596

This article assesses the use of Zoom, a videoconferencing platform, as a research tool to conduct qualitative interviews. Authors highlight that there have been few projects based on the use of Zoom for data collection and offer a study within the context of health research to assess how effective this platform is. Sixteen practice nurses share their overall positive experiences as participants within a zoom interview. General findings suggest that the benefits of zoom lie in its user-friendly interface, cost-effectiveness, security options, and data management. The main disadvantages highlighted revolve around technical difficulties and poor call quality. Overall conclusions express that zoom is a viable tool for qualitative data collection which can be implemented alongside conventional qualitative methods.

Brown, D, Iacono, V & Symonds, P (2016). 'Skype as a Tool for Qualitative Research Interviews' *Sociological Research Online,* 21.2, <https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.3952>

Focuses on VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) based methods of communication to highlight the effectiveness of such tools when conducting international research. The findings of this paper combine researchers' experiences with feedback from Skype interview participants from two research projects; one project considers the nature of dance as cultural heritage whilst the other focuses on wayfinding within different settings. Chapters address the benefits of Skype for international sampling and democratizing research by reducing costs whilst noting both the challenges and new opportunities that

arise when attempting to build a rapport. Authors also include an outline of specific ethical considerations when utilising Skype as a research tool.

Deakin, H & Wakefield, K (2013) 'Skype interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers' *Qualitative Research*, 14.5 1–14 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794113488126>

This article is structured around the experiences of two Ph.D. researchers who used Skype within the interview process. Discussions with the researchers are conducted after the completion of interviews to conclude that Skype can be used as a valid alternative for in-person methods. Logistical and ethical considerations are explained and discussion focuses on the place of Skype within contemporary research methodology. It is highlighted that Skype is often considered as secondary to traditional methods but in practice, it can replace the need for face-to-face interviews. Deakin and Wakefield conclude with an understanding that emerging technologies can begin to challenge the in-person interview method.

Hanna, P, (2012). 'Using Internet technologies (such as Skype) as a research medium: A research note', *Qualitative Research*, 12.2, 239–242 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794111426607>

Hanna presents an account of a research project in which participants are given a choice of the medium in which interviews are conducted. Skype is offered alongside telephone and face-to-face interviews to outlines the benefits of adopting flexibility within qualitative research. Holt's (2010) argument which validates the use of telephone interviews is drawn upon to suggest that Skype is a similarly beneficial medium with the added visual quality that conventional interviews offer. As such, he concludes that online video methods offer a face-to-face experience whilst also maintaining the 'private space' elements that telephone interviews create (p 241).

Seitz, S (2016) 'Pixilated partnerships, overcoming obstacles in qualitative interviews via Skype: A research note' ***Qualitative Research*****, 16 229–235, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794115577011>**

This research note deals with the inherent challenges faced when using online video platforms such as Skype for qualitative interviews. Issues covered include the lack of intimacy compared to in-person methods, dropped calls, sound delay, and problems with reading body language. Seitz provides methods to overcome each obstacle and create an effective interview environment such as reflecting on personal facial expressions, choosing a suitable location, and speaking slowly and clearly to participants. The author concludes that an interview preparation checklist for participant and researcher which considers the mentioned ways to overcome such obstacles can lead to successful Skype interviews.

Weller, S, (2017) 'Using internet video calls in qualitative (longitudinal) interviews: Some implications for rapport', ***International Journal of Social Research Methodology,*** **20.6 613–625, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1269505>**

This paper explores the increasing opportunities provided by digital technologies and internet video calls for social researchers. Weller reflects upon technologies such as Skype and Facetime and the implications for rapport. The author focuses on the introduction of remote methods in a qualitative longitudinal research study that has previously conducted face-to-face interviews. As such, the paper compares rapport building within the two interview modes to consider potential benefits and pitfalls of both. Weller argues that 'internet video calls are a valuable tool for both QLR and one-off interviews and should not be viewed as second rate to the "gold standard" of physical co-present encounters (p 623).' Findings support this, illustrating that whilst interviews may begin with a focus on technicalities rather than small talk, remote modes can create a sense of ease for participants and video visibility can aid interaction.

b. Groups

Etzel, E F, Knight, S M, Monaghan, M, & Quartiroli, A, (2017) 'Using Skype to facilitate team-based qualitative research, including the process of data analysis', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 20.6, 659-666, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1275371>

Authors move away from analysing the use of Skype for qualitative data collection and instead consider how the platform may be used for qualitative data analysis in teams. This study is contextualised by an interdisciplinary project which uses Skype as part of the collaborative data analysis process. Team members report that video conference calling enables communication and allows data to be analysed in real-time throughout the research process. Various advantages including the ability to overcome geographical dispersion, address temporal malleability, and improve interaction are focused on to conclude that Skype can increase the effectiveness of co-operative qualitative data collection.

Tuttas, C A, (2015) 'Lessons learned using web conference technology for online focus group interviews'. *Qualitative Health Research*, 25.1 122–133, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732314549602>

Tuttas details the process of conducting a real-time web conference focus group for a qualitative study on work experiences of travel nurses across the USA. Different web conference platform criteria and strengths and weaknesses of numerous online services are outlined before Tuttas arrives at the choice to use Adobe Connect Web services. Taking a methodological approach, advice is given to guide researchers interested in synchronous online focus groups, including how dictation software can be used for transcription. Observations of group dynamics are made and limitations are mentioned to conclude that when used for appropriate subjects and geographically dispersed participants, such a method can produce qualitative data securely and effectively.

2) Instant messaging chat/email methods

a. Email

Buster, H & James, N,(2016) 'Credibility, authenticity and voice: dilemmas in online interviewing', 1st August 2006, Qualitative Research, 6.3 403-420, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106065010>

This article engages with email, web-based qualitative interview methods. It is informed by two studies that applied this method to explore how participants reflect on their professional identities and experiences. Limitations regarding establishing credibility and trustworthiness within the design process and issues with discontinuous responses are balanced by the ability to hold asynchronous conversations with participants via email. Authors argue that the methodological framework used to conduct the mentioned studies requires improvement but that email-based research studies have the potential to generate good descriptive data.

Hunt, N & McHale, S, (2007) 'A practical guide to the e-mail interview', Qualitative Health Research, 17.10 1415-1421 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732307308761>

Hunt and McHale address the issues surrounding e-mail interviews. The article is informed by a study on people with alopecia areata and the psychological issues associated with the condition. Whilst authors argue that email interviews can be effective both alone and in conjunction with other methods, there remain concerns with reliability and validity. As such, the method is only suited to specific areas and 'cannot be used simply as a cheap alternative to face-to-face interviews in all circumstances (p 1415).'

b. Online forums

Fox, F, Morris, M & Rumsey, N (2007) 'Doing synchronous online focus groups with young people: Methodological reflections', *Qualitative Health Research,* 17.4 539–547 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732306298754>

Authors observe that online focus groups are becoming more widely used for qualitative data collection but note that studies generally report on asynchronous groups. This article explores the value of synchronous online focus groups, detailing the set-up process, hosting, and moderation of a study-specific online forum. The study addresses appearance-related concerns with young people and outlines why such an approach may be a beneficial and effective way to engage younger participants. Ethical considerations and overall advantages and disadvantages are reflected on to inform researchers and argue that online focus groups 'might constitute an important new domain for communication broadly, with implications for qualitative research specifically (p 546).'

Pocknee, C & Turney, L, (2005) 'Virtual focus groups: New frontiers in research' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 4.2, 32–43 <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690500400203>

This article discusses the viability of conducting virtual focus groups via online discussion boards in Blackboard. Authors reflect upon the possibilities of collecting sensitive data in secure and safe ways within an online environment. For ease of execution, it is recommended that university-managed systems with which researchers are already familiar with, such as Blackboard are used where possible. The validity of the virtual focus group method is measured against Kruger's (1988) focus group criteria to conclude that the use of discussion boards is theoretically sound. In addition to this, it is revealed that the discussion boards increased the ability to communicate with geographically dispersed participants.

c. IM

Andres, C & Buskirk, T D, (2013) 'Smart Surveys for Smart Phones: Exploring Various Approaches for Conducting Online Mobile Surveys via Smartphones', *Survey Practice* 5.1 1-11 <https://doi.org/10.29115/SP-2012-0001>

This article provides an overview of three ways to conduct online surveys via mobile phones: online surveys via mobile browser, surveys administered via smartphone apps and surveys administered via mobile browsers that are app-like. Having observed the upward trend in the smartphone usage Buskirk and Andres argues that the mobile device can be effectively utilised for data collection. Tables outlining the advantages and disadvantages of each approach are given with recommendations for researchers who are considering conducting surveys via smartphone. They conclude that each method for smartphone survey deployment has its own benefits which should be matched to suit the research project.

Gavin, H, & Hinchcliffe, V, (2009) 'Social and virtual networks: evaluating synchronous online interviewing using instant messenger', *The Qualitative Report*, 14.2 318-340 < http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR14-2/hinchcliffe.pdf>

This article discusses the value of using instant messenger communication as a mode to conduct synchronous online interviews in social network research. The case study interviews ten final year university students and the positives and negatives of this virtual interaction method. Authors point out that IM is already a large part of young, student lives meaning that younger participants embrace using this platform. The article goes on to present a table comparing IM with in-person interviews, highlighting the lack of non-verbal signals in the IM method as the main concern. Overall it is argued that data collected via IM can be extremely valuable and it should be considered a powerful research tool for its ease and convenience.

Jowett, A, Peet, E & Shaw, R (2011) 'Online Interviewing in Psychology: Reflections on the Process', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 8.4, 354-369 https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2010.500352

Explores the use of instant messaging and 'chat' software to conduct synchronous online interviews. Features of online interviews are outlined through a study on the experiences of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people living with diabetes. Focus is placed on practical issues which may affect the development of a rapport with participants and methods to create a conversational environment where the researcher is the listener.

Ullrich, L, (2018) 'Whatsapp Surveying guide: Lessons learnt from two qualitative whatsapp surveys in Lebanon', *UDNP* <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67580>, accessed 2 July 2020

Ullrich's guide offers an introductory overview of the processes involved in creating a qualitative WhatsApp survey. Her guide is informed by experiences conducting pilot surveys in Lebanon, Qaraoun, and Bar Elias with vulnerable communities. The different uses of WhatsApp as a: deep-dive qualitative survey tool, a human-centred design tool, and a real-time monitoring tool are explained and the positive contributions of speed, cost-effectiveness, and aiding data collection from vulnerable populations are highlighted. The main reason for her decision to survey via WhatsApp comes from the popularity of the messaging service, with over 80% of refugee residences using WhatsApp in Lebanon. Equally, the voice message capabilities allow narratives to be collected from illiterate participants. Practical considerations and survey design are addressed, paying attention to issues regarding inclusivity and conflict within the context of the study.

3) Telephone call interviews and surveys

Barooah, B & Mani, S (2020) 'Phone surveys in developing countries need an abundance of caution', *International Initiative for Impact Evaluation*, <https://www.3ieimpact.org/blogs/phone-surveys-developing-countries-need-abundance-caution>

Authors argue that in the wake of COVID-19, whilst phone surveys may appear to be the best alternative method to collect data in LMICs, researchers should be cautious in their approach. Since the pandemic is an abnormal circumstance in which participants may be under additional pressures, Mani and Barooah list eight key notions to consider to ensure that any phone surveys are strategized correctly. By considering: benefits to the human subject, informed consent, compensation, communication, shared phones, electricity, scarcity, and intimate partner violence they suggest that necessary phone surveys can be conducted ethically with the participant in mind.

Bhajibhakare, S, Chopra, A, Gupta, P & Patel, M (2020) 'Transitioning to CATI: Checklists and Resources', *J'PAL South Asia*, <https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/research-resources/transitioning-to-CATI-Checklists.pdf>, accessed 1 July 2020

A detailed checklist which provides guidance for data collection via Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The appendix includes sample tracking sheets for phone surveys and a calling protocol sample to support researchers.

'Carrying out a telephone survey under the impact of COVID-19 – what to consider', *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs,* (2020) <https://covid-19-response.unstatshub.org/statistical-programmes/telephone-surveys-what-to-consider/>

A note from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the practical elements to consider when conducting telephone surveys during COVID-19. Logistical elements such as questionnaire length, content, interview protocol, and telephone-interview training are highlighted to argue that the quality of data collection needs to be thoroughly assessed before the survey is conducted.

Dabalen, A, von Engelhardt, J, Etang, A, Hoogeven, J, Mushi, E & Schipper, Y (2016) 'Mobile Phone Panel Surveys in Developing Countries: A Practical Guide for Microdata Collection', *World Bank Group* <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0904-0>
This handbook draws upon the first-hand experiences of authors who have conducted mobile phone panel surveys (MPPSs) across Sub-Saharan African. The text explores the rationale for such surveys, details challenges in the design process and highlights the advantages of this method of data collection. Detailed chapters that consider all stages of the process from creating, conducting, and analysing MPPSs, provide a toolkit for researchers specifically seeking to collect data remotely within LMICs.

Eckman, S, Himelein, K Lau, C & Mckenzie, D (2020) 'Mobile Phone Surveys for Understanding COVID-19 Impacts: Part 1 Sampling and Mode' <https://blogs.worldbank.org/impactevaluations/mobile-phone-surveys-understanding-covid-19-impacts-part-i-sampling-and-mode?CID=WBW_AL_BlogNotification_EN_EXT>
This blog piece focuses on sampling strategies for mobile phone surveys in situations where an existing sample frame is either present or absent. Three main modes of computer-assisted telephone interviewing, interactive voice response surveys, and short message surveys are offered and compared by literacy requirements, cost, speed, and method of implementation. It is argued that no one approach is superior but rather that 'studies that combine modes can benefit from each mode's strength.'

Holt, A, (2010) 'Using the telephone for narrative interviewing: a research note', *Qualitative Research*, 10.1 113-121 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794109348686>

Holt opposes the general consensus within social science research that face-to-face interviews are the best mode for collecting narrative data. Through considering a study where telephones are used to produce narrative data, Holt argues that the use of telephones is a valid and favourable alternative to face-to-face interviews. The study is contrasted with N Stephens 'Collecting Data from Elites and Ultra Elites: Telephone and Face-to-Face Interviews with Macroeconomists' (2007), which finds telephone interviewing to be a surprisingly productive tool in an elite class context. Using data from both the researcher's perspective and the participants' experiences the article engages with the many benefits that using telephones can produce. These include reducing the intensity of questioning and diminishing power imbalances between interviewer and participant.

Hanrahan, K J & Sturges, J E (2004) 'Comparing telephone and face-to-face qualitative interviewing: a research note', *Qualitative Research*, 4.1 107-118 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794104041110>

A research note which details the findings of a study comparing face-to-face interviews with telephone interviews for qualitative research. The study in focus is based on peoples' perceptions of visiting jail inmates. Interview approach required adaptation so that half of the interviews could be completed via phone. Despite expectations that different interview approaches may produce different results, authors notice no significant differences. Research methods are detailed and interview transcripts are compared to conclude that telephone interviews are a productive way to collect qualitative data.

Mahapatra, B, (2020) 'Mantras to data quality in telephonic surveys during COVID-19 crisis', <https://medium.com/@bidhuiips/mantras-to-data-quality-in-telephonic-surveys-during-covid-19-crisis-a558347aec6c>

A blog piece that considers the increasing use of telephone surveys to support COVID-19 relief efforts across the world. Five key areas which are central to ensuring quality telephone data collection named the 'five T's' are concisely explained – tool, training, time, trust, and topic. It is argued that failure to pay attention to these 'T's' will lead to poor telephone surveys and poor data collection.

Favara, M, Porter, C & Sanchez, A, 'Listening to Young Lives at Work COVID-19 Phone Survey: First Call fieldwork has begun', *Young Lives* <https://www.younglives.org.uk/content/listening-young-lives-work-covid-19-phone-survey-first-call-fieldwork-has-begun>

A blog outlining how the Young Lives team have created a COVID-19 phone survey as part of virtual fieldwork in Ethiopia, India, Peru, and Vietnam. The piece addresses the design of the first call and the information researchers hope to gather. Data collected on health, education, and livelihoods with a concern for gender analysis is intended to help governments around the world with policy and responses to the pandemic. Links to the questionnare document and field manual which instructs fieldworkers are included as a template for other researchers.

Other methods

Aurino, E, Bruck, T, Daidone, S, Natali, L & Schwab, B, (2018) 'Administrative Data: Missed opportunity for learning and research in humanitarian emergencies?', *Unicef*, <https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/administrative-data-missed-opportunity-for-learning-and-research-in-humanitarian-emergencies/>

This blog piece highlights the lack of attention given to administrative data as a valid research tool and proposes that in humanitarian emergencies such data can provide readily available information for researchers. Concise lists of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and possible threats to the use of registries for research are detailed. Authors conclude that administrative records can be utilised beyond their purpose to help deliver services. Such data can be used to further learning and to create long-lasting strategies in which administrative data is collected more accurately – this can be beneficial to both service providers and researchers.

Crozier, S E and Cassell, C M, (2015) 'Methodological considerations in the use of audio diaries in work psychology: Adding to the qualitative toolkit', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 89*.2 396-419 <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12132>

Crozier and Cassell explore the emergence of audio diaries as a mode of qualitative research, taking findings from a study considering work patterns and stress in temporary workers. The study aims to address the usefulness of qualitative audio diaries in gaining an understanding of a participant's stress. Background is provided on diary studies to note connections with audio diaries. The benefits of this method for cognition and storytelling are given to evaluate the audio diary experience. Important methodological and technical issues that researchers may need to overcome are also highlighted and comparisons are made with more traditional methods. Authors conclude that this research mode is well-suited for stress research and guidance for researchers who are interested in using audio diaries to conduct qualitative research is given.

Griffin, A & Hesse-BibeR, S (2012) 'Internet-mediated technologies and mixed methods research: Problems and prospects' *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 7.1 43–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812451791>

Hesse-Biber and Griffin expand the field of research on undertaking internet-mediated mixed methods research. They examine four different case studies where internet-mediated technologies are used to research different online communities including student activist groups and gaming communities. The process of research design is addressed for each case study in turn and ethical issues as well as the potential drawbacks of internet-mediated research are outlined. Medium theory is used to demonstrate the impact of moving research into the online realm and the inevitable adaptations that researchers must make within their research processes. Further implications for using internet-mediated technologies in the future are discussed.

Hookway, N, (2008) 'Entering the blogosphere: Some strategies for using blogs in social research', *Qualitative Research*, 8.1 91-113 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794107085298>

Noting the emergence of the 'blogosphere' online, Hookway explores how this mode can equip qualitative researchers with additional ways to collect data. The increasing significance of the 'blogosphere' is highlighted and similarities are drawn between blog research and diary research. The article offers techniques for researchers interested in this mode and provides key examples of blog sites within the research context of everyday understanding and experiences of morality. Key ethical issues are also considered and the research potential that blogs can offer is emphasised.

Hughes, R, & Huby, M (2004). The construction and interpretation of vignettes in social research, *Social Work and Social Sciences Review*, 11.1,(2004) 36–51, <https://journals-whitingbirch-net.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/index.php/SWSSR/article/view/428/464>

Hughes and Huby provide an introduction to the use of vignettes within social science research. They define vignettes and draw on previous literature regarding the development of the mode to inform their approach. There are two main areas of focus within this essay. The first area considers the development and construction of vignettes, detailing concerns with internal reliability, research topics, and participant groups. The second section deals with vignette interpretations and responses including perspectives and difficulties with interpreting and responding to vignettes. They conclude by outlining the importance of considering 'conceptual boundaries' as it is hard to evaluate the extent to which vignettes can reflect real-life perspectives and processes (p 46). However, authors remain aware of the value of such a mode for particular research projects.

Jowett, A, (2015) 'A case for using online discussion forums in critical psychological research, Qualitative Research in Psychology, 12.3 287-297, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2015.1008906>

Jowett provides a case study for the use of online discussion forums as an accessible source of data. The breadth of discussion forums and subjects of interest can be used to explore a wide range of social topics. He begins by addressing the advantages and disadvantages of their use in psychological research and outlines ethical debates. The article concludes with a close analysis of a diabetes chat forum discussion thread to demonstrate how online forums can be used for specific critical research.

Marwick, A, (2013) 'Ethnographic and Qualitative Research on Twitter' in K Weller, A Bruns, C Puschmann, J Burgess, M Mahrt (eds). *Twitter and Society* (p, 109-122). New York: Peter Lang

Marwick explores how Twitter has been used as an area where big data and large-scale quantitative data analysis can be conducted. Marwick suggests that such large data sets omit nuances of smaller groups and are limited compared to qualitative methods which can provide useful data on the practices and motivations of particular user groups. The

chapter argues that qualitative research methods such as interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, and textual analysis can be conducted effectively via Twitter.

Mazur, E. (2010). *Collecting data from social networking Web sites and blogs.* In S. D. Gosling & J. A. Johnson (Eds.), *Advanced methods for conducting online behavioral research* (p. 77–90). American Psychological Association.

This chapter outlines the use of blogs and social networking sites as data sources. Mazur focuses on non-interfering measures where users of social media are not contacted. Information on how to sample and search within these areas is provided and how to conduct content analysis. Even though such research is less obtrusive than other methods, Mazur suggests that researchers consider the ethical issues they may face and conduct further research on content analysis before undertaking a project. The chapter is considered most useful for those who wish to study blogs and social networking sites for text and image-based data.

de Abreu, G, Cline, T, Crafter, S, & O'Dell, L, (2012) 'The problem of interpretation in vignette methodology in research with young people', *Qualitative Research*, 12.6, 702-714 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112439003>

Authors explore the problems involved when using vignettes to collect qualitative data. The case study of a young carer whose vignette explores the experiences of a fictitious young carer is used to outline the struggles a researcher may face with interpretation. As participants shift between discussing the self, the character, and experience it is often hard to extract valuable information. It is proposed that using dialogical self-theory can help to overcome challenges of analysis; shifts between different positions can be interpreted as a dialogue with the different identity positions of the participant.

Conducting research on violence against women/children during COVID-19

Bhatia, A, Guedes, A & Peterman, A, (2020) 'Remote data collection on violence against women during COVID-19: A conversation with experts on ethics, measurement and research priorities', *Unicef* <https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/1997-remote-data-collection-on-violence-against-women-during-covid-19-a-conversation-with.html?utm_source=twitter>,

This think piece engages in conversation with ten experts. They reflect on the ethical and methodological issues of using remote surveys to collect data on violence against women (VAW) during COVID-19. Researchers argue the need for enhanced safety protocols within online surveys to ensure that data collected will aid participants' wellbeing rather than exposing them to further risk. Attention is drawn to the need to collect data which considers violence beyond the household and womens' access to safety, whilst understanding particular issues. These issues concern survey structure, fostering a rapport, and the likely exclusion of vulnerable women who lack access to cellular phones and computers. Social media analysis and interviews with service providers are briefly mentioned as alternatives to asking direct VAW questions via survey.

Bhatia, A, Guedes, A & Peterman, A (2020) 'Remote data collection on violence against children during COVID-19: A conversation with experts on research priorities, measurement and ethics', <https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/2004-collecting-remote-data-on-violence-against-children-during-covid-19-a-conversation.html?utm_source=twitter>

Part two think piece in conversation with six researchers who consider the use of remote surveys to analyse the effects of COVID-19 on violence against children (VAC). Experts display a strong consensus that researchers 'should not conduct remote VAC data collection with children while lockdown measures are in place,' instead concluding that other data sources such as case reports, child helpline data, and service-level assessments

could be analysed as well as existing VAC data. Instead, helpful guidelines for question design, the selection of interviewers, and participant safety measures are offered for VAC data collection when face-to-face research becomes possible once again. Currently, researchers are held back by the limited examples of remote data collection regarding VAC and experts argue that a public health crisis is not an appropriate time to experiment. Reference is made to the previous think piece on violence against women data collection during COVID-19 to point out that investigating changes in VAC and VAW cases does not provide an understanding of whether such changes can be directly attributed to the pandemic.

Dartnell, E & Bates-Jefferys, E, (2020) 'IPA Considerations for Doing Intimate Partner Violence Research in the Time of Coronavirus', <https://www.poverty-action.org/blog/considerations-doing-intimate-partner-violence-research-time-coronavirus>

A co-authored article which considers the increased risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) against women during COVID-19 and the move towards remote data collection methods to measure impacts. The article focuses on the limitations of phone and online surveys for use with female participants who are less likely to have technical literacy or internet and phone access compared to male peers around the world. Importantly, authors argue that when data collection is deemed absolutely necessary, piloting surveys and gaining informed voluntary consent are vital to ensure that standard ethical guidance is upheld.

'Data Collection on Violence against Women and COVID-19: Decision Tree', (2020) *UNFBA Asia and the Pacific,* <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/resources/decision-tree-data-collection-violence-against-women-and-covid-19>

A decision tree resource created in collaboration with kNOwVAWdata, UNFBA Asia, and the Pacific and the UN Women and World Health Organisation. The resource helps researchers with undertaking the task of collecting data on women's experiences of

violence during COVID-19. The decision tree reflects upon ethical considerations and guides researchers to seek viable alternative reliable sources of data and to understand when data collection is unsafe for participants.

Haberland, N, Mathur, S, Pulerwitz, J, Undie, C & Vieitezt,I (2020) *Sexual Violence Research Initiative*, <https://svri.org/blog/opportunities-sgbv-data-collection-time-covid-19-value-implementation-science>

Approaches debates on ethics and safety surrounding the collection of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) data by proposing the benefits of using 'implementation science,' and specifically 'operations research' within the context of COVID-19. Authors define operations research as that which 'aims to better understand a program's operations to make improvements to service delivery.' It is argued that program implementers should be included within the data collection process due to their insight, previous experience of handling case reports, and engagement with survivors. Furthermore, as data collectors, service providers will seek to engage with the findings generated and may use this information to develop their service in positive ways.

Nabachwa, A G & Namakula, S, (2020) 'Trauma-informed Phone Interviews on Sensitive Topics: Learning from the COVID-19 lockdown in Uganda', *Sexual Violence Research Initiative*, <https://svri.org/blog/trauma-informed-phone-interviews-sensitive-topics-learning-covid-19-lockdown-uganda>

An interview with two Healing and Resilience after Trauma (HaRT) team members in Uganda who offer holistic healing programmes for women and girls who have experienced human trafficking and gender-based violence. Interview concerns their transition from in-person activities to conducting phone-based interviews during COVID-19 to maintain relationships with participants. Details of the interview approach and specific skills to adopt when approaching phone calls with a 'trauma-informed lens' are explained, highlighting patience, listening, and emphasising participant agency. Namulka and

Nabachwa conclude by demonstrating the positive effects of reaching out to participants during a pandemic; girls were open and willing to talk, perhaps because 'we came in to listen at a time so many women and girls are experiencing anxiety and isolation.'

Rogers, K D, (2020) 'COVID-19: Has it become too dangerous to measure violence against women?' *Devex*, <https://www.devex.com/news/has-it-become-too-dangerous-to-measure-violence-against-women-97112>

Rogers explores the reality that instances of violence against women have been heightened due to COVID-19 related issues including financial and health worries. However, instead of calling for direct interviews with women, Rogers notes that UN agencies are instead suggesting existing data is harnessed and case reports considered. This is to prevent compromising the safety of survivors. Overall, Rogers outlines the necessity of shifting resources and methods of collecting data which may include strengthening administrative records from service providers and interviewing service providers who can offer insight.

'Violence Against Women and Girls Data Collection during COVID-19', (2020) *United Nations Women World Health Organization*, <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/vawg-data-collection-during-covid-19-compressed.pdf?la=en&vs=2339&mc_cid=4c3ffeeed4&mc_eid=af0b85d090>

A living document that provides recommendations for researchers who intend to collect data on the impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls (VAWG). The document addresses the importance of collecting VAWG to help identify risk factors, understand impacts on services for survivors, and aid policy and programmes to prevent VAWG in future emergencies. In response to the difficulties of upholding ethical principles for data collection, focus is placed on utilizing existing data in the best possible ways, contacting service providers, and assessing case reports before reaching out to survivors.

In cases where questions regarding VAWG are necessary it is stressed that they should not be included in population-based rapid assessments. Equally, the research design process should be inclusive of women and girls who may be marginalised.

Other ethical considerations for remote research and research during COVID-19

Ansoms, A, 'Research in Times of Crisis: Caring for Researchers' Mental Health in the Covid-19 Era' (2020) *Social Science Research Council*, <https://items.ssrc.org/covid-19-and-the-social-sciences/social-research-and-insecurity/research-in-times-of-crisis-caring-for-researchers-mental-health-in-the-covid-19-era/>

An Ansoms reflects on how social scientists are faced with various mental challenges whilst conducting research 'in crisis', arguing that universities and institutions should begin to think about methods to help researchers care for their well-being to move 'toward an institutional strategy for research "in crisis".' Guidance on training, coaching and care is offered, so that researchers and institutions can gain insight and awareness into emotional challenges individuals may face. In turn, this will aid the research process and help researchers to develop strategies for developing resilience.

Baaz, M, Eriksson, D, Oscar A, Mwambari, D, Oseema, A, Parashar, S, Toppo, M & Vincent, J (2020) 'The COVID-19 Oppurtunity: Creating More Ethical and Sustainable Research Practices', *Social Science Research Council*, <https://items.ssrc.org/covid-19-and-the-social-sciences/social-research-and-insecurity/the-covid-19-opportunity-creating-more-ethical-and-sustainable-research-practices/>

In this collaborative essay, authors draw attention to the inequalities which COVID-19 has highlighted, including higher death rates amongst minority groups and the exacerbation of poverty and starvation within areas of LMICs. It is argued that 'Covid-19 – by highlighting

inequalities and immobility – offers an opportunity to rethink and push for more ethical – and more equal research practices.' Immobility, which may affect certain facilitating researchers is outlined as a particular issue that creates imbalances. In order to address imbalances, issues for institutions, researchers, and publishers to consider are given. Ultimately the essay aims to reveal the hidden opportunities that this pandemic has provided to transform the way fieldwork is conducted.

Bechmann, A, Ess, C, Franzke, AS & Zimmer, M, (2020) 'Internet Research: Ethical Guidelines 3.0' ***The Association of Internet Researchers*** **<https://aoir.org/reports/ethics3.pdf>**

An extensive report which introduces Internet Research Ethics (IRE). Updating previous ethics guidelines IRE 3.0 pays close attention to the stages of research and the overarching issue of informed consent that is particularly prevalent within big data analysis. A structure for ethical analysis is outlined to help researchers, along with suggestions on how to overcome ethical challenges which researchers may be facing. Examples of analyses and ethical frameworks are provided in chapter six with the aim to encourage the development of additional analyses. Authors hope to produce a 'living document', in which guidelines continuously emerge and develop, having recognised that IRE is an expanding field.

Bisoka, A N, (2020) 'Disturbing the Aesthetics of Power: Why Covid-19 Is Not an "Event" for Fieldwork-based Social Scientists', ***Social Science Research Council*****, <https://items.ssrc.org/covid-19-and-the-social-sciences/social-research-and-insecurity/disturbing-the-aesthetics-of-power-why-covid-19-is-not-an-event-for-fieldwork-based-social-scientists/>**

Bisoka approaches research practice during COVID-19 to consider the opportunities and responsibilities researchers have to decolonise practice within the context of Africa. He considers the work of African artists to argue that research assistants within LMICs

continue to be used as 'body instruments', exposed to dangerous fieldwork whilst those in the Global North reside in safety. The blog piece reminds researchers that the use of the black body as an instrument is rooted in racism and as such, the impacts of the pandemic stem from colonial histories. Bisoka highlights the need for a deconstruction of current practice which acknowledges privileges and struggles within the community of researchers to improve situations for the marginalised.

'Ethics Guidelines for Internet-mediated research', (2013) ***British Psychological Society*** **<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Ethics%20Guidelines%20for%20Internet-mediated%20Research%20%282017%29.pdf>**

A comprehensive outline of key ethical issues that researchers should consider when conducting internet-mediated research (IMR). Applying existing ethics principles whilst assessing ethics on a case-by-case basis is particularly emphasised. Chapters focus on four principles of respect for the autonomy, privacy, and dignity of individuals and communities; scientific integrity; social responsibility, and maximising benefits whilst minimising harm.

Jowett, A, (2020) 'Carrying out qualitative research under lockdown – Practical and ethical considerations', <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2020/04/20/carrying-out-qualitative-research-under-lockdown-practical-and-ethical-considerations/>

Jowett's blog article offers video-calling and online surveys as techniques that can be effectively adopted to collect data under social distancing restrictions. Collating previous studies alongside considering the advantages and disadvantages of such techniques, he argues that ethical considerations must be reconsidered before re-designing studies. Viewing the pandemic as a call to reflect on how research is undertaken, Jowett concludes

that ‘the health and wellbeing of participants and researchers should take priority over research timelines (p 3).’

Crivello, G & Favara, M, (2020) ‘COVID-19 and the “Ethics of Disruption”: Current Dilemmas Facing Longitudinal Research in Low and Middle-Income countries’, *Young Lives* DOI:10.20944/preprints202006.0262.v1

This paper argues that coronavirus has created an ‘ethics of disruption’ for researchers globally. Detailing the challenges that the Young Lives study is facing, authors focus on three considerations. First is the need to maintain and manage relationships within study design and second is the need to ensure methodological consistency throughout the long-term. Finally, the challenge of acting quickly with a short-term response whilst remaining focused on a long-term perspective is explained. The Young Lives study is a longitudinal research project across low and middle-income countries and the study plans for the implementation of a COVID-19 phone survey are discussed within this ethical framework.

Roberts, L D, (2015) ‘Ethical Issues in Conducting Qualitative Research in Online Communities’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12.3 314-325 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2015.1008909>

As researchers increasingly use online methods of data collection, unique ethical challenges are faced. Roberts considers ethics in practice when researching online communities, drawing upon issues regarding the blurring of public and private space, consent, anonymity, and quality of data produced. Examples of how psychological researchers have addressed such issues are given to demonstrate that whilst ethics procedures may differ between cases there are indeed general sensitivities that should be paid to the online community. Importantly, ethical frameworks should also be utilised within online research to create initial ethics reviews prior to conducting research.

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