Centre for Qualitative Research

DEMAND-LED QUALITATIVE INNOVATIONS SESSIONS

SESSION ONE
Collecting Qualitative Data using Digital Methods

Thursday 25 March 2021

Session Summary

In this session we explore our own experience of collecting online qualitative data and our conception of 'Tracking' and 'Trawling'. We explain how this approach evolved from our Age at Work research project, in which we explore understandings of age and ageing in online media. Our session covers an introduction to Tracking and Trawling, particularly highlighting how these are temporally orientated. Tracking is prospective, with the researcher following an event, people or topic as it develops and evolves. Data is collected in real-time. Conversely, Trawling is retrospective and the researcher casts their net across the internet to access relevant material across the Web. These approaches can be used together, and with other research methods. However this adaptability means that the researchers must be clear about their own ontological and epistemological orientation, and adopt a reflexive approach. After offering the opportunity to discuss key challenges within breakout rooms, Katrina and Rebecca then consider their experience of using tracking and trawling highlighting:

- The relationship with, and variety of forms of, online data
- How platforms shape research
- The importance of piloting
- Balancing quantity and quality in research practice
- Research ethics in digital methods
- Moving from data collection to analysis

The session concludes with a look to the future of digital methods and online data.

Recording
Find the link below to access the recording of the session
https://vimeo.com/530811725

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SESSION ONE
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Summary

- We introduce Tracking and Trawling as flexible and adaptable methods for collecting qualitative data online
- We review key challenges related to understanding data, platformization, piloting, research ethics and data organization
- We consider how online research and digital methods have developed to date and look forward to the future

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Reading List

Whiting R and Pritchard K (2020) Collecting Qualitative Data via Digital Methods. SAGE. https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/collecting-qualitative-data-using-digital-methods/book267730

Pritchard, K (2020) Examining Web Images: A combined visual analysis (CVA) approach. European Management Review 17(1), 297-310

Pritchard, K and Whiting, R (2017) 'Analysing web images' in SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods Volume 2 (Eds. Cassell, C; Cunliffe, A and Grandy, G) Sage

Whiting, R and Pritchard, K (2017) 'Digital Ethics' in SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods Volume 1 (Eds. Cassell, C; Cunliffe, A and Grandy, G) Sage.

Pritchard, K (2012) Combining Qualitative Methods in Symon, G and Cassell, C "Qualitative Organizational Research: core methods and current challenges" Sage. pp. 132-148.

Pritchard, K and Whiting, R (2012) 'Autopilot? A reflexive review of the piloting process in qualitative e-research'Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management, 7 (3) 338-353.

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Animation

https://biteable.com/watch/demand-led-webinar-1-2843065/e016032d4b01f4333e6b069df4c50b4c