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Qualitative preregistration



Preregistering qualitative research

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ABSTRACT

The threat to reproducibility and awareness of current rates of research misbehavior sparked initiatives to better academic science. One initiative is preregistration of quantitative research. We investigate whether the preregistration format could also be used to boost the credibility of qualitative research. A crucial distinction underlying preregistration is that between *prediction* and *postdiction*. In qualitative research, data are used to decide which way interpretation should move forward, using data to generate hypotheses and new research questions. Qualitative research is thus a real-life example of postdiction research. Some may object to the idea of preregistering qualitative studies because qualitative research generally does not test hypotheses, and because qualitative research design is typically flexible and subjective. We rebut these objections, arguing that making hypotheses explicit is just one feature of preregistration, that flexibility can be tracked using preregistration, and that preregistration would provide a check on subjectivity. We then contextualize preregistrations alongside another initiative to enhance credibility in qualitative research: the confirmability audit. Besides, preregistering qualitative studies is practically useful to combating dissemination bias and could incentivize qualitative researchers to report constantly on their study's development. We conclude with suggested modifications to the Open Science Framework preregistration form to tailor it for qualitative studies.

KEYWORDS

Preregistration; qualitative research; transparency

Relevance

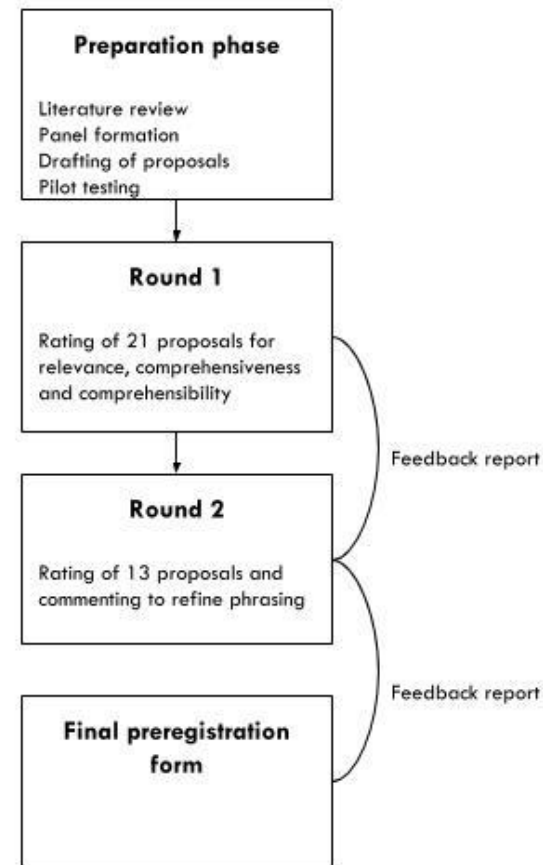
- Strengthen the ***credibility*** and ***transparency***
- Importance recognised by various ***stakeholders***
- Qualitative preregistration ***counterintuitive***
- Different authors put forth ***ideas***
- Publications thus far not based on ***systematic empirical investigation***

Goal: to understand what ***parts of preregistration*** templates qualitative researchers would find ***informative***



Delphi study

- Consecutive **questionnaires** with **feedback** reports in between
- Otherwise **dispersed** group, not one person that can **dominate**



Panelists

Fourfold strategy

1. **Own** network
2. Reporting **guidelines**
3. **'Active'** qualitative researchers
4. **Suggested** colleagues

Total: **294 invitees**



Creation questionnaire

Fourfold approach

1. Integrated **existing works**
2. Systematic search in **PubMed** and **PsycINFO**
3. Screened 21 reporting guidelines published on **EQUATOR**
4. Put forth this list of 36 proposals to **steering committee**

Result: **21** proposals





New Registration

☒ Study Info

☐ Design Plan

☐ Data Collection

☐ Analysis Plan

Design Plan

Study Type

Please describe your study type(s). Typical study types are case studies, evaluation research, intervention research, participatory research. In addition, if you do participatory research, you may want to elaborate on whether the participation is overt or covert.

Questions

1. Term
2. Elaboration
3. Relevance
4. Heading

To what extent do you agree with the suggested...?

Arguments!



Agreement criterion

≥68% -- “Strongly agree” **OR** “Somewhat agree”

Criterion was preregistered, see osf.io/en3qc



Results round 1

35 researchers completed questionnaire (response rate: 12%)

14 proposals relevant → merged into 11 ***revised proposals***

2 proposals had 66% and 65% scores & conflicting arguments → put forth ***again***





New Registration



Study Info



Design Plan



Data Collection



Analysis Plan

Design Plan

Study Design

Please indicate and describe your research design. Examples of study designs include phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, or case study. Your specific study design could be a combination of different research designs, or even both quantitative and qualitative methods.

A large, empty light gray rectangular box intended for the user to enter their study design details.

Questions

To what extent do you agree with the suggested...?

1. **Revised** term
? based on panel members' arguments
2. **Revised** elaboration
? based on panel members' arguments

Arguments!



Results round 2

31 researchers completed questionnaire (response rate: 11%)

9 proposed terms >68% agreement → *slightly* revised

10 proposed elaborations >68% agreement → *slightly* revised

2 optional proposals → actually *relevant*



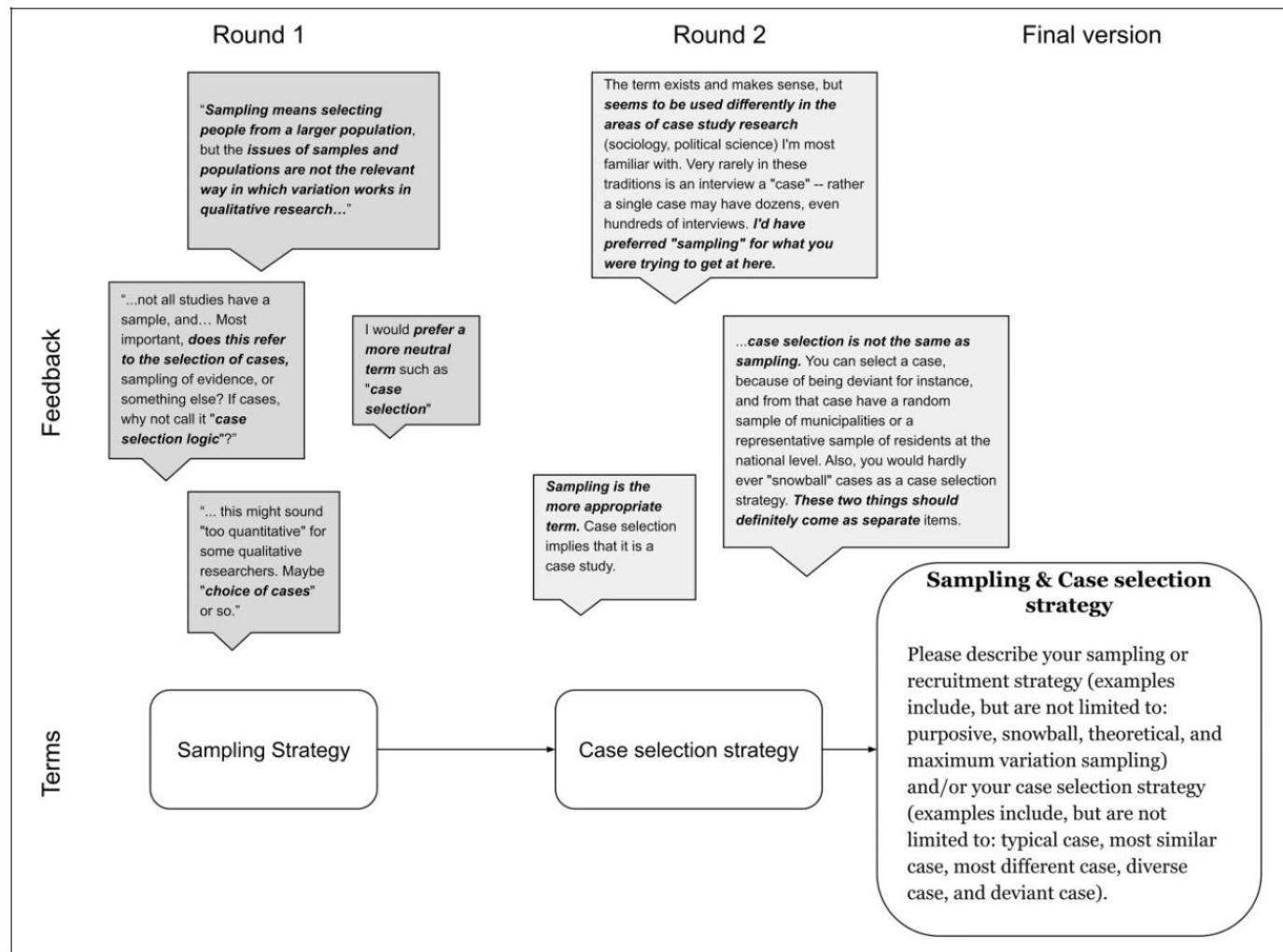


Figure 3. Visualization of the Delphi feedback process.

Discussion

Agreement-based form for qualitative preregistration

Voluntarily, systematic ***starting-point***

Extra '***modules***'

Connection ***reporting guidelines***

No empirical evidence → ***examples***




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OSF REGISTRIES

Search registrations...?

Refine Search

OSF Registries

Qualitative Preregistration

Provider

<input type="checkbox"/> ClinicalTrials.gov	366,269
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Registry	3,405
<input type="checkbox"/> Character Lab Registry	403
<input type="checkbox"/> DARPA ASIST Registry	39
<input type="checkbox"/> egap Registry	2,285
<input type="checkbox"/> Metascience Registry	6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OSF Registries	92,312
<input type="checkbox"/> Real World Evidence Registry	14

308 Registrations

Sort by: Modified Date (oldest to newest)

Experiences of crisis care among service users with Complex Emotional Needs and other stakeholders: a systematic review and meta-synthesis of the qualitative literature

Lucy Maconick, Kristiana DeLeo

OSF Registries | Qualitative Preregistration

A qualitative systematic review and meta-synthesis of the literature exploring experience of crisis care among service users w...

Les effets de la musicothérapie par rapport à une thérapie cognitivo comportementale sur des patients atteints de dépression modérée.

Léo LEPETIT

What's next?

Register

Registration creates a frozen version of the project. Your original project remains editable and will have the registration linked.

Things to know about registration:

- **Registrations cannot be edited or deleted.**
- Withdrawing a registration removes its contents, but leaves behind basic metadata: title, contributors, date registered, date withdrawn, and justification (if provided).
- Registrations can be public or embargoed for up to four years. Embargoed registrations will be made public automatically when the embargo expires.

Continue your registration by choosing a form:

- ☐ OSF Preregistration
- ☐ Open-Ended Registration
- ☒ **Qualitative Preregistration ⓘ**
- ☐ Registered Report Protocol Preregistration ⓘ
- ☐ OSF-Standard Pre-Data Collection Registration ⓘ
- ☐ Preregistration Template from AsPredicted.org ⓘ
- ☐ Replication Recipe (Brandt et al., 2013): Post-Completion ⓘ
- ☐ Replication Recipe (Brandt et al., 2013): Pre-Registration ⓘ
- ☐ Pre-Registration in Social Psychology (van 't Veer & Giner-Sorolla, 2016): Pre-Registration ⓘ

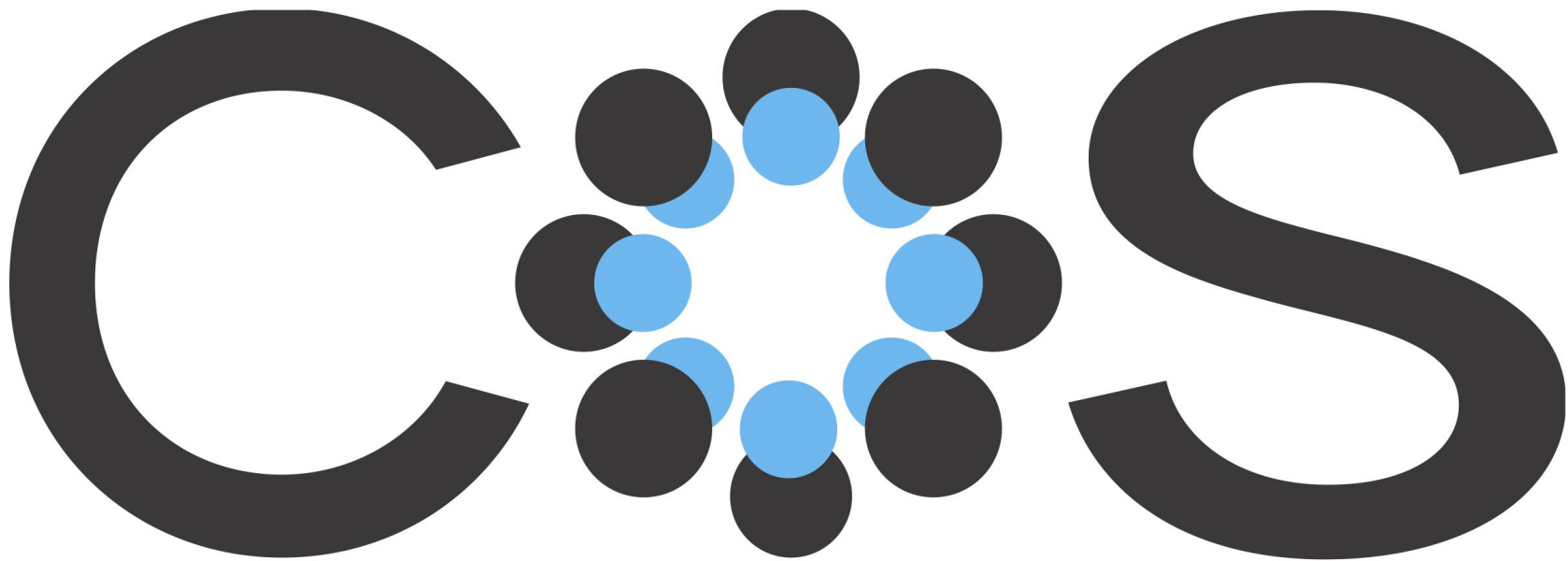
This template was created by researchers from the qualitative community for preregistration of qualitative research

1

2

Building a community

Thanks to:



Questions?

Article

Preregistering Qualitative Research: A Delphi Study

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Discipline		Type of research		Paradigm	
Anthropology	4	Archival/documentary evidence	22	Critical theory	7
Biomedicine	6	Ethnography	12	Positivism	7
Education	6	Focus groups	26	Post positivism	9
Environmental studies	1	Interviews	40	Social constructionism	23
International relations	1	Observation	17	Other	10
Linguistics	1	Secondary literature	17		
Nursing	9	Self-report	13		
Political science	10	Other	5		
Psychology	9				
Public health	6				
Sociology	10				
Other	2				

