

“The Fantastic Octet”: use and contributions to qualitative research

This thematic issue presents some of the best studies from the 2020 and 2021 editions of the Iberian American Congress on Qualitative Research (CIAIQ), with consolidated and emerging ways of doing qualitative research. The observed triangulation of methods gives the studies consistency and depth and should be encouraged^{1,2}.

We analyzed the alignment between eight essential points for qualitative studies to demonstrate the quality of the articles: title, assumption, research questions, objectives, theoretical-methodological framework, data collection and analysis, interpretation of findings, and final considerations, playfully called “The Fantastic Octet”.

The title of the qualitative study requires clarity and methodological adequacy to translate its message and relevance^{3,4}. In this edition, “viewpoints”, “opinions”, “perceptions”, “perspectives”, “meanings”, “experiences”, and “conceptions” are highlighted, aligned with the objectives.

Explicitly or implicitly, the assumption can also be understood from the research questions and objectives. The theoretical-methodological framework, the “guiding thread” of the research, helps develop and achieve objectives, establishing coherence between “what one wants to achieve” and “what needs to be done to get there”.

The authors mention theoretical-methodological references that converge with the study objects: Symbolic Interactionism, Fairclough three-dimensional model, health professional training theories, health humanization perspectives, older adults’ mental health, and health literacy. These may have sociological, anthropological, ethnographic support or may even be based on theories about the investigated subject.

Data collection includes literature reviews, focus groups, interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The articles show different strategies for exploring the data: content and discourse analysis and grounded theory, to name a few.

Some research used specialized software⁵, whose diverse exploration possibilities reaffirmed the technology’s potential to strengthen analyses. Software packages systematize the organization of findings, providing opportunities for new studies and interpretations⁵.

The “interpretive magnifying glass” based on the theoretical-methodological framework facilitates the dialogue between data and literature. The final considerations reflect on the research questions, objectives, and results, presenting answers, reflections, and developments for the study.

We hope that the articles in this issue will inspire readers to develop qualitative research capable of making fundamental contributions to people, institutions, and society.

Christina César Praça Brasil (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7741-5349>)¹

Ellen Synthia Fernandes de Oliveira (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0683-2620>)²

Elza de Fátima Ribeiro Higa (<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5772-9597>)³

¹ Programa de Pós-Graduação em Saúde Coletiva, Universidade de Fortaleza. Fortaleza CE Brasil.

² Programa de Pós-Graduação em Saúde Coletiva, Universidade Federal de Goiás. Goiânia GO Brasil.

³ Programa de Pós-Graduação da Faculdade de Medicina de Marília. Marília SP Brasil.

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