cira
Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS
at Yale University

CIRA Presents:

Qualitative Research Discussion Group

"'Big Small Data': How to rigorously analyze qualitative datasets with large complex accounts from a small number of participants?"



Ruta Sevrukaite



Jorge Castro Caicedo
University of East London

Friday, June 20, 2025
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Join by Zoom:
https://yale.zoom.us/j/93012332332?pwd=dUo3Wi9rd3Z0ejF4WTczdW5tWHRpdz09

Contact Lauretta.Grau@yale.edu with questions.

Organized by the Dissemination and Implementation Science Methods (DISM) Core of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA). CIRA is supported by National Institute of Mental Health Grant No. P30MH062294, Trace Kershaw, Ph.D., Principal Investigator.

Qualitative Research Discussion Group (QRDG)

Overview:
The session will discuss questions of reaching saturation and ensuring analytical rigor when qualitative data are big and small simultaneously and includes a handful of long and complex accounts. This may happen in situations such as humanitarian crisis, where there are serious constraints to fieldwork and only a limited number of interviews or FGDs may be possible or allowed. This is also frequently the reality of early career researchers, who have constrained resources (both in terms of time and in terms of funding) to address their fundamental research questions. How can we make the most of these unique data? During the session, two early-career researchers, one of whom used originally collected qualitative interview data, and the other analyzed the data from previously conducted focus group discussions, will present their work and ponder these questions, looking forward to suggestions from the audience about strategies to publish their findings.

PRESENTERS:

Ruta Sevrukaite
Ruta received her MSc in Global Mental Health at King's College London and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. Ruta's qualitative research explores ethical challenges in humanitarian mental health research.

Ruta will present learnings from her study entitled "On Conducting Ethical and Impactful Research in Humanitarian Contexts: Insights from Global Mental Health Scholars on the "Do No Harm" Principle and Beyond".

Background: Mental health support is critically needed in humanitarian contexts. Conducting meaningful research in these settings is essential to improving the quality of care and support. However, the vulnerability and marginalisation of affected populations, often shaped by power imbalances present significant ethical challenges. The 'Do No Harm' principle encourages researchers to protect these populations by integrating ethical considerations, appropriate methodologies, and humanitarian principles and standards. Despite its importance, practical guidance on applying this principle in humanitarian research remains limited. This study explores the factors that facilitate or hinder the research that 'Does No Harm' in humanitarian settings, from the experience and perspective of Global Mental Health researchers.

Methods: Using a social constructionist qualitative approach, structured interviews were conducted with nine Global Mental Health researchers working in humanitarian settings internationally, five from the Global North and four from the Global South. Participants were recruited through university networks and subsequent snowball sampling. Thematic analysis was used to explore researchers' interpretations of, and perceived barriers and facilitators to, conducting research that adheres to the 'Do No Harm' principle, including reflections on their own mental health and well-being.

Results: Three main themes emerged: (1) Responsibility and Power Dynamics: calling attention to researchers' ethical dilemmas and responsibilities amid structural power imbalances; (2) Communication and Communities: underscoring the importance of cultural sensitivity and collaboration with local actors; and (3) Mental Health: revealing the emotional and psychological toll of conducting research in humanitarian crises.
Conclusions: Humanitarian research is embroiled in power dynamics that can undermine the needs of affected populations. Ethical research must prioritise reflexivity, equitable collaboration, co-production, respect for local contexts, and the empowerment of local communities to lead and sustain research independently of the Global North. Further investigation is needed into the appropriateness and application of humanitarian principles in research. Moreover, adequate psychological and moral support should be made available for researchers working in these high-stress environments.

Qualitative Research Discussion Group (QRDG)

Jorge Castro Caicedo
Jorge is a first-year PhD student at the University of East London. Jorge's current work is related to tailoring cultural competence training for the mental health workforce in the UK. He also is interested in global mental health and health inequalities. Jorge did a MSc in Global Mental Health in which he explored the HIV disclosure process of older Ukrainian adults.

Jorge will present learnings from his study entitled "Exploring the disclosure process of older Ukrainian people living with HIV: a thematic analysis".

Abstract: Ukraine has made remarkable progress addressing its human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) epidemic during the past decade by implementing health programmes targeting key populations. Nevertheless, older people, defined as ≥50 years old, living with HIV (OPWH), have not been taken into account by governmental programmes. Whilst disclosure may lead to stigma for OPWH, it may also help increase OPWH's likelihood of receiving social support and improve health outcomes. Due to the potential role of disclosure in healthy ageing with HIV, it is imperative to understand why and how OPWH choose to disclose their status and when disclosure is beneficial. Thus, this study aimed to explore the disclosure process of OPWH in Ukraine. This study analysed secondary data from four focus group discussions (FGDs) with OPWH (2 FGDs), confidants (1 FGD), and health care workers (1 FGD) that were conducted in the city of Kyiv, Ukraine, between October and December 2021. A reflexive thematic analysis was conducted and three main themes were identified: (1) Barriers to disclosure; (2) Disclosure decision-making; and (3) Outcomes of disclosure. This study sheds light on the disclosure process and experiences of OPWH, their confidants, and HWs who work with OPWH. These findings might serve as a starting point to develop toolkits to aid HWs in counselling individuals about the disclosure of their HIV status.

QRDG Overview:
The goal of the Qualitative Research Discussion Group (QRDG) is to provide opportunities for individuals involved in qualitative or mixed-methods research to meet regularly to discuss the qualitative research process and potentially problem-solve issues that may arise when engaged in qualitative research. Discussion topics include, but are not limited to: logistics, data management, analysis, dissemination, role of the researcher, and ethics. It is intended as a venue for discussing research in progress and new or relevant literature on qualitative methods and practice as well as to create networking opportunities and foster research collaborations. CIRA's Dissemination Implementation Science and Methods (DISM) Core member, Lauretta Grau, PhD, is coordinating the meetings. She can be reached at lauretta.grau@yale.edu.