

CHAPTER I

Introduction to Digital Platforms and Digital Research Approaches, Encryption, Cybersecurity and Bandwidth

Considerations for Qualitative Researchers

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The introduction of digital approaches is perhaps the most significant change to the way that healthcare research is conducted that has been seen since computers first came into use. This introductory chapter will set the tone for the rest of the book. The book is divided into two parts: 1. digital platforms, and 2. approaches to healthcare research that are either uniquely digital or are adaptations of existing approaches to the online context. Within each of these parts, a collection of chapters by distinguished and rising authors present digital platforms and techniques and consider these as applied to a wide range of healthcare studies. This introduction will consider the broad area that the book addresses and will similarly be divided into the same two sections. The unique aspects of digital research approaches will be highlighted and emphasised, and the reader will be prepared for the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2: ‘Doing Digital Qualitative Research: Key Ethical Considerations’, by Rebecca Wise, Jeff Gavin and Karen Rodham, focuses on ethical challenges for researchers who are engaged in qualitative digital research. The authors argue that while the digital world has opened up significant opportunities for researchers, it has also presented complicated and multifaceted ethical challenges. The authors offer examples of these ethical issues by drawing from a range of research from diverse disciplines.

Chapter 3: ‘Using Video Diaries for Remote Observational Research’, by Steve Hagelman and Melinda Rea-Holloway, considers the essential benefits of using video diaries in corporate ethnography as a tool to collect observational data in health care and consumer research. Drawing on the authors’ experiences, the chapter explores the strengths and limitations of

video diaries, and serves as a guide for how to engage video diaries in ethnographic and qualitative research.

Chapter 4: '(In)Equitable Shifts: Mapping a Pivot to Digital Diary and Remote Research Methods with Queer Youth in the Times of Covid-19', by Rodney Stehr, Danya Fast, and Rod Knight, presents the authors' experiences of evolving research regarding sexual and gender-identity minority young people (ages 15–29) towards an online protocol using digital methods. The authors discuss their use of and experience with using digital diaries to conduct virtual longitudinal qualitative research, and present both the strengths and weaknesses of this method.

Chapter 5: "'To Be or Not to Be?' Qualitative Research upon and during a Pandemic Outbreak', by Gillie Gabay, aims to disentangle the problems qualitative researchers may experience when planning and implementing rigorous research upon and during a crisis. The chapter address practical and necessary concerns for the qualitative researcher and works as a guide for how best to conduct research during challenging times.

Chapter 6: 'Adopting Digital Methods: Conducting Qualitative Interviews and Focus Groups in the Midst of a Pandemic', by Ruth Strudwick and Hollie Hadwen, explores the foundational theory of qualitative research methods, specifically semi-structured interviews and focus groups, and the issues that arise when adopting a digital approach. The authors explore the practical considerations, challenges and benefits of utilising digital methods.

Chapter 7: 'Lessons Learned Conducting Online Qualitative Interviews during Covid-19', by Sally Lindsay, Hiba Ahmed, Vanessa Tomas, and Abirami Vijaykaumar, discusses the barriers to, advantages of and crucial lessons learned by the authors while conducting online interviews during the pandemic. The chapter engages a qualitative study focusing on the employment experiences of youth with and without disabilities throughout Covid-19.

Chapter 8: 'Virtual Interviewing in the Age of Covid-19: Considerations for Qualitative Research', by Charles Edmund Degeneffe, focuses on the use of virtual approaches to data collection in qualitative research during the Covid-19 pandemic. The chapter provides background information on virtual interviewing, investigating researcher and participant perspectives, and offers best-practice considerations qualitative researchers should be aware of when managing the technical aspects, participant engagement, and ethical issues of virtual interviewing.

Chapter 9: 'Minimizing the Impact Technology Has on Interviewer–Interviewee Rapport: An Existential-Phenomenological Analysis', by

Patrick M. Whitehead and Gary Senecal, discusses post-phenomenology as a form of conducting qualitative research. The chapter examines whether something of importance is concealed when qualitative researchers depend on the use of technology. A three-year international qualitative study on PTSD with active-duty military, which relied heavily on technology, is used to examine the strengths and weaknesses of combining technology with phenomenological healthcare research.

Chapter 10: ‘Participatory and Invasive Online Worlds: Exploring the Research Method of Qualitative Digital Ethnography’, by Adele Philips and Shane Blackman, argues that there is great value in utilising online ethnographic approaches. Whilst the chapter notes the caveats to these approaches, the authors position the strengths as outweighing the potential negatives.

Chapter 11: ‘Using Online Survey Tools to Improve Access to International Experts: The ‘E-Delphi’’, by Georgina Clutterbuck, presents the E-Delphi method as a modern, flexible research approach with the potential to produce quality data in a time- and cost-effective manner. The chapter discusses the challenges and advantages of the method and suggests best practices for employment.

Chapter 12: ‘Refining Interview Protocols for Online Interviews on the Employment of Persons with Down Syndrome: Insights from a Pilot Test’, by Md Mizanur Rahman, Abg Safuan, Sharifa Ezat, Razitasham Safi, Chen Yoke Yong, Rosalia Saimon, and Ting Chuong Hock, notes the increased necessity for adopting online interviews in qualitative research during the Covid-19 pandemic. The chapter discusses the challenges related to ensuring the validity of the interview protocol, especially when involving people with intellectual disabilities. The authors conducted a pilot test in an attempt to validate the interview protocol and to solidify the trustworthiness of the data. The authors discuss the experience and their findings.

Chapter 13: ‘Technology-Aided Programs to Support Leisure, Communication, and Daily Activities in People with Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities’, by Giulio E. Lancioni, Nirbhay N. Singh, Mark F. O’Reilly, Jeff Sigafoos, and Gloria Alberti, provides an overview of studies assessing technology-aided programs to promote independent leisure and communication or combinations of independent leisure, communication and daily activities in people with mild to moderate intellectual disability often associated with sensory and/or motor impairments. The chapter presents the studies’ programs and their outcomes and discusses three key challenges found within the studies.

Chapter 14: 'Virtual Qualitative Data Collection: A South African Autoethnographic Perspective', by Shantel Lewis, Charlene Downing, and Christopher M. Hayre, presents an account of virtual qualitative data collection using autoethnographic approaches. The chapter illustrates a PhD candidate's experience whilst conducting individual and focus group interviews virtually in a developing nation. The authors discuss the narrative and offer recommendations for conducting virtual qualitative data collection.

Chapter 15: 'Afterword', by Paul M. W. Hackett, Christopher M. Hayre, Ava Gordley-Smith, Marcia Scherer and Dave J. Muller, briefly discusses the authors' projections for the future of digital research tools in healthcare research. The authors share qualitative survey results to support their claims and present a forward-looking perspective to conclude the exchange of diverse views within this book.