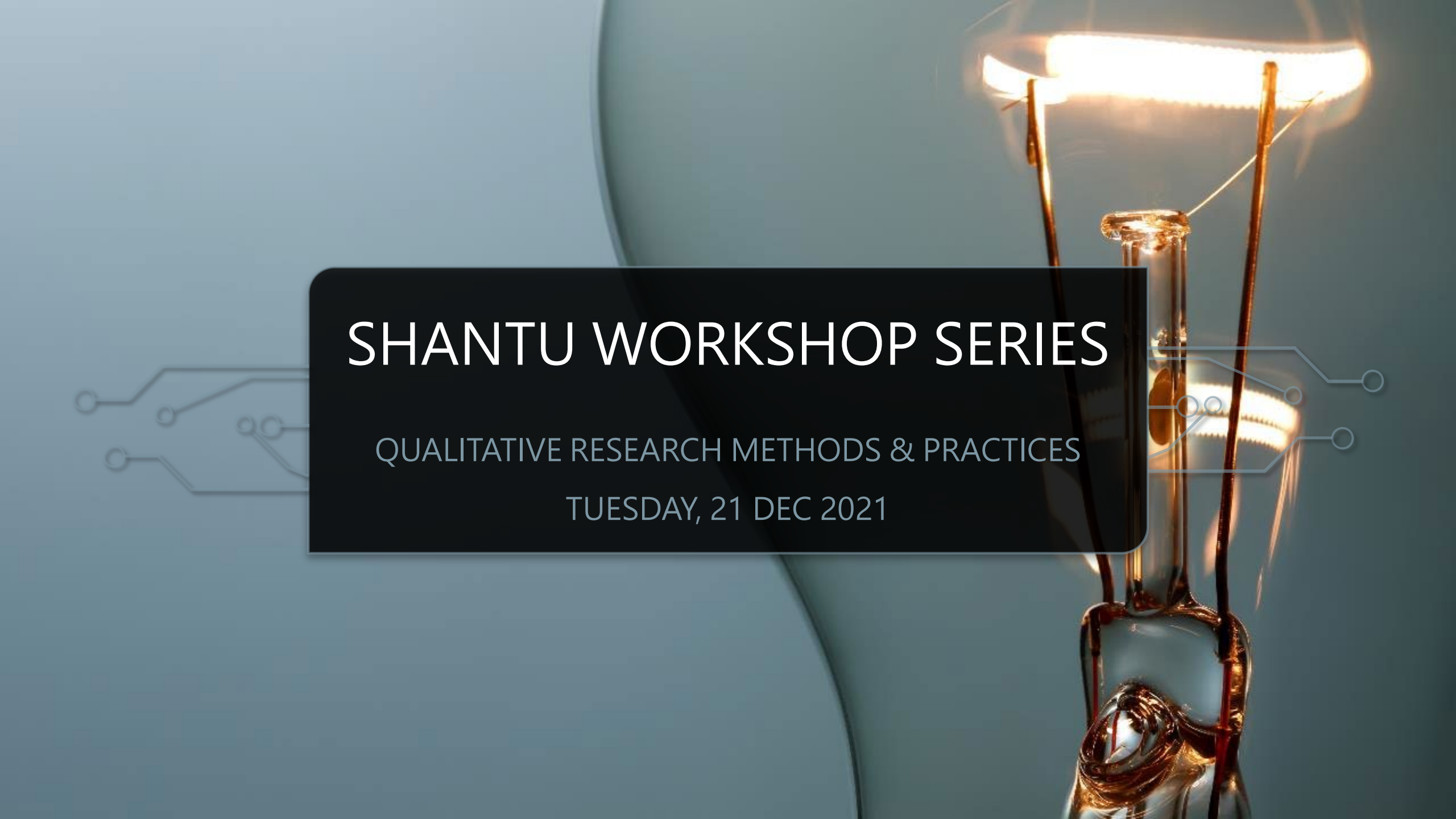


SHANTU WORKSHOP SERIES

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS & PRACTICES

TUESDAY, 21 DEC 2021

TYPES OF QUALITATIVE DATA (ALL NON-NUMERICAL DATA)

- Diary accounts
- Documents
- Case studies
- Photographs
- Audio recordings
- Video recordings
- Transcriptions
- Descriptive traits
- Descriptions
- Observations

INTERVIEWING

- Structured (survey & questionnaire)
  Semi-structured (open-ended questions)
  Unstructured (issue-oriented conversations)

- Types of questions:
  - Background or demographic
  - Behaviour and experience
  - Opinion and belief
  - Feelings and emotional responses
  - Knowledge

- Interviewing elites:
  - Strategies:
    - ‘insider-ness’
    - Reputation: credibility
    - Enthusiasm: generosity
    - Vulnerability: ‘voicing-out’
- Critical points:
  - Confidentiality
  - Anonymity
  - ‘Vulnerable elite’ participants

TECHNIQUES: INTERVIEW SKILLS

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- Looking carefully and critically at early transcripts (pilot study), ask yourself:

1. Did you interrupt?
2. Could you have left longer gaps for them to continue speaking?
3. Were there points that you could prompt for more information?
4. Did your questions appear judgemental, or too leading?

TIME MANAGEMENT

- Planning interviews:
  Access ➔ Setting ➔ Rapport ➔ Interview guide ➔ Body language ➔ Using prompts and probes
- Triangulation:
  - Reliability of notes
  - Credibility of information
- Transcribing interviews

GROUP INTERVIEWS

- Interaction between participants: How is social knowledge produced collaboratively?
- Important to plan:
  - Ice-breaking
  - Facilitator/moderator
  - Physical setting
  - Data recording & note taking
  - How to deal with sensitive issues e.g. trauma?

Interview type	Features	Typical uses
Consensus panel	Often composed of key informants or experts Seeks group consensus or normative reactions More narrow, closed-ended stimulus material	Agreeing clinical protocols, resource prioritization
Focus group	Participants selected to meet sampling criteria Seeks broad range of ideas of open-ended topic Formal, controlled pre-arranged time and place Usually audio-taped and transcribed for analysis	Testing health promotion materials, exploring service users' views
Natural group	Group exists independently of the research study Format formal or informal Interview guide loosely followed Usually recorded by written notes	Ethnographic data collection (informal), social research (formal)
Community interview	Open to all or large segments of a community Usually recorded by written notes	Project planning, programme evaluation

OBSERVATIONAL METHODS

- The usefulness of observation:
  - Data itself
  - Reference for triangulation
- Planning a PO:
  - Identifying a site
  - Access: gatekeepers
  - Taking notes
- Observing:
  - Particular social events
  - The events that precede and follow it
  - Explanations of its meaning by participants and spectators, before, during and after its occurrence.
- What to observe?
  - Settings: descriptions of whole sites
  - Participation
  - Relationships
  - Acts
  - Meanings
  - Activities

ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH:
FIELDWORK
+ PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION
+ INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

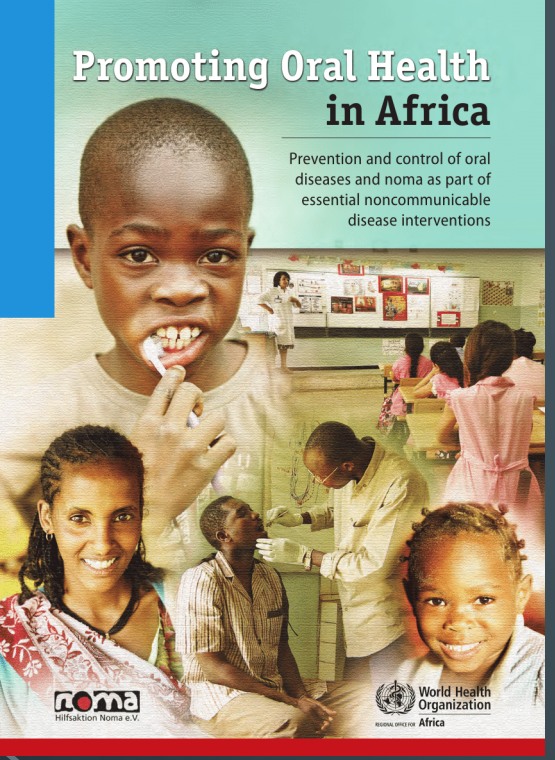
- To understand particular processes, events, ideas and practices in an informant's own terms rather than ours.

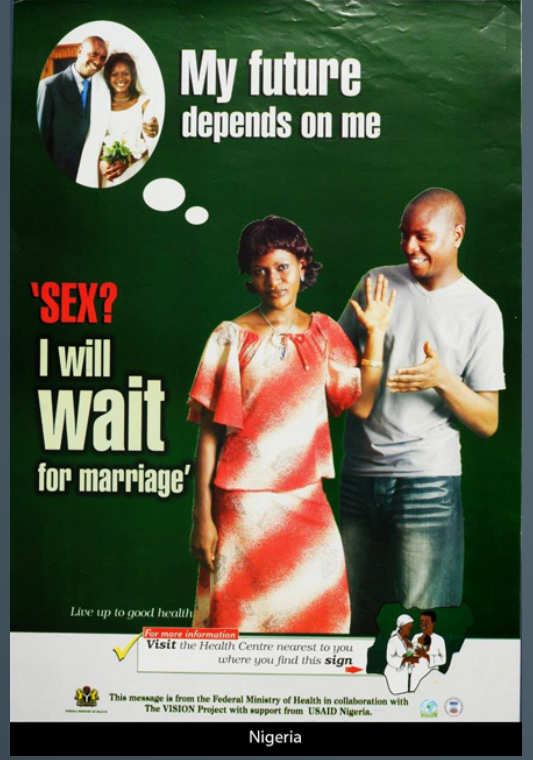
  - By building up relationships rather than making a single visit.

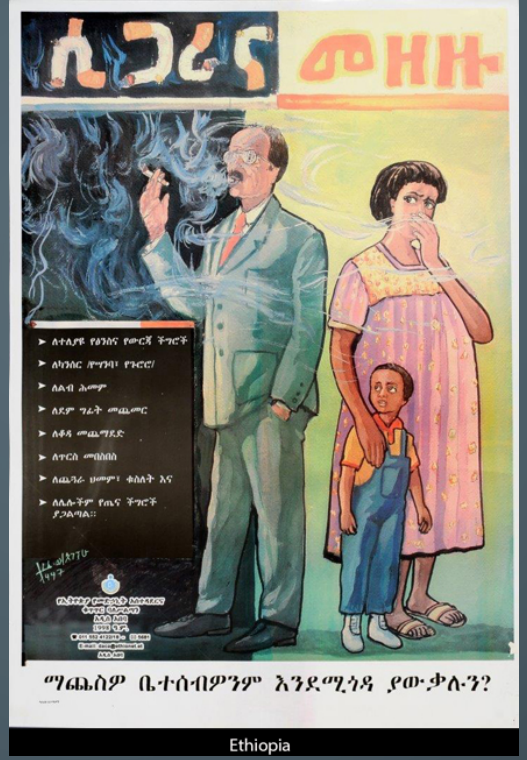
  - By spending time in ordinary conversation and interaction, preferably before introducing the more directed form of an interview.

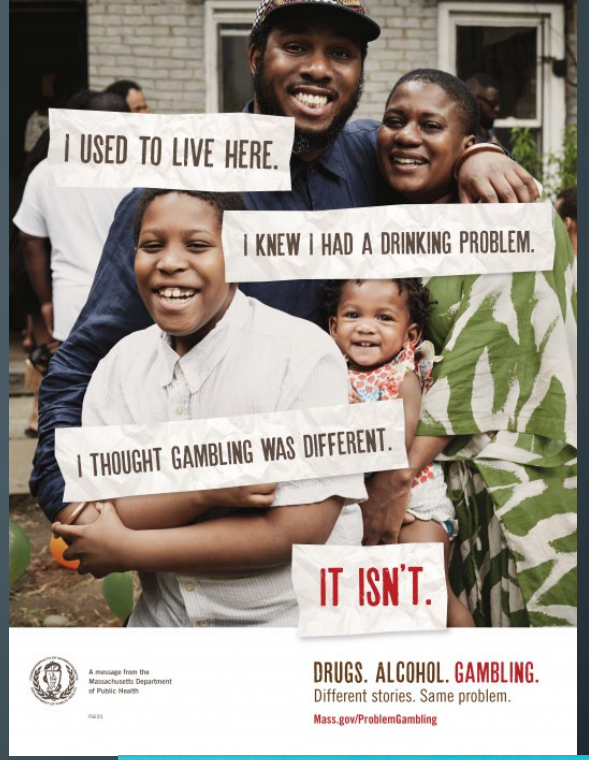
DOCUMENTS AS DATA

- Public records: official statistics (positivist), technologies of classification (social constructionism) e.g. ICD-10
- Personal documents: (auto)biographies, published diaries
- Media outputs: news reports, films, television programmes
  - Content analysis: quantity & frequency
  - Contextual analysis: quality & discourse
  - Audience analysis
- Research outputs: existing primary data, research reports









HEALTH PROMOTION MATERIAL

- Visualising health issues:
  - The messages themselves, and their framings
  - The target audience
  - The effectiveness of messages
  - The contexts in which they are produced

VISUAL RESEARCH METHODS FOR HEALTH

TYPES:

- Photovoice
- Selfies / photo diaries
- Videovoice
- Video diaries
- Autovideography

STRENGTHS:

- Rich descriptions
- Emic perspectives
- Comfortableness
- Empowering
- Readiness for advocacy and media material

CHALLENGES:

- Ethical concerns: confidentiality v. authority
- Desirability bias: authenticity ➔ triangulation
- Time consuming
- Material constraint: equipment, body, infrastructure

HOW TO TRANSCRIBE FIELDWORK DATA?

- Types of transcriptions:
  - Verbatim transcription: Transcribing every word, pause, stutter, and filler words, such as 'ahs' and 'ums'.
  - Intelligent transcription: Transcribing every word, but making an interpretation to exclude pauses, status, and filler words and potentially cleaning up the grammar.
  - Edited transcription: Transcribing with a target audience, editing to increase readability and clarity, by removing run-on sentences and grammatical errors, and summarising notes.