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Qualitative Data Analysis for Enrollment and Student Services

Why do we need to analyze qualitative data?

Camellia Inman
Strategic Planning and Assessment
Enrollment and Student Services

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*Excerpts taken directly or modified from 'Assessment Practice in Student Affairs' by Schuh & Upcraft, 2001;
'Analyzing Qualitative Data' by Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003*

Agenda

- What is qualitative data?
- How many students are needed for qualitative data?
- Why do we need qualitative data?
- How do we analyze qualitative data?
- What is the basic analysis approach?
- How do we use data analysis to improve?

What is qualitative data?

Words, Observations, Text or Narrative data

Notes from
Interviews
Documents
Reports
Articles

Open-ended
questions

Written
comments

Transcripts
from focus
groups

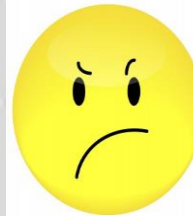
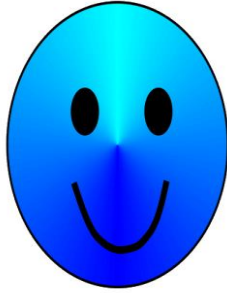
Discussion
groups

Reflections
Testimonials
Logs
Journals
Diaries

Perceptions
Observations
Stories
Case studies



How many students are needed for qualitative data?



How many students are needed for quantitative data?

| Population | Margin of Error (Confidence Interval) | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| | Note: Confidence Level - 95% | | |
| | 10% | 5% | 1% |
| 100 | 50 | 80 | 99 |
| 500 | 81 | 218 | 476 |
| 1,000 | 88 | 278 | 906 |
| 10,000 | 96 | 370 | 4,900 |
| 100,000 | 96 | 383 | 8,763 |
| 1,000,000+ | 97 | 384 | 9,513 |

<http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>

Why do we need qualitative data?

- Quantitative data answers ‘What’, it defines
- Qualitative data answers ‘ Why’, it describes
 - It provides that level of detail needed to make meaningful improvements.
- Both types – make for stronger assessment
- Just tests and exams are not enough

Why do we need qualitative data analysis?

It brings order and understanding

How do we analyze qualitative data?

Organize your data

- If you have specific outcomes or a demonstration of knowledge
 - Use either a rubric or checklist to analyze what you've found
- If you are searching for information regarding a topic, but have no particular criteria
 - Use open coding – pulls themes from the data

What is a basic analysis approach?

- Open coding – determining themes and sub-themes from within the data
- Content analysis – determining how often themes and patterns occur

How do we use data analysis to improve?

- Identify an opportunity for improvement
 - 2011 SENSE Survey, only 31% of entering student respondents indicated they were provided adequate financial aid information
- Gather qualitative data (focus groups, written feedback, reflections, etc. to gain clarity)
 - Focus group conducted – summer 2012
- Research best practices
 - FA Division determined the best approach
- Develop improvement strategy
 - FA 101 Workshops
- Implement improvement strategy
 - 2012-13 over 22 workshops conducted for over 200 students
- Evaluate and assess strategy
 - 2012 SENSE Survey – 45%
 - 2013 SENSE Survey – 48%

How do we use data analysis to improve?

- Identify an opportunity for improvement
 - New Student Orientation (NSO)
- Gather qualitative data (focus groups, written feedback, reflections, etc. to gain clarity)
 - spring 2012
- Research best practices
 - Group of advisors in March 2012
- Develop improvement strategy
 - 90 minute “Know and Go’ orientation developed
- Implement improvement strategy
 - Over 100 orientation sessions conducted in fall 2012
- Evaluate and assess strategy
 - fall 2012 to fall 2014
 - Participation increased from 832 to 2,457 students
 - NSO participation persistence rate - 43%
 - Non-NSO new student persistence rate – 30%

How will you use qualitative data analysis to improve?