



Qualitative Methods for Practice Research (Pocket Guide to Social Work Research Methods)

Jeffrey Longhofer, Jerry Floersch, Janet Hoy

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Qualitative methods have become increasingly popular among researchers, and while many comprehensive textbooks describe the standard techniques and philosophical assumptions, it is often assumed that practitioners are consumers of research and not producers. This innovative book describes how qualitative methods can be used to investigate the in-vivo use of theory in social work practice. It offers not just a comprehensive overview of methods, but a concise, accessible guide focused on how to study and explicate application of theory, and the creative tension that inevitably exists between theory and practice. Theory-to-practice gaps are indispensable conditions for conducting engaged scholarship, which in turn promotes collaboration between researchers and practitioners in addressing practice-related problems in real-world settings.

Engaged scholarship and critical realist assumptions are applied to three case studies that combine research questions with data collection techniques and analytic strategies. Thematic, grounded theory, and narrative research techniques are all illustrated, including original quick-start instructions for using ATLAS.ti software. Institutional ethnography is also presented as a method that is particularly useful for social work practice settings.

By generating knowledge of practice in open and natural systems, qualitative methods can be used to examine how practice is experienced and how interventions may be understood and transformed. This cutting-edge pocket guide will equip practitioner-scholars with the foundation for conducting research that makes a difference.

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