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Qualitative methods: beyond the cookbook. FREE

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Qualitative methods appear increasingly in vogue in health services research (HSR). Such research, however, has utilized, often uncritically, a 'cookbook' of methods for data collection, and common-sense principles for data analysis. **RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS:** This paper argues that qualitative HSR benefits from recognizing and drawing upon theoretical principles underlying qualitative data collection and analysis. A distinction is drawn between problem-orientated and theory-orientated research, in order to illustrate how problem-orientated research would benefit from the introduction of theoretical perspectives in order to develop the knowledge base of health services research.

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