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Dissertation projects:
introduction to secondary analysis
for quantitative and qualitative data

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UK Data Service

26 May 2020

Overview

- What is secondary analysis?
- Types of projects
  - Re-analysis
  - Replication study
  - Comparative analysis
  - Re-study
- Ethical issues
  - Access and licensing
  - Citation
- Methodological issues
  - Recontextualising
  - Sampling
  - Writing up
- Further resources

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A note on terminology

A Reflexive Account of Reusing Qualitative Data: Beyond Primary/Secondary Dualism

by Libby Bishop
University of Essex

Abstract

Though secondary analysis of qualitative data is becoming more prevalent, relatively few methodological studies exist that provide reflection on the actual, not idealised, process. This paper offers a reflexive account of secondary analysis focused on the topic of convenience food and choice. Several phases of the research process are examined: understanding context, defining a subject area, finding data and sampling, later sampling and topic refinement, and relating to transcripts. For each phase, I explore if reusing data is different from using it in the first instance, and if so, how those differences manifest themselves. The paper closes with reflections on the differences, similarities, and relationships between primary and secondary analysis of qualitative data. Although differences exist regarding the researcher-respondent relationship, primary and secondary analyses are more alike than not. The suitability of each approach can only be assessed in light of a particular research question.

Introduction

"It is scary to reveal how your mind works" (First entry, personal research diary, BSA food

What is the UK Data Service?

- a comprehensive resource funded by the ESRC

- a single point of access to a wide range of secondary social science data

- support, training and guidance

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Who is it for?

- Academic researchers and students

- Government analysts

- Charities and foundations

- Business consultants

- Independent research centres

- Think tanks

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Types of data collections

- Survey microdata
  - Cross-sectional
  - Panel / Longitudinal

- Aggregate statistics
  - International macrodata

- Census data
  - Aggregate data for 1971 -2011
  - Microdata for 1991, 2001 and 2011

- Qualitative and mixed methods data

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Sources of data

- Official agencies – mainly central government

- International statistical time series

- Research institutions

- Individual academics - research grants

- Market research agencies

- Public records/historical sources

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http://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk

The research process

Define the research problem

Locate and assess date

(Formulate a

Review the literature

Design research

Design research

Analyse data

Interpret/report

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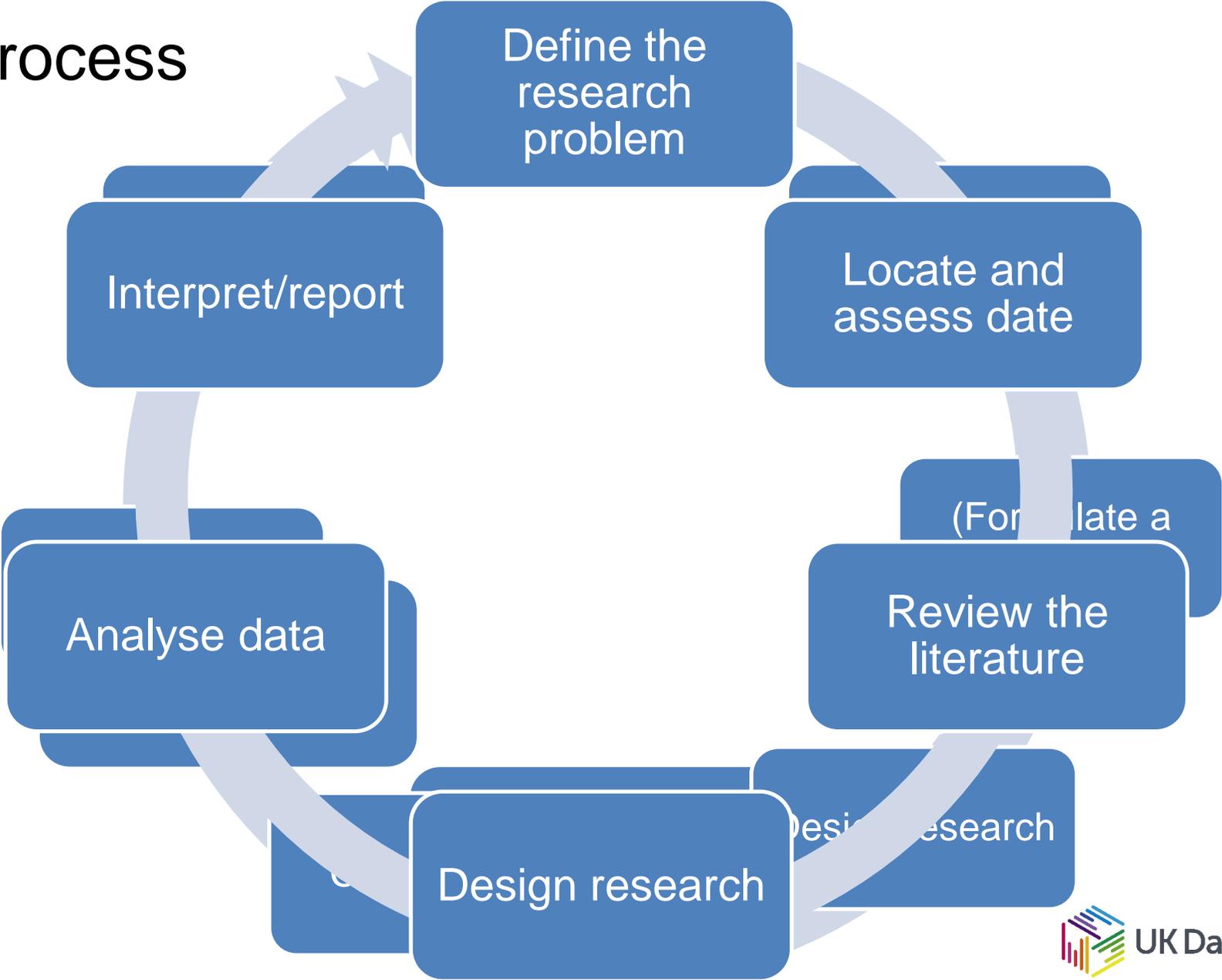
Re-use projects

- Re-analysis
  - Very different – comparative keyword analysis of illness narratives Seale and Charteris-Black (2008)
  - "Similar" topics, but with different focus (Bornat et al. 2012)
- Replication study
  - Reinhart and Rogoff controversy – PG student found flaw in dataset which completely changed results
- Comparative study
  - Key data quickly signposts you to national surveys: https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/key-data.aspx
- Re-study
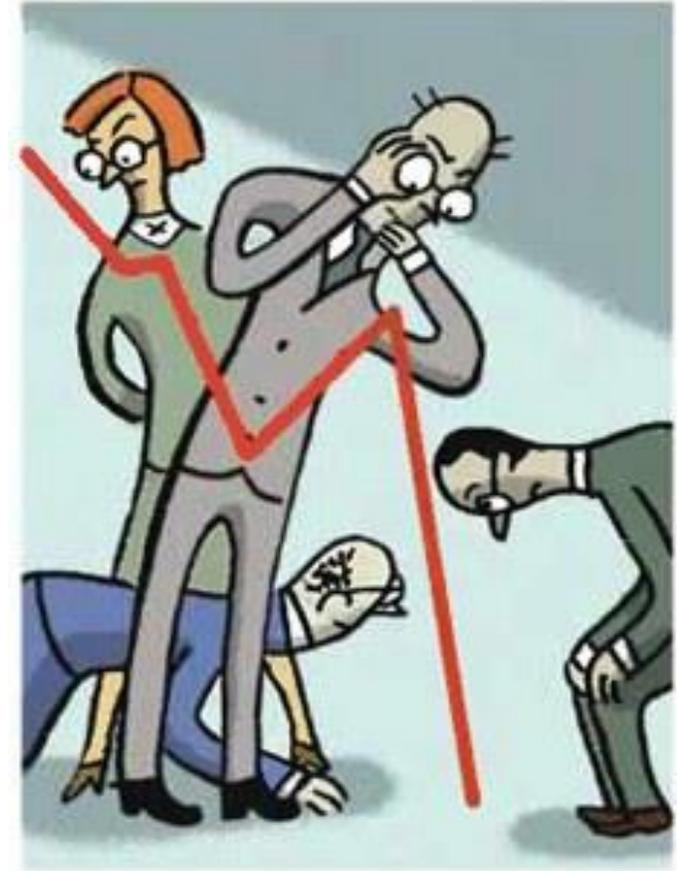
The New Yorker (2013)

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Re-study: School Leavers Study

Principal investigator: Ray Pahl

In 1978, teachers at a comprehensive school on the Isle of Sheppey were asked to set an essay about 10 days before pupils were due to leave school. The essay asked students to imagine that they were nearing the end of their life, and that something had made them think back to the time when they left school. They were then asked to write an imaginary account of their life over the next 30 or 40 years.

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School Leavers Re-Study: Imagining the Future

Re-users: Graham Crow and Dawn Lyon

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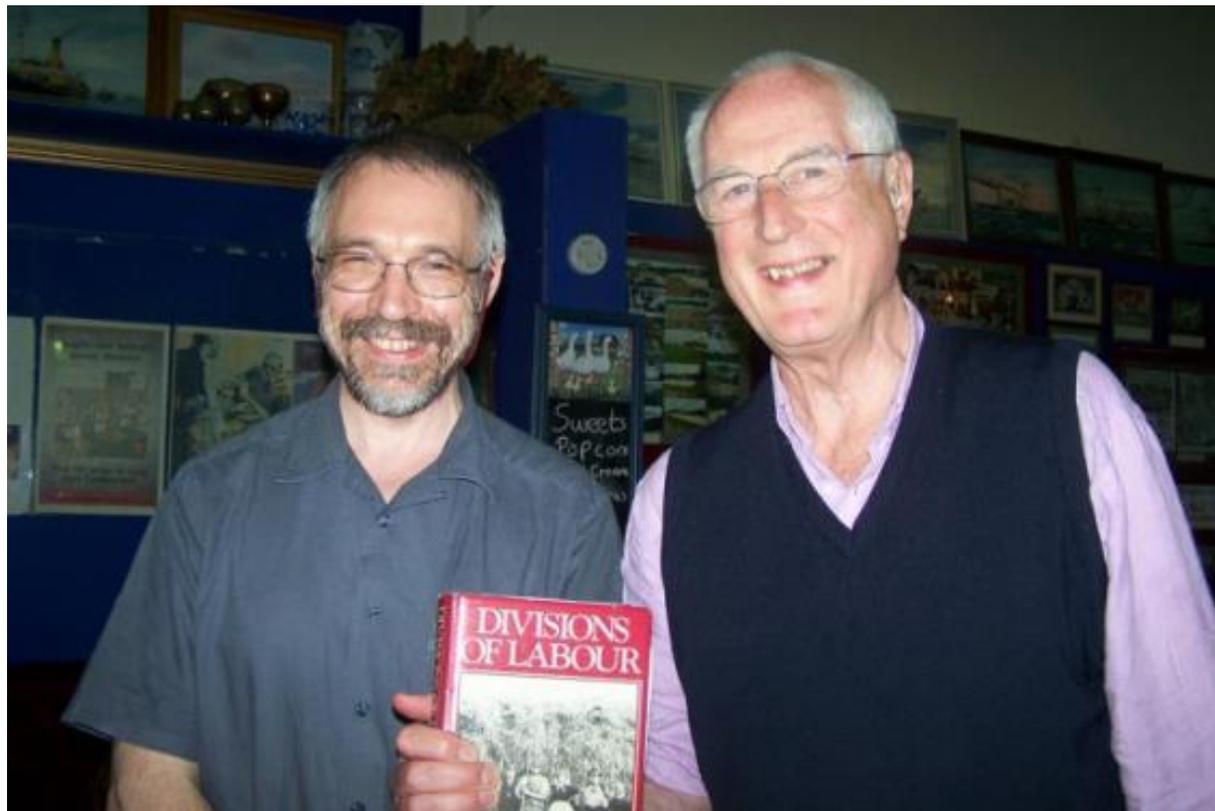
School Leavers Re-Study

Essay instructions 2009: Imagining the Future:

I want you to imagine that you are towards the end of your life. Look back over your life and say what happened to you. Don't write a very exaggerated story, just tell the straightforward story of your life as it might really be. Of course you cannot know what is going to happen to you, but you can describe the sort of thing that could happen if things go as you expect or hope. Spread your story over your whole life from the time of leaving school. Continue on another sheet as necessary.

Sheppey: Essay 30
Group: Boys

My Past

I was sitting in front of the fire smoking my pipe, just thinking of the past. I was nearly seventeen when I left school, I had an apprenticeship in the Tudor Glass, an electrical apprenticeship lasting four years, I served my four years and got my diploma for an electrical engineer. I was now twenty and courting a rearly lovely girl. I had to work in London in my next job and came back home every weekend. Jobs were scarce so you had to take what you can get, I didn't want to go to London,

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1978 Mundane & grounded jobs; gradual career progression; periods of unemployment.	2010 Well-paid, instantaneous jobs; choice but uncertainty; influence of celebrity culture.
"It was hard finding a job, I failed a few chances, but eventually got what I wanted locally, a craft apprenticeship." (Essay 27, male)	"I could not decide what to do. Then it came across my mind that I should be a body builder, and be good enough to enter the Mr Olympia contest. After that I went to an athletics club, within a few months I was scouted for the Olympics for the 200 metre sprint." (Essay 10, male)
"I was on the dole for six months after leaving school, until I got a job in a garage." (Essay 42, male)	"I was 20 now living the dream I had a amazing band...I had toured the world 3 times sold 4 million records." (Essay 30, male)
"When we found a house it was a semi-detached in Sittingbourne. I wanted to live in Italy but that was asking for too much." (Essay 56, male)	"I arrive at my 3-bedroom luxury villa; I land my helicopter on my own heli-pad and walk inside. I grab my keys and jump in my Bentley Continental GTS." (Essay 40, male)
"I longed for something exciting and challenging. But yet again I had to settle for second best. I began working in a large clothes factory." (Essay 104, female)	"In my future I want to become either: a dance teacher, hairdresser, or a Professional Show Jumper/horse rider. If I do become a dancer my dream would be to dance for Beyoncé or someone really famous." (Essay 61, female)

Living and Working on Sheppey

Welcome to the Living and Working on Sheppey: Past, Present and Future project website.

Living and Working on Sheppey explores the recent history and changes in working lives on Sheppey in the last decades of the 20th century and into the 21st. It concentrates on the period since the closure of the dockyard at Sheerness in 1960.

The site contains **materials from older people and their memories of work** in or around the dockyard and everyday life in Blue Town, the area of Sheerness closed to the dockyard. You can listen to clips of these interviews on different themes including the closure of the Dockyard, various trades, and changes in family life across different generations, and you can read the interviews in full (you need to register to do that).

You can read and listen to **short essays written by young people** in 2009-10 on what they imagine their futures have in store for them. They talk about their hopes and aspirations for their working lives, families, and travel as well as some of the difficulties they foresee.

You can watch the **two videos made by the artists, Tea**, as part of the Living and Working on Sheppey project. In 'Back and Forth on High Street Blue Town' you can see images of Blue Town High Street past, present – and future! And you can hear older people's memories of everyday life on the High Street through the twentieth century. In 'Sheerness Port', you can

Home

Project overview

Project team

The Isle of Sheppey: context

The Isle of Sheppey: gallery

Older people's memories

Young people and the future

Blue Town High Street: a video by Tea

Sheerness Port: a video by Tea

Lessons learned

Get involved

1978 Essay Writers Facebook Page

Access to data

Presentations and events

Publications and publicity

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1. to use the data in accordance with the EUL and to notify the UK Data Service of any non-compliance you are aware of
2. not to use the data for commercial purposes without obtaining permission and, where relevant, an appropriate licence if commercial use of the data is required
3. that the EUL does not transfer any interest in intellectual property to you
4. that the EUL and data collections are provided without warranty or liability of any kind
5. to abide by any further conditions notified to you
6. to give access to the data collections only to registered users with a registered use (who have accepted the terms and conditions, including any relevant further conditions). There are some exceptions regarding the use of data collections for teaching and the use of data collections for Commercial purposes set out in an additional Commercial Licence
7. to ensure that the means of access to the data (such as passwords) are kept secure and not disclosed to anyone else
8. to preserve the confidentiality of, and not attempt to identify, individuals, households or organisations in the data
9. to use the correct methods of citation and acknowledgement in publications
10. to send the UK Data Service bibliographic details of any published work based on our data collections
11. that personal data about you may be held for validation and statistical purposes and to manage the service, and that these will only be passed on to the following, in specific circumstances: the data collection depositor, your own institute or your research funder
12. to notify the UK Data Service of any errors discovered in the data collections
13. that personal data submitted by you are accurate to the best of your knowledge and kept up to date by you
14. to meet any charges that may apply
15. to offer for deposit any new data collections which have been derived from the materials supplied
16. will destroy *all* copies of the data to the standards specifield in point 1.16
17. will ensure that the data are destroyed to the standards specified in the Microdata Handling and Security: Guide to Good Practice
18. that any non-compliance of the EUL will lead to immediate termination of your access to the services and could result in legal action against you

Golden rules
of secondary analysis

1. No onward sharing of data, even with your supervisor.
2. All anonymized data needs to stay anonymous.

(If data comes doesn't come from an archive with a data access policy, then check the terms and conditions of usage to see how data can be used and still abide by the above rules.)

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https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/citethedata.aspx

Citation and copyright ⌄

The citation for this study is:

NatCen Social Research. (2020). *British Social Attitudes Survey, 2018*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8606, http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8606-1

Select citation format:

APA ▾

XML citation formats:

CSL | EndNote

Citing a dataset correctly is just as important as citing articles, books, images and websites.

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Getting started with documentation

- Use documentation to re-contextualise your data and better understand the limitations and opportunities of the data.

- Re-contextualise at different levels, including
  - Study level
  - Data level
  - Participant level

- Find out more about study-level and data-level documentation: https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/document.aspx

Health Survey for England, 2010

| Details | Documentation | Resources | | Access data |

Documentation

Title	File name	Size (MB)
"Interviewer, Nurse, Coding and Editing Instructions"	6986supportingdocs.pdf	4.26
"Questionnaires, Showcards, Coding Frames and Consent Booklets"	6986interviewingdocs.pdf	5.87
Additional data for renal analysis	6986userguide_renal_analysis_2009_2010.pdf	0.55
Lists of Variables and Derived Variables	6986datadocs.pdf	3.38
Study information and citation	UKDA_Study_6986_Information.htm	0.01
UKDA Information for Study 6986	read6986.htm	0.01
User Guide	6986userguide.pdf	0.73

ervice

Case Study: April Gallwey

> By considering the oral history archive as an ongoing, creative project - beyond the recorded interview - we are implicated as users in its potential to assist sociological and historical imagination.

The rewards of using archived oral histories in research: the case of the Millennium Memory Bank

by April Gallwey

Abstract: This article is about using archived oral histories in research. It advocates greater exploration of oral history archives in the UK in light of burgeoning research into the history of post-war society and the social sciences. Drawing on the author's experience of utilising interviews from the Millennium Memory Bank (MMB), it offers a critical reflection on the rewards of using this particular archive from the perspective of a social historian. Although the challenges of working with the MMB are noted, its unprecedented scale, and incorporation of the 'life history' method, demonstrate its value as a source for historical enquiry. The author highlights the importance of summaries and supporting literature attached to interviews to assist with accessibility and contextualisation, envisioning the archive as an ongoing process, whereby original and subsequent researchers ensure its legacy.

Key words: oral history archives, social history, life history interview, Millennium Memory Bank, re-use, secondary analysis, single motherhood

During the course of the 20th century, increasing amounts of qualitative data collected by social scientists – field notes, interview transcripts, letters, drafts and the like – have been collected and archived. [...] Until recently these documents were largely ignored: social scientists did not know how to use them since they did not conform to standardized norms from which trends could be inferred. Historians did not have the experience of using such sources and in many cases were ignorant about them.[1]

In this statement, Mike Savage captures how the trail of the social scientist alters our gaze onto the historical landscape of the twentieth century. At the same time he foregrounds how a reluctance amongst social scientists to conduct secondary analysis of qualitative data and the negation of such sources by many historians, has until relatively recently, left these sources under-utilised.[2] Savage has argued for greater inclusion of archived qualitative data and demonstrated how social research archives, such as the Mass Observation Archive (MOA), profoundly illuminate historical shifts at the socio-cultural level. Savage's most recent work places the social science archive at the heart of his project for a historical sociology of the post-war years.[3] Debate about re-use of data has been circulating amongst sociologists for some time, generating a very substantial body of literature.[4] Although there has been a recent turn to archived social scientific data amongst historians – Paul Thompson has highlighted the multi-

Sampling

- Select a subgroup based on shared social characteristics or a probability sampling procedure
- Mix and match from different collections into a customized dataset for your project
  - For quantitative projects, you'll need to harmonize data to ensure validity
  - For qualitative projects, consider study-level context to ensure data are comparable

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Writing-up

The Lone Mother Resilience Project: A Qualitative Secondary Analysis

Elizabeth C. Watters, Sara J. Cumming & Lea Caragata

FORUM: QUALITATIVE SOCIAL RESEARCH SOZIALFORSCHUNG

Volume 19, No. May 2018

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Mental health and the jilted generation: Using age-period-cohort analysis to assess differential trends in young people's mental health following the Great Recession and austerity in England

Rachel M. Thomson[a,b,*], Srinivasa Vittal Katikireddi[a]

2. Methods

2.1. Study design

We used repeat cross-sectional data from the Health Survey for England (HSE), a multi-stage stratified random sample designed to be nationally and regionally representative, spanning 1991 to 2014. Details of the HSE have been published elsewhere (Mindell et al., 2012). Response levels have fallen over time but plateaued recently, remaining reasonably high at 62% in 2014 compared with 68% in 2006 (NatCen Social Research, 1991–2014). Weights for non-response were available from 2003. Relevant data were available for all years except 1996, 2007, 2011 and 2013 when the outcome measure was not administered.

The HSE has run for a considerable time using standardised methods with frequent data collection, allowing consideration of long-term trends. Cross-sectional rather than longitudinal data were used to allow inclusion of birth cohorts who only reached the age of 16 years during the study period, and so would not have been eligible for initial recruitment to longitudinal cohort studies of adults. This approach also avoided residual confounding that could occur using panel data which include whole households for age-period-cohort analysis, as children in included households who are subsequently followed up as adults are likely to share many genetic and environmental influences with others in their household.

Further resources

Timescapes Methods Guides Series:
http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/about/timescapes-methods-guide-series.html

Secondary Analysis of Quantitative Data Sources:
https://methods.sagepub.com/book/the-sage-handbook-of-social-research-methods/n31.xml

Data Skills modules:
https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/use-data/data-skills-modules

UK Data Service video tutorials:
https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/use-data/tutorials.aspx

What is secondary analysis?
https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/use-data/secondary-analysis.aspx

UK Data Service: Tools and templates:
https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/tools-and-templates.aspx

Get connected

http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/about-us/contact.aspx

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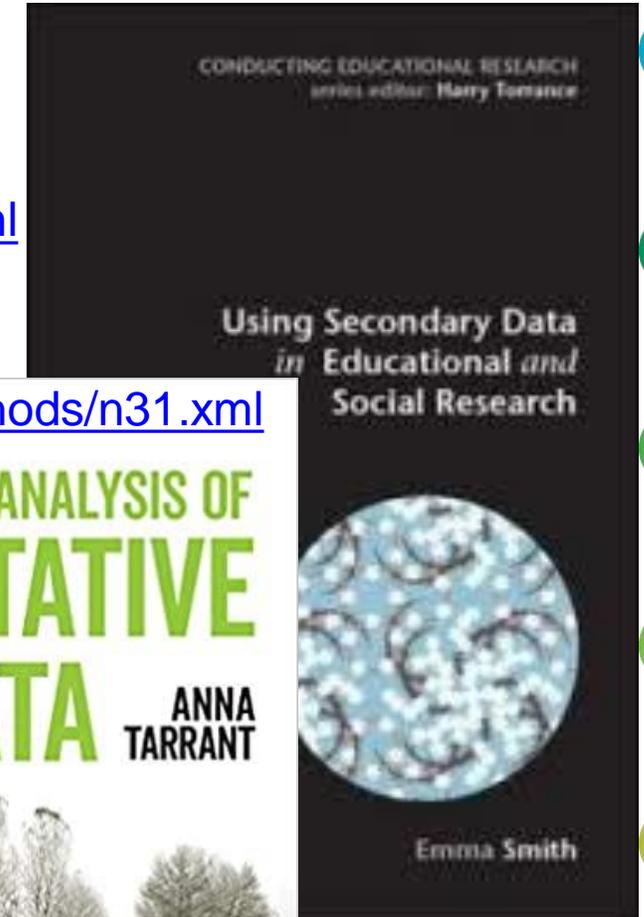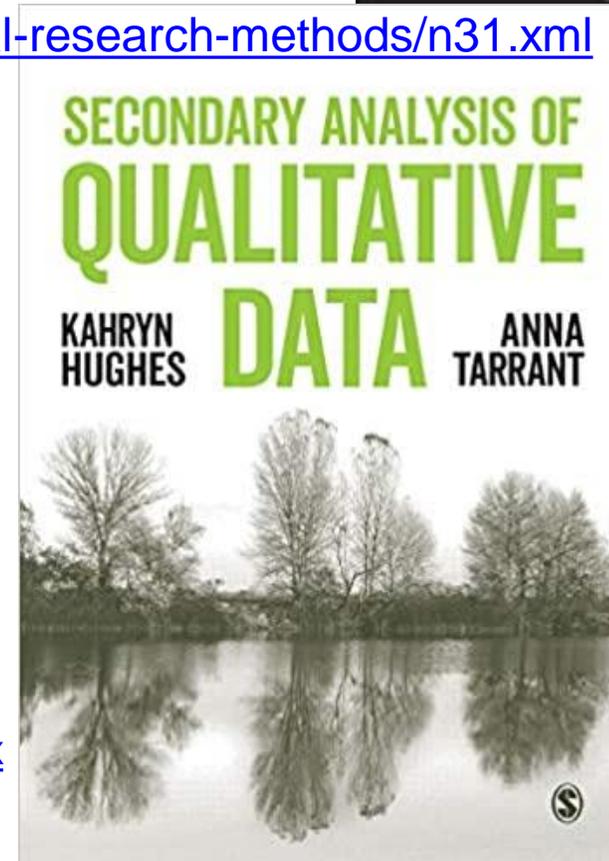
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Questions

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