

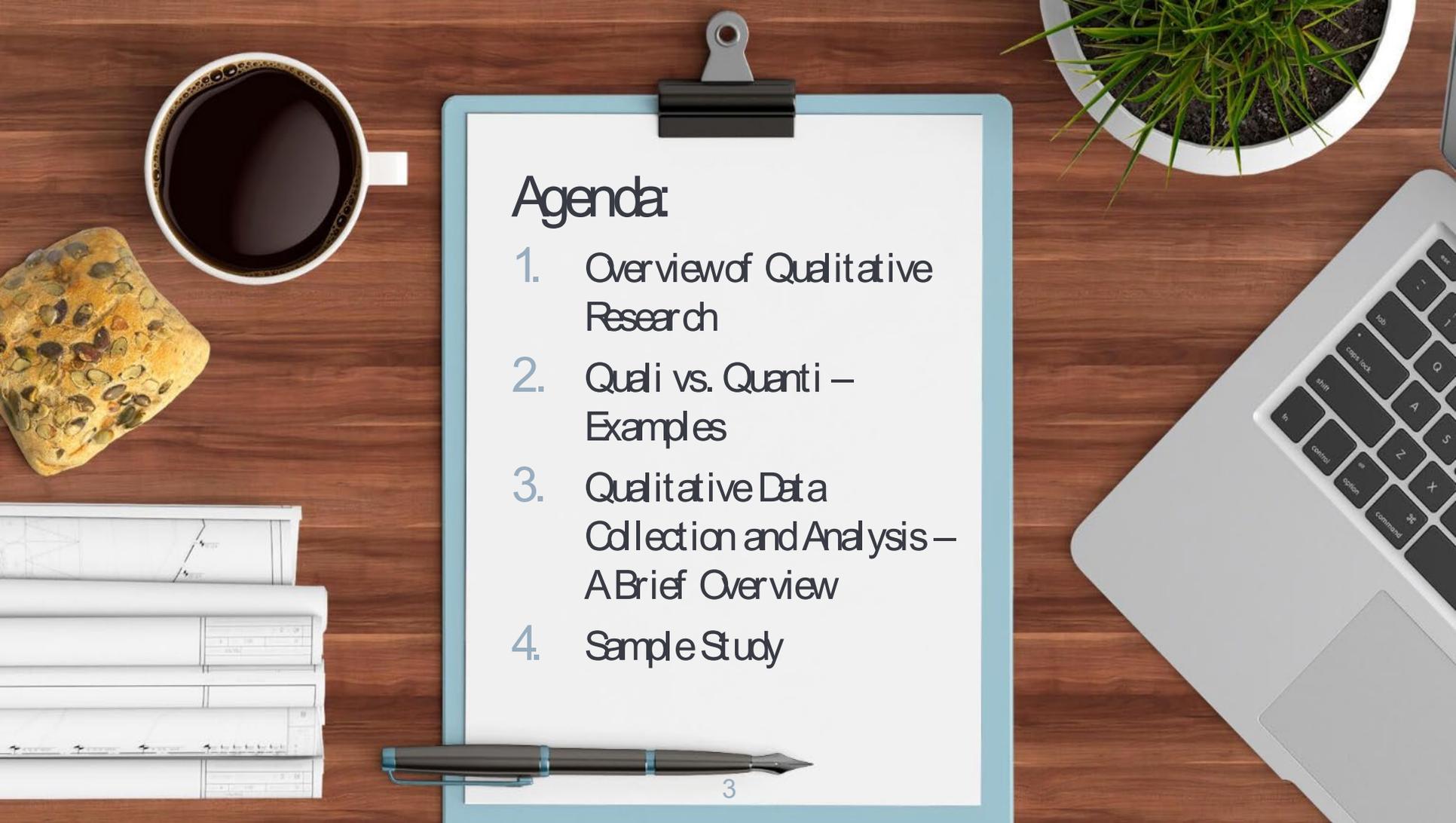
Qualitative Research Methods in Educational Research

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objectives

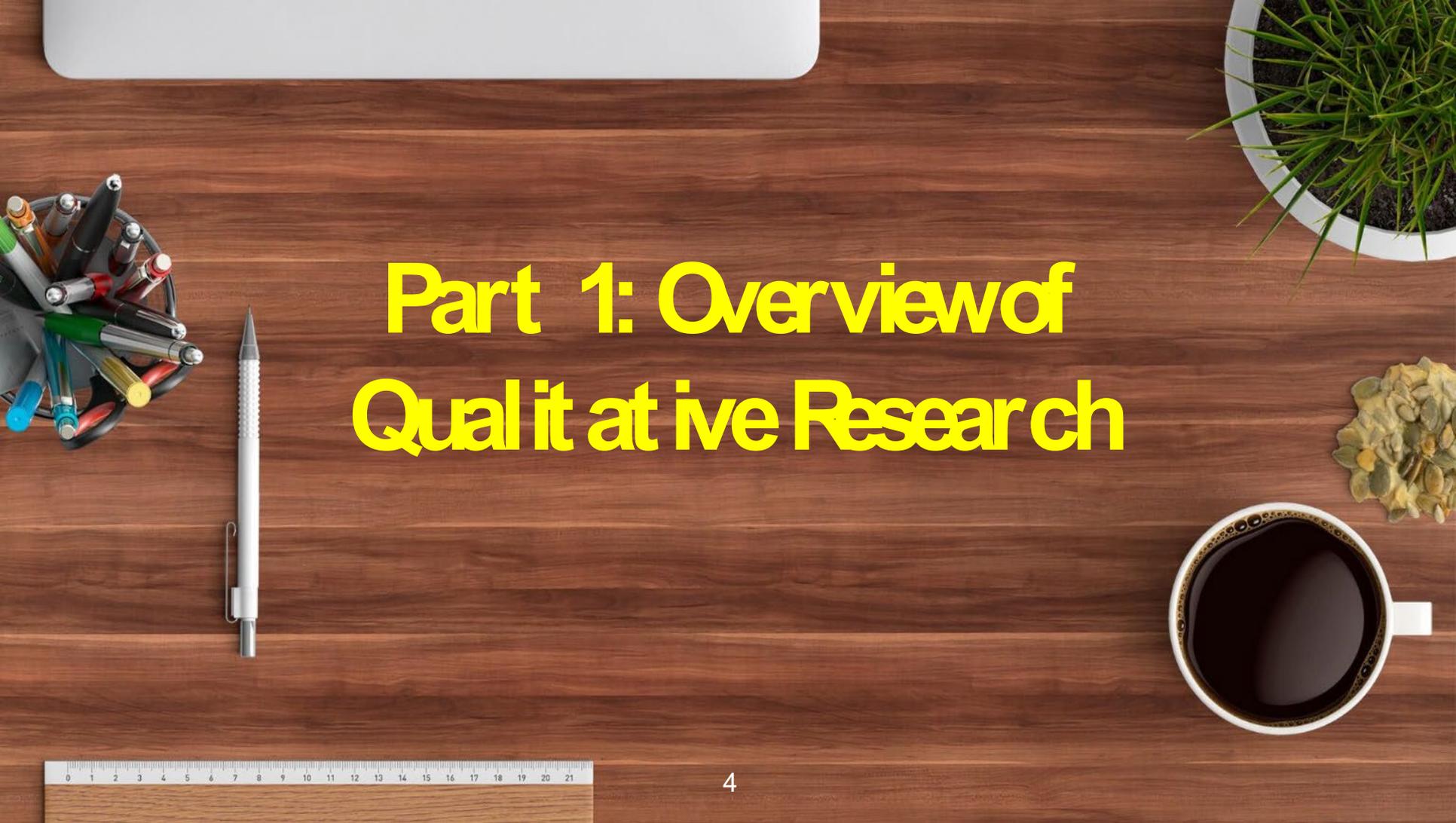
What we hope to achieve by the end of the talk:

- > A general overview of qualitative research
- > A basic understanding of the major differences between qualitative and quantitative research
- > A desire to learn more about qualitative research and consider using it for your work

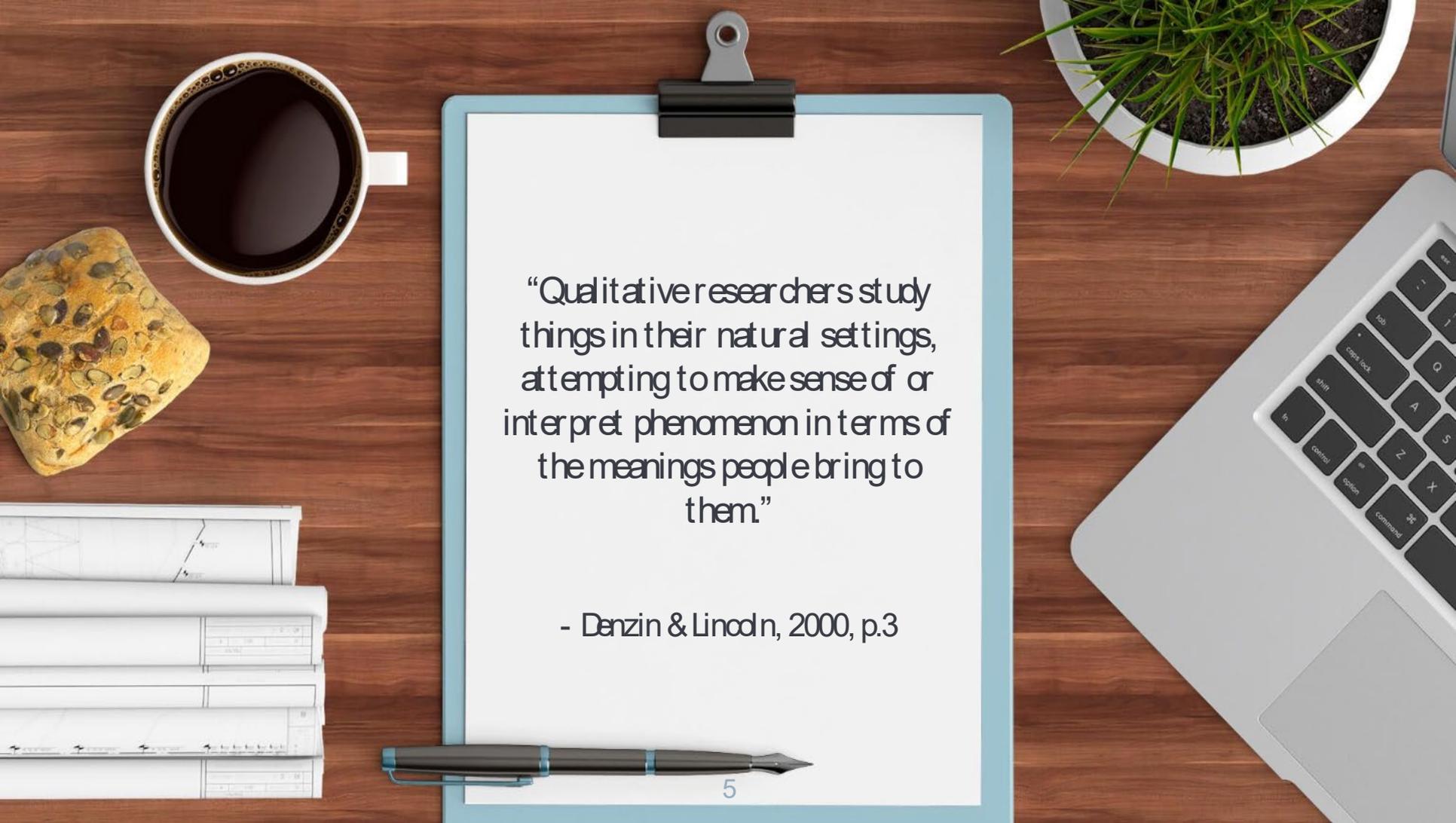


Agenda:

1. Overview of Qualitative Research
2. Quali vs. Quanti – Examples
3. Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis – A Brief Overview
4. Sample Study



Part 1: Overview of Qualitative Research



“Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them.”

- Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3

Researching Meaning...

- > Words and experiences don't contain inherent meanings, people give meaning to them
- > To understand human behavior we need to make sense of the meanings people attribute to their social world



18. Equipment and technology used supported the learning activities in this course.

In the space below please write any comments about physical facilities or use of equipment and technology.

Summary Question

19. Overall, how would you rate your learning experience in this course?

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

In the space below please write any overall comments about this course or instructor not covered above.

If I had one hour to live, I'd spend it in this class because it feels like an eternity.

Additional Questions (if separate sheet is provided)

20 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

23 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

26 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

29 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

32 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

21 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

24 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

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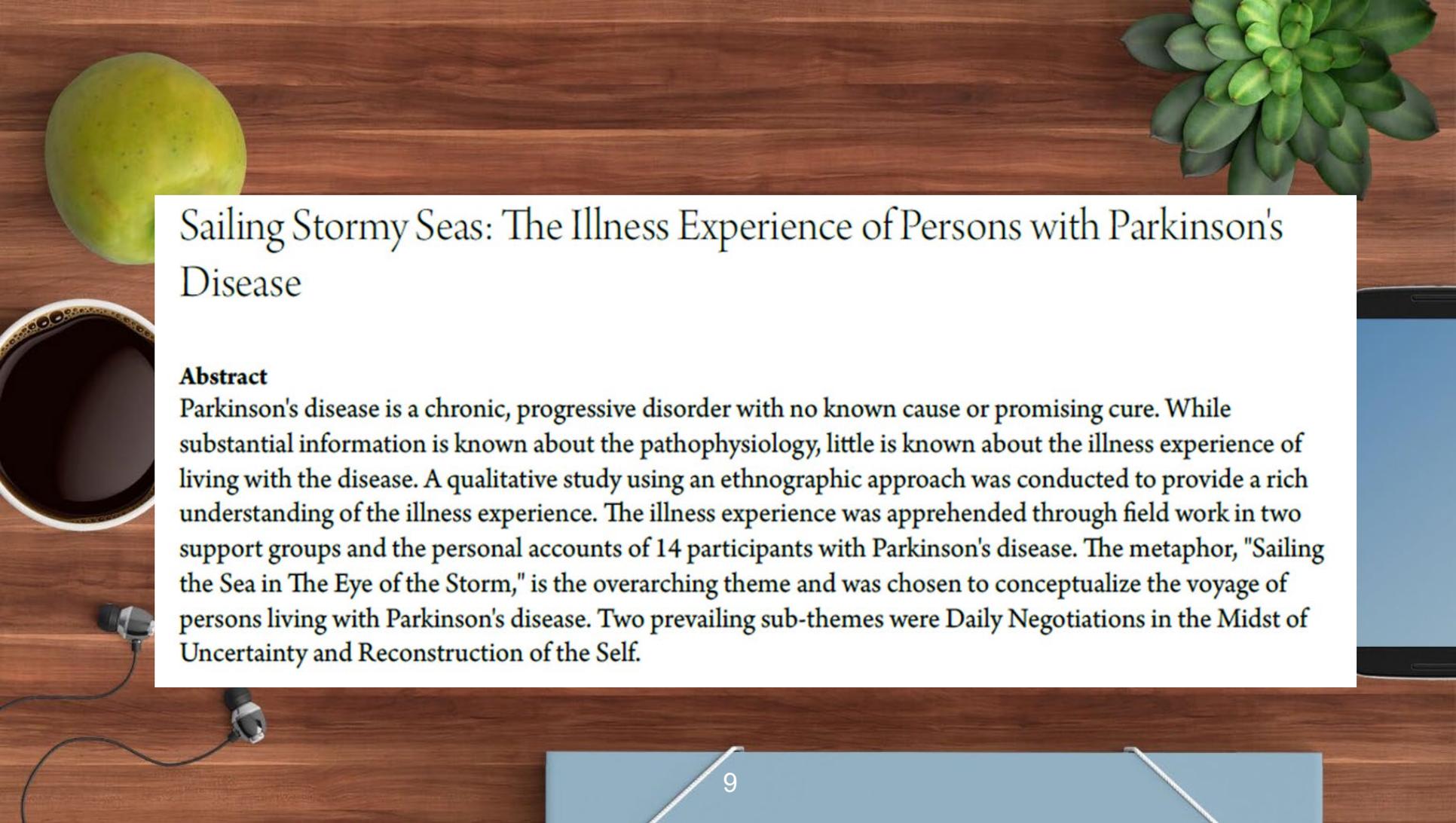
31 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

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The Nature of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive **narrative data** in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest

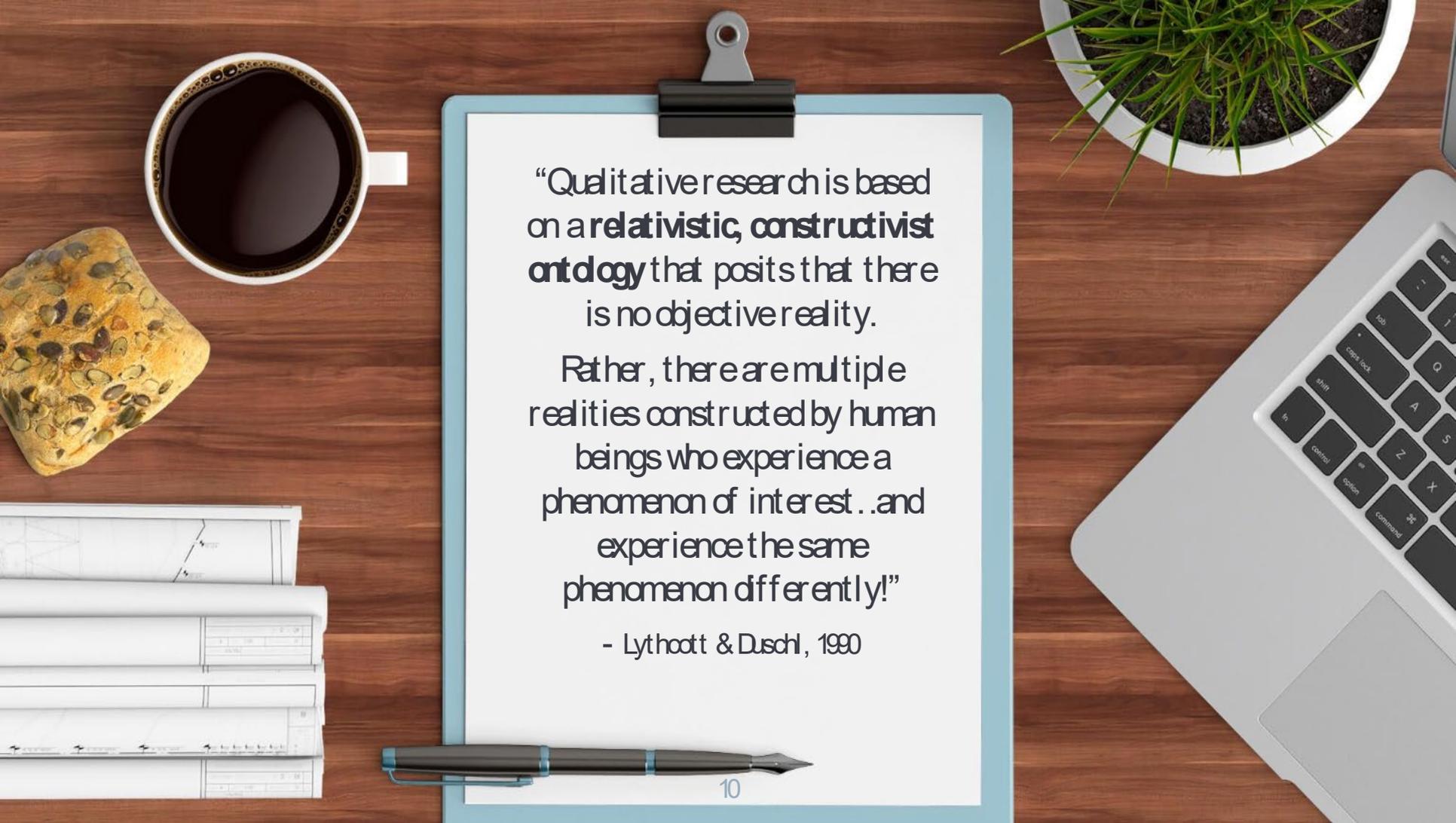
- Useful for answering questions about participants and contexts
- Answers the 'what,' 'why' and 'how' research questions

A top-down view of a wooden desk. In the top left is a green apple. In the top right is a green succulent plant. In the middle left is a white cup of dark coffee. In the middle right is a smartphone. At the bottom center is a blue rectangular area with a white number 9.

Sailing Stormy Seas: The Illness Experience of Persons with Parkinson's Disease

Abstract

Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive disorder with no known cause or promising cure. While substantial information is known about the pathophysiology, little is known about the illness experience of living with the disease. A qualitative study using an ethnographic approach was conducted to provide a rich understanding of the illness experience. The illness experience was apprehended through field work in two support groups and the personal accounts of 14 participants with Parkinson's disease. The metaphor, "Sailing the Sea in The Eye of the Storm," is the overarching theme and was chosen to conceptualize the voyage of persons living with Parkinson's disease. Two prevailing sub-themes were Daily Negotiations in the Midst of Uncertainty and Reconstruction of the Self.



“Qualitative research is based on a **relativistic, constructivist ontology** that posits that there is no objective reality.

Rather, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest . . . and experience the same phenomenon differently!”

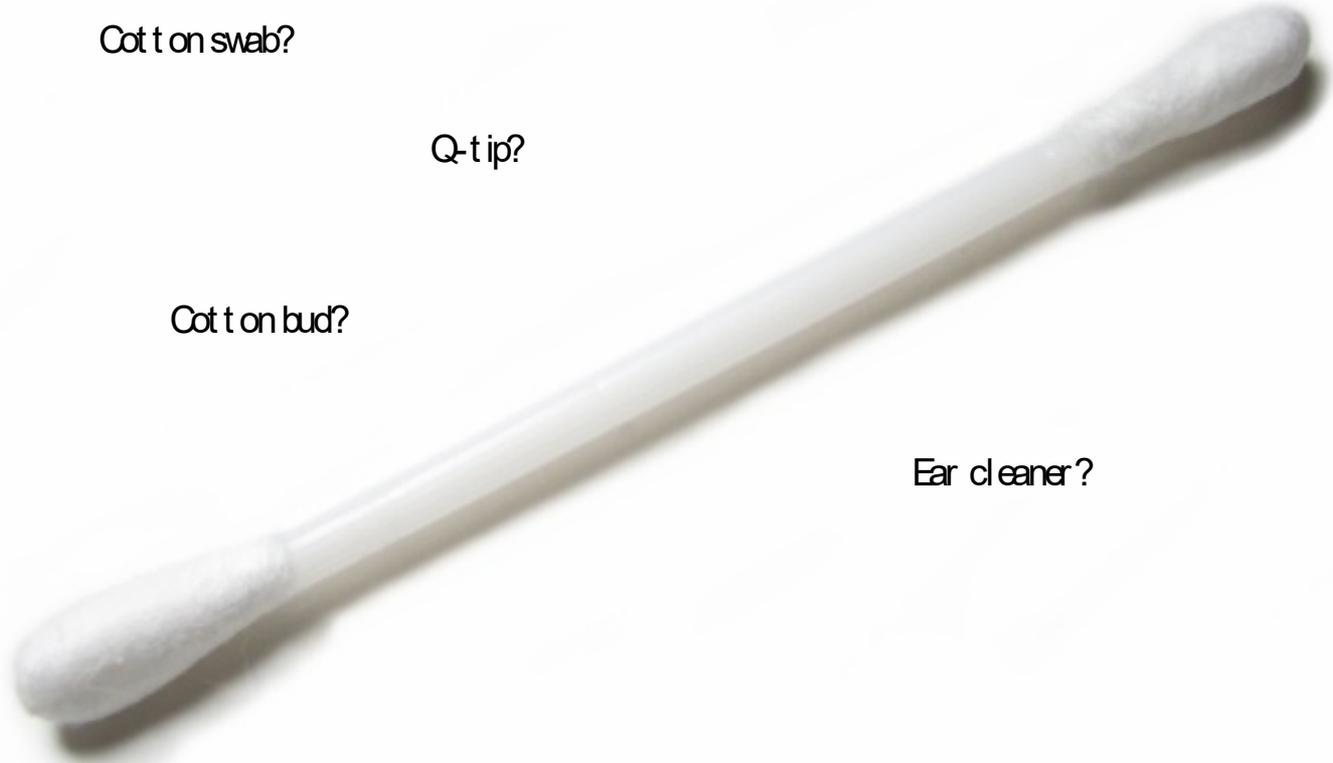
- Lythcott & Duschl, 1990

Cotton swab?

Q-tip?

Cotton bud?

Ear cleaner?

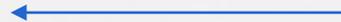


When to Use Quali?

Develop hypotheses -
about the
occurrence of
social phenomena

Describe - capture
the language and
imagery people use
to describe and
relate to a
phenomenon

?
Understand -
feelings, values and
perceptions that
shape behavior





Importance of
exploring qualitative
topics

1.

Provide insight
into the
complexity of
common
occurrences —
for example,
what is the
experience of
hope?

2.

**Provide concrete
details** to guide
understanding in a
particular setting —
rich data

3.

**Provide insight
into the “local”
meanings** that
activities and
practices have
for participants
- contextual

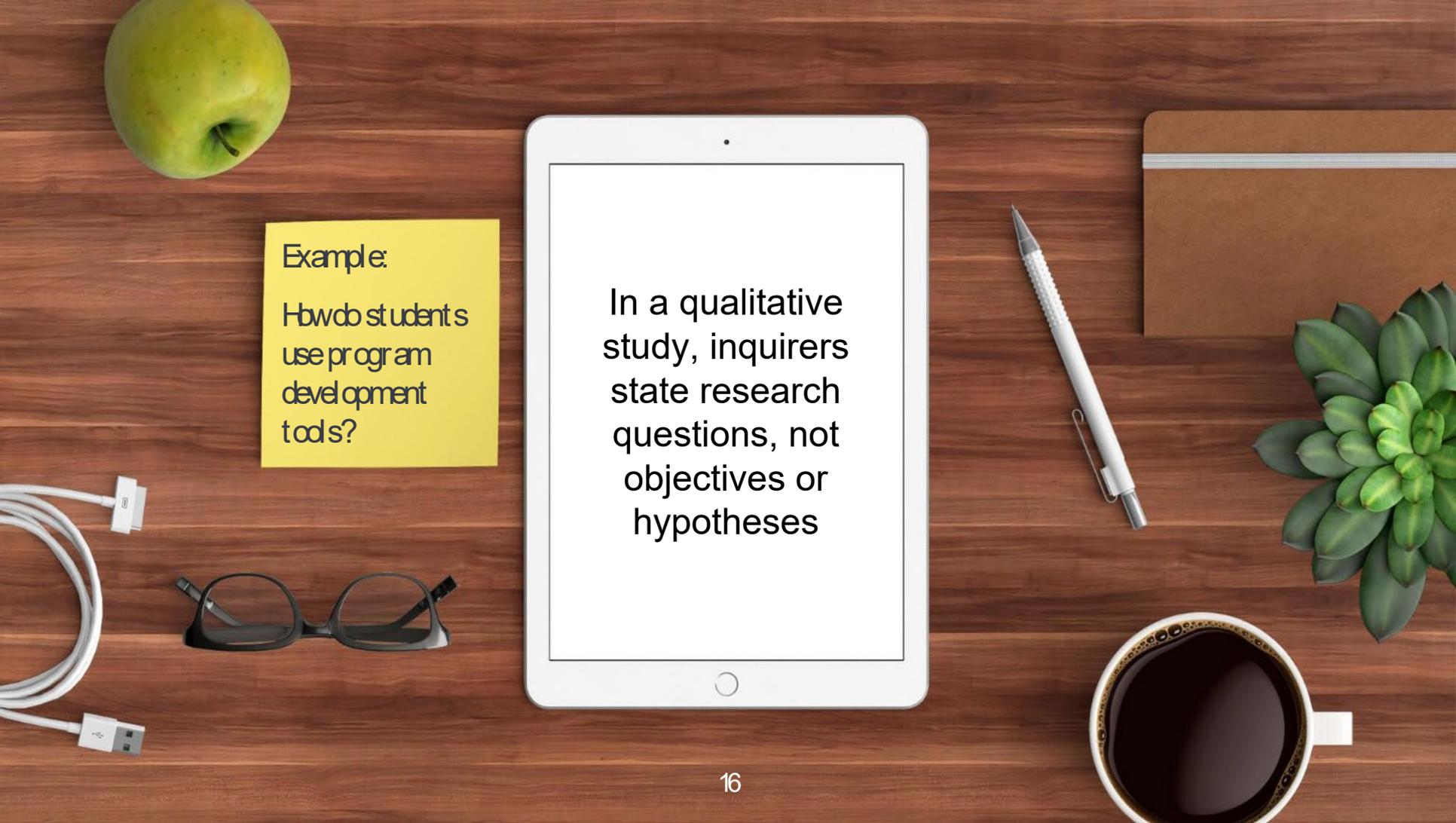
4.

**Develop a
comparative
understanding** of
phenomena as
experienced by
different
participants in
different
settings



Research Questions

The heart of a qualitative study...



Example:

How do students
use program
development
tools?

In a qualitative
study, inquirers
state research
questions, not
objectives or
hypotheses

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Takes place in the natural setting

Fundamentally interpretive (role of researcher as interpreter)

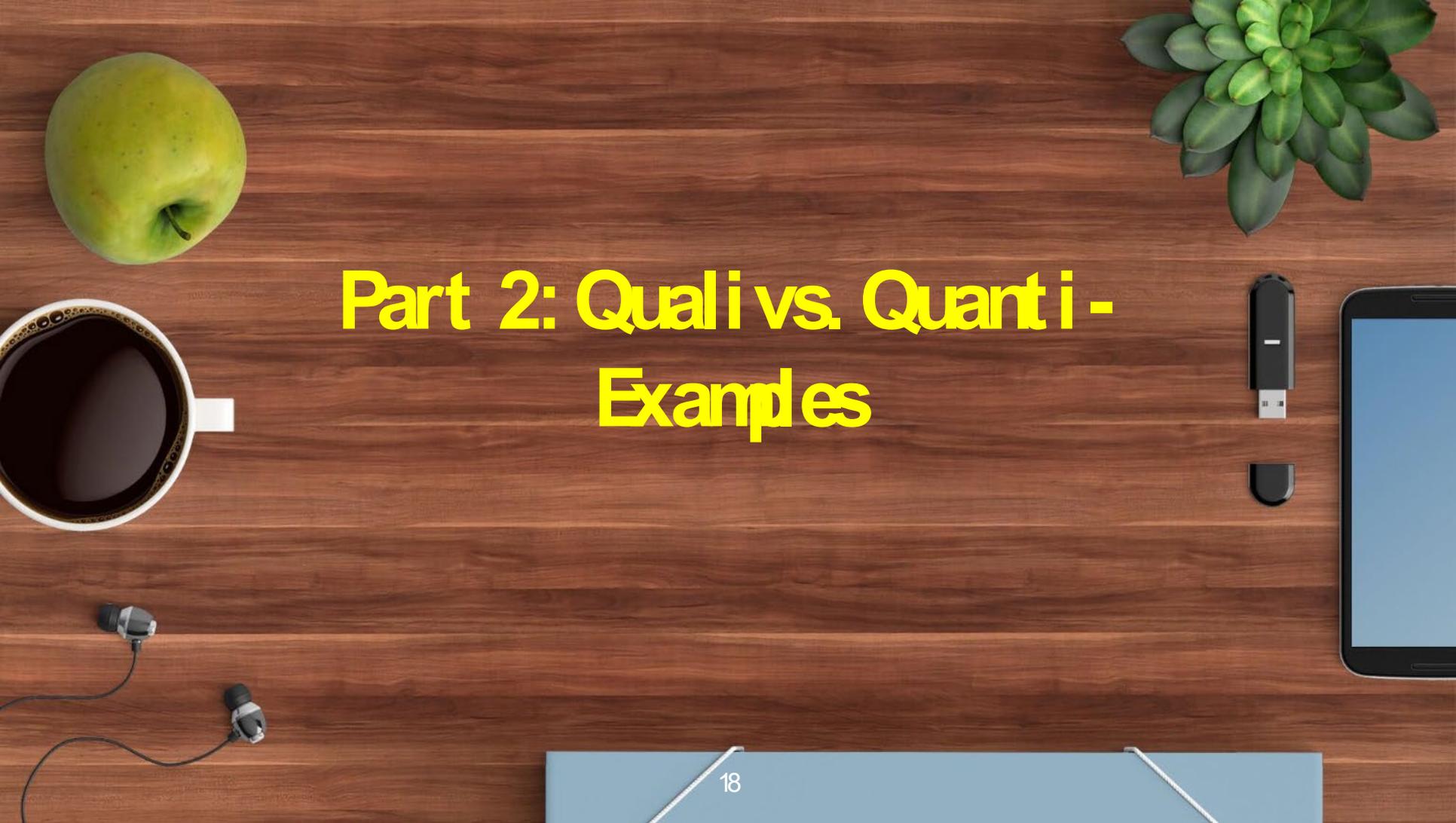
Researcher uses one or more strategies of inquiry

Researcher views social phenomena holistically

Researcher uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted, iterative, and simultaneous

Is emergent rather than prefigured

Researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study



Part 2: Quali vs. Quanti - Examples

Quantitative vs Qualitative

Quantitative:

- > Objective
- > Lit. review done early
- > Tests theory
- > Analysis by numbers
- > Use instruments
- > Go for generalization
- > Sample size large

Qualitative:

- > Subjective
- > Lit. review on-going
- > Develop theory
- > Analysis by words/ ideas
- > Researcher as inst.
- > Go for uniqueness
- > Seeking 'information rich' sample

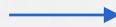
Choice of research method is dictated by the research questions

How many parents would consult their general practitioner when their child has a mild temperature?



Why do parents worry so much about their children's temperature?

What proportion of smokers have tried to give up?



What stops people giving up smoking?

What is the relationship between smoking and parenting behavior



How do people learn about smoking?

Example 1

Quantitative: The Relationship Between Types of Learning Activities of Adults and Geographic Location (rural vs. urban) (correlational)

Qualitative: How a Rural Location Shapes the Learning Activities of Adults

Example 2

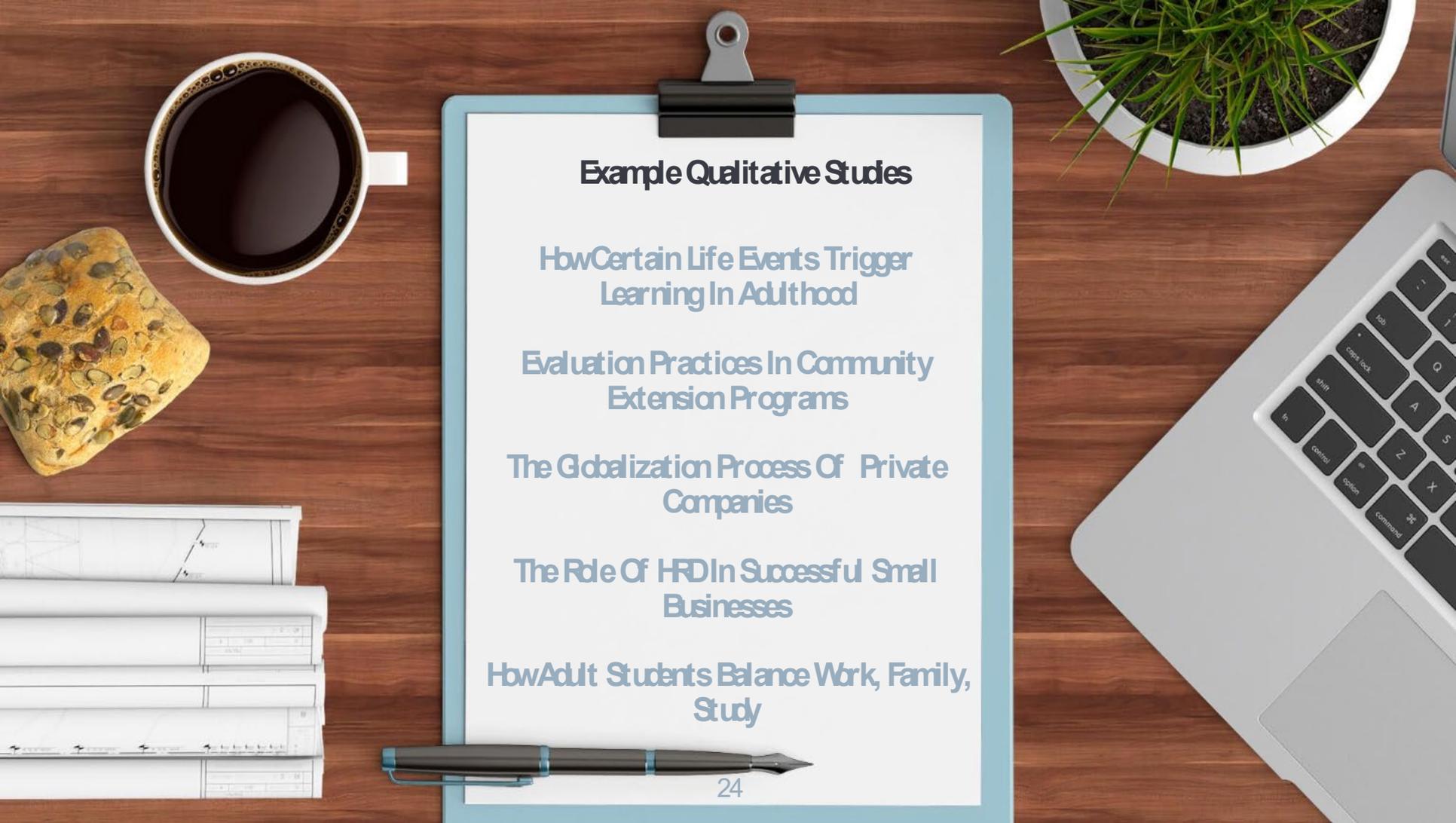
Quantitative: Strategies Teachers Prefer to Use in Handling Classroom Discipline Problems

Qualitative: How Teachers Negotiate the Resolution of Classroom Discipline Problems

Example 3

Quantitative: The Relationship Between Being a Learning Organization and a Firm's Financial Profits

Qualitative: Factors That Facilitate the Successful Implementation of the Learning Organization



Example Qualitative Studies

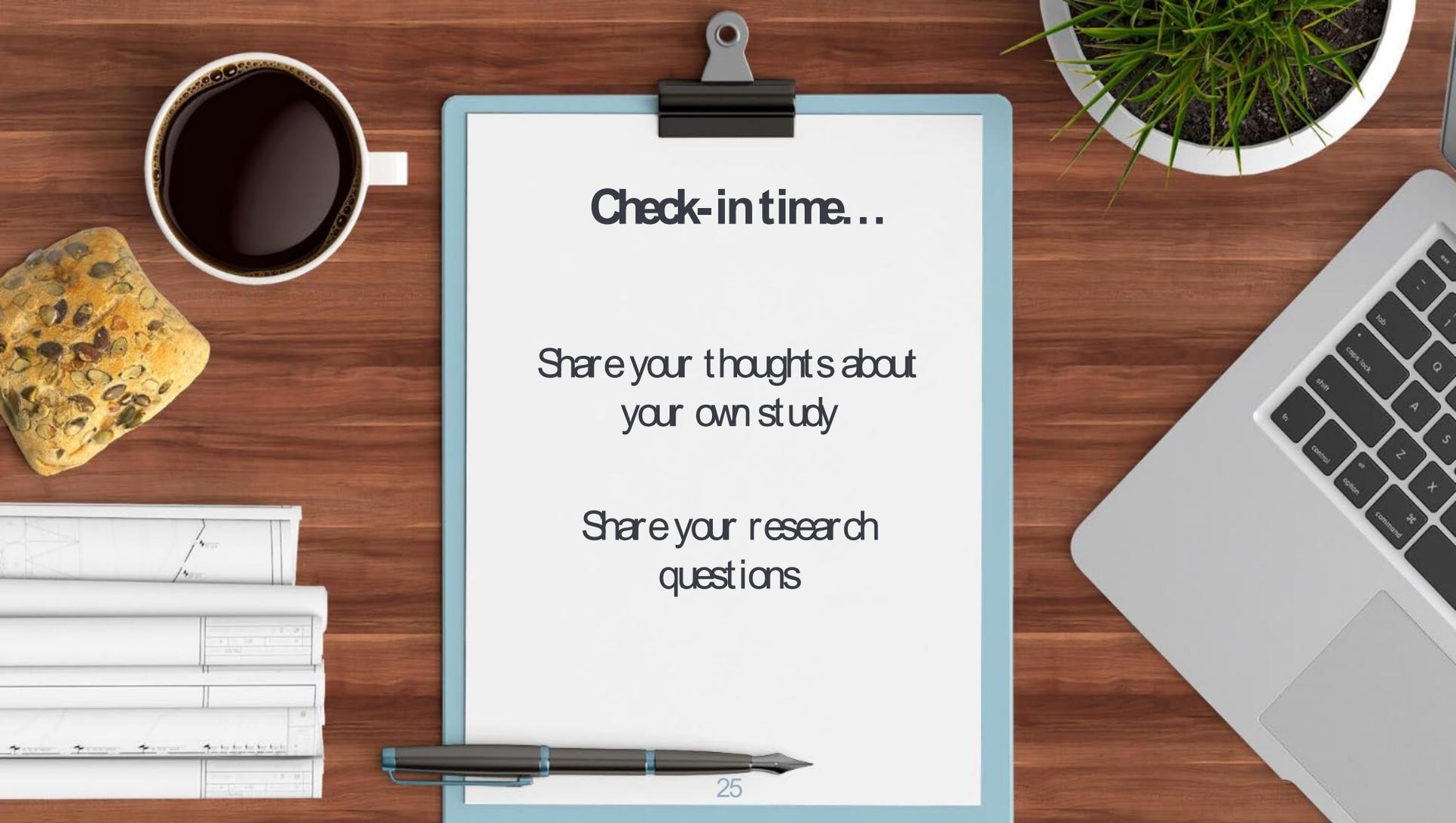
How Certain Life Events Trigger Learning In Adulthood

Evaluation Practices In Community Extension Programs

The Globalization Process Of Private Companies

The Role Of HRD In Successful Small Businesses

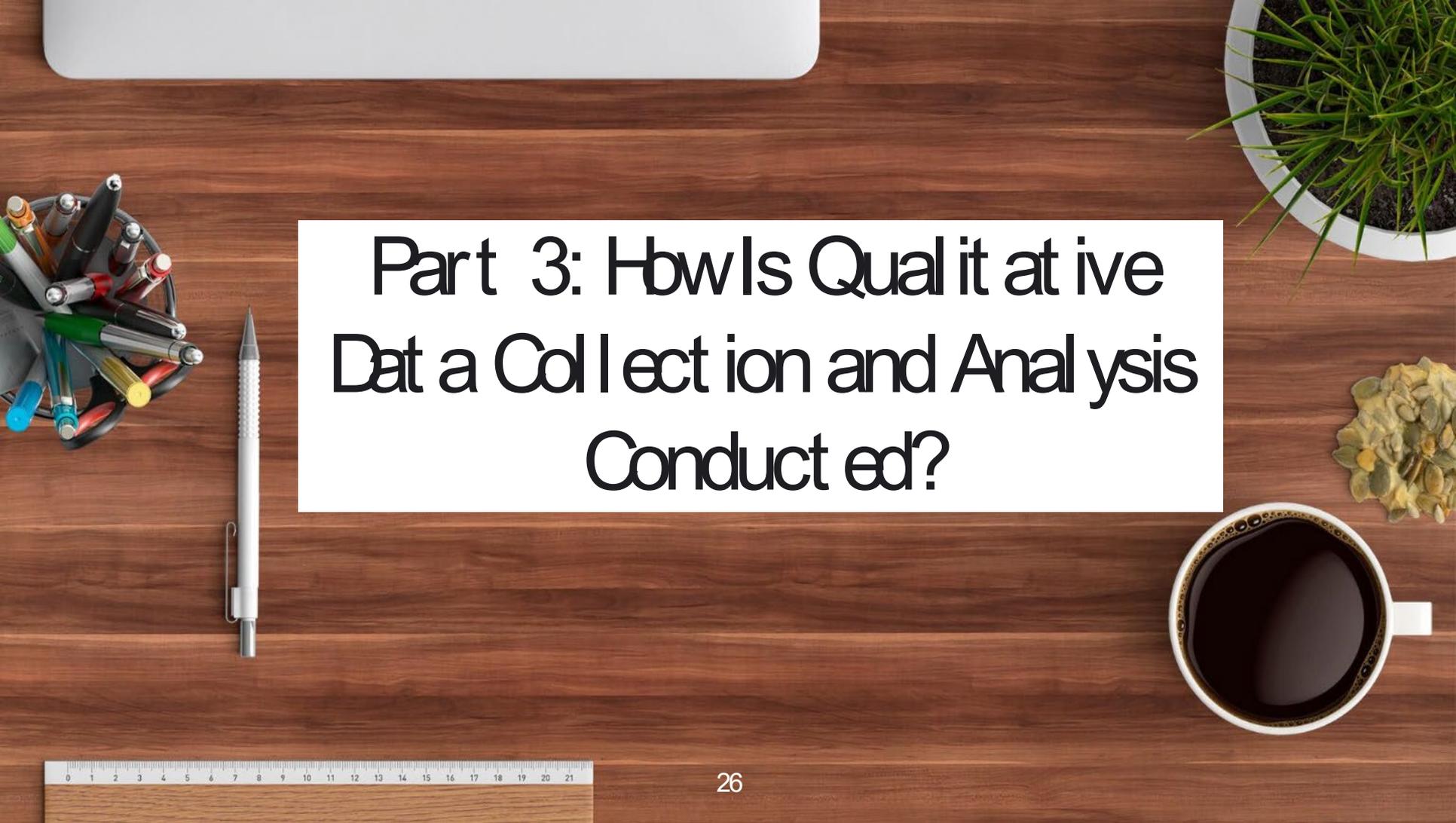
How Adult Students Balance Work, Family, Study



Check-in time...

Share your thoughts about
your own study

Share your research
questions



Part 3: How Is Quality Data Collection and Analysis Conducted?

Qualitative data collection

- > Interviews
- > Focus groups
- > Participant observation (field notes)
- > Video
- > Text and Image analysis (documents, media data)

Interviews

- > A conversation with a purpose
- > Forms
 - Focused
 - Open-ended





Conducting effective interviews

- > Two types
 - person to person
 - group formats (e.g. focus group) -- usually small groups, between 4 and 12 people
- > Both seen as “conversation with a purpose”



Observations

- > Systematic description of events behaviors, and artifacts
- > Forms
 - Focused
 - Unstructured

Observations

- > Continuum of Observation
 - Complete participant
 - Complete observer
- > It is impossible to record everything

Documents

- > Range of written and symbolic records
- > In existence prior to and during the investigation

Types of Artifacts

- Writings
 - Pictures
 - Paintings/ drawing
 - Tasks
 - Classroom activities
 - Homework / assignments
 - Essays
 - Quizzes/ test/ evaluations
 - Material designed by ss
 - Copies used by teacher
- ▶ Oral presentation
 - ▶ Role plays
 - ▶ Reflections



Documents may include:

- > Historical accounts
- > Journalistic accounts
- > Works of art
- > Photographs
- > Memos
- > Accreditation records
- > Television transcripts
- > Newspapers
- > Brochures
- > Meeting agendas
- > Budget/ accounting statements
- > Notes from teachers/ students
- > Speeches
- > Other case studies

WHAT IS QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS?

- > A complex process that involves moving back and forth
 - between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts
 - between inductive and deductive reasoning
 - between description and interpretation
- > Simply put: Data analysis is the process of making meaning from the data through interpretation and description



DEVELOPING DESCRIPTIONS & THEMES FROM DATA

- > Coding
- > Clustering/Categorizing
- > Thematizing - looking for relationships between themes



Coding

- > First process of analysis - define what the data are all about
- > Researcher names chunks of data with a label that summarizes each piece of data
- > Codes can easily be retrieved and categorized for further comparison and analysis
- > Coding makes it easier to search the data, to make comparisons and to identify patterns

When you move into your own home, you're alone. There is no bustle of people around the house. I miss having someone to chat to when I get home. I put the TV or some music so there's some background noise, the silence makes me feel so alone. Sometimes I will be sat watching trash TV and thinking I should be out doing something rather than watching this rubbish. I read a lot but sometimes I am too tired and just want to veg out. But it's been good to move out of mum and dads as it's not healthy to rely on them as they won't last forever. I become independent and made my own decisions. It's good they still there when I need them. It's good to have some distance as when I was at home I was arguing a lot with my dad and that was made me decide it was time to go.

feelings

Living alone

New relationship with parents

Independence

Old relationship with parents

Argument with Dad
Relation with father

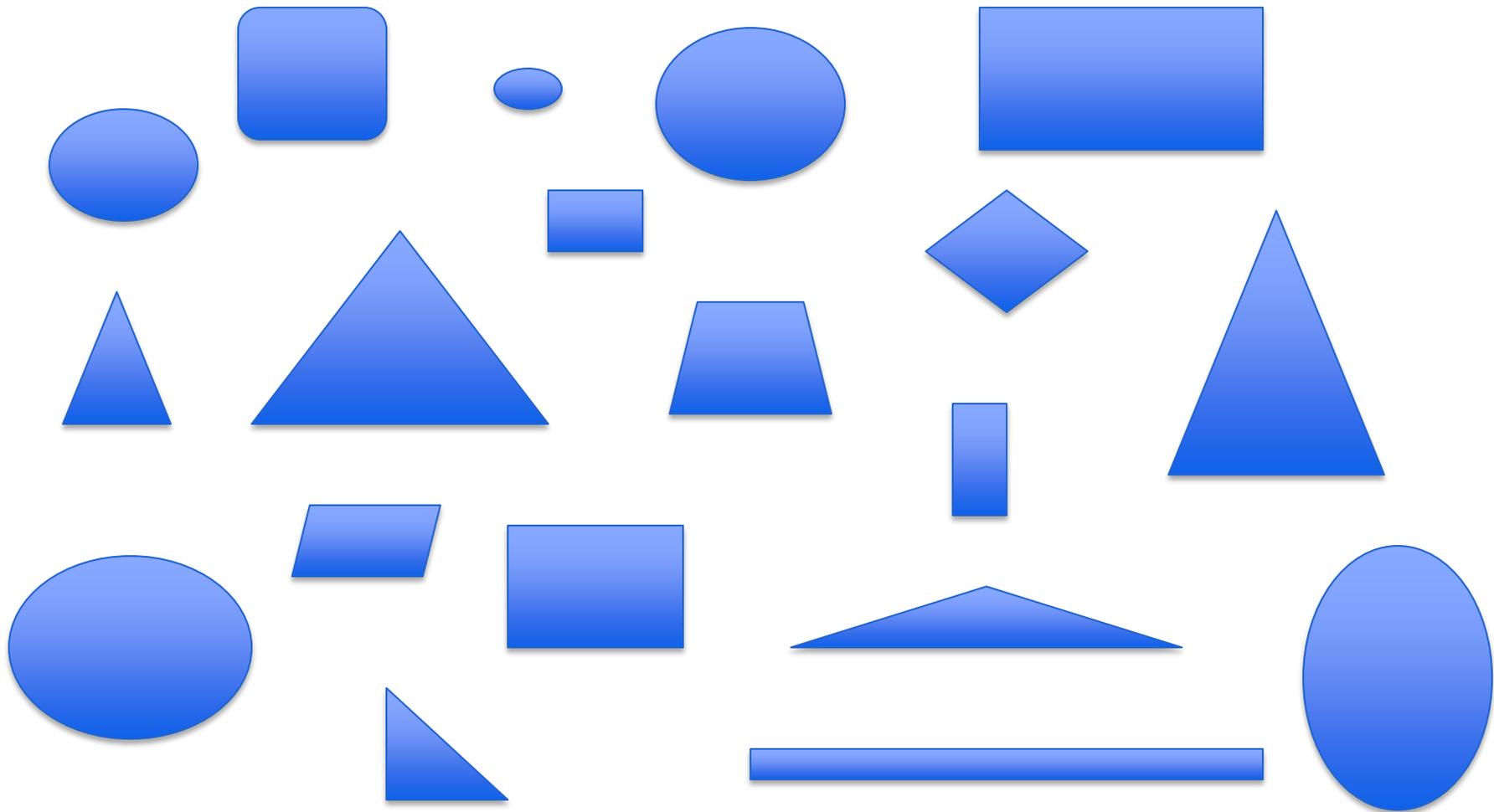
Coding a Page from a Sample Interview Transcript

The Process of Reconstructing Curriculum in a Rural High School Setting

| Codes Here | | Themes (And other Ideas) Here |
|---|--|--|
| | JJ: One thing, Lucy, that I've heard talked about was the fact that schools reflect the strengths of communities. What do you perceive as strengths of Greenfield as a community and how that relates to schools? | |
| Close-knit community | LU: Well, I think Greenfield is a fairly <u>close-knit community</u> . I think people are interested in what goes on. And because of that, they have a sense of ownership in the schools. We like to keep track of what our kids are doing and feel a connection to them because of that. The downside of that perhaps is that kids can feel that we are looking TOO close. But most of the time, that is the nurturing environment that we do provide an atmosphere of concern and care. | Potential theme: The community |
| Health of community or community values | To back up, you said the <u>health of the community</u> itself is reflected in schools. A lot of times communities look at schools and say they are not doing this or they aren't doing that, or we're missing something in our schools. I think perhaps we look at the school and see, this is probably a pretty conservative community overall, and look to make sure that <u>what is being talked about in the schools really carries out the community's values.</u> There is a little bit of an idealization I think, perhaps in terms of what we thought of "basic education." [And I think there might be a tendency to hold back a little bit too much because of that idealization of "you know, we learned the basics, the reading, the writing and the arithmetic."] So you know, any <u>change is threatening.</u> And I think that goes for the community as well as what we see reflected at the school. Sometimes that can get in the way of trying to do different things. I think, again, idealization, older members of the community forget, some of the immaturity that they experienced when they were in school and forgetting that kids are kids. So there is a little bit too much of that mental attitude. But for the most part, I think there is a sense of we're all in this together, and concern for the kids. | Idea: getting a good sense here for the community and its values A good quote |
| Change is threatening | JJ: In terms of looking at leadership strengths in the community, where does Greenfield set in a continuum there with planning process, understanding the need to plan, forward-thinking, visionary people. You talked about that a little bit before. | Potential theme: Leader |
| Visionary skills of talented People | LU: I think there are people that have wonderful <u>visionary skills.</u> I would say that the community as a whole would be . . . would not reflect that. I think there are people who are driving the process, but the rest of the community may be lagging behind a little bit. I think we have some incredibly talented people who become frustrated when they try to implement what they see as their . . . | Idea: returns to description of community again |

CATEGORIZING AND THEMATIZING

- > The process of looking for categories that cut across codes
- > After categorizing, you build themes - integrate categories
- > You can't classify something as a *theme* unless it cuts across *the preponderance* of the data
- > Themes should answer the research questions of the study
 - e.g., if our RQ is Why do UM students undertake post-grad study?
 - Enhanced job prospects
 - Upgrading of self
 - Desire to give back



Codes:

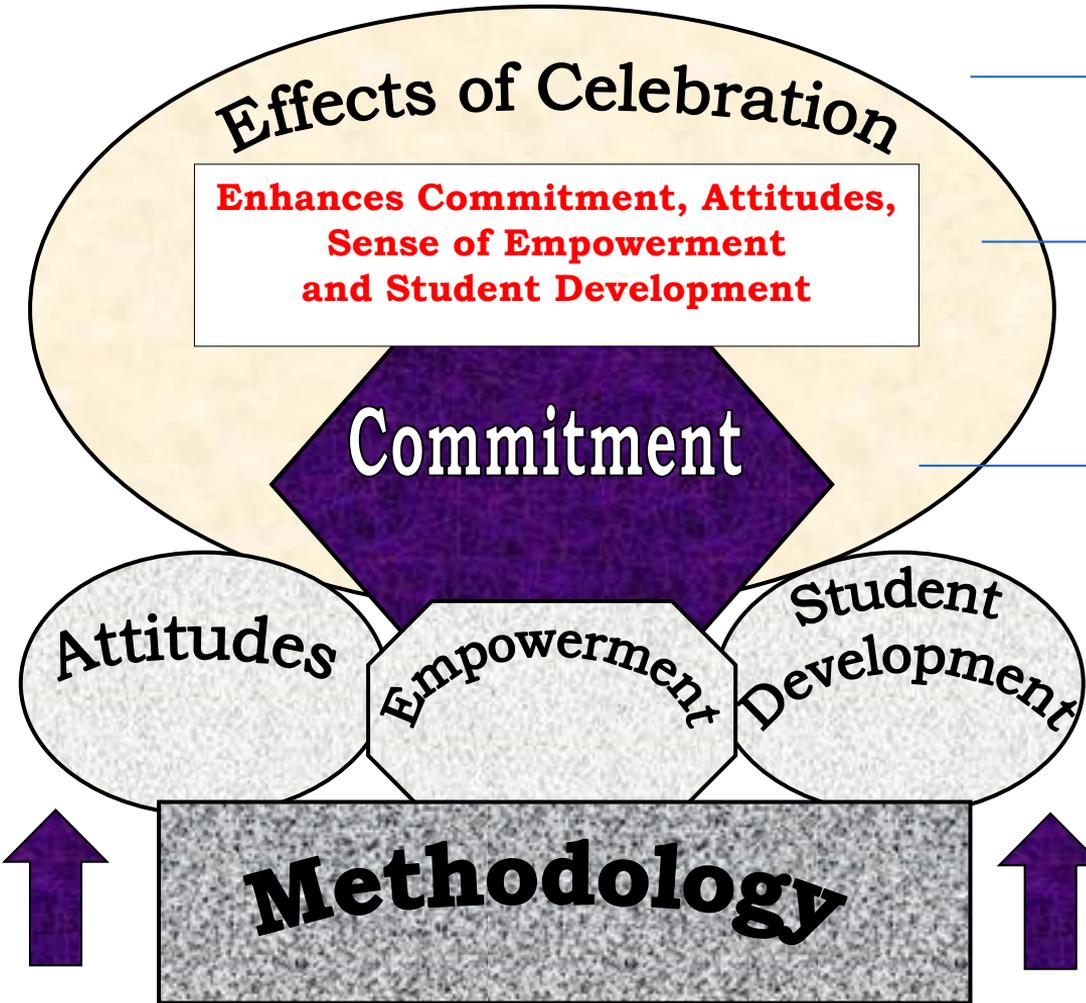
- Triangles
- Circles
- Ovals
- Rectangles
- Squares
- Diamonds
- Trapezoids
- Parallelograms

Categories:

- Circular shapes
- Four-sided shapes
- Three-sided shapes

Theme:

- Geometric shapes



Research question – What are the effects of celebration on students?

Narrative/description of theme

Overall theme

Sub-themes/categories

THE ANALYSIS CONTINUUM

Descriptive

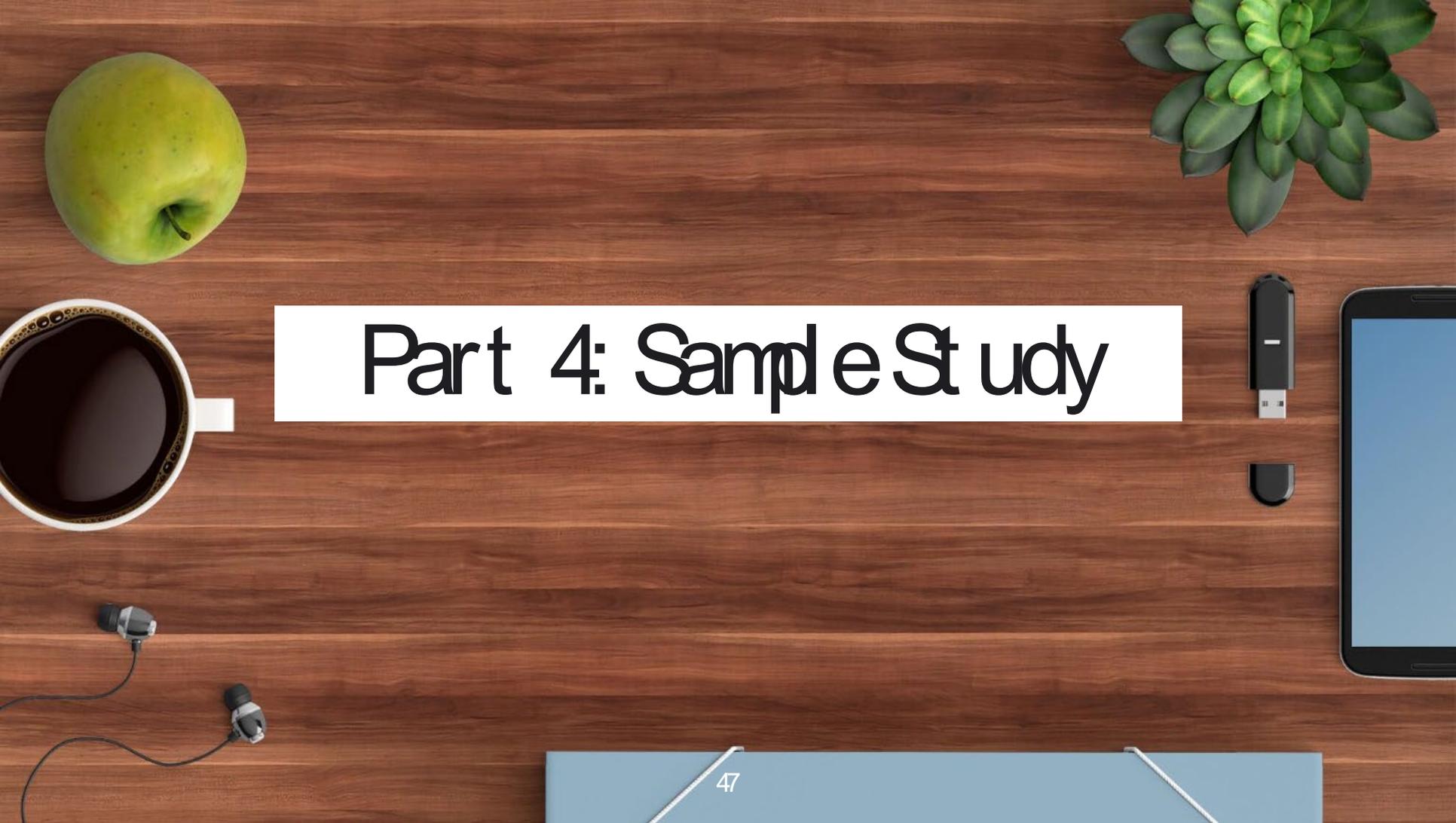
Conceptual



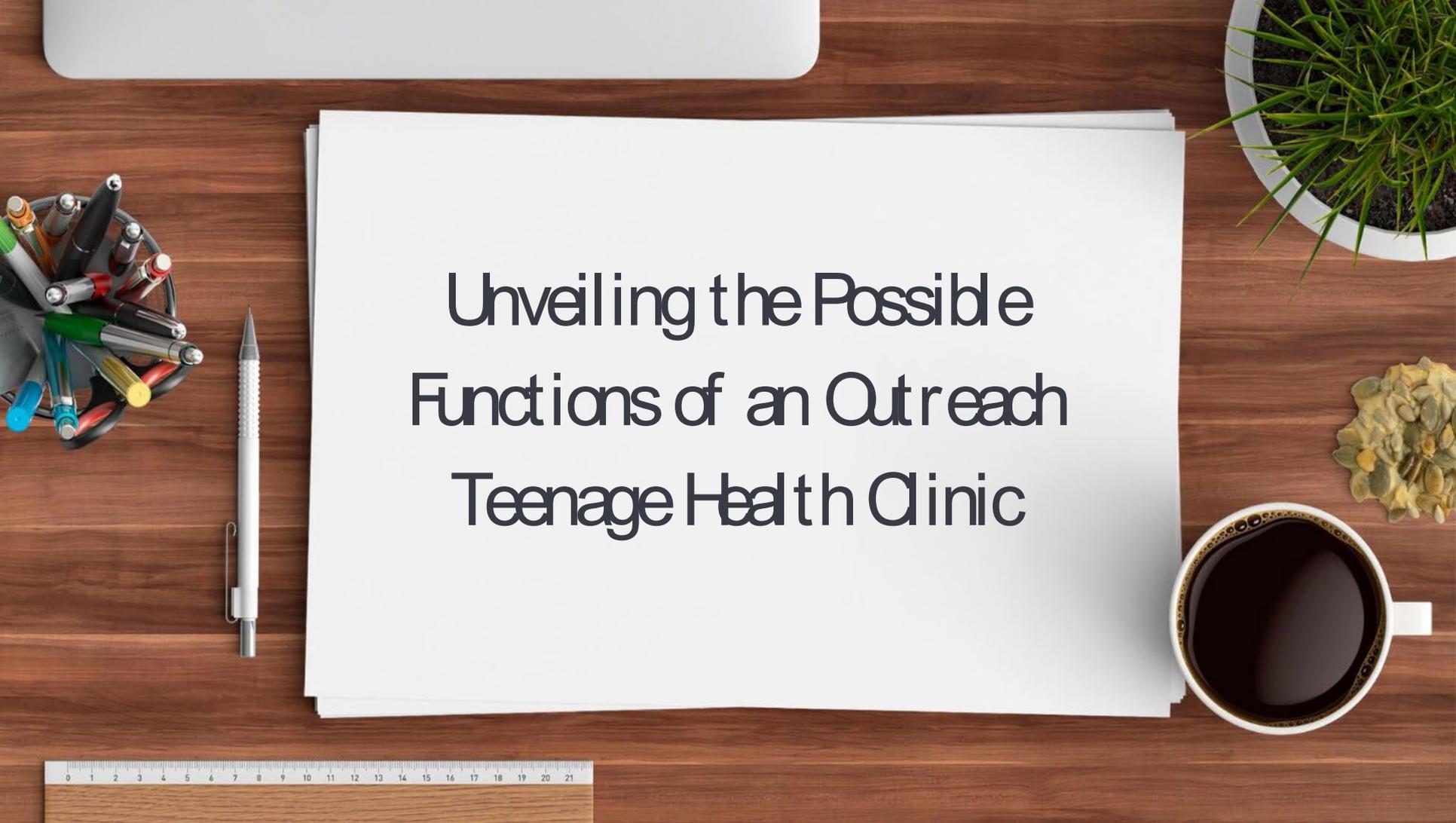
Raw Data

Descriptive
Statements

Interpretation



Part 4: Sample Study



Unveiling the Possible
Functions of an Outreach
Teenage Health Clinic

Open/ First - level Coding

- > Pregnancy
- > Smoking
- > Self esteem
- > Misinformed
- > Peer pressure
- > Time
- > Staff attributes
- > Sexual behaviour
- > Alcohol
- > Stress
- > Understanding
- > Own beliefs
- > Venue
- > Conducive setting

Categories

- > **Sexual Health**
 - Pregnancy
 - Sexual behaviour
- > **Drugs**
 - Smoking
 - Alcohol
- > **Mental Health**
 - Self esteem
 - Stress
- > **Lack of Knowledge**
 - Misinformed
 - Understanding
- > **Attitudes**
 - Peer pressure
 - Own beliefs
- > **Availability**
 - Time
 - Venue
- > **Approachability**
 - Staff attributes
 - Conducive setting

Themes

- > **Health issues for young people**
 - Sexual Health (Pregnancy, sexual behaviour)
 - Drugs (Smoking, alcohol)
 - Mental Health (Self esteem, stress)
- > **Barriers for accessing service**
 - Lack of Knowledge (Misinformed, understanding)
 - Attitudes (Peer pressure, own beliefs)
- > **Incentives to use service**
 - Availability (Time, venue)
 - Approachability (Staff attributes, conducive setting)



Thank you!

Any questions?

Contact me at lateef@pm.edu.my