**Framework for Assessing Quality Evaluations (\*adopted from resource)**

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| Wilson, D. K., Williams, J., Evans, A., Mixon, G., & Rheaume, C. (2005). Brief report: a qualitative study of gender preferences and motivational factors for physical activity in underserved adolescents. *Journal of pediatric psychology*, *30*(3), 293-297. |

You don’t need to necessarily respond to each bullet. They are guides for developing a sufficient answer in response to the questions highlighted in red. The response boxes will expand at you type.

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| **Appraisal Questions****Quality Indicators (possible features for consideration)** | **Notes on Study Being Reviewed / Analyzed** |
| 1. **(Findings) How credible are the findings? How well does the evaluation address its original aims and purpose?**
* Findings/conclusions are logical coherent.
* Findings/conclusions are triangulated with other supporting evidence.
* Findings clearly linked to purpose of study.
* Limitations of study discussed.
 | The peer-reviewed journal can be grouped under community-based or public sector issue. It centers on obesity, which remains a critical issue among U.S. adolescents from the 70s. The research attributes increased cases of obesity to decreased physical activity (PA). It focused on underserved adolescents and minorities because they are considered the least active group of adolescents. The aim of the study was to explore **preferences and motivational factors** for augmenting PA underserved adolescents since they are at higher risk of developing obesity. The results may have public health implications. The findings are linked to study purpose. At the outset, the researcher’s aim was to find ways obesity rates among the minority adolescents can be lowered. They identified PAs in schools to be the lucrative approach to handling the problem. The investigators then outlined preferences for the genders under study (boys and girls). Boy **preferred** playing basketball, football, and soccer while girls **preferred** swimming, roller-skating, jogging, playing tennis, jump roping, and cheer-leading. The **motivational** factor for both genders was to have fun and for health benefits. The research also cited limitations. These are factors that may have hindered research generalizability. The researchers considered the study sample to be relatively small. Meaning, the findings may not be applicable to the entire nation due to various differences. Furthermore, the research was conducted in the southeastern region of the U.S. Had it been undertaken in different parts of the country, research generalizability would be ideal. Additionally, considering it was a focus group, peers were reluctant to respond honestly to questions concerning their peers and this may have impacted the validity of self-reports.  |
| 1. **(Findings) How has knowledge understanding been extended by the research?**
* Findings offer new insights/alternative ways of thinking
* Aims and design of study set in the context of existing knowledge/understanding; identifies new areas
* for investigation (for example, in relation to policy/practice/substantive theory)
* Discussion of what remains unknown/unclear or what further information/research is needed
 | The study has extended knowledge in two ways. First, over the years, little attention has been channeled towards involving adolescents in developing programs ideas and PA choices that may augment innate encouragement. Second, the focus was on minorities and the underserved adolescents who appear to be the most affected by obesity. Thus, by highlighting the preferences and motivations for specific PAs among both genders, educationists can utilize the information to develop ideal programs that would be helpful for them and thereby lowering the rate of obesity. The results also highlight alternate school of thought for policymakers. What this signifies is the entities developing policies and procedures will be encouraged to actively engage adolescents to ascertain their preferences and motivations regarding PA choices. The approach will be instrumental in lowering levels of motivations because it will create intrinsic motivation. The study also establishes the bedrock for future research on ways adolescents can be incorporated in creating PAs. Policy makers can engage stakeholders (governments, parents, the youth and educational institutions) in finding common ground for lowering obesity levels through activities that adolescents prefer and are motivated doing.  |
| 1. **(Findings)** **Scope for drawing wider inference – how well is this explained?**
* Discussion of what can be generalized to wider population
* Discussion of how hypotheses/ propositions/findings may relate to wider theory; consideration of rival explanations
 | The scope for drawing wider inference is comprehensively explained. The researchers cite adolescent autonomy and independence in creating effective PAs. This is a common phenomenon in the 21st century. Because of this, it becomes necessary to provide the choice and involvement in developing PA programs. Involving the youth will invoke a self-initiated behavior change and this makes it developmentally ideal. The results can be applied to minority adolescents in the entire country after a thorough research regarding their effectiveness has been undertaken. Thus, the findings require additional research on the ideal approach to involving adolescents in such programs.  |
| 1. **(Findings) How clear is the basis of evaluative appraisal?**
* Discussion of how assessments of effectiveness/evaluative judgments have been reached
* Description of any formalized appraisal criteria used
 | The researchers’ findings indicate that boys and girls are motivated to undertake PAs because they have fun, it is ideal for their health, and they get to select preferred PAs. The investigators supported their findings by citing other peer-reviewed journals (Taylor *et al.*, 1999, Baranowski et al., 1998; Ferrer-Caja & Weiss, 2000; and Goudas et al., 1994 ). In these studies, the researchers established that adolescents are not being given the autonomy to develop preferred PAs and for that reason, they lack the self-initiated behavior change. Therefore, by citing other credible sources, the researchers were able to critically cement their findings.  |
| 1. **(Design) How defensible is the research design?**
* Discussion of rationale and how overall research strategy was designed to meet aims of study
* Convincing argument for different features of research design (e.g. reasons given for different components or stages of research; purpose of particular methods or data sources, multiple methods, time frames etc.)
* Use of different features of design/data sources evident in findings presented
 | A focus group, as utilized in this particular study, was ideal in yielding maximum information and reducing potential bias. The rule of thumb also indicates that a focus group discussion should have between 6 and 12 homogenous respondents and this study met the criteria. In addition, selecting the adolescent minority was the only approach to obtaining high-quality findings. Thus, it was valid to target the underserved respondents and 6th and 7th grade adolescents, majority of whom were African-American, were high-quality participants. Furthermore, trained moderators conducted the focus group thereby ensuring objectivity. This was in line with Kothari (2014), who describes a good research design as the one that minimizes bias, maximizes reliability, and attains maximal information of the data collected and evaluated. The author also opines that it should be enforced by skilled researchers and staff to obtain valid outcomes, insights and ideas about the phenomenon under study.  |
| 1. **(Sample) How well defended is the sample design/target selection of cases/documents? Sample composition/case inclusion – how well is the eventual coverage described?**
* Rationale for basis of selection of target sample/settings/documents
* Description of study locations/areas and how and why chosen
* Discussion of any missing coverage
* Maximizing inclusion (e.g. language matching or translation; specialized recruitment; organized transport for group attendance)
 | In any peer-reviewed research study, validity and credibility is enhanced by the type of respondents. Therefore, the rationale was to leverage the social dynamics of a particular group of respondents to reveal the required opinions, attitudes, and reasons for their behavior. For that reason, the researchers utilized participants who were well-positioned and informed (adolescents). The study involved 51 adolescents out of which 72% were African-American, 19% where white, and 9% other minorities. Twenty-five boys and 26 girls participated all located in the southeastern part of the nation. Even though the sample was highly inclusive, it was relatively smaller for generalized outcomes. However, a 75% response rate was perfect to complete research. This observation is in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), who affirmed that a response rate of 50% is adequate for research analysis, 60% is good, and above 70% is excellent.  |
| 1. **(Data Collection) How well was the data collection carried out?**
* Discussion of who conducted data collection; procedures/documents used for collection/recording; checks on origin/status/authorship (validity)
 | The effectiveness of a data collection approach directly affects research findings. The investigator is required to create a conducive and trusting environment for participants to respond honestly and openly. In this study, the focus group discussion approach was employed to gather data from six same-gender focus groups at two local middle schools and at the Recreation and Parks Center. Trained moderators were asking questions directly and receiving responses. Participants were assured confidentiality to augment the rate of response. The entire conversation was audiotaped and transcribed by an independent entity. While an interview would have been ideal, a focus group was an excellent option because it created a relaxed atmosphere to aid participants in expressing themselves with minimal inhibitions; for instance, fear of being judged by persons considered to be superior.  |
| 1. **(Analysis) Contexts of data sources – how well are they retained and portrayed? How well has diversity of perspective and content been explored?**
* Participants’ perspectives/observations placed in personal context (e.g. use of case studies/vignettes/individual profiles, textual extracts annotated with details of contributors)
* Discussion of contribution of sample design/ case selection in generating diversity
* Evidence of attention to negative cases, outliers or exceptions
* Examination of origins/influences on opposing or differing positions
 | A credible study should be free from any form of bias. Thus, various independent and competent bodies were involved in undertaking and codifying the research to retain validity and reliability. Additionally, the researchers focused on highlighting the feelings, perceptions, and opinions of respondents in their original form without alteration to gain greater insights into the adolescents’ attitudes and beliefs regarding PAs. The researchers ensured that the responses where not altered by entrusting an independent entity to codify and transcribe the responses into common themes. This was to ensure contexts are retained and portrayed as received. While common themes were established, each set of participants had their own perspective regarding questions asked. For instance, girls preferred doing PAs with their peers than with boys while boys perceived girls as equally capable and would prefer inclusive PA activities.  |
| 1. **(Analysis) How well has detail, depth and complexity (i.e. richness) of the data been conveyed?**
* Discussion of explicit and implicit explanations
* Identification and discussion of patterns
* of association/conceptual linkages within data
* Detection of underlying factors/influences
 | The depth and complexity of a study is more than the sample size and participant characteristics but focus. This study was highly focused on specific and highly textured elements. The investigators began in a manner that was open ended because they understood little experiences and issues from participants’ perspective. In the introduction, the researcher began with a statistic to portray the seriousness of obesity among American adolescents. The investigators then highlighted the plight of underserved adolescents who happen to be the most affected. In the focus groups, the breadth of the discussion gave investigators a sense of significant phenomena in a superior detail and texture that provided patterns of association on participant responses. Through an open participation, youths had maximum freedom to explain their perspectives of PAs in their own way allowing them to create sound meanings and narratives that sought to respond to the aim of the study.  |
| 1. **(Reporting) How clear are the links between data, interpretation and conclusions – i.e. how well can the routes to any conclusions be seen? How clear and coherent is the reporting?**
* Discussion of how/why particular interpretation/significance is assigned to specific aspects of data – with illustrative extracts of original data
* Discussion of how explanations/ theories/conclusions were derived – and how they relate to interpretations
* Demonstrates link to aims of study/research questions
* Provides accessible information for
* intended target audience(s)
 | Besides study aims and objectives, data interpretation and conclusions form the bedrock of a comprehensive research study. What is interpreted is what is highlighted in the conclusion. Any contradictions may imply that robust analysis was not undertaken. The aim was to study how PAs can reduce obesity among the underserved community in the southeastern America. In addition, the research highlighted the need to involve the youth in designing PA programs. In the analysis, themes are derived and it is noted that the major reason why both genders undertake PAs was for fun, health benefits, choice of activities, enhance friendship, explore skills and sports, or just as an outdoor activity. Both genders also highlight a variety of preferred PAs and what motivates them to undertake the sport/activity. Preference and motivational themes for PAs are highlighted for mixed and same genders. The concluding section then pulls critical information from the analysis. It highlights two major reasons why youth undertake PAs (fun and for health benefits); and the greatest motivator is to participate in PAs they prefer. The information can assist policy makers in making meaningful decisions that would aid in lowering obesity among the underserved.  |
| 1. **(Ethics)** **What evidence is there of attention to ethical issues?**
* Evidence of thoughtfulness/sensitivity about research contexts and participants
* Documentation of consent procedures and information provided to participants
* Discussion of confidentiality of data and procedures for protecting
* Discussion of any measures to offer information/advice/services etc
 | Qualitative forms of research tend to utilize methods that lead to text production rather than statistical outputs. Thus, human beings, which are the instruments of choice, are involved from the outset to reporting of the themes and concepts. It is therefore important to note that the researcher-participant relationship, which emanates from qualitative research can raise ethical concerns. Dilemmas such as respect for one’s privacy, the need for open and honest interactions, as well as shunning misrepresentations are common elements. The researchers portray evidence of sensitivity regarding research participants. They began by seeking informed consent from the youth (respondents) and their parents/guardians. The investigators ensured that participants had a clear understanding of the study objectives and aims before enrolling in the study. Additionally, researchers guaranteed confidentiality of the collected data and respondent private information. This was necessary to promote honest and confident responses from participants.  |

**References**

Kothari, R.S. (2014). Research methodology: methods and techniques. New Delhi: New Age International (P) Limited, Publishers.

Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (2012). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press.

\*Source (adopted from):

Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: A framework for assessing research evidence. A Quality Framework

Liz Spencer, Jane Ritchie, Jane Lewis and Lucy Dillon

National Centre for Social Research

<http://www.gsr.gov.uk/downloads/evaluating_policy/a_quality_framework.pdf>

A web version of the research can be found on Policy Hub (http://www.policyhub.gov.uk).

Policy Hub is a web resource launched in March 2002 that aims to improve the way public policy is shaped and delivered. It provides many examples of initiatives, projects, tools and case studies that support better policy making and delivery and provides extensive guidance on the role of research and evidence in the evaluation of policy.