

Chapter 4: Qualitative methods in psychological research.

Full answers to study questions

1. There are lots of different ways that you could develop the hypothesis and research question, but here are a couple of suggestions:
 - 1.1. Women athletes who take part in a cognitive behavioural training programme will feel more confident before taking part in a competitive race than women athletes who did not take part in the programme.
 - 1.2. What practices do women athletes feel best prepare them for the 100 metre race in Paralympic games?
2. Given the very specific participant group, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis might be particularly suitable. You may have suggested a different method though.
3. In designing this study, you could take the following factors into consideration in a number of ways, but here are some of the key issues that I would pay particular attention to:
 - 3.1. The representativeness of the sample: The sample is quite specified within the study outline, so you would need to sample from women who would be taking part in that particular event within that particular competition. You might want to particularly think about whether you could sample across different classification groups, athletes from different countries, with differing levels of experience, etc.
 - 3.2. Reliability and validity: You could potentially examine the validity of the analysis by asking the participants to comment on the themes that are identified, and reliability could be considered by asking a second researcher to examine the transcripts and findings to verify their reliability.
 - 3.3. Ethical considerations: Given that the participants are professional athletes, it would be important to ensure that the study design could not influence their performance in a negative way. For example, you would want to be careful in the way that questions are worded, and potentially sensitive questions should not be given at the end of the interview or focus group. It would also be important to take extra care over issues around anonymity and confidentiality as the athletes could be relatively easily identified as they will all be participants in a very specific public event.