SAGE researchmethods cases

Exploring the Influences on Teenage Pregnancy Decision Making Using the Listening Guide Data Analysis Method

Contributors: Sarah Bekaert
Pub. Date: 2020
Product: SAGE Research Methods Cases: Medicine and Health
Methods: Narrative research, Feminist research, Case study research
Disciplines: Nursing
Access Date: March 24, 2020
Academic Level: Postgraduate
Publishing Company: SAGE Publications Ltd
City: London
Online ISBN: 9781529732726
DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781529732726

Abstract

This case study presents the methodology and method for an exploratory study with eight young mothers regarding their pregnancy decision making. The study drew methodologically on feminist reflexivity and concepts of governmentality to attend to ways in which women's sexuality is regulated through policy, clinical, and research practice, as well as framing how the young women speak of their own pregnancy decision making. The case study will critically consider issues relating to recruitment, sample size, the role of gatekeeper, children and consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. The Listening Guide method will be described drawing on examples from the research. The four "readings" within the Guide will be examined: first for "plot"—eliciting the overall "story" the participant wishes to tell before beginning the fragmentive process of data analysis, and then for reader response to the participant's words, building in a feminist reflexivity to the method. The second reading is for the voice of I and the third for relationships. The fourth reading looks wider to social structures and cultural contexts. This method highlighted how the young women interviewed offered stylized "good citizenship" narratives as the participant may not feel free to fully voice their desires and opinions for fear of judgment. The readings highlighted quieter or less frequently mentioned narratives. Using the Listening Guide leads the researcher to see the wider influences on the young women's lives, which included poverty, gang culture, and pervasive violence. These fragile life circumstances had a significant bearing on the young women's decisions to "get on with" parenting in the teenage years.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this case, students should be able to

- Have an understanding of a feminist narrative methodological approach to qualitative research
- Understand how the Listening Guide data analysis method puts a feminist narrative methodology into action
- Apply the Listening Guide readings to narrative text

Project Overview and Context

This case study presents a critical account of the use of the Listening Guide as data analysis method. The method was employed to put into action a feminist reflexive approach to an exploratory study with eight young mothers regarding their pregnancy decision making.

Policy and research discourses tend to construct teenage pregnancy and parenthood as negative and to be avoided. Current sociopolitical expectations in the United Kingdom for the teenage years encompass commitment to education as a route to social mobility, and avoidance of pregnancy and parenthood, which is assumed to disrupt this trajectory. If parenthood occurs in the teenage years, it is problematized within policy discourses which associate young parenting with social exclusion. Teenage women who become pregnant

are expected to return to education and are subject to targeted intervention to avoid repeat pregnancy.

In a nurse outreach service in a U.K. urban location, a small number of young women became mothers after deciding to abort a first, unexpected pregnancy. Commissioners saw this as a failure of an outreach program and constructed the young women as a "hard to reach" group. Troubled by such labeling, this study was designed to explore the influence on teenage women's pregnancy decision making. The study drew methodologically on feminist reflexivity and concepts of governmentality to attend to ways in which women's sexuality is regulated through policy, clinical and research practice, as well as framing how the young women speak of their own pregnancy decision making. Analysis indicated a tension between policy assumptions of individualized decision making and the contextualized decisions of the young women in lives often dominated by violence, poverty, and uncertainty. Where there was a distance between the expected trajectory for teenage years and actual life events, the young women's narratives were characterized by discourses of "good citizenship." Overall, the study suggested that the young women struggled to articulate a desire for parenting within dominant discourses of prevention.

Section Summary

- The Listening Guide is a data analysis method that puts a feminist reflexive approach into action.
- Extended education and pregnancy avoidance are contemporaneous expectations for the teenage years.
- Where there is a distance between an expected trajectory and actual life events, the young women's narratives are characterized by accounts of "good citizenship."

Research Design

I took a feminist reflexive approach to this study. However, this approach was not fully formed or articulated in advance of the study—It was a standpoint that developed as I engaged with the feminist literature and reflected on the findings in the study. Sue Wilkinson (1988, 1996) summarized the salient aspects of this approach as follows:

- to carry out research for, and not on, women,
- to illuminate women's social conditions and experience,
- to advocate for social change on behalf of women,
- to expose and challenge the operation of male power,
- to be mindful of the power inherent in the researcher's role within the research relationship.

A Relational Approach

To illuminate women's social conditions and experience, I drew on Carol Gilligan's (1982) "In a different voice," which articulates a relational way of being. Early in her career, Gilligan worked with Kohlberg who had observed a difference in how boys and girls negotiated ethical decisions. He observed that boys ultimately

took a law-based non-relational approach, and girls took a relational approach, drawn between the law and the implications for individuals. While Kohlberg took this "indecision" to be of a lower order in moral reasoning, Gilligan suggested it may reflect a feminine reasoning, different, relational, but not of a lower order (Gilligan, 1982, p. 22). This is an example of how men are constructed as being able to engage with more abstract, moral reasoning and being less field dependent, and women constructed as being relational and contextual in their reasoning. The young women's decisions in this study exemplified this. Their decisions were not made in a detached manner, a model of decision making which appeals to individualistic values, but in terms of the networks and support afforded by their family, boyfriend, and the state. For example, Carleen decides to abort her first pregnancy when her partner, initially excited, began to voice concerns about how he was going to provide for Carleen and the baby; "Well he wanted the baby at first, I was always the one to say no, not yet. And then the tables turned and he started getting scared …"

To advocate for social change on behalf of women, I considered the regulatory frameworks within which the young women were making, and narrating, their pregnancy decisions. For this, I drew on Foucault's (1976) work, which explored how the "state" exerts its power on its "citizens" (p. 85). He described how numerous and diverse techniques have evolved for achieving the "subjugation of bodies" and the control of populations, which he described as "biopower" (p. 140). The devices or institutions on which "biopower" relies he described as "capillary" power, power negotiated in day-to-day interactions (pp. 84, 145). This is power through legislation such as extending schooling, the Family Nurse Partnership which supports young parents, and even the research interview.

Nicklaus Rose (1990) suggested that such normalizing discourses are internalized, and, rather than being perceived as imposed, are reformulated as personal desire. Rose (1990) observed that government expects that citizens should want to regulate their conduct and existence for their own welfare, that of their families, and that of society (p. 224). People are "entrepreneurs of themselves" (p. 226), shaping their own lives through available choices. This assumes a range of possible "choices" and stands in tension to contextual considerations in teenage pregnancy decision making where such choices may be reduced (Phoenix, 1981). Rose also described how people display in their talk how they have made responsible choices (p. 247). He terms these practices as "responsibilisation" or "good citizenship" narratives. I explore this concept in how the young women gave accounts that assured the listener of their "good citizenship" in relation to normalized expectations for the teenage years and family formation.

The Participant–Researcher Relationship

To be mindful of the power inherent in the researcher's role within the research relationship, I took inspiration from feminist authors who have challenged a positivist approach to research methodology and method, stressing the impossibility of removing the researcher's "effect" on the interview encounter and acknowledging that each party will inevitably affect the resulting "data" (Martin, 2001; Phoenix, 2008; Taylor et al., 1996). The data arising from an interview are co-constructed, and it is important to reflect on this relationship in data analysis. Considering the participant–researcher relationship is built into the Listening Guide data analysis method as well as underpinning a feminist approach to the whole research process, and should be explicitly

considered and overtly discussed in the research account.

Section Summary

- Women tend to be constructed as being relational and contextual in their reasoning.
- Regulatory "power" is present at a state, interpersonal, and internalized level.
- A feminist reflexive approach acknowledges the co-constructed nature of a research interview and overtly considers this relationship.

Research Practicalities

Recruitment

The criteria for recruitment to this study were to be a woman and have decided on abortion with a first pregnancy and birth with a subsequent pregnancy during the teenage years. This encompassed an age range of 13 to 18 years, which reflected the age focus of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999). Participants were identified as they presented to the service between January 2013 and January 2014. Eleven possible participants were identified and approached for interview; three declined to participate, and eight accepted.

Oakley (1981) described how few women participate in research from a purely altruistic motive. Some young women may have agreed to participate as they had an issue or concern they wanted to discuss. For example, there was discussion of miscarriage and contraception in many of the interviews. However, while discussing the research with one young woman on the phone, she was hesitant. I could hear her friend questioning my motivation loudly in the background, querying why I wanted to know about her friend's situation, and advising her not to do it. Perhaps she saw me as representing the range of professionals that are seen to judge the teenage mother, or rightly questioned my proposed forensic exploration of her friend's decisions.

Sample Size

This was an exploratory study, and hence the sample size was small. Studies that have used the Listening Guide for data analysis vary in sample sizes; Beauboeuf-Lafontant's (2008) analyses of strength and depression among Black women and Edwards and Weller's (2012) exploration of young people's understanding of self over time had samples of 58 and 50, respectively. It is notable that these authors primarily focused on one reading from the guide, the "voice of I" (i.e., participant voice), whereas authors who have carried out the four readings (for plot/reader response, voice of "I," relationship, and social structures/cultural contexts) have smaller sample sizes. For example, Middleton (2010) looked at young women's narratives of maternal timing with 16 young women, and Balan (2005) had a sample of 5 for an examination of women and workplace transition. It would appear that a greater range and depth of analysis is rendered possible with fewer participants.

The Gatekeeper Role

The ethics committee raised concerns regarding potential coercion to participate in the study. This led to the decision that the first invitation to participate in the study comes from an outreach nurse rather than the researcher to avoid potential participants feeling pressured into taking part. Miller and Bell (2002) described this layer as “gatekeeping” and voiced concerns regarding adding an extra layer to the recruitment process. They suggested that incorrect judgments might be made about who might be suitable interviewees, which may lead to a “biased” sample. They also felt that the researcher is dependent on the gatekeeper for access to participants and, depending on the main role of the person acting as gatekeeper, questioned how easy it would be for potential participants to refuse participation. Introducing an extra layer to recruitment may also hinder the research, as the gatekeeper may not be as motivated as the researcher to invest time explaining the research to the potential participant, which may in turn affect successful recruitment. Ironically, it is also possible that the young women felt obliged to participate because of their relationship with the outreach nurse, which would seem contrary to the aims of the ethics committee. Joint review of all referrals to the outreach service by myself and the nurse mitigated some of these concerns by ensuring all potential participants were approached.

Consent

Children and Consent

At the beginning of the interview, and in line with ethical guidance, I explained to the women the rationale for the research, provided written information, and requested written consent. Information sheets and the consent form were approved by the local National Health Service (NHS) ethics committee. Gaining consent has become central to ethical research practice, and the varied definitions of consent tend to focus on participant understanding of what it is they are participating in and any possible risks in doing so. Wiles et al. (2005) considered whether the same set of principles and procedures in relation to gaining consent is equally applicable to research among different groups and different methodological frameworks. Research with children and young people is an example. The ethics committee was particularly concerned regarding those who might be below 16 years at the point of interview—reflecting current legislative structures regarding ability to consent. As such, they demonstrated the familiar trope of children as incomplete adults. This approach to research participation has the potential to deny children and young people the opportunity to contribute to research and express their opinions in the name of “protection” which, contrary to its aim, might increase their vulnerability through a lack of evidence or knowledge of children’s perspectives and opinions (Mayall, 2000). According to Lansdown (2005), children and young people’s “capacity” to make decisions is dependent on the nature of the decision, their experience, and the opportunities available to them. Viewed this way, children of all ages can make informed decisions about participation in research provided they have information that is meaningful to them (Lansdown, 2005).

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Maintaining anonymity is of concern when working with small numbers, of a narrow age range, in a specific

locality and with narrative methods, the detail of which can render the participants identifiable (Greenhalgh et al., 2005). I used pseudonyms and deleted place names and other identifying details to support anonymity.

In qualitative research, the interviews are often in-depth and sustained, during which the participant may speak of a range of sensitive issues and confidentiality considered. Cowburn (2005) discusses how in an in-depth interview there is the potential to reveal information that may be incriminating. In turn, the participant may fear that the researcher might disclose sensitive information to authorities who may then impose sanctions. Cowburn (2005) argued that due to the intimate and therapeutic nature of the in-depth interview, research participants may disclose more than they had planned and be left vulnerable as a consequence. He identified three considerations within confidentiality that may stand in tension with each other: legal, moral, and research. For example, the researcher's non-disclosure of a crime revealed in an interview could be seen as aiding and abetting or colluding with the participant, moral codes would lead one to break confidentiality to stop an ongoing or future abuse, while not breaking confidentiality might produce more information that would add to knowledge about a particular subject.

The researcher is obliged to act on safeguarding concerns, and therefore absolute confidentiality within the research setting is precluded. However, with such confidentiality limits, which must be explained to the participant at the outset, there is potential of censored data in the research setting. The young women in this study did freely discuss issues of a safeguarding nature such as witnessing domestic violence or sexual abuse. These were historical, which could have been a censoring of any possible current issues. Overall, the potential benefit of my research would not outweigh potential harm to participant or others if a safeguarding issue were disclosed. Therefore, I was prepared to stop the research process for those who might reveal concerning issues.

Distress

Due to the nature of in-depth interview, the participant might tell of painful events that may be stressful to both speaker and listener. A referral pathway was drawn up for those where the interview might raise issues for which they needed support and I was prepared to terminate an interview if proving too distressing. Corbin and Morse (2003) have argued that the risk in dealing with sensitive issues in unstructured interviews is minimal. They stressed how the participant's control over the interview process in qualitative research creates a different risk profile to that of the clinical trial. They have suggested that the participant has agency and control over what is said, and although qualitative interviews may cause some distress, there is no indication that this is any greater than in everyday life nor that this will require follow-up counseling. In fact, the interview may have therapeutic effects, give insight, and offer closure for participants. They also argued that those who might be emotionally fragile do not tend to volunteer to be interviewed. This echoes Oakley's (1981) observations that women often participate in research for other reasons in addition to helping the researcher with their goals. The process may be mutually beneficial; for example, in my study, Susannah used the interview as an opportunity to seek clarification on what might have caused her miscarriages.

Section Summary

- A smaller sample size enables greater analytical range and depth.
- The "gatekeeper" role in recruitment avoids coercion to participate. However, the process may hinder recruitment by adding an extra layer and through being less motivated to recruitment.
- Children of any age are capable of consenting to participate in research if information is tailored to their understanding.
- While distress may occur for the participant, the therapeutic effect of a qualitative interview may be greater.

Method in Action

Overview

The Listening Guide was used as data analysis tool. In its essence, the Guide uses a series of readings to tune into layers within the narratives. In Taylor et al.'s (1996) formulation of this method, the researcher explores the relational through listening, or reading, for who is speaking, who is listening, and examining the social location of both. This approach focused on the psychological; the development of self within relational contexts. Mauthner and Doucet (1998) developed the method from a sociological approach. They introduced an initial reading for "plot"—eliciting the overall "story" the participant wishes to tell before beginning the fragmentive process of data analysis, and then a reading for reader response to the participant's words, building in a feminist reflexivity to the method. The second reading is for the voice of I, and the third for relationships. For the fourth reading, they then looked wider to social structures and cultural contexts evident in participants' narratives. This study aimed to explore the regulatory framework for the teenage years—that is, legislative and political as well as relational, as well as expectations for self; therefore, I adopted Mauthner and Doucet's (1998) development of the Guide.

Transcription

In this study, transcription was an important part of the reflexive process within data analysis. I fully transcribed all interviews, and, although arduous, ultimately it was a way of slowing down my thinking and reflexively considering my thoughts in response to the stories and the way in which they were told. It became apparent that this was going to be a messy process as possible "themes" jumped out at me, and different emotional responses ebbed and flowed. It was important to take note of these thoughts as I progressed with the transcription; these notes (as part of a "field notes diary") became a part of the reading for "reader response" to the narratives in the data analysis method.

What Is a "Reading"?

A "reading" generally looks for instances related to the focus area, whether affirming or disconfirming, as well as absences where a mention might be expected. The readings I conducted were as follows:

- Plot: What happens in the story?
- Reader response: What are the researcher's emotions and thoughts as they go through the transcript? This places the researcher firmly in the research process and foregrounds the researcher–participant relationship.
- The young women's voice or the "voice of I." Where was this present or absent? Where did "I" become "we" or "you"?
- Relationships: What were the significant relationships in the narrator's story and what were their roles? Where was there absence of relationship?
- Cultural contexts and social structures: How did the young women draw on cultural resources in telling their story? How did they speak about themselves in relation to cultural and material structures?

Through these readings, the reader tunes into the multilayered nature of a story. Sections of the transcript text are highlighted in color according to the reading. A parallel column acts as a space for reader response, reflection, commentary, notes on linked texts, and possible thematic thought.

Reading for Plot and Reader Response

I wrote a plot synopsis for each young woman's story as soon as I had a transcript and before any other reading. This gave me a sense of the story she wanted to tell me before I started a more reductive process of analysis. While writing the plot, I noted my immediate emotional response, as well as any other research or thinking of which I was aware, that related to the events described. I then went through each "reader-response" note to reflect on what it might reveal about me, the young woman or the structures within which we lived, as well as the interview context. This reflexive practice, at the point of engagement with the data, increases the listener's ability to avoid voicing over the story told with their own reactions. Noting my responses and incorporating these in the analytic process, I placed myself, the researcher, systematically in the research and acknowledged how my interpretation flowed from my own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Mauthner & Doucet, 2008).

Reading for the "Voice of I"

I then carried out a reading for the voice of "I"; how did the young woman speak of herself? This was facilitated by highlighting all "I" statements. Gilligan et al. (2003) refer to this collective of "I" statements as "I poems." I was mindful that deciding on how much text accompanies the pronoun was intuitive and chose to include the "I" and enough of the accompanying text to make the phrase intelligible. For example, a segment of Sandra's I poem expresses her decision to stop contraception:

> I came off it
>
> I didn't want to do it no more
>
> I came off it

I didn't go back

I thought what's the point

I've done my GCSEs

I'm a big girl now.

Creating these "I poems" gave the opportunity to dwell on the narrator's sense of self, and self in relation to others. Edwards and Weller (2012) focused on "I poems" in a case study to highlight a young person's sense of self over time. Beauboeuf-Lafontant (2008) used "I" poems to illuminate areas of conflict between cultural scripts and individual meaning making for Black women's experience with depression. She noted a lack of use of "I." She felt this highlighted the recognition of an inner world at odds with the women's self-presentations. Natasha Mauthner (Mauthner & Doucet, 2008) interviewed women with experience of postnatal depression and observed a dissonance in their narratives between expectations and the reality of early motherhood. She described the women as "caught between two voices," the "latter drowned out by the former." This has a certain resonance for the young women's voices in my study, where voicing a personal desire for pregnancy and parenthood is "drowned out" by "good citizen" narratives.

The creation of I poems is a unique quality feature of the Listening Guide. Following the young women's stream of consciousness by tracing their "I" statements gives the researcher an overview of their sense of self throughout their narrative. Drawing out their "I" statements creates a picture of where the young women may have several senses of self or can identify a change in sense of self over time. Exploring wider references such as you, me, or us, or an absence of "I" can add further insight regarding participant's sense of self. Edwards and Weller (2012) described such contrapuntal voices as different "analytic angles" (p. 203) that can give insight into participant's personal and social realities.

Spending time with the young women's I poems during the research process sets aside a moment where the researcher pauses and "listens" to the participants' voice(s) before imposing their perceptions. Edwards and Weller (2012) described this as a "standing alongside" rather than "gazing at" the participant (p. 215) which a thematic approach engenders—although are careful to state that one approach is not superior to the other.

Reading for Relationships

I decided to draw out similar "poems" for relationships in the young women's stories such as partners, parents, friends, school, and social care. This was a development of the suggested process. Mauthner and Doucet (1998) stress that the method should not be prescriptive and that researchers can introduce other readings such as for metaphor, absent voices, and so on. It is the layered, unfragmented reading approach that is the essence of the method. I feel the process of identifying relational poems added insight into relationships in the young woman's life—for example, all women had extensive poems about their partners. It also highlighted important elements that might have been lost in the general narrative. For example, Ally, originally from West Africa, speaks of how her sister died from Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)—her sister's poem is only 10

lines long; however, this event has had a great impact on Ally:

My sister passed away

She done her one (circumcision)

She passed away straight away

She died straight away

She was 8

She was like a year older than me

We were meant to do it together

She got her one (circumcision)

She died straight away

She was really young.

Each complete poem began with the first reference to the protagonist and ended with the last, and therefore contained all references to that person. Creating a collection of poems for each young woman helped to map out the relational and contextual aspects of each participant's story. These poems became an element of the reading for relationships. Again, I noted down my thoughts and reflections during each relationship reading. I considered what were the significant relationships in the young women's lives and whether the young women described these relationships as enabling or constraining. For example, their relationship with their mothers was facilitative such as Danielle recognizing how her mother's support enabled her to have free time in the evening; "she helps out like every time she comes home she takes (daughter)," or constraining as with Mai describing her mother as "moving like she wants to be the mum."

Reading for Social Structures and Cultural Contexts

I then read all the transcripts a fourth time over, making notes about cultural contexts and social structures such as gang life or personal expectations within education. This reading is embedded in all previous readings but serves to specifically consider the wider sociopolitical context of people's lives, rather than individual's actions and words. For example, the importance of education is voiced as rationale for deciding to abort a pregnancy: "I wanted to get my education straight" (Ally), and as goal once a parent, "By September I need to be in college, I need to be in college for … more than 3 years, I want to be in uni and that's it … For (daughter) I don't want her to be like oh my mum she doesn't do anything with her life" (Danielle). This reading also served to highlight the pervasive violence in the young women's lives, from witnessing domestic violence, fleeing FGM, involvement in gang life, and experiencing intimate partner violence and rape.

From Notes to Theory Building

At the end of the Listening Guide readings notes and observations were grouped following chronological order across the eight narratives. From this chronological approach, how the young women narrated their pregnancy choices clustered around three main aspects: their first unexpected pregnancy and subsequent abortion, legitimizing accounts of their journey to a second pregnancy, and their existing parenting arrangements and hopes for family formation. I then returned to the transcripts and conducted a line-by-line analysis around the broad conceptual groupings identified thus far. The aim of this return to the transcripts was to firmly locate my findings in the data, to ensure that the theory aligned with the participant's words and that I had not moved away from the data while developing theory.

Overall, I identified the main "story" of how the young women foregrounded identities of self as "good citizens." The young women's narratives were characterized by discourses of good citizenship as they negotiated the space between what they perceived as expected and what they desired. In their narratives, they worked to present themselves less as "socially excluded" in line with policy and more as responsible citizen –assuring me, and the wider audience of the research, that they wanted to finish their education before becoming a parent or to reengage with education or to try to find work once a parent. Their accounts of how they became pregnant a second time also stressed how they were adhering to normalized expectations for non-reproduction, but the pregnancy occurred despite their best efforts, and that, now established as a family, they were moving toward marriage and nuclear family living.

Section Summary

- Transcription is the beginning of the reflexive process in data analysis.
- The Listening Guide readings highlight the multilayered nature of a story.
- Reflexivity at the point of data engagement avoids voicing over the story told with the researcher's reactions.

Practical Lessons Learned

Considering the Participant–Researcher Relationship

In this study, the young women offered stylized "good citizenship" narratives. I reflected on my role as researcher, and how this may be one of many relationships with professionals with whom the young women had contact in recent years. The research interview may reinscribe such paternalistic relationships. While the aim of the researcher may be to amplify participant voice, the participant may not feel free to fully voice their desires and opinions for fear of judgment. Transparency is achieved to some extent through a feminist reflexive approach, by overtly recognizing, despite not always being able to resolve, this tension in the research process and noting where the young women may be orienting their narrative to their perception of the listener's position (England, 1994; Gill, 1998).

"Quieter Narratives"

Despite "good citizenship" narratives of pregnancy avoidance being foregrounded in the young women's narratives, the Listening Guide method facilitated readings that highlighted quieter or less frequently mentioned narratives, such as their muted desire for pregnancy and parenthood. Using this method has highlighted contextual aspects that receive less focus in research, which tends to emphasize dominant narratives as the main findings. For example, an "obvious" analysis of the data might focus on individual "failure" in using contraception effectively. A contextual analysis has led to an exploration of why contraception was not used "effectively" in relation to the wider sociocultural context of the young women's lives. Different approaches point to different solutions. While more Relationship and Sex Education and contraception provision might be a suggestion from the former, an acknowledgment and understanding of the effect of socioeconomic context is engendered from the latter.

Wider Sociocultural Contexts

The readings of the Listening Guide moved from the personal, to the relational, to social structures and cultural contexts. My clinical work prior to this project had focused on health promotion and education at an individual level; using the Listening Guide trained my eye, as a novice researcher, to see the wider influences on the young women's lives that were evident through their narratives.

This was an important practical process that ensured consideration of wider social and cultural aspects alongside individual experience and opinion. Where I had begun with a cause and effect investigatory approach focused on the individual, through using this method I was enabled to identify wider social and cultural influence on pregnancy decision making which included poverty, gang culture, and pervasive violence. These fragile life circumstances had a significant bearing on the young women's decisions to "get on with" parenting in the teenage years that went beyond contraception use.

Section Summary

- It is important to reflexively consider in the interview whether the participant may be orienting their narrative to the perceived position of the researcher.
- The Listening Guide readings enable quieter, or even absent, narratives to be considered alongside those that are prevalent.
- The Listening Guide readings draw the analysis beyond focus on the individual to wider contextual aspects.

Conclusion

Using the Listening Guide brought disparate elements that I had at the outset together: a desire to keep the young women's voice central within the research, an awareness of broader pressures to "conform" to social expectations for the teenage years, how young women's desire for motherhood and successful

parenting seemed to be silenced, and a growing awareness of the role of the researcher in shaping data and findings. As a practitioner working directly with young women, I was aware of individual contextualized experience, however needed to train my eye to recognize the powerful discourses that were directing my work, my interaction with the women, their presentation of self, and my interpretation of this. The Listening Guide readings facilitated this process, beginning with how the woman speaks of herself and moving wider to evidence of social structures and cultural contexts within their narrative.

Overall, the method has enabled recognition of the young women's desire for pregnancy and parenthood, highlighted their agency in moving toward this goal within a regulatory framework that denies them this desire, and acknowledged their decisions in a positive light. It has enabled identification of the broader and evolving personal and sociocultural contexts of the young women's lives encompassing finishing education, longevity of relationships, risk through violence and gang involvement, and pregnancy loss, which render having a baby sooner an understandable "choice" given the limits of choice afforded these women within their social location.

Classroom Discussion Questions

Classroom Discussion Questions

1. A feminist methodological approach entails an examination of power in the research process. Where are these power relations evident across research projects?
2. From what you have read in this case study, what is your understanding of reflexivity?
3. How is the reflexive process built into the approach to data analysis?
4. What is unique about the Listening Guide's layered reading approach to data?

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Further Reading

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Harvard University Press.

Gilligan, C., & **Eddy, J.** (2017). Listening as a path to psychological discovery: An introduction to the Listening Guide. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 6(2), 76–81.

Gilligan, C., **Spencer, R.**, **Weinberg, M. K.**, & **Bertsch, T.** (2003). On the Listening Guide: A voice-centered relational method. In **P. M. Camic**, **J. E. Rhodes**, & **L. Yardley** (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 157–172). American Psychological Association.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & **Piatelli, D.** (2012). *The feminist practice of holistic reflexivity*. In **S. N. Hesse-Biber** (Ed.), *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (2nd ed., pp. 557–582). SAGE.

Mauthner, N. S., & **Doucet, A.** (2008). What can be known and how? Narrated subjects and the Listening Guide. *Qualitative Research*, 8(3), 399–409.

Ramazanoglu, C., & **Holland, J.** (2002). *Feminist methodology: Challenges and choices*. SAGE.

References

Balan, B. N. (2005). Multiple voices and methods: Listening to women who are in workplace transition. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 4(4), 63–86.

Beauboeuf-Lafontant, T. (2008). Listening past the lies that make us sick: A voice-centered analysis of strength and depression among Black women. *Qualitative Sociology*, 31(4), 391–406.

Corbin, J., & **Morse, J. M.** (2003). The unstructured interactive interview: Issues of reciprocity and risks when dealing with sensitive topics. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(3), 335–354.

Cowburn, M. (2005). Confidentiality and public protection: Ethical dilemmas in qualitative research with adult male sex offenders. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 11(1), 49–63.

Edwards, R., & **Weller, S.** (2012). Shifting analytic ontology: Using I-poems in qualitative longitudinal research. *Qualitative Research*, 12(2), 202–217.

England, K. V. (1994). Getting personal: Reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research. *The Professional Geographer*, 46(1), 80–89.

Foucault, M. (1976). *The history of sexuality, Vol. 1: An introduction* (R. Hurley, Trans.). Vintage.

Gill, R. (1998). Dialogues and differences: Writing, reflexivity and the crisis of representation. In **L. Phillips**, **M. Kristiansen**, **M. Vehviläinen**, & **E. Gunnarsson** (Eds.), *Standpoints and differences: Essays in the practice of feminist psychology* (pp. 18–44). Routledge.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Harvard University Press.

Gilligan, C., **Spencer, R.**, **Weinberg, M. K.**, & **Bertsch, T.** (2003). On the Listening Guide: A voice-centered relational method. In **P. M. Camic**, **J. E. Rhodes**, & **L. Yardley** (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 157–172). American Psychological Association.

Greenhalgh, T., **Robert, G.**, **Macfarlane, F.**, **Bate, P.**, **Kyriakidou, O.**, & **Peacock, R.** (2005). Storylines of research in diffusion of innovation: A meta-narrative approach to systematic review. *Social Science & Medicine*, 61(2), 417–430.

Lansdown, G. (2005). *The evolving capacities of the child* (No. innins05/18). https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/evolving-eng.pdf (accessed November 2019).

Martin, E. (2001). *The woman in the body: A cultural analysis of reproduction*. Beacon Press.

Mauthner, N. S., & **Doucet, A.** (2008). What can be known and how? Narrated subjects and the Listening Guide. *Qualitative Research*, 8(3), 399–409.

Mayall, B. (2000). The sociology of childhood in relation to children's rights. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 8(3), 243–259.

Middleton, S. (2010). *Hearing the voices of young women: Interpreting teenage pregnancy narratives individually and collectively* (Doctoral dissertation, Middlesex University).

Miller, T., & **Bell, L.** (2002). Consenting to what? Issues of access, gate-keeping and "informed" consent. In **M. L. Mauthner**, **M. Birch**, **J. Jessop**, & **T. Miller** (Eds.), *Ethics in Qualitative Research* (pp. 53–69). SAGE.

Oakley, A. (1981). Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms? In **H. Roberts** (Ed.), *Doing feminist research* (pp. 30–61). Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Phoenix, A. (1981). *Young mothers?* Polity Press.

Phoenix, A. (2008). Analysing narrative contexts. In **M. Andrews**, **C. Squire**, & **M. Tamboukou** (Eds.), *Doing narrative research* (pp. 64–77). SAGE.

Rose, N. (1990). *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge.

Social Exclusion Unit. (1999). *Teenage pregnancy strategy*. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Taylor, J. M., **Gilligan, C.**, & **Sullivan, A. M.** (1996). Missing voices, changing meanings: Developing a voice-centred, relational method and creating an interpretive community. In **S. Wilkinson** (Ed.), *Feminist social psychologies: International perspectives* (pp. 233–257). Open University Press.

Wiles, R., **Heath, S.**, **Crow, G.**, & **Charles, V.** (2005). *Informed consent in social research: A literature review* (NCRM Methods Review Papers NCRM, 1). http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/85/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-001.pdf (accessed November 2019).

Wilkinson, S. (1988). The role of reflexivity in feminist psychology. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 11(5), 493–502.

Wilkinson, S. (1996). Feminist social psychologies: A decade of development. In **S. Wilkinson** (Ed.), *Feminist social psychologies: International perspectives* (pp. 1–20). Open University Press.