

Fourth Assignment: Qualitative methods

In this fourth assignment, on qualitative research, you may reuse your individual, mobile phone use-related research issue from assignment 3. You will (re-)formulate it as a qualitative study. Alternatively, if this topic does not easily apply, choose the topic of software/hardware obsolescence for mobile phones, described later.

Formalities:

Due: 10.11.2019, 23:59

Est. word count: 2-3 pages (800-1500 words).

You can write your assignment in English or Norwegian. The response must be submitted as a single pdf document and the filename should include your student-id.

Introduction

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a protocol for a qualitative study, and select and describe at least one technique for data collection in more detail. To do this, you must respond to all of the questions in part I and II.

Notice: The purpose of this assignment is to describe and discuss your study design. You are not asked to conduct the study in practice.

Part I: Research approach (app. 1-2 pages)

(1) Investigate the research topic that you developed in assignment 3, or the topic of software/hardware obsolescence for mobile phones.

Software/hardware obsolescence refers to the fact that mobile phone users can experience major disruptions in using the 'old' hardware when upgrading software/the operating system or older software (apps) with new hardware or across operating systems. Refer to the paper by Farman [1], who brings up issues around nine major releases of iOS between 2007 and 2014, where especially apps "rarely preserve[d] backward compatible versions for older iOSs" [1, p. 21]. "Older iOSs", synonymous to older devices, i.e. hardware, are characterized as not even "allowed" to have the latest version installed or running.

*[1] J. Farman, 'Repair and Software: Updates, Obsolescence, and Mobile Culture's Operating Systems', *Continent*, no. 6.1, pp. 20–24, 2017.*

<http://www.continentcontinent.cc/index.php/continent/article/view/275>

Consider how a **qualitative study** can contribute to your understanding of the research issue. Describe the overall purpose of conducting a qualitative study, and – if applicable – when and how it would fit with the experimental research study you have created earlier.

(2) Formulate an according **qualitative research question** that you wish to investigate.

(3) Describe which qualitative approach you apply to investigate the research question and your reasons for choosing this. You can choose between either **ethnographic study** or **case study**.

Part II: Data collection methods (app. 1-2 pages)

See next page

Part II: Data collection methods (app. 1-2 pages)

(4) Describe your plan for **data collection** by specifying one or a combination of the following data collection techniques: Diaries, observations, surveys, interviews, and focus groups. If we for now assume **diaries** as appropriate, explore the following questions:

- i) What type of diary will you apply? Describe this type of diary and discuss why you have chosen this particular type.
- ii) Describe how you practically intend to carry out the diary study, and argue for your choices.
- iii) Indicate how you would present the diary task to the study participants, and argue for your choice.