

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORTS SCIENCE

COURSE CODE: **MES834**

COURSE TITLE: Qualitative Research Design and Methods in Physical Education  
and Sports Science

COURSE DURATION: 39 hours (3 hours x 13 weeks)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide students with well-defined knowledge and skills to plan and undertake an interpretive research project. Given that in the past decade there has been a knowledge (practical and theoretical) expansion in the fields of human movement studies and physical education, there is a need to provide focused understanding of the value of social science research designs, set research design in the context of the interpretive inquiry paradigm, as well as introduce graduate students to research methods and designs within subsets of social sciences of human movement. Because there has been increased awareness of the value of cross-discipline research inquiries and cross-methods research designs, appropriate links will be made to relevant scientific methods.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to achieve the following in the context of qualitative research:

1. undertake an exploratory literature search in the social sciences of human movement
2. identify a research issue and formulate a problem for investigation
3. identify limitations to interpretive research
4. design a qualitative research investigation
5. identify various types of qualitative research strategies available for investigating a case
6. be able to write a research abstract or short research report in an interpretive genre
7. understand ethics in qualitative research

## COURSE CONTENT

1. Research interests in the field of physical activity
2. Qualitative research designs
3. Using research literature to identify and develop an interpretive research problem
4. Identifying a research problem
5. Purpose of both the exploratory and comparative literature surveys
6. Steps in a literature search
7. Structuring a meta-analysis
8. Presenting a research problem
  - i. Identifying the research problem
  - ii. Articulating a question
  - iii. Defining a research context
  - iv. Limitations on the research problem
  - v. Justifying the significance of the study
9. Formulating the research design
  - i. Selecting an appropriate hermeneutic design (such as case study)
  - ii. Describing data collection (such as survey, interview and observation) and analysis methods (such as grounded theory)
  - iii. Interaction of researcher, participants and data collection methods
  - iv. Credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research
  - v. Theory building
10. Reporting research
  - i. Writing abstracts
  - ii. Research papers

11. Ethics in qualitative research, particularly issues of power relations between researcher and research participants

### REQUIRED TEXT

Pitney, W. A., & Parker, J. (2009). Qualitative research in physical activity and the health professions. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. (Available as an ebook)

### ASSESSMENT

#### *Assignments (Individual) 60%*

Identify an issue in the physical education sports fields that would warrant qualitative inquiry.

From that:

Design a study detailing to the extent of generating an IRB application. The following must be included: justification for the study, research question, participant selection, researcher perspective, data collection and analysis methods. The University IRB application form must be used so that all relevant ethical issues (especially confidentiality, data protection, and power relations) are addressed in the submission.

Include a description of the specific ways that trustworthiness and creditability will be achieved through the research design.

#### *In-class tasks (Individual) 30%*

These may include: reviewing a published study from a peer-reviewed journal with the view of identifying key elements of its design;

generating a structure for meta-analysis of the literature;

designing a survey; conducting an interview;

undertaking an observation of a sports-related event;

analyzing textual data using a researcher-designed coding framework (constant comparison); and

generating own coding categories and using same to derive themes to interpret a qualitative data set. (generating grounded theory)

*Classroom participation (Individual) 10%*

These include:

Providing referenced definitions to key terms such as the following: case study, ethnography, life history, triangulation, member checking, mixed-methods

Engaging in/facilitating group discussion

Leading brainstorming, and

Role play