

Applying Intersectionality - qualitative research

Set-up & Conduct- Study Preparation

VERSION

1.0

What is intersectionality?

The research framework of intersectionality acknowledges a person or group with multiple layered social identities (e.g. gender, class, race, ability, etc). The combined impact of these social identities manifest a social position of advantage and/or disadvantage. These positions of advantage and/or disadvantage can affect health behaviors, access to health services and resources, and health outcomes. Adopting an intersectional approach to research can help researchers understand their research populations and the social context in which their research findings emerge. It contributes to insight in between and within group differences, and helps link these differences.

More reading about the theoretical and methodological background of Intersectionality:

- Crenshaw K. Mapping the margins: Identity politics, intersectionality, and violence against women. Stanford Law Rev. 1991;43(6):1241-99.
- Hankivsky O, Doyal L, Einstein G, et al. The odd couple: using biomedical and intersectional approaches to address health inequities. Global Health Action. 2017;10(sup2):1326686.
- Bowleg L. When Black+ lesbian+ woman? Black lesbian woman: The methodological challenges of qualitative and quantitative intersectionality research. Sex roles.2008;59(5-6):312-25.

Why consider intersectionality?

Intersectionality enables researchers to address health inequities and social justice in their research. It helps researchers to gain insight in biases: to whom is this knowledge applicable? And to whom is it not?

Intersectionality allows for researchers to identify vulnerable/ underserved groups, differences within and between groups and to explain these differences from a socio-structural perspective. Thereby, intersectionality adds value by generating integrated knowledge that contributes to tailored, personalized and patient-centered care policies and practices.

More reading about the relevance of intersectionality and examples of good practice:

- Giesbrecht M, Crooks VA, Williams A, Hankivsky O. Critically examining diversity in end-of-life family caregiving: implications for equitable caregiver support and Canada's Compassionate Care Benefit. International Journal for Equity in Health. 2012;11(1): 65.
- Logie C, James LL, Tharao W, Loutfy MR. HIV, gender, race, sexual orientation, and sex work: a qualitative study of intersectional stigma experienced by HIV-positive women in Ontario, Canada. PLoS medicine. 2011;8:11.
- Branković I, Verdonk P, Klinge I. Applying a gender lens on human papillomavirus infection: cervical cancer screening, HPV DNA testing, and HPV vaccination. Int J Equity Health. 2013;12:14.
- Verdonk P, Muntinga M, Leyerzapf H, Abma T. From Gender Sensitivity to an Intersectionality and Participatory Approach in Health Research and Public Policy in the Netherlands. The Palgrave Handbook of Intersectionality in Public Policy: Palgrave Macmillan; 2019.
- McCall L. The complexity of intersectionality. Intersectionality and Beyond: Routledge-Cavendish; 2008. p. 65-92.
- Seng JS. Marginalized identities, discrimination burden, and mental health: Empirical exploration of an interpersonal-level approach to modeling intersectionality. Social Science & Medicine. 2012;75(12):2437-2445.
- Anuj K, Hill S, Meer N. What can health inequalities researchers learn from an intersectionality perspective? Understanding social dynamics with an inter-categorical approach?. Social Theory and Health. 2015;13(3-4):288-307.
- Bauer GB. Incorporating intersectionality theory into population health research methodology: challenges and the potential to advance health equity. Social science & medicine. 2014;110:10-17.

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- Wemrell M, Mulinari S, Merlo J. Intersectionality and risk for ischemic heart disease in Sweden: Categorical and anti-categorical approaches. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2017;177:213-222.
- Giritli Nygren K, Olofsson A. Intersectional approaches in health-risk research: A critical review. *Sociology Compass*. 2014;8(9):1112-1126.
- Ferlatte O, et al. Recent suicide attempts across multiple social identities among gay and bisexual men: An intersectionality analysis. *Journal of homosexuality*. 2018;65(11): 1507-1526.
- Black J, Veenstra G. A cross-cultural quantitative approach to intersectionality and health: using interactions between gender, race, class, and neighbourhood to predict self-rated health in Toronto and New York city. 2011;71:91.
- Hankivsky O. *Health Inequities in Canada. Intersectional Frameworks and Practices*: UBC Press;2011. 71-91.

How to apply intersectionality?

The research framework of intersectionality is applicable to all phases of qualitative research: research design, data collection, data analysis, reporting and knowledge translation/ implementation. Although the application of intersectionality in qualitative research is still in its early stages, a number of useful resources have been published. The following resources may support you in the application of intersectionality to your own research:

- CIHR. Integrating Sex & Gender Checklist - Partnership Development Grants for the Healthy & Productive Work Initiative. Ottawa: Canadian Institute for Health Research; 2015. <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49336.html>
 - o Checklist to support the integration of sex and gender in all stages of research. This checklist may be applied to integrate sex, gender and other aspects of identity.
- Hunting G. Intersectionality-informed qualitative research: A primer. *Criminology*.2014;4(1):32-56. <https://www.ifsee.ulaval.ca/sites/ifsee.ulaval.ca/files/b95277db179219c5ee8080a99b0b91276941.pdf>
 - o Illustrations of intersectionality in qualitative research stages (framing, data collection, measurement, data analysis, interpretation)
- European Commission. Gendered Innovations. How Gender Analysis Contributes to Research. Fix the knowledge. <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/fix-the-knowledge.html>
 - o Toolkit (methods, terms, checklists) and peer-reviewed case studies with a particular focus on sex and gender in research. However, toolkits and case studies may serve the integration of other aspects of identity as well.
- Stuij M, Muntinga M, Bakker M, Bendien E, Verdonk P. Intersectionele analyse in kwalitatief gezondheidszorgonderzoek. Een praktische wegwijzer; 2020. ZonMw: Den Haag.
 - o Guide to intersectional analysis of qualitative data
- Christensen AD, Jensen SQ. Doing intersectional analysis: Methodological implications for qualitative research. *NORA-Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 20.2; 2012: 109-125.
 - o Guide to intersectional analysis of qualitative data

Research support and intersectionality

1. APH PhD Training 'Intersectionality and I'

If you are interested in applying intersectionality to your research, you can participate in the Amsterdam Public Health PhD training 'Intersectionality and I'. The following themes are part of the training:

1. Introduction to theory and concepts of social justice and intersectionality
2. Implications of social justice and intersectionality to public health
3. Implications of social justice and intersectionality in quantitative and qualitative research methods
4. Application of social justice and intersectionality in your own research design
5. Reflexivity and the role of the researcher in the interpretation of research findings

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6. Train-the-trainer: to present acquired knowledge and skills to your own research teams

For more information on enrollment, please contact: m.muntinga@amsterdamumc.nl.

2. Community of Practice:

If you already practice intersectionality-based research or plan for the integration of intersectionality in your research, you may want to enroll in the community of practice. The community of practice has a digital platform where key resources are shared and experiences with intersectionality-based research are exchanged. For more information or to enter the SharePoint platform, please contact: m.muntinga@amsterdamumc.nl

LINKS

| | Link |
|---|---|
| CIHR. Integrating Sex & Gender Checklist - Partnership Development Grants for the Healthy & Productive Work Initiative. | http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49336.html |
| Hunting G. Intersectionality-informed qualitative research: A primer. | https://www.ifsee.ulaval.ca/sites/ifsee.ulaval.ca/files/b95277db179219c5ee8080a99b0b91276941.pdf |
| European Commission. Gendered Innovations. How Gender Analysis Contributes to Research. Fix the knowledge. | http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/fix-the-knowledge.html |

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| 1.0 | Document created | 28JUN2020 | Dr. Maaïke Muntinga, Dr. Saskia Duijs |

DOCUMENT APPROVAL

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