

# Q-sort

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## Learning outcomes

- Appreciate the meaning of a 'concourse' or range of texts surrounding a topic that is deemed to be an essential component of practice development;
- practice creating a Q-sample or set of statements that represent the concourse;
- identify a P-set or number of people to sort the Q sample;
- set up and conduct a practice Q sort.

## Q-sort workshop

- Short presentation:
  - Methodology
  - Procedural steps
- Create a Q-sample – values exercise;
- Perform a Q-sort;
- Simple analysis to establish ranking of Q-statements;
- Discussion.

## Q Methodology

- Scientific study of human subjectivity;
- ‘...person’s communication of his/her point of view.’ (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, 12).
- Exploration and comparison of subjectivity and attitudes (Akhtar-Danesh, Baumann, Cordingley, 2008).

## References

- Akhtar-Danesh N, Baumann A, Cordingley L, 2008, Q-methodology in nursing research, *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 30(6), 759-773.
- McKeown B, Thomas D, 1988, *Q-Methodology*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park.
- Stephenson W, 1953, *The study of Behaviour: Q-Technique and its Methodology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Web-Q, <http://www.lrz-muenchen.de/~schmolck/qmethod/webq/> (accessed 1.10.08).

## Concourse

- Background information about a topic (in this case culture) wide enough to represent a range of views.
  - Theory, literature, interviews, public opinion, observation, expert opinion (naturalistic or structured).
- Comprehensive list of statements

## Examples of Q-statements

Evidence about the effectiveness of nursing therapies should be used in care planning.

Evidence regarding the effectiveness of nursing therapies to justify decisions is over-rated

Decisions regarding nursing therapy is the responsibility of the individual patient and his/her family.

## Q-sample

- Reduce the number of statements
  - repeats,
  - ambiguity,
- Classify the statements (eg EBP, PCC, CI),
- Q-sample represents concourse,
- Number of statements (20 – 100),
- Each statement randomly numbered and written on a card.
- Domain experts – check & pilot testing.

## Examples of Q-statements

**7** Evidence about the effectiveness of nursing therapies should be used in care planning.

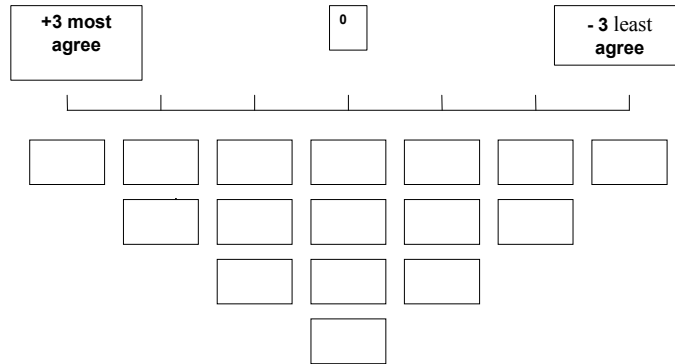
**14** Evidence regarding the effectiveness of nursing therapies to justify decisions is over-rated

**4** Decisions regarding nursing therapy is the responsibility of the individual patient and his/her family.

## Q-set

- the participants who will undertake the sort,
- Selection criteria (RNs, working in hospital, permanent staff),
- Numbers of participants relatively unimportant.

## Q-sort table



## Data sheet

+ 3	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Statement No 7	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
+ 2	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Statement No 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statement No 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
+ 1	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Statement No 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statement No 8	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statement No 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
0							

## Analysis

- Correlations between Q-sorts or participants,
- Determine the common viewpoints,
- Similar sorts form a group or factor (eg medical model),
- Means, factors analysis.

## Potential

- Quantitative perspective,
- Multi-disciplinary development,
- Evaluation studies.

## Workshop – exercise 1 developing statements

- Three groups (develop a list of statements that represent ‘universe of viewpoints’ – regarding multidisciplinary health care)
  - Consumers/clients
  - Nurses
  - Medical and allied health
- In the group discuss the likely values and write statements that portray these – write nine statements per group – EBP, PPC and CI.

## Workshop Exercise 2 the Q-sample

- Each group will read out the statements;
- Overlaps will be taken out to reduce the number to sixteen statements – if there are not enough statements supplements will be produced for the exercise;
- The statements in the Q-sample will be written onto cards (randomly numbered from 1 – 16) Three sets of cards are required for this w’shop.

## Workshop exercise 3

### Q-set

- Choose the people to do the Q-set – Write a code number on Q-sort data card. (M to allocate codes eg N1 = Nurse one, D1 = doctor 1, P1 = patient one).

## Workshop exercise 4

### Q-sort

- Take the cards and read carefully;
- Make a pile of the cards that you most agree with and put them on the right hand side. Make a pile of the cards you least agree with and put them on the left hand side. Place the rest of the cards in the middle.
- Take the right hand pile and take the one card you most agree with and place it on the first space on the left hand side of the grid. Then take the right hand pile and choose the statement with which you least agree and put it on the space furthest to the right.
- Place the other 'agree' cards in the left hand spaces and then the 'least agree' cards in the right hand spaces until all the spaces are taken up. Think carefully and take your time. You can keep moving the cards around until you are satisfied.

## Critical questions

- ????