

PREPARE guidance

(Principles for REPorting All Rapid Ethnographies)

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What are rapid ethnographies?

How can they be used?

- Focused ethnography
- Quick ethnography
- Rapid ethnography
- Short term ethnography
- Others...



- Short timelines
- Cultural lens
- Theory-based
- Multiple data sources
- Multi-disciplinary teams
- Timely dissemination

(Andreassen et al 2020; Knoblauch 2005; Vindrola-Padros, 2020; Vindrola-Padros and Vindrola-Padros, 2018; Wall 2015)

Research problem and aim

Rapid ethnographies are viewed by some as quick and dirty...

...a perspective likely sustained by their poor reporting (identified in recent literature reviews)...

This research aimed to:

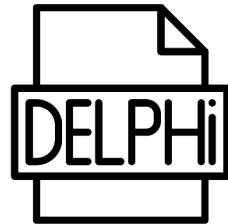
- encourage consensus on minimum criteria of reporting rapid ethnographies
- produce guidance

(Black et al., 2021; Gertner et al., 2021; Sharon et al 2024; Vindrola-Padros and Vindrola-Padros, 2018)

PREPARE development process



Step 1:
Scoping
review



Created by Smashicons
from Noun Project

Step 2: e-
Delphi survey
and
consensus
meeting



Step 3: Prototype
piloting



Step 4: Consolidation
and finalisation

1

Prototype tested through structured reflection

2

Accessibility and acceptability tested with experts

3

Accessibility and acceptability tested with novices
to rapid ethnographies

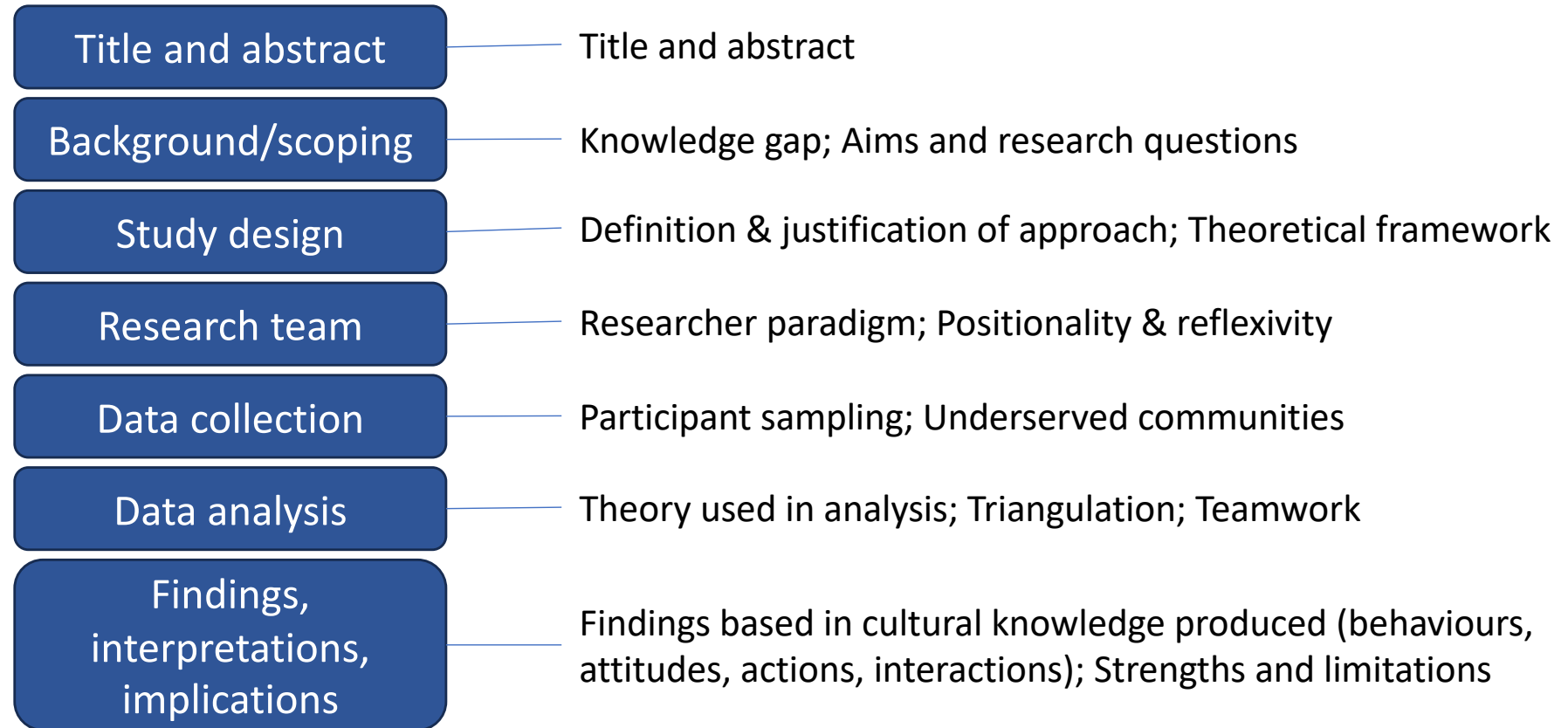
Transformation of the PREPARE tool

- Reporting tool
- Informed by quantitative reporting norms
- Slightly rigid
- More generic



- Self-reflection tool, discussion document for teams
- Informed by ethnographic principles and HSR
- Flexible phrasing
- Encourages 'ethnographic sensibilities'

PREPARE tool



Study design: Definition and Justification of Approach

3a. Does the paper describe the researchers' interpretation of their selected form of rapid ethnographies (whether focused, quick, rapid, short-term, etc. ethnography)?

3b. Cite the text(s) used for methodological guidance?

3c. And justify the use of rapid ethnographies as it links to the real-world problem that the study is considering?

Rationale for reflection and discussion

Rapid ethnographies are a research approach that can be informed by interdisciplinary (e.g., anthropological, sociological, biomedical, etc.) ways of understanding and being in (and with) the world and can aim to improve health and care services, while also making academic contributions. Rapid ethnographies can refer to rapid ethnography or focused ethnography or other variations under development that share similar characteristics.

Researchers would benefit from understanding the sub-types of rapid ethnographies (see the tables in the 'Helpful resources' section on the next two pages). Yet, it is not expected that researchers would describe all the varied forms of rapid ethnographies in their reports – but rather their interpretation and application of their chosen

sub-type. Key methodological guidance for each sub-type can be referenced to highlight the key characteristics of rapid ethnographies (see 'Helpful Resources').

You should be explicit and authentic about your justification for using rapid ethnographic approaches. Acknowledging personal commitments and clearly identifying any time or budget constraints or other considerations is crucial. It is important to note that rapid ethnography is not an easy alternative to traditional ethnography and comes with its own challenges and complexities. Being transparent about your reasons for choosing rapid ethnographies will let your audience know that your research was carefully selected and planned effectively.

	FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY	TRADITIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY
SUBJECT MATTER	Episodes in social fields	Entire social fields
	Clear research focus	Broad research purpose
	Familiar cultures	Foreign cultures
	Background knowledge prior to data collection	Gaining knowledge from engagement in the field
	Applied research	Basic research
DATA COLLECTION	Relatively long planning phase	Relatively short planning phase
	Intermittent visits with particular time frames	Full-time participant observation over a longer period
	Focused exploration	Open exploration
	Video- or audiorecordings or detailed, focused field notes	Extensive and in-depth written field notes
	Often multi-sited	Often single-sited
RESEARCHER ROLE	Time limited and Time intensity	Time extensity
	Alterity	Strangeness
	Observer-as-participant	Participant-as-observer
	Selected informants who hold a specific knowledge serve as key participants	Participants are often those with whom the researcher develops close relationships
DATA ANALYSIS	Analysis intensity	Experiential intensity
	Collective data analysis sessions	Solitary data analysis

Source: This table is a reproduction of Andreassen et al.'s (2020) differentiation of focused versus traditional ethnography, which builds upon a table first produced by Knoblauch (2005)

FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY (AS A LONE-RESEARCHER)

TEAM-BASED FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY

STAGE 1: BACKGROUND RESEARCH	The researcher will already have some background knowledge on the topic and/or setting, which can be augmented by rapid reviews, informal conversations with potential participants to better plan for times when data collection would be helpful.	The research team will already have background knowledge on the topic and/or setting which can be augmented by rapid reviews, informal conversations within the team and with potential participants to better plan for times when data collection would be helpful.
STAGE 2: STUDY DESIGN AND SET-UP	Enter field with pre-established questions. Often designed as a standalone study or linked to bigger pieces of work. Ethical review process.	Same as with lone researcher FE
STAGE 3: DATA COLLECTION	Combine different methods. Initial 'entering the field' period is used to familiarise researcher with context, build relationships. Initial observations or interviews might be broad in scope. Researchers keep reflexive journals, which are then used as data. Time-saving techniques can include writing notes after each interview to identify emerging findings. Data collection and analysis done in parallel.	Team creates standardised documents for participant recruitment and data collections: participant information sheets, consent forms, a case study guide (to make sure researchers are observing the same types of events), interview schedules and coding framework. Team mates collectively produce fieldnotes.
STAGE 4: DATA ANALYSIS	Data collection and analysis in parallel allows for identification of salient topics and further exploration of gaps.	Guided by the field researchers. Thematic coding led by research team and adhered to by field researchers. One of the leads played a role in cross-checking, but all members had some sort of contact with data.
STAGE 5: DISSEMINATION	Emerging findings discussed with research site, peers, supervisors.	Emerging findings discussed with research team and shared with research site.
KEY REFERENCES FOR THIS APPROACH	(Knoblauch, 2005; Trundle and Phillips, 2023; Wall, 2015)	(Vindrola-Padros, 2021)

Principles of REPorting All Rapid Ethnographies (PREPARE)

Guiding principles for reflection and discussion, methodological signposting, and 'good practice' examples

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Do you have any questions?

References

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