Finding, accessing and using qualitative data from the UK Data Service

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Data and Methods of Analysis for Qualitative Social Science Data
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Who
... are we?

What
... do we offer?

How
... to access them?

Where
... to find data and resources?

Why
... could that be of interest to you?
Roadmap for today

- UK Data Service – overview and data holdings
- Finding and accessing data
- Support and resources – research and teaching
- Forthcoming attractions – UK QualiBank
UK Data Service

Integrates ESDS, Survey Question Bank and Census.ac.uk

www.ukdataservice.ac.uk
What is the UK Data Service?

• a comprehensive resource funded by the ESRC

• a single point of access to a wide range of secondary social science data

• support, training and guidance

• listen to the recorded webinars at ukdataservice.ac.uk/news-and-events/newsitem/?id=3494
Who is it for?

- academic researchers and students
- government analysts
- charities and foundations
- business consultants
- independent research centres
- think tanks

ukdataservice.ac.uk
What does the UK Data Service do?

- Put together a **collection of the most valuable data** and enhance that over time
- **Provide data management advice** for data creators
- Make the **data and documentation** available for reuse
- **Provide support** for users of the service
- Information **about the use** to which data are put
- **Preserve data in the long term for future research purposes**
What do users do with the data?

- Comparative research, restudy or follow-up study
- Re-analysis/secondary analysis
- Research design and methodological advancement
- Teaching and learning
- Replication of published statistics
Overview service – some statistics

Holdings: data for research and teaching purposes, used in all sectors and for many different disciplines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6,000 datasets in the collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400+ qualitative and mixed methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000 registered users</td>
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<tr>
<td>60,000 downloads worldwide p.a.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4000+ user support queries p.a.</td>
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Types of data collections

- Qualitative and mixed methods data

- Survey microdata
  - cross-sectional
  - Panel/ Longitudinal
  - International microdata

- Aggregate statistics
  - International macrodata

- Census data
  - Aggregate data for 1971 -201
  - Microdata for 1991 and 2001 (2011 data are forthcoming)
Links with other data archives worldwide

CESSDA - Council of European Social Science Data Archives

Non-European: ICPSR, ASSDA
Qualitative data

The UK Data Service collections contain examples from a range of qualitative methods including:

- interview transcripts
- visual data
- focus groups
- essays
- diaries
- online data
- observation notes
- documents
- audio data
- newspaper clippings
- etc.

Interview transcripts are the most commonly deposited qualitative data with the UK Data Archive.

Most contemporary data is deposited in a digital form, but we also hold (and sometimes digitise) legacy data which is a paper (handwritten or typewritten) format.
Qualitative data


Teachers at a comprehensive school on the Isle of Sheppey were asked to set a particular essay to those pupils who were students in English lessons about ten days before they were due to leave school. The students were asked to imagine that they were nearing the end of their life, and that something had made them think back to the time when they left school. They were then asked to write an imaginary account of their life over the next 30 or 40 years.

The resulting data: 142 handwritten essays in 1978 by school leavers aged 15 and 16 years old.
Qualitative data

Example – How can the data be used?

Living and Working on Sheppey, Dawn Lyon and Graham Crow
• Digitised the original 1978 handwritten data.
• Coded and compared the data across time

Together, these two sets of essays shed light on the aspirations of Sheppey’s young people (and young people more generally) and cover a range of topics including health, education, career, family and leisure.

Example analysis of the career aspirations of Sheppey’s young people

“It was hard finding a job, I failed a few chances, but eventually got what I wanted locally, a craft apprenticeship” (Essay number 27, male)

“In my future I want to become either: a dance teacher, hairdresser, or a Professional Show Jumper/horse rider. If I do become a dancer my dream would be to dance for Beyoncé or someone really famous” (Essay number 61, female)
Case study: ‘The Last Refuge’ (1962)

- Peter Townsend conducted a major investigation of long-stay institutional care for old people in Britain in the late 1950s.

- In-depth interviews with 67 local authority chief welfare officers and with serving staff and residents of 173 institutions.

- Photographs and field notes about the condition of the buildings and the facilities were created.

- Diaries were also kept by a number of residents and staff.
“The Last Refuge” Revisited

- A review of Townsend’s research material and subsequent findings and recommendations

- A tracing study was conducted to find out and document what happened to the institutions visited by Townsend

- It was found that of the 173, 25 still existed as registered care homes and these were investigated further

- This follow-up study broadly replicated Townsend's method allowing direct comparison of the situation in 2005 with the detailed original information on the individual homes.

- **Publications:** Julia Johnson, Sheena Rolph and Randall Smith, *Residential Care Transformed: Revisiting ‘The Last Refuge’* (Palgrave, 2010).
“The Last Refuge” Revisited

Townsend’s original photograph (1959)  

Photo taken by Julia Johnson (2005)
Qualitative data

Some popular datasets:

• Family Life and Work Experience Before 1918, 1870-1973 (SN 2000)

• Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, 1961-1962 (SN 6512)

• Health And Social Consequences Of The Foot And Mouth Disease Epidemic In North Cumbria, 2001-2003 (SN 5407)
Finding and accessing data
How to search for data?

discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/
Key data

Browse our most popular datasets, by data type.

UK surveys Cross-national surveys Longitudinal studies International macrodata Census data

Business microdata Qualitative / mixed methods

Qualitative data is non-numeric information, such as in-depth interview transcripts, diaries, anthropological field notes, answers to open-ended survey questions, audio-visual recordings and images. Mixed methods approaches combine qualitative data with numeric data.

- Discover qualitative or mixed methods data
- Discover case studies relating to qualitative or mixed methods data

Affluent Worker in the Class Structure
The 'Affluent Worker' project was undertaken to test empirically the thesis of working class embourgeoisement. The research studied the attitudes and behaviour of high wage earners in three mass or continuous flow companies.

Family Life and Work Experience Before 1918
This study comprises 537 life story interviews which were recorded in the 1970s with a cross-national sample of people born before 1918 in the UK. These interviews
Variable and question bank

Type
- Data collections (423)
- Case studies (23)
- Series (1)
- ESRC outputs (0)
- Support / how to guides (0)

SEARCH RESULTS

Displaying 1-10 of 423 results

1. SN 6691 Social Participation and Identity, 2007-2010
   University of London. Institute of Education. Centre for Longitudinal Studies
   + Full record...
   Download/Order | Get full DDI XML | Similar data collections

   Neale, E., University of Leeds. School of Sociology and Social Policy
   Henwood, K., Cardiff University. School of Social Sciences
   + Full record...
   Download/Order | Get full DDI XML | Similar data collections

   Neale, B., University of Leeds. School of Sociology and Social Policy
   + Full record...
   Download/Order | Get full DDI XML | Similar data collections
Data access

- Web access to data and metadata via the UK Data Service web pages
- Documentation (codebooks, questionnaires) freely available to anyone browsing the web pages
- Data are freely available for use in higher education institutions
- Data supplied in a variety of formats
  - statistical package formats (e.g. SPSS, STATA)
  - databases and spreadsheets
  - word processed documents, PDF documents etc.
Accessing data - step by step

• Click on the ‘login’ link on the UK Data Service homepage
• Click on ‘login to the UK Data Service’
• Find your university in the list of institutions and proceed to the login page (or your UK Data Archive credentials if you are not at a UK University)
• Enter your login details
• Complete the registration form as a new user
• Accept the End User Licence
• Select the desired data from the Data Catalogue by clicking on the ‘Download/Order’ button
• Specify a project for which the data is to be used (minimum: 30 word description)
• Then:
  - download the data to local machine selecting your preferred format (SPSS, STATA, TAB etc.)
  or
  - place an order for the data (SC, if no online agreement; SL; AR) and complete all relevant forms
Data access conditions

- End User Licence (EUL)

- Special Conditions (SC)

- Special Licence (SL)
  - ONS - Approved Researcher Status
    (SL September 2005 - April 2008)
  - Other depositors - SL (e.g. ISER, CLS)

- Secure Data access
  - ONS-Approved Researcher or ESRC-Accredited Researcher
  - Training
  - Password and username
Demo (if time) – your search requests
Resources and help
User support and resources

- Help desk, individual user support
- Promotional events/ workshops
- Teaching data and resources
- User guides/ thematic guides
- Themes
- Online data analysis
- Advice on creating and managing data
- Geospatial resources
- Case studies
Teaching resources

• We can help provide support in many areas of teaching research methods:
  • Research design
  • Survey design and analysis
  • Software for analysis data
  • Secondary analysis of qualitative data
  • Managing research data
  • Consent and ethics

• Data collections are accompanied by user documentation and a record of main publications resulting from original use and re-use of the data

• Documentation should be recognised as a resource in its own right
Teaching with data

"Real data bring learning to life"

The use of data in teaching is an invaluable way for learners to engage with real-life research. By investigating the collections held at the UK Data Service, learners can find out how real data is originally conceived, collected, analysed and managed.

Data based on well-known studies or surveys can bring both substantive and methodological topics alive.

Using data in teaching can also enable critical engagement through the evaluation of the strengths and limitations of particular collections and their methodologies.

Teaching datasets

Our teaching datasets have been prepared for ease of use for learners. They are data files of a manageable size, which may have some features in a simplified form (e.g. weights). However, they are still real data which can be used to explore substantive
Teaching resources

This section provides practical information, exemplars, and tips for using data in teaching, including ideas for using data in teaching, practical advice on sharing data with students, teaching resources and teaching case studies.

Discover teaching data

We have a growing number of datasets designed for teaching, produced both by data services and teachers themselves, which can be accessed through our Discover tool.

The files are of a manageable size and may be suitable for students to engage with. Some are available for access to explore data online. These include:

• cut-down datasets from major surveys
• qualitative teaching files
• file collections for teaching particular topics

Discover our teaching datasets now.

And add filter for qual data...
Teaching sociology with archived data

Teaching resource: teaching sociology with archived data

"Incorporate research methods with analysing qualitative data"

This teaching resource enables students to develop a number of skills:

- students learn important research discovery skills including how to explore and search official websites
- they learn about the specific restrictions on certain data, as well as issues of confidentiality and data protection when working with personal data
- through the exploration of data collections they learn about a wide variety of research methods
Teaching resource: Interview methods

"Illustrating interview methods using our extensive data collection"

Interviewing is a frequently used method in social research with its suitability being entirely dependent on the particular research question. Qualitative interviewing is generally distinguished from questionnaire-based interviewing, even if the form of communication, such as face-to-face conversation, may be the same.

This teaching resource provides instructors and students with materials designed to assist in teaching qualitative interviewing.

The UK Data Service has created this resource to illustrate interview methods using its extensive data collection held as part of the UK Data Archive holdings, and, in particular, to assist instructors who have limited research materials of their own.
Exploring data online
SEARCH RESULTS

Displaying 1-10 of 12 results

Interview with Ms. Ledbetter
SN5072 Mothers Alone, 1955-1966
Sex: Female. Socioeconomic status: Never worked/long-term unemployed.

... bothered with little boxes for saving up. Food She pays quite a lot for meat and eggs she’s got potatoes from her brother-in-law who works on a farm but otherwise she had a lot out of the garden too. She’d not noticed any drop in the standard of living since her husband died he used to spend...

Interview with Ms. Thurgood
SN5072 Mothers Alone, 1955-1966
Sex: Female. Socioeconomic status: Never worked/long-term unemployed.

... She is divorced and has one child living with her, illegitimate aged three, another child aged thirteen lives with her husband. Past History I think my father was a farm labourer. At least that’s what it said on my Birth Certificate, but I never knew him. I didn’t have a...
Interview with G2

DETAILS

SN: 4943
Title: Mothers and Daughters: Accounts of Health in the Grandmother Generation, 1945-1978
Principal investigator: Blaxter, M., University of East Anglia
Sex: Female
Age group: 45-54
Socioeconomic status: Routine
Region: Scotland

FULL INTERVIEW TEXT

I: There's just one or two factual questions first of all; do you mind me asking how old you are?
R: Well, I'm 51.
I: 51. And what schools did you go to yourself?
R: Well, I started off at Duncht, and I finished at O'Neil Corse.
I: Whereabouts...
R: O'Neil Corse... well, it's between Craigievar and Cushnie...
I: So you moved about...
I: There's just one or two factual questions first of all; do you mind me asking how old you are?

R: Well, I'm 51.

I: 51. And what schools did you go to yourself?

R: Well, I started off at Dunacht, and I finished at O'Neil Corse.

I: Whereabouts...

R: O'Neil Corse... well, it's between Craigievar and Cushnie...

I: So you moved about...

R: Yes. It was just when I left school.

I: Uh-huh... how old were you when you left school?
A unique citation reference has been generated based on your selection.


Select the text above

You can copy and paste this citation as required in your outputs. This citation includes a URL which will link directly back to this page, where the cited text will be highlighted.

View a preview
Help - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Answers to some of our most frequently asked questions are provided here. If you are unable to find an answer to your question please contact us by selecting one of the short web forms available from Help.

Questions about how to find and access data

How do I find a particular dataset?

How do I find studies on a particular subject?

Who can access the data?

Who can access census data?

How do I access the data?

What formats are the data available in?

How do I download/order data?

How much will it cost?
Contact

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Questions?