

Chapter 3:

Methodology

NAME

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Title

The Psychological Impact of the Pandemic: A Thematic Analysis of Depression and Anxiety Among Healthcare Workers

Research Philosophy

- This study adopted an interpretivist research philosophy, which focuses on understanding individuals' subjective experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences.
- The philosophy was appropriate because the study aimed to explore the lived experiences of healthcare workers (HCWs) who experienced depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Rather than measuring psychological distress statistically, the research sought to understand participants' emotions, perceptions, and personal interpretations reported in qualitative studies.

Research Approach

- An inductive research approach was employed.
- Themes and patterns were allowed to emerge naturally from the qualitative evidence instead of testing predetermined hypotheses.
- The inductive approach enabled a deeper understanding of healthcare workers' psychological experiences and ensured that findings reflected participants' own narratives.

Research Design

- The study utilised a qualitative secondary research design.
- Instead of collecting primary data, previously published qualitative studies were analysed.
- This design was selected because it provides access to rich experiential data while being cost-effective, ethically appropriate, and suitable for synthesising existing evidence.
- The study focused on 30 peer-reviewed qualitative studies published between 2020 and 2024.

Data Sources

Qualitative studies were identified from internationally recognised academic databases, including:

- PubMed
- PsycINFO
- CINAHL
- Google Scholar

Keyword combinations included:

- COVID-19
- Healthcare workers
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Mental health
- Qualitative research
- Interviews
- Lived experiences

Data Analysis

The study employed Braun and Clarke's (2006) Six-Phase Thematic Analysis:

- Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data through repeated reading.
- Phase 2: Manual generation of initial codes.
- Phase 3: Grouping similar codes into potential themes.
- Phase 4: Reviewing and refining themes.
- Phase 5: Defining and naming final themes.
- Phase 6: Reporting and interpreting the findings.

The analysis identified four major themes relating to healthcare workers' psychological experiences during the pandemic.

Ethical Considerations

- The study relied exclusively on secondary data from published academic literature.
- No human participants were directly involved.
- Ethical standards were maintained through accurate citation and referencing of all sources.
- Academic integrity was ensured by acknowledging the original authors and presenting findings objectively without misrepresentation.