Towards an Anatomy of “Successful” Qualitative Research Manuscripts in IS: A Critical Review and Some Recommendations

Completed Research Paper

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Abstract

In this study, we assess the current trends and patterns of 85 qualitative research articles published over the period of 2001-2011 from four mainstream IS journals with no stated preference for qualitative research (MISQ, ISR, JMIS, JAIS). We analyze each article with respect to its anatomical elements. More specifically, we review the nature of the research question; the way the IT artifact issue is handled; theoretical engagement; methodological aspects of data collection, data analysis, and criteria of rigor; research contribution; and presentation. Our findings are not meant to be normative per se, but do make visible the strategies of authors who have been successful in publishing in the leading mainstream journals of the discipline. We also propose a set of principles that we believe can help assist authors and evaluators in further enhancing the status of qualitative research in the discipline.

Keywords: Qualitative research, Interpretive research, Literature review, Case Study, IS research, Recommendations, Principles, Research methodology, Reviewing, Research methodologies
Introduction

Historically, for a significant proportion of IS scholars, “research” had meant “quantitative research”, and studies without hypotheses and statistical analysis to test hypotheses had been excluded from the definition of research itself. This overall point is echoed by Lee and Liebenau (1997, p. 3) who state, “… IS researchers had [for long] pejoratively and imperialistically dismissed all qualitative research as ‘unscientific’”. In fact, many have viewed qualitative research as “exploratory” and as “pre-research” not worthy of being featured in leading journals. In this past era, while quantitative researchers enacted a “supremacist” view, dominating the methodological discourse in the discipline and the prestigious publication outlets, qualitative researchers enacted an “isolationist” viewpoint (Fitzgerald and Howcroft 1998), shying away from the mainstream, communicating research within their own journals and conferences that the majority of mainstream scholars ignored or were largely unaware of.

Fortunately, as a result of efforts of many leaders in the qualitative research community, and with support from broad-minded senior scholars of the discipline who saw value of diversity in the mainstream and recognized the fact that fast changing phenomena are difficult to investigate solely through the use of traditionally privileged methods, our discipline has moved beyond this distressing phase; qualitative research is now seen as legitimate in much of the IS research community. Reflecting this point, and the severe challenges that had to be overcome on the way to such a broad-based acceptance, Markus (1997, p. 18) noted that “achieving academic acceptance for qualitative methods [in the discipline] was no small feat”. Indeed, the visibility of these methods has grown in the IS community since the mid-90s, and this is evident from the representation of qualitative research in leading mainstream conferences, in addition to prominent journals, which had, in the past, been (or seen to be) reluctant to publish this form of work.

The publication of the Special Issue in Intensive Methods (Markus and Lee 2000) in the MIS Quarterly may be seen as a critical event (though by no means the only one) that has contributed to the normalization of qualitative research in the mainstream community of the discipline. This happened in at least two ways: first, the Special Issue provided the avenue for publication of a critical mass of qualitative studies in the MIS Quarterly (often ranked as #1 in the discipline in surveys), thereby institutionalizing the acceptability (and respectability) of qualitative research at the highest level; and second, it inscribed exemplars and criteria of excellence, certified by the leading qualitative scholars, into the literature, that became a shared resource and set of norms for the entire IS community. Authors could be guided by these works as they prepared their own work for the most selective outlets in the discipline. Likewise, reviewers and editors, including those without significant background in the qualitative arena, could refer to the published exemplars and criteria when assessing the quality of studies being considered for publication.

Despite these developments and the gradual inclusion of qualitative work in high-profile mainstream outlets, noted academics have expressed concerns about the “disproportionately low number of qualitative articles in top journals,” and attributed this to (among other reasons) “perceptions of negative bias against qualitative approaches from editors and reviewers in leading journals”, and also to challenges in “transferring tacit skills” and getting “novice researchers to effectively conduct qualitative research” (Conboy et al. 2012, p. 113). Our goal in this paper is to address some of the issues raised by Conboy et al. (2012). In particular, we seek to highlight established practices in conducting and presenting such research in the last decade or so, since the publication of the MIS Quarterly Special Issue in 2000. Guided by the metaphor of “anatomy” to focus on the systems of components that constitute a qualitative research paper, we analyze published qualitative research articles in the discipline to unearth patterns characterizing different aspects of the publications. Our intended contributions are to understand the state of qualitative research in the IS discipline, to make emergent patterns reflecting the practices of “successful” qualitative researchers more visible, and to provide some broad guidelines for authors and evaluators of qualitative research in the IS discipline.

The rest of our paper is structured as follows: first, we introduce readers to the key anatomical components of a qualitative research manuscript. Next, we describe the methodology we used to select and analyze published articles. This is followed by the findings and related recommendations. Finally,
based on the patterns that emerged, we offer some abstractions – a set of principles - for the authors as well as reviewers/editors of the journals.

**Background and Anatomy of Qualitative Research Manuscripts**

Much has been written on the topic of qualitative research in the IS discipline. While some publications (e.g., Urquhart et al. 2010; Schultze 2000; Yin 1994; Klein and Myers 1999; Walsham 1995, 2006; Lee 1989) provide guidance and recommendations regarding how various types of qualitative research is to be conducted, others offer reviews of methodology-related practices-in-use within the IS discipline. Table 1 presents some of the recent review articles within the IS discipline. In addition, we highlight our papers’ unique contribution to the discipline.

<table>
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<th>Review articles</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<td>Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991)</td>
<td>Articulates the philosophical assumptions underlying IS research and shows the proportion of published articles that are guided by positivism, interpretivism, and critical social theory.</td>
<td>Time Period: 1983 - 1989 Focus: Ontological, epistemological, and theory-practice connection in IS research Outlets Considered: <em>Communication of the ACM; ICIS Proceedings; MISQ; and Management Science</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dube and Pare (2003)</td>
<td>An examination of the rigor in IS positivist case research.</td>
<td>Time Period: 1990 - 1999 Focus: Rigor in positivist case study design, data collection, and data analysis. Outlets Considered: <em>EJIS; Information &amp; Management; Information &amp; Organization; ISR; Information, Technology &amp; People; JMIS; and MISQ</em></td>
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<td><strong>Our Paper</strong></td>
<td>Offers a fairly comprehensive analysis of relevant facets of qualitative research publications thereby providing a detailed multi-dimensional view of the current state of qualitative research in IS.</td>
<td>Time Period: 2001 - 2011 Focus: In-depth analysis across a number of components of a qualitative research paper Outlets Considered: Four of the AIS Senior Scholar’s Basket of journals that have no explicit preference for qualitative research (<em>MISQ, ISR, JMIS, JAIS</em>)</td>
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To facilitate our analysis, we use the metaphor of “anatomy.” Anatomy is often defined as the “art of separating the parts of an organism in order to ascertain their positions, relations, structure, and functions” (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary 1993, p. 42). And just as a living organism has components - each with its own purpose, and when integrated, create a functional living being - so too does a qualitative research paper consist of components - each with its own purpose, and when properly integrated produces a meaningful manuscript. The key components of a qualitative research paper include the following: research focus, theory, methodology which includes data collection, data analysis and criteria for rigor, and contributions (Cresswell 1998; Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Patton 1990). In addition, we include the nature of presentation, an important component that facilitates the communication of the other components to the reader (Conboy et al. 2012).
Methodology for Our Review

In order to understand the current state of qualitative research in the IS discipline, we reviewed qualitative studies published between 2001 and 2011. More specifically, we looked at qualitative research papers from the following IS journals - MIS Quarterly (MISQ), Information Systems Research (ISR), Journal of Management Information Systems (JMIS), and Journal of the Association for Information Systems (JAIS). We selected these journals for two reasons: 1) they are part of the AIS Senior Scholar’s Basket of 6 Journals with a global reach and reputation, and are considered leading behavioral/managerial mainstream journals in our field; and 2) they have no specific preference toward qualitative research. Qualitative research has had a prominent place in European IS journals and the expectation is that “interpretivist and/or case study research will continue to represent something of a tradition in European IS research” (Galliers and Whitley 2007). The two European journals in the basket of six (ISJ and EJIS) are known to be very receptive to qualitative manuscripts. Specifically, the ISJ website openly “welcomes and promotes qualitative research papers”, and the EJIS website notes the journal’s encouragement of case studies. We therefore focused on the other four journals in the AIS basket, given that they do not have an openly favorable stance with respect to qualitative research, thereby posing greater challenges in publishing qualitative work; unearthing patterns in these four journals is therefore likely to be valuable for aspirant authors and also reviewers/editors. In our review, we excluded mixed as well as multi-method papers where quantitative analysis was used in addition to qualitative analysis. Further, we excluded SIM “Best Papers” featured in earlier issues of MISQ. And finally, for this study, we excluded action research and design research given that they contain many elements in addition to (or distinct from) those core to the typical qualitative study (e.g., Baskerville and Myers 2004; Goldkuhl 2012), rendering them beyond the scope of our investigation. Based on the above criteria, we selected and analyzed 85 articles.

Each article was coded along the attributes identified as being important aspects of the anatomical elements of a qualitative research manuscript. We developed a coding guide explicitly defining the attributes and their various states. Initially four articles were coded jointly by all three authors in order to gain a consistent level of understanding regarding each attribute. Thereafter, two of the authors coded the articles independently, periodically cross-checking each other’s codes. Where differences emerged, they were discussed and resolved amongst the three authors.

Results

We present our key findings in this section followed by a table that summarizes these findings and offers some recommendations. We start by examining the broad trends in the discipline, and then explore the patterns related to the anatomical components of qualitative research papers.

Trends in Qualitative Research

For the four journals reviewed, beginning with 2001 we note a somewhat steady increase in the number of qualitative papers published. Figure 1 shows a sharp growth between 2001 and 2006, followed by what appears to be a stabilization period between 2006 and 2011. The total number of qualitative studies published between 2006 and 2011 is 66, and the proportion of qualitative research to all research published is 7.56% within this time period. For 2011 alone, the number of qualitative research articles published is 13, and the proportion of qualitative research to all research published in the year is 7.8%. These figures represent some improvement in the number and proportion of published qualitative research, given that Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991) found only 5 interpretive studies out of 155 (3.2%) empirical studies published between Jan. 1983 - May 1988 in Communication of the ACM, ICIS Proceedings, MISQ, and Management Science (admittedly, in a different set of outlets). It is also interesting to see the differences across the four journals. Figure 2 presents the percentages of qualitative research published within the 2001-2005 time periods as well as the 2006-2011 time periods by journal.

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2 While SIM “Best Papers” are qualitative in nature and represented valuable contributions, we excluded them because they were generally written with the practitioner audience in mind, and thus do not emphasize methodological and theoretical aspects of the work. Indeed, such papers are now published in the elite practitioner-oriented outlet, the MIS Quarterly Executive.

3 Please see [http://www.cb.wsu.edu/~theaulieu/paperlist.pdf](http://www.cb.wsu.edu/~theaulieu/paperlist.pdf) for a list of these articles.
It is interesting to note that JMIS shows the highest growth between these two periods, while ISR shows the least growth in qualitative research. Between 2001 and 2005, we found the following absolute numbers and percentages of qualitative research published within each journal: MISQ (7, 6.48%), ISR (3, 2.78%), JMIS (5, 2.73%), and JAIS (4, 6.45%). Between 2006 and 2011, the statistics are: MISQ (19, 8.41%), ISR (8, 3.98%), JMIS (19, 7.82%), and JAIS (20, 9.8%). The absolute number of qualitative publications and overall proportions between 2001 and 2011 within each journal are: MISQ (26, 7.78%), ISR (11, 3.56%), JMIS (24, 5.63%) and JAIS (24, 9.06%).

Managing the length of qualitative manuscripts is often mentioned as a challenge by qualitative researchers. We therefore examined the lengths of manuscripts per journal. The average number of words per articles was 15,856. Table 2 shows the minimum, maximum, and average length by journal. We note that ISR has a strict page limit of 32 pages and thus publications in ISR had minimal variance in terms of the word length.

Another interesting fact is that about 39% of the published qualitative papers had at least one author from outside North America, showing the selected journals have a global authorship even though many perceive MISQ, ISR, JMIS, and even JAIS as “North American” journals.

**Research Focus Component**

Focusing the research paper is a critical first step in ensuring effective conduct and communication of research. This component includes identifying the topic, ensuring a prominent role of IT within the research, and articulating an appropriate research question.

Qualitative topics varied, but were concentrated in the streams\(^4\) of project management, outsourcing, and IS development (45%), organization theory and strategy (14%), online communities and digital collaborations (12%), and others (28%).

\(^4\) For the sake of convenience, we categorized the topics based on the ICIS 2011 tracks.
The role of technology is a critical element in Information Systems research as this is what separates researching IS from that in other disciplines. Researchers must be cognizant of the nomological net and how their constructs/concepts relate to the nomological net (Benbasat and Zmud 2003). This is of particular importance in qualitative studies where authors frequently focus on the human/social dynamics and implications and thus can end up with studies that treat IT as an “omitted variable” (Orlikowski and Iacono 2001). We reviewed each article with a critical eye to their treatment of the IT artifact and using the classification scheme of the “IT artifact” proposed by Orlikowski and Iacono (2001). We found that about 15% of the papers adopt the “nominal view”, often with technology merely serving as the context. We also found that even papers adopting an “ensemble view” (about 59%) tend to be heavily focused on the social aspect paying little attention to the technology component.

How the problem is formulated directly impacts a study’s design, data collection, and analysis (Van de Ven 2007). Explicit research questions provide the direction of inquiry, and enable a connection between the research and its practical and theoretical contributions (Dube and Pare 2003). We were surprised to find that only 57% of the articles reviewed contained an explicit research question. Of those articles that stated a clear research question, we found that about 83% were introduced at the end of a literature review, and interestingly, about 15% only made their research questions explicit in the abstract!

Yin (1994) suggests that case study research should be used to answer how and why questions. About 71% of the articles that had explicit research questions addressed how questions and about 18% addressed why questions. Interestingly, our review also revealed a significant proportion (33%) addressed what questions. We found that what questions could elicit specific answers, such as “What factors influence the initial composition, and the subsequent evolution, or the portfolio of mechanism used to control an outsourced ISD project?” (e.g., Choudhury and Sabherwal 2003, p. 292), or pose a broad descriptive or theoretical question, such as “What does collaboration mean…” (e.g., Sarker and Sahay 2003, p. 3). We note that a number of articles (29%) tackled multiple types of research questions in the same study, e.g. addressing how, when and with what (e.g., Watson-Manheim and Belanger 2007).

**Upfront Theory Component**

Most editors of top journals emphasize the need to use theory and see lack of theory as a key reason for rejecting a manuscript (e.g., Iacobucci 2011; Daft 1995; Gregor 2006). In a MISQ editorial, Lee (2001) emphasized this same issue with respect to qualitative research. Not surprisingly, we found a wide variety of theories used upfront (i.e. prior to data analysis/interpretation) in the reviewed papers, including structuration theory, practice theory, institutional theory, and situated learning theory. The majority of the papers (65%) exhibited the use of a single core theory, while others (24%) used multiple theories, and notably, about 11% had no discernible theory. Further, we found that when multiple theories were used, they could be positioned as being complementary (e.g., Pawlowski and Robey 2004), being in competition (e.g., Sarker and Lee 2002) or being used in piece meal fashion (e.g., Nissen 2005). Further, we discerned that theories played varying roles in different papers: as a source of hypotheses being empirically examined (e.g., Dibbern et al. 2008), as guidance for data collection and data analysis (e.g., Olsson et al. 2008), as lens (e.g., Silva and Hirschheim 2007), or as scaffolding (e.g., Sarker and Sahay 2003). These roles are consistent with those mentioned in the literature (e.g., Walsham 1995; Lee 1989; Eisenhardt 1989; Goodhue 2007).

**Methodology Component**

The methodology section of a paper is where researchers explain the research approach used and its justification, given the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying the study. Interestingly, we found that only about 17% of the articles clarified their ontological and epistemological stance. Methodological details are important in that they 1) define how the study is to be conducted and presented by the researchers, 2) help editors select appropriate reviewers, and 3) determine how the quality of the study is determined by the audience including the reviewers (e.g., Klein and Myers 1999). About 8% of the papers did not state a particular methodology. For the remaining 92%, we found that authors used 25 different labels to describe their methodological approach. This we believe can potentially lead to confusion due to the lack of correspondence of these labels with well-accepted genres of qualitative methodologies in the discipline. Qualitative research studies based on grounded theory
methodology, hermeneutics, or ethnography were generally labeled as such, however, in many other manuscripts (about 53%), the labels used were either too generic (e.g., “case study”, “field study”, “qualitative case study”, or even “exploratory case study”) or relatively unrecognizable (e.g., “iterative qualitative data collection scheme” Maldonado (2010)). Recognizable labels have the advantage of reviewers, authors, and readers having consistent expectations. This is not to imply that only certain labels are acceptable, but rather recognizable labels require less explanation and justification. While new innovative research approaches are always welcomed in qualitative research, they tend to require additional details and evidence of rigor. Our issue with the large array of labels is that it can lead to research being conducted and evaluated incorrectly, given that different approaches to qualitative research can have different guidelines and criteria associated with them.

It was also interesting to see how authors justified their choice of methods. We found that about 31% did not justify their use of method while 25% offered a generic justification (e.g., “case studies... are considered highly appropriate for exploratory, theory-building research” (Mahring et al. 2008, p. 467); some just mentioned that they followed Klein and Myers (1999) principles, without further explanation). There were a large number of papers, however, that did provide a more detailed explanation of how their chosen method was appropriate for their research. For example, Day et al. (2009) explained at length why they adopted a grounded theory approach to study an extreme case.

**Data Collection**

The main considerations in data collection include where to study the phenomenon of interest and how many case units to study, when and how data is to be collected, and what types of data is to be collected (Patton 1990). We found that while the vast majority of the manuscripts reviewed were case-based (86%), some authors used a set of interviews (e.g., Backhouse et al. 2006, Wigand et al. 2005), and/or a collection of texts (e.g., Berente et al. 2011, Mueller et al. 2010) on a given phenomenon without a case context.

**Where and how many:** Sampling strategies apply not only to quantitative research but also to qualitative research. A number of sampling strategies are described in the qualitative methodology literature (Patton 1990). Indeed, a clear sampling logic is essential to ensure that the cases being studied are of “substantive significance” or “theoretical relevance” (Dube and Pare 2003). While about 35% of the papers we reviewed had no mention of their sampling logic or reasoning of choosing certain case units, the majority provided some form of rationale/ justification for sample selection. For example, Silva and Hirschheim (2007, pg. 333) studied the implementation of an information system in Guatemala using a “revelatory” case sampling logic. As they note, “Thus, this case study presented us the rare opportunity of exploring the relationship between the deep structure of an organization and SIS implementation as well as expanding our knowledge of that subject matter in a developing countries context” [emphasis added]. Similarly, Levina and Vaast (2008, p. 311) justified their case selection by noting that the site offered “a unique opportunity”. Yet others used the typical or “representative” case selection logic (e.g., Sarker and Sarker 2009). Additionally, Koch and Schulze (2011) used a “theoretical” sampling strategy. In studying B2B e-Marketplaces, they selected a company that represented their theoretical concept of the “conflicted-middle.”

For case-based research, “How many cases is enough?” is a question qualitative researchers often struggle with. Eisenhardt (1989) has argued that “while there is no ideal number of cases, a number between 4 and 10 cases usually works well”. Interestingly, we found that studies used 1 case unit (54%), 2 case units (19%), 3 case units (8%) etc. Indeed, case study methodologists have insisted that a study involving just one case is absolutely fine (e.g., Lee and Baskerville 2003, Walsham 1995), though increasing the number of cases can increase the degrees of freedom and thus the rigor of a positivist case study (Lee 1989).

**When, how, and what:** About 40% of the papers we reviewed did not mention when the data collection happened. However, the others were quite explicit (e.g., “Data was collected over a seven-month participant observation period, between March and September 2000” (Levina and Vaast 2006, p. 20)). Interviews were found to remain the most common technique of qualitative data collection. The average number of interviews conducted was 38, with a maximum number of 145 and a minimum number of 6. However, of the papers reviewed, about 19% either did not address or did not provide the number of interviews conducted. For example, Sahay et al. (2009) reported that they did “an uncountable number of formal and informal interviews”. When it comes to interview protocols, we found that about 11% of the
papers merely mentioned the use of an interview protocol, while about 24% were more thorough and provided a more complete set of interview protocol or a high-level interview guide.

Recording and transcribing is often seen as essential for ensuring rigor of the study, yet scholars such as Walsham (2006) have expressed mixed feelings about the practice. About 64% recorded and transcribed (or partially transcribed) their interviews, and about 8% of the papers justified why they did not record their interviews (e.g., Silva and Backhouse 2003). In addition to the use of interviews, we found that about 60% of the papers we reviewed reported the use of some form of documents, about 55% reported the use of some level of observation, and about 45% reported the use of some type of field notes to supplement the interview data; however, the role of these supporting material was not clearly explained in the majority of the papers which only provided some generic statement (e.g., documents were also used for triangulation). Interestingly, about 20% of the papers used text content from online communities, news releases, or written assessments as their primary data collection approach.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves processing the empirical material collected to make contribution claims. Of the papers reviewed, we found about 7% adopted pure deduction. Some deductive approaches being used include pattern matching to examine hypotheses (e.g., Harris et al. 2009) and framework guided coding process (e.g., Alavi et al. 2006). About 34% appeared to use only induction. Common inductive approaches include GTM procedures of open coding, axial coding and selective coding (e.g., Strong and Volkoff 2010), thematic coding (e.g., Oborn et al. 2011), content analysis (e.g., Charki and Josserand 2008), and hermeneutics (e.g., Davidson and Chismar 2007). About 60% studies reported the use of coding procedures, of which 45% made the process transparent through examples and appendices. Some authors mentioned the role of abduction along with induction (e.g., Chakraborty et al. 2010). We also found that interpretive elaboration was adopted by some researchers in the form of theory-informed storytelling (e.g., Porra et al. 2005). About 51% of the papers used some combination of induction, deduction, abduction, or elaboration. In about 8% of the papers, it was hard to discern the logic underlying the data analysis. In such papers, it becomes difficult for the reader to discern if the text represents data, past literature, or an interpretation.

Unlike in quantitative studies, researchers in qualitative studies are instruments of observations and analysis, and it may sometimes be helpful to offer confessions to the reader (Schultze 2000; Walsham 2006), without overdoing it. We found that about 6% of the papers we reviewed made a clear confession of possible bias in the data collection process. For example, Sarker and Sahay (2003, p.11) stated that “researchers’ evaluative role... may have prompted study participants to change their communication patterns”. Similarly, Zahedi et al. (2006, p. 118) confessed: “We therefore acknowledge that our findings are colored by the biases and foreknowledge of the first two authors, who performed the data collection and analyses”.

Methodological Guidelines/Criteria

Perhaps one of the most critical roles of a researcher is to ensure that appropriate guidelines/criteria of rigor are met. We note that qualitative research is not one generic method, but rather there are various forms of qualitative research - each with its own criteria for conducting good research (Gubrium and Holstein 1997). Our review revealed some lack of clarity in what criteria should be applied, and when. For positivist researchers there is clear recognition of the differences among approaches and related criteria; however the distinctions among qualitative approaches are not so widely known or agreed upon (Sarker 2007). This is often due to the fact that the authors are not conscious of their ontological and epistemological positions, or whether they adopted a data centric or interpretation centric approach (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009). While some papers showed that the authors were clearly cognizant of methodological criterion appropriate to their study, others appeared less so. For example, some authors discussed/applied positivist criteria of “validity” and “reliability” as discussed by Yin (1994) while noting that their study was “interpretive”.

We found various ways in which authors communicated the methodological criteria by which their research was guided. We found that about 40% of the reviewed papers lacked reference to any criteria used to guide their research. Others made minimal or generic comments (21%). A typical wording might
be: “Our analysis employed principles of online ethnography and cross-case analysis...” (Chua and Yeow 2010, p. 842) without clearly specifying what they were. Another means for communicating criteria was what we characterized as being "weaved into" the manuscript (8%), where the author noted what specific criteria they were using and how it applied to a given section of the paper (e.g., Rivard et al. 2011). Others devoted a specific section of the paper to explaining the criteria used to conduct their research. A specific section was used in 22% of the papers, while 8% used a table to list relevant criteria and show how the study satisfied them.

We also examined which qualitative methodologists have had significant impact on the methodological practice in the discipline. While there was some variety, the top eight methodologists (in order of popularity) whose work guided the studies we reviewed were Yin, Strauss and Corbin/Glaser and Strauss, Klein and Myers, Walsham, Eisenhardt, Miles and Huberman, Dube and Pare, and Golden-Biddle and Locke.

**Contribution Component**

In the contribution component, the researcher brings together the *a priori theory* (if relevant), the data that was collected, and the analysis into a culmination. Within this component, the researcher provides an answer to the research question (Patton 1990).

We were also interested in the state of theory development in qualitative research, and therefore reviewed the level of theory presented as a contribution. While we acknowledge there are many definitions of theory (Sutton and Staw 1995), we took an inclusive approach along the lines of Weick’s (1995) perspective. Using Gregor’s (2006) classifications of theory, we found the resultant theory (or theorizing) in the papers to be of the following types – Theory of Analyzing (8%), Theory of Explaining (42%), Theory of Predicting (8%), Theory of Explaining and Predicting (11%), and Theory of Design and Action (4%). It is worth noting that Gregor’s review of studies (not limited to qualitative) published in *MISQ* and *ISR* revealed that 66% had theories of Explanation and Prediction. We also found that 27% did not offer a conclusion in the form of theory, nor were they moving towards theorizing. These papers merely summarized the empirical findings of their case or highlighted “lessons learned.”

Critics of qualitative research often point to the issue of generalizability of contributions as a limitation of qualitative research (Conboy et al. 2012), and indeed much has been written on this topic (e.g., Lee and Baskerville 2003, 2012; Walsham 1995; Yin 1994). We found that about 69% of the publications discussed generalizability of their research, often referring either to analytic generalization (Yin 1994), one of Walsham’s (1995) four concepts of generalization including “development of concepts”, “generation of theory”, “drawing of specific implications”, and “contribution of rich insight”, or to one of the four types of generalization (Type I through Type IV) proposed by Lee and Baskerville (2003). Authors largely approached generalizability in one of the three following ways - by stating that a) findings are not generalizable, but the theory or the concepts can be applied to other settings; b) generalizability is limited, but is balanced against other advantages of qualitative studies; c) future research is needed to enhance generalizability. Interestingly, the discussion on generalizability are generally defensive as noted by Lee and Baskerville (2003), and we did not find any paper openly adopting the position advocated by Lincoln and Guba that “the only generalization is: there is no generalization” (Lincoln and Guba 2000, p. 27, emphasis added).

**Nature of Presentation Component**

According to Conboy et al. (2012, pg. 115), “Writing succinct and persuasive papers remains a challenge for most qualitative researchers. As compared with quantitative studies, there is arguably less structural support ... for writing qualitative papers”. Qualitative research often involves presenting a case to the reader, and hence the manner in which a case is presented is important. The case study should be clearly written and engaging as it is through the case presentation that the author communicates to the reader the basis of their findings. We found that about 88% of the manuscripts provided background about the context before offering interpretation and analysis. Quotes can be an effective way to augment the case narrative. Interestingly, we found that 89% of the papers we reviewed included quotes, in contrast with

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5 Gregor does mention that scholars within the interpretive paradigm argue for the increased recognition for theories of explanation.
patterns observed by Dube and Pare (2003), who found that only one-third of the cases included quotes (admittedly they reviewed “positivist” cases alone). While we found that quotes are sometimes used to support a fact (e.g., Vidgen and Wang 2009), they can be used more effectively to transport the reader to the context (e.g., Day et al. 2009), or to evoke an emotional response (e.g., Sarker et al. 2006). For example, Vidgen and Wang (2009, p.365) provided the following quote to support the fact that “The team has no shared routines at the daily level”:

“[Do you have any daily routine to organize your work?] No, not really, just work, work, eat, work again, and that’s it (Developer A/SysCheck)”

Day et al. (2009, p. 645) helped transport the reader to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina with the following quote:

“I found (a) communications truck with technology. I knocked on the window, and he asked if he could help anybody, and I said ‘hey, come with me!’ It was a full truck, full communications, I had internet, I had telephone. It basically ran the base (of local Red Cross) operations for several weeks. ... (Community Recovery Manager, American Red Cross)”

Sarker et al. (2006, p.69) used the following quote to evoke readers’ emotional response of what the interviewee had gone through:

“In about six weeks, I lost 16 pounds, and I can’t afford to lose 15 pounds, and there was a tremendous stressful situation, and without naming names, there were many people who had nervous breakdowns during this. . . . We are talking about people's lives here.”

Notably, the average number of quotes per paper was 22. Interestingly, we found no articles used first person narrative in their presentation.

Further, we found several methods authors used to present their findings - in table format (26%) (e.g., Backhouse et al. 2006), in the form of a model (variance (e.g., Kankanhalli et al. 2006), process (e.g., Sarker and Sahay 2003), or system (e.g., Vaast and Walsham 2009) (37%), as propositions (9%) (e.g., Vlaar et al. 2008), as text (22%) (e.g., Ren et al. 2008), and as a map (6%) (e.g., Levina 2005).

Next, we present a table (Table 3) summarizing the patterns discussed above, along with some recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper Characteristics /Anatomical Components</th>
<th>Patterns observed</th>
<th>Suggestions with sample “Exemplars”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size (length)</td>
<td>Word count by Journals</td>
<td>Journals such as ISR with strict page control may be stifling some of the qualitative manuscripts. We suggest that the journals be flexible with length constraints, especially during the review process. Authors should be very conscious regarding the length of manuscript. They cannot be too short, given the various necessary elements of a qualitative study that need to be covered to provide a substantive, defensible contribution, and at the same time, be concise to ensure that readers including the reviewers engage with the contents. We suggest extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISQ</td>
<td>ISR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>16,764</td>
<td>14,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>22,870</td>
<td>16,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>12,054</td>
<td>13,234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Focus of Study

About 57% had explicit research questions (RQs), with about 83% of these articles posing the RQs in the introduction section or at the end of the literature review section. Interestingly, about 15% placed the RQ only in the abstract!

What, how, why, when, whether and which questions (and combinations) can effectively guide qualitative research.

RQs should be explicitly stated, and it appears that placing the questions in the introductory section of the paper is the norm.

Researchers should not be obliged to restrict themselves solely to “why” and “how” questions as suggested by Yin (1994). In fact, 33% of the published articles addressed “what” questions.

Be conscious of the situations where IT is the “omitted variable” (Orlikowski and Iacono 2001). However, the emphasis should not necessarily be on just the IT artifact, but on “value creation with information, design processes, design products, and designed systems” (Nunamaker and Briggs 2012, p. 8).

[Exemplars: Strong and Volkoff 2010; Leonardi 2011; Kankanhalli et al. 2006]

### Focus on IT Artifact

About 15% adopted a “nominal view” of IT artifact. In general, we observed that there was an over-emphasis on the social part, and IT was usually treated as the context.

Single or multiple theories can be profitably utilized. [Exemplars: Dibbern et al. 2008; Mähring et al. 2008] It may be advisable not to use multiple theories in bits and pieces without a clear justification.

### Theory

Theory can be used as source of hypotheses, for guidance, as lens, or as scaffolding.

About 65% articles adopted one core theory, and about 24% had multiple theories in the front-end, using them in complementary, competing, or a piece meal fashion. About 11% did not have upfront theory.

Theory can have different legitimate roles in the manuscript.

### Methodology

A very small proportion of the articles (17%) provided a clear idea of the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions.

Authors used 25 different labels, many generic and in some instances somewhat unrecognizable, to refer to their methodology. Notably, 8% did not even state what type of qualitative research was being undertaken, and 53% used fairly non-specific labels such as “exploratory case study.”

It is usually helpful to clarify the underlying philosophical assumptions. [Exemplars: Sarker et al. 2006; Ravishankar et al. 2011]

While the use of new qualitative methodologies is to be encouraged, it is important that authors refer to their methodology with the precise label, and with appropriate qualifications. For example, the use of interpretive case study along with a citation of Walsham (1995; 2006) tells the audience what kind of study to expect and what appropriate criteria for
### About 31% did not provide any methodological justification, and about 25% only provided generic justification; the rest provided detailed justification.

It is sometimes helpful to justify the use of methodology in a specific manner. Sometimes questions such as “why hermeneutics” and “why not GTM” do arise in the reader’s mind. [Exemplars: Day et al. 2009; Sarker and Lee 2002]

### Methodology - Data Collection

About 35% did not mention their sampling logic.

About 47% used one case and about 24% used 2-3 cases.

Average number of interviews was about 38. About 19% did not report the number of interviews. About 65% did not provide or discuss their interview protocols.

Further, 64% mentioned that their interviews were recorded and transcribed, at least partially. Interestingly about 8% justified not recording the interviews.

About 60% used documents as a source of information, about 55% used some level of observation, and about 45% used field notes.

Recording and transcribing can increase the credibility and auditability of a study. If not done, authors should provide a clear justification. [Exemplars: Silva and Backhouse 2003]

There is no recommended number of interviews, but we suggest that the number of interviews be reported. The minimum number of interviews in studies we reviewed was 6. In addition, providing an interview guide/outline is recommended.

The use of multiple data sources and collection methods is encouraged. It is however important to specify how exactly the multiple sources were used. [Exemplars: Nidumolu et al. 2001; Hanseth et al. 2006; Miscione 2007]

### About 34% seemed to indicate the use of induction, about 7% used deduction, and about 51% used multiple approaches (e.g., induction and deduction sequentially, or induction with abduction). For about 8% of the papers reviewed, there was no clarity regarding the logic of analysis.

About 60 % studies reported the use of coding procedures, of which 45% made the process transparent through examples and

There is a need for clarity in the logic underlying data analysis. [Exemplars; Chakraborty et al. 2010; Rivard et al. 2011]

While explicit coding is encouraged (and even required) by certain qualitative approaches (e.g., GTM studies), others (e.g., interpretive case studies) do not require it. Providing well-designed appendices to enhance...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendices</th>
<th>About 15.3% mentioned the use of software to facilitate the coding process.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>transparency is valuable. [Exemplars: Strong and Volkoff 2010; Ravishankar et al. 2011; Olsson et al. 2008]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confessions may add to the quality of some papers; however, the authors should avoid the “twin dangers of overmodesty and self-aggrandizement” (Walsham 1995).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>About 40% did not address what methodological guidelines/criteria they used, and about 21% only gave generic statement of how they followed guidelines/criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Criteria</td>
<td>Making explicit the appropriate criteria for a study helps the researchers focus on the important methodological issues and helps the readers to understand how well the study has been conducted. [Exemplars: Sarker and Sarker 2009; Davidson 2002; Walsham and Sahay 1999]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without such criteria being articulated in the paper, the reader is free to apply any set of criteria, e.g., their own favorite criteria, which may or may not be appropriate for the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Contribution</td>
<td>About 27% did not offer a resulting theory or did not move towards theorizing – they merely focused on empirical findings. About 42% offered a Type II theory (Explaining), while about 11% offered theory of Type IV (Explaining and Predicting).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>While we do not see which type of theory produced is critical, top-tier scholarly journals do require theoretical contributions. [Exemplars: Strong and Volkoff 2010; Lamb and Kling 2003]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidance of generalizability can be found in Yin (1994), Walsham (1995), and Lee and Baskerville (2003; 2012). Some authors explicitly illustrate analytic generalization [Exemplar: Silva and Hirschheim 2007]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Presentation</td>
<td>About 88% provided background information of the context, separate from the analysis or interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Case Narrative</td>
<td>It is often useful to provide a case background for the purpose of contextualization before the analysis/interpretation starts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The use of quotations appears to be valued by qualitative research audience, as it is seen to provide “richness” and helps differentiate such studies from “experience-far” methods. [Exemplar: Sarker et al. 2006; Lapointe and Rivard 2005] To make effective use of space, sometimes quotations may be placed in tables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For certain types of studies, first person narrative would be appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Contribution</td>
<td>Contributions were presented in the following ways: Table (26%), Model (37%), Propositions (9%), Text in the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Principles

Up to this point, we have presented our view of the state of qualitative research as reflected in the four selected journals. We have highlighted some of the patterns that we believe are of interest, and have also offered some specific recommendations (see Table 3 above). We believe that the nature of qualitative research is such that specific guidelines, while undoubtedly useful, cannot address the breadth of concerns that a qualitative researcher or a reviewer/editor of a qualitative manuscript faces. Drawing again on the metaphor of anatomy, we note that just as the principles of good nutrition and exercise ensure a healthy well-functioning body, we believe there are overarching principles which ensure a healthy well-functioning qualitative research environment. To this end, we offer 6 principles, which we believe can provide holistic guidance to both researchers and evaluators. While some of the principles were derived directly from our findings in Table 3 (e.g., the Principle of Variety), others were broadly suggested based on our reading of the articles and our own experiences (e.g., the Principle of Charity). Principles #1, #2, #3, #4 and #6 are useful for authors, while #1 and #5 are particularly relevant for evaluators. Admittedly, some of these principles may also be applicable to quantitative research. However, we feel they are particularly of significance for qualitative research, given the higher levels of flexibility authors have with respect to theory, methodology, and composition, and the existence of fewer institutionalized norms as compared to quantitative research. While we do not claim that the set of principles offered here are exhaustive, we believe that, in the spirit of parsimony, they capture the primary issues emerging from our review without overwhelming readers with a large number of guidelines.

### #1 Principle of Variety

Literature shows that there is a variety of qualitative methods available for the researcher. Trauth (2001) indicated “...qualitative research in information systems field represents the importation of several different methodological traditions” (p. 277), and Creswell (1998) elaborates on “five [different] qualitative traditions of inquiry”. Further, he notes “philosophical assumptions underlying different types of qualitative studies: ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical, methodological...” (p. 75) and Gubrium and Holstein (1997) note that “qualitative research is a diverse enterprise... qualitative method is often portrait broad strokes that blur differences” (p. 5). Markus (1997) summed this up when she noted, “There are qualitatively different types of qualitative research in terms of philosophy, technique, and output” (p. 14). In the IS discipline, common methods include “interpretive case study” (Walsham 1995; 2006), “positivist case study” (Eisenhardt 1989; Lee 1989; Yin 1994; Dube and Pare 2003), “hermeneutics” (Boland 1991; Lee 1994), “ethnography” (Schulze 2000; Myers 1999), “grounded theory” (Urquhart 2001; Urquhart et al. 2010), “explanatory case study” (Yin 1994), and so on.

Different types of qualitative research are associated with different types of research questions, different conceptions and roles of theories, different sets of data collection procedures, different data analysis approaches, and different types of findings that are generated (Sarker 2007). Even though researchers in the role of evaluators may be cognitively aware of these different types of qualitative research, on many occasions, they tend to expect their own preferred type and impose the assumptions and criteria related to their preferred types (e.g., expecting “validity” and “reliability” in an “interpretive case study”). Indeed, Markus (1997, p. 14, emphasis added) noted this issue among qualitative researchers, asserting, “When we review the research of qualitative research colleagues, we... [disrespect] those who do not do qualitative research exactly as we do... this is pure and simple prejudice”.

The principle of variety is thus fundamental to a fair assessment of a qualitative manuscript by reviewers and editors. It suggests that the evaluators need to be conscious about the different types/genres of qualitative research (not just their own). Further, the authors have an obligation of placing their work within a particular methodological tradition (e.g., “interpretive case study” (Walsham 1995), or “explanatory case study” (Yin 1994) or Straussian variant of “grounded theory methodology” (Strauss and Corbin 1998)), and being true to the tradition. Of course, the use of new combinations and innovative styles of qualitative approaches are always welcome, but in such cases, the authors need to clearly outline
for the audience what the essential features are, and what the methodological expectations associated with it might be (e.g., with a potentially unfamiliar methodology such as “virtual ethnography”).

### #2 Principle of Internal Coherence

Closely related to the principle of variety is the principle of internal coherence. Just as in “anatomy” where various systems must work together coherently, so too should different components of a research manuscript work in an internally consistent manner (e.g., Creswell 1998; Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000). For example, in an explanatory case study, one might expect the authors of a manuscript to ask what and why questions, adopt an ontology of realism and an epistemology of causality (positivism), be data-centric rather than imaginative-interpretation-centric in conducting the study, use criteria of rigor such as internal validity, construct validity, and reliability, adopt the logic of deduction, claim falsification of a variance EP theory (theory of explanation and prediction) as part of the contribution, and have a neutral scientific presentation style. We note that innumerable valid (or invalid) combinations exist in the way the anatomical components work together, and therefore it would be pointless to try to develop a comprehensive list of valid (or invalid) combinations. The goal of this principle, then, is to sensitize authors and evaluators so that they ensure a high degree of coherence across the manuscript’s anatomical elements such as the research question, underlying philosophical assumptions, methodological guidelines followed, the nature of theory, logic driving the theory-data interactions, the contributions offered, the presentation style, and so on (Sarker 2007).

### #3 Principle of Relevance

The principle of relevance is applicable at many levels. First, the relevance to discipline requirement signals the fact that the role of IT must be significant in an investigation within the IS field. Qualitative researchers tend to focus on the social and behavioral issues, often with minimal focus on technological aspects beyond technology being the context, as in IS offshoring or virtual team development (e.g., Olsson et al. 2008; Sarker and Sahay 2003). Failure to focus on the unique contributions associated with technology means that IS researchers lose their “comparative advantage” as compared to other social science researchers (Markus 1997, p. 17). Consistent with Markus’ view, Orlikowski and Iacono (2001) urged researchers to be wary of studies where IT is the omitted variable, and Benbasat and Zmud (2003) cautioned researchers about the errors of exclusion. Nunamaker and Briggs (2012) take a more tolerant approach and urge researchers to investigate value creation enabled by IT as well as design of IT products and IT-enabled processes. The second aspect is the relevance of methodology, i.e., what the chosen methodology brings to the table compared to other methodologies in the investigation related to a particular problem. Depending on the nature of the problem being investigated, authors should choose an appropriate qualitative research approach. Indeed, Trauth (1997, pg. 236) notes that it is important “not to get the (methodological cart) before the horse (research goal)”. Yet another aspect of relevance is related to practice. Van de Ven (2007) highlights the increasingly widening theory-practice gap, noting that many scholars conduct their research without the benefit of discussion and interaction with other stakeholders. This often leads to research that is not “grounded in reality”, and thus results in ideas that are unrealistic, trivial, or irrelevant. Many qualitative research approaches, owing to the fact that they require intensive engagement of researchers with the experiences and views of study participants in natural settings (Klein and Myers 1999), hold the potential for ensuring practical relevance.

### #4 Principle of Transparency

Qualitative research is often criticized as being subjective, biased, or unscientific. While subjectivity, bias, and lack of correspondence with the natural science model are not a legitimate criticism for a number of types of qualitative approaches, it is generally valuable for qualitative researchers to ensure the accountability and auditability of their work. We propose the principle of transparency to urge qualitative researchers to provide details about where, when, how and from whom data was collected, and how data was analyzed and inferences were made, and to demonstrate their self-criticality regarding their data and their initial conclusions. Essentially, the principle calls for tacit methodological assumptions and procedures to be made as explicit as possible while noting that the nature of and expectations regarding transparency can vary depending on the type of methodology. Also, since authors often have to struggle
with limited page requirements, the use of methodological appendices with details about data collection
and data analysis processes is advised (Levina and Vaast 2008, Dibbern et al. 2008).

**#5 Principle of Charity**

When one reads the work of others, or considers others’ arguments, it is natural for the interpreter to
bring some of his or her own prejudices into his or her interpretation (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009).
However, this can potentially lead to a failed understanding, with the interpreter imposing his/her own
pre-understanding without being sufficiently open to the meaning of the work. The principle of charity is
based on the premise that “successful interpretation necessarily invests the person interpreted with basic
rationality” (Davidson 2001, p. 211). The principle implies that before a new idea can be judged, the
interpreter should “…seek to understand that view in its strongest, most persuasive form before subjecting
the view to evaluation” (“Oriental Philosophy”). Davidson (2001, p. 148-9) explains this issue further:

“The point of the principle is to make the... [author of qualitative manuscripts] intelligible, since too
great deviations from consistency and correctness leave no common ground on which to judge either
conformity or difference. From a formal point of view, the principle of charity helps solve the problem
of the interaction of meaning and belief by restraining the degrees of freedom allowed...while
determining how to interpret words.”

By keeping the principle of charity in mind, evaluators can be more self-reflexively aware of their own pre-
conceptions, and be open to seriously considering ideas from authors, even if it initially appears that they
do not make sense. We hasten to add that we do not mean to imply that reviewers and editors should not
judge, or be critical to authors’ work; we merely offer a position from which to judge from. In the end, the
goal for evaluators is to provide a fair hearing to new ideas or alternate ways of looking at a phenomenon,
and the principle asks evaluators to guard against the tendency to be dismissive without giving a work
careful thought.

**#6 Principle of Dignity**

Traditionally, qualitative researchers have felt oppressed due to the fact that their work was not well-
accepted in the discipline, which is often reflected in the apologetic and sometimes over-defensive tone in
the manuscripts. However, as qualitative research is finding its rightful place in the mainstream IS
literature and in the IS community, we believe that there is no need for qualitative researchers to be
defensive, aggressive, or apologetic about issues such as lack of objectivity, lack of generality, lack of
causal explanations, or more broadly, not being sufficiently scientific. In this sense, it is time for
qualitative researchers to liberate themselves from the sense of being oppressed and excluded, and
approach their qualitative work with dignity. This, we believe, will lead to fresh and creative ideas, and the
freedom and confidence to express interesting views.

To summarize, in this section, we have presented six principles, some of which are directly indicated by
our review and the others broadly implied. For example, the *Principle of Variety* is directly evident from
our review of the literature, where we encountered a large number of genres of qualitative research. The
*Principle of Internal Coherence*, while not derived inductively, was suggested by the logical coherence
most authors ensured among the various anatomical elements. The *Principle of Transparency* emerged in
our minds due to the fact that there were a number of articles with elaborate appendices explaining the
data collection and data analysis procedures, and this seemed to contribute to the credibility of the study.
The *Principle of Relevance* attempted to capture the lessons from our observation that not all studies
were mindful about the role of IT (relevance to the discipline), the role of the specific methodology chosen
(relevance to the study), and contribution beyond academia (the role of practice). The *Principle of
Charity* was suggested by the fact that there is great variety of qualitative research and there are few
universally acceptable/appropriate practices for researchers to follow or criteria for evaluators to apply. It
is therefore important for readers to be especially open and to suspend the need to judge a qualitative
work until they have given it a “fair hearing.” And finally, the *Principle of Dignity* reflects the historical
context of exclusion of qualitative work from leading outlets in the discipline, which has arguably led to
deep scars on many members of the qualitative research community – this is perhaps reflected in an
overly apologetic stance on issues such as the lack of generalizability, and the constant need to argue for
the merits of qualitative research.
Concluding Thoughts

Through our review, we believe we have provided a fairly comprehensive overview of patterns associated with the anatomical components of qualitative research papers in four leading journals of the IS discipline. There is clearly much variety. The specific patterns unearthed should be seen as descriptive rather than as normative, given that many of the patterns are not necessarily justifiable philosophically or methodologically. Nevertheless, some potentially useful guidelines for qualitative researchers do emerge (Table 3), and researchers may find some of the patterns (e.g., average number of case units, average number of interviews) helpful in justifying and legitimating their own methodological choices. This is particularly the case given that the patterns are derived from highly reputed journals in the discipline. In addition, we believe that the 6 proposed principles will provide broad direction to authors and evaluators. Such guidance can be valuable, given the many traditions of qualitative research and the absence of widely shared or accepted practices related to the different anatomical components of a qualitative study. While our results and recommendations, as in the case of most studies, are undoubtedly provisional and subject to future revisions, we hope the work can serve as a useful reference for both novice and experienced qualitative researchers, in their roles as authors as well as evaluators.

References


Oriental Philosophy.” http://philosophy.lander.edu/oriental/charity.html


