Conducting Pilot Studies: Learn from Our Mistakes

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http://tinyurl.com/pilotstudies2016
Presentation Overview

What is a Pilot Study?

Myths and Realities

Why a Pilot Study?

Benefits

How do you do a Pilot Study?

Get Started Today
What is a pilot study?
Pilot Studies Defined

In his book on case study research, Robert K. Yin (2014) advocated for the value of conducting a pilot study, explaining that the approach is “formative, assisting you to develop relevant lines of questions—possibly even providing some conceptual clarification for the research design as well” (p. 96).
# Pilot Studies: Myths and Realities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MYTH</th>
<th>REALITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Tons of work!”</td>
<td>Ok. It’s true. “Tons of work!” - but valuable, productive work</td>
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<td>IRB-approval will be time-consuming and difficult.</td>
<td>Allot a few weeks to complete ethics training, prepare, and “shepherd” an IRB application.</td>
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<td>I won’t be able to use these findings in my dissertation or another</td>
<td>NO! Once you obtain IRB approval a pilot study is a REAL study with REAL findings with REAL participants. You might be confusing pilot studies with “pre-tests.”</td>
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<td>research project (i.e., presentation, article).</td>
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<td>My ideas are too green to conduct research.</td>
<td>All research projects (even those conducted by seasoned researchers) gain shape and clarity throughout the research project (Maxwell, 2013).</td>
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<td>Who needs a pilot study? I’m just going to dive right into the real</td>
<td>Don’t miss this change to refine your interview protocols/surveys, ensure alignment between your research questions and method, and gain practical skills to facilitate your planned research.</td>
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<td>deal.</td>
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Why should researchers conduct pilot studies?
Benefits of Pilot Studies

1. Is there long-term relationship potential here?
2. Inform methodology and critical framework
3. Refine your interview or survey protocol
4. Gain valuable experience designing and completing a research study
What did we learn as a result of conducting pilot studies?
Tangible & Practical Research Skills

Generated Findings for Scholarly Dissemination

Focus in on what matters most

Developed relationships with participants

LESSONS LEARNED
What do we wish we had known before conducting our pilot studies?
Better acquainted with the topic.

Don’t be afraid to change... everything.

Pursue with focus and rigor.

Pilot in name only.

Hindsight is 20/20
Preparing to conduct your pilot study
What's an idea you'd like to test out in a pilot study? (A new skill? A population you want to learn more about? A theoretical framework or methodology that excites you?)

Who is one person you can talk to you to continue developing this idea? (A friend, mentor, academic advisor?)

What is holding you back from conducting a pilot study?

Tiny URL:  http://tinyurl.com/pilotstudies2016
Pilot Study: Prospective Timeline (15 week semester)
IRB - Four Weeks
Recruitment - Three Weeks
Data Collection - Four Weeks
Data Analysis - Four Weeks
Write-up - Two Weeks
References and Resources


Or… Contact us!

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