

# Some comments on general research methodology

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**To cite:** Zhu L. Some comments on general research methodology. *Fam Med Com Health* 2019;7:e000213. doi:10.1136/fmch-2019-000213

Received 30 July 2019  
Accepted 31 July 2019



▶ <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2019-000218>



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Dear editors,

The methodological introduction on family medicine and community health research<sup>1</sup> provides general practitioners (GPs) with a good guide on general research methodology, principles, procedures and examples. All of these have laid a good foundation for the development of general medical research in China. However, considering the actual situation, GPs still have some difficulties in applying these research methods.

External difficulties include the following:

1. Qualitative analysis-related research is still rarely encouraged by many mainstream journals, such as *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association* and other journals, due to its severe bias and relative low level of medical evidence, and it could not be applied to clinical practice widely. Among all of six research methods, policy research and case studies are rarely accepted by relevant general medical journals, which affect the popularity and application of these methodologies.
2. The domestic medical funds that can support the research type in the article are relatively less, and the support from other social societies is rare because these types of research could not bring stakeholders much benefit.
3. The primary research network is still in the bud, and GPs with qualified research capacity are sorely lacking.

Internal difficulties include the following:

1. The content of those articles are not detailed enough; more relevant books or

links are required to declare those methods and steps, such as the detailed methodological introduction of qualitative analysis and precautions of semistructured interviews.

2. The GP needs to learn not only research methods introduced in the article but also the epidemiology and other quantitative research methods, which matter a lot. Quantitative research is easier to apply to clinical practice and allows easier access to funding than qualitative analysis.

In short, those articles bring us new research methodology, for example, quality improvement research, which opens up a new horizon for GPs. Meanwhile, further details are required, as well as the need for introduction to quantitative research methods, policies and fund support from the government, all of which could contribute to the development of family medicine research in China.

**Competing interests** None declared.

**Patient consent for publication** Not required.

**Provenance and peer review** Not commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

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## REFERENCE

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