

RDM in Ethical Consumption

Andreea Bocioaga is a doctoral research student based in the Adam Smith Business School. She is also the author of an [article](#) for the Researcher Development Blog on data management practices.

Here she discusses how she's arranged data management activities for her research project.

Research Area



Andreea is a doctoral student who works with qualitative data in the Social Sciences. She's based in the Adam Smith Business School in the Marketing research cluster. Andreea examines food consumption habits, focusing on users of a number of allotment sites and gardening communities around Glasgow.

Funding and Partners

Andreea is in receipt of a College of Social Sciences Scholarship. She is supervised by Professor Deirdre Shaw. Her access to her

research participants has been brokered by seven community gardens: Woodlands Community Garden, The Concrete garden, The Back Garden, Peat Road Garden, Southseeds Croft, Wallacewell Community Fellowship and North of Glasgow Community Food Initiative.

Research Data

Andreea's primary data consists of interviews (audio recordings), observations (handwritten and digital notes) and diaries, and some photos of food.

From these primary data, the following secondary data including transcripts and coding are derived. These are generally in the form of Docear and NVivo files.

Some of the data Andreea collects is sensitive data; un-redacted audio recordings of interviews may include personal information, as can the diaries kept by participants. Personal data is also collected as part of the administrative data required for the project, e.g. consent forms and contact details.

The data collected during this research is longitudinal. Andreea will conduct three interviews with each participant over the period of a year. She collects audio data only at the interview – observations are written up soon after. Transcripts are produced soon after that and offered for review by participants for accuracy and redaction.

Docear is a free, open source, academic literature management system which supports the sorting of annotations on PDF files, in addition to other functions such as organisation of documents into categories and reference management.

NVivo is software that can be used for both qualitative and mixed-methods research. NVivo is particularly useful for analysis of unstructured text and other data types.

Data Processing

Interview data is recorded simultaneously on a recording device and on a phone (for backup purposes).

Andreea uses a two-stage transcription process for her interview data: Initial rough transcription is done using an online transcription tool; clean-up is then done in Word. She uses the tool [Transcribe](#), for which she has a personal subscription. This does not require upload or storage of the audio files, which remain stored locally.

Andreea's next step in analysing her research data will be coding the data. This will be informed by a methodological and theoretical approach which is yet to be determined. Coding will be carried out using Word, NVIVO and Docear. She plans on feeding the outputs from Docear and NVIVO back into Word for analysis.

Transcripts are partially anonymised using parentheses (eg [participant discusses sensitive issue]). This method came from Andreea's previous experience working for charity prior to her PhD study – Andreea didn't consult any additional external resources when planning her anonymisation strategy eg UK Data Service (UKDS) guides.

Data Management Activities

Ethical permission was granted for this research in 2016 by the Social Science Ethics Committee. Andreea had some concern about General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) issues but the issues were easily resolved as not much personal data is collected.

Andreea wrote a data management plan (DMP) for the research early in the project but later found that it was over-elaborate and complicated. She reviewed the plan and simplified lots of aspects once data collection started and she had a better feel for what the data required.

Andreea uses a consistent file naming convention for her data files:

participant pseudonym_observation number.format

e.g. sally_observation1.mp4

Originally, she developed a more sophisticated file naming convention but dropped this after the initial stages of data collection because it was unnecessarily complicated.

She organises her data into folders by participant. Derived data is added into folders with the associated primary data when it has been generated. At first, she stored different data types separately, but found that in practice, this didn't make it easy to analyse.

Andreea maintains an administrative spreadsheet for the project. This records data-file locations and a timescale for all data collection points – each interview and any subsequent contact point. This

effectively logs all the data collected during the research (which makes complying with GDPR much simpler) and will be helpful when it comes to archiving or deleting data at the end of project.

No	Participant Name	First contact	Interview #1	Food growing observation	Food shopping observation	Diary return	Interview #2	Next contact	Interview 3	Food growing observation	Food shopping observation	
1	John	Jul-16	11/07/16	19/09/16	07/10/16	paper 15/10/20	08/12/16	May-17	21-Jan	21-Jan	29-Jun	Retired gentleman, involved in local food considerations are health and care about the environment and being the garden but does not necessarily sustainability issues when shopping. Middle aged professional woman, is reliant with regards to food. Her interests are health and fresh ingredients. She has sustainability issues in consumer shopping behaviour with some doubt if she can do anything. She tries to shop locally.
2	Laura	Jul-16	12/07/16	10/08/17	25/10/16	online 31/08/20	17/01/17	May-17	27/01/20	follow up message	27-Jun	Retired gentleman, was referred to the garden as a way to "get out" garden before his divorce but now food considerations are freshness. any sustainable considerations will especially been showing on the east aspect of the garden.
3	Michael	Jul-16	17/07/16	11-Aug	02/11/16	paper 26/10/20	15/12/16	May-17	22-Jan	27/07/17	19-Jul	He is a professional filmmaker who garden as an opportunity to meet people normally meet. He is primarily concerned if comes to food and has some awareness issues but doesn't consider them as a priority. He is a young professional with a job very important for him and his wife. things for his family. He wanted to...
4	Loui	Sep-16	26/09/16	28/09/16	05/10/16	online 17/10/20	06/01/17	May-17	15th Aug	16th Aug	done	

Andrea's admin spreadsheet helps her track her project. Participants are known by pseudonyms, and all contact is tracked. Completed activities are coloured green and ongoing activities are coloured orange.

Storage and Sharing

Andrea stores multiple copies of her data files in different locations: OneDrive, USB drive, personal laptop, work PC. Recordings on phone. This duplication on different storage media and different locations is intended to ensure robust backup.

There's no funder requirement for Andrea to share the data that will underpin her publications and thesis. However, like all postgraduate research (PGR) students at the University of Glasgow, she's encouraged by the University to archive and share her data where possible.

Andrea plans to share a sample of transcripts she has analysed as an appendix to her thesis, and include some pictures of the food which is discussed.

She also plans to deposit data with Enlighten: Research Data, our institutional data repository, at the end of her project, having fully anonymised the data by redacting transcripts and removing identifiers. For the interview data, she will only deposit the transcripts, the recordings will be destroyed. Unstructured interviews are very rich data sources and contain lots of info not pertinent to current research question, so may represent a valuable re-use resource.

Finally, as a condition of her ethical approval, Andrea will offer data back to her participants and offer a summary of her findings to one of the gardening organisations that brokered contact with the participants.

Critical Issues

Andrea is concerned that her anonymization process may not meet GDPR requirements. She plans on checking this with the Data Protection & Freedom of Information Office once her full anonymization process is planned.

Reflections

The diaries kept by participants weren't as successful or useful as Andreea expected. It was difficult to get the participants to record comparable information. This made the interviews she conducted more significant to the success of the research than originally planned.

The time taken to carry out the transcription was a big surprise to Andreea. This took much longer than she had anticipated.

The most useful single resource for the project is the master administrative spreadsheet. It is essential to have a list of all the data collection points with a timeline to facilitate data analysis, as well as making the project simple to run.

Useful links

Transcription tool: <https://transcribe.wreally.com/>

NVivo: <http://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/nvivo-products>

Docear: <http://www.docear.org/>

Andreea's blog post on 'Managing qualitative data...':

<https://uofgpgrblog.com/pgrblog/2018/2/9/managing-qualitative-research-data-at-uofg>

Enlighten: Research Data: <http://researchdata.gla.ac.uk/>

University of Glasgow PGR Code of Conduct (RDM requirement for students):

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/ourresearchenvironment/prs/pgrcodeofpractice/>

Partner Organisations:

<http://www.woodlandscommunitygarden.org.uk/>

<http://www.concretegarden.org.uk/>

<http://www.concretegarden.org.uk/the-back-garden/>

<http://southseeds.org/projects/the-urban-croft/>

<https://www.wallacewell.com/our-urban-oasis>

<http://www.ngcfi.org.uk/>

This case study was written by Mary Donaldson and Matt Mahon for the University of Glasgow Research Data Management service.

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