

Research Methods

Case Study: Understanding sex work in Canada

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Understanding sex work in Canada

1: Knowledge exchange

2: Sex workers

3: Sex workers & romantic partners

4: Sex workers' clients

5: Sex workers' managers

6: Sex workers' regulators

7: Ethnography of sex work



Research locations

- BC
- Alberta
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Nfld and Lab



Sex workers and romantic partners

- In-person tape recorded interviews (n>40)
- Combines open-ended and closed-ended questions (2.5 hours)
- Many standard questions used for other workers
- Focus on gender, health and safety strategies, stigma, interactions with regulators, access to health and social services, partner support
- \$80 honorarium for each of the two participants

Choose Problem
Review Literature

Hypotheses

Select Methodology

Collect Data

Analyze Results

Share Results

Research
Methods

Words Matter

- Defining Concepts
 - Sex Worker: Someone who exchanges sexual services for money which necessarily, but not exclusively, includes direct physical sexual contact with clients
- Difficult and very important
 - Sex Work
 - Health
 - Safety
 - Violence

Hypotheses: The exciting part of research

- How are these concepts related to each other
- Is substance use (a measure of health) related to sex work?
- How are these two concepts related?
 - Weakly

Inclusion Criteria

- A sex worker
- Aged 19 or older
- Legally able to work in Canada
- Delivered sex service 15 or more times in the last 12 months
- Currently present in the area and willing to be interviewed in person.
- Partner: Living with the sex worker for at least three months

Collecting Data

- Asking questions
- Participant/or Non-Participant observation
- Experiments
- Secondary analysis
- Historical

Strategies to collect sensitive data

Question 74: How old were when you first consumed..

a. Alcohol?

.....

g. Crack cocaine?

- Context
- Strategies
- Research Ethics

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Sensitive Data: Social Context

- Research project
- Participant
- Researcher

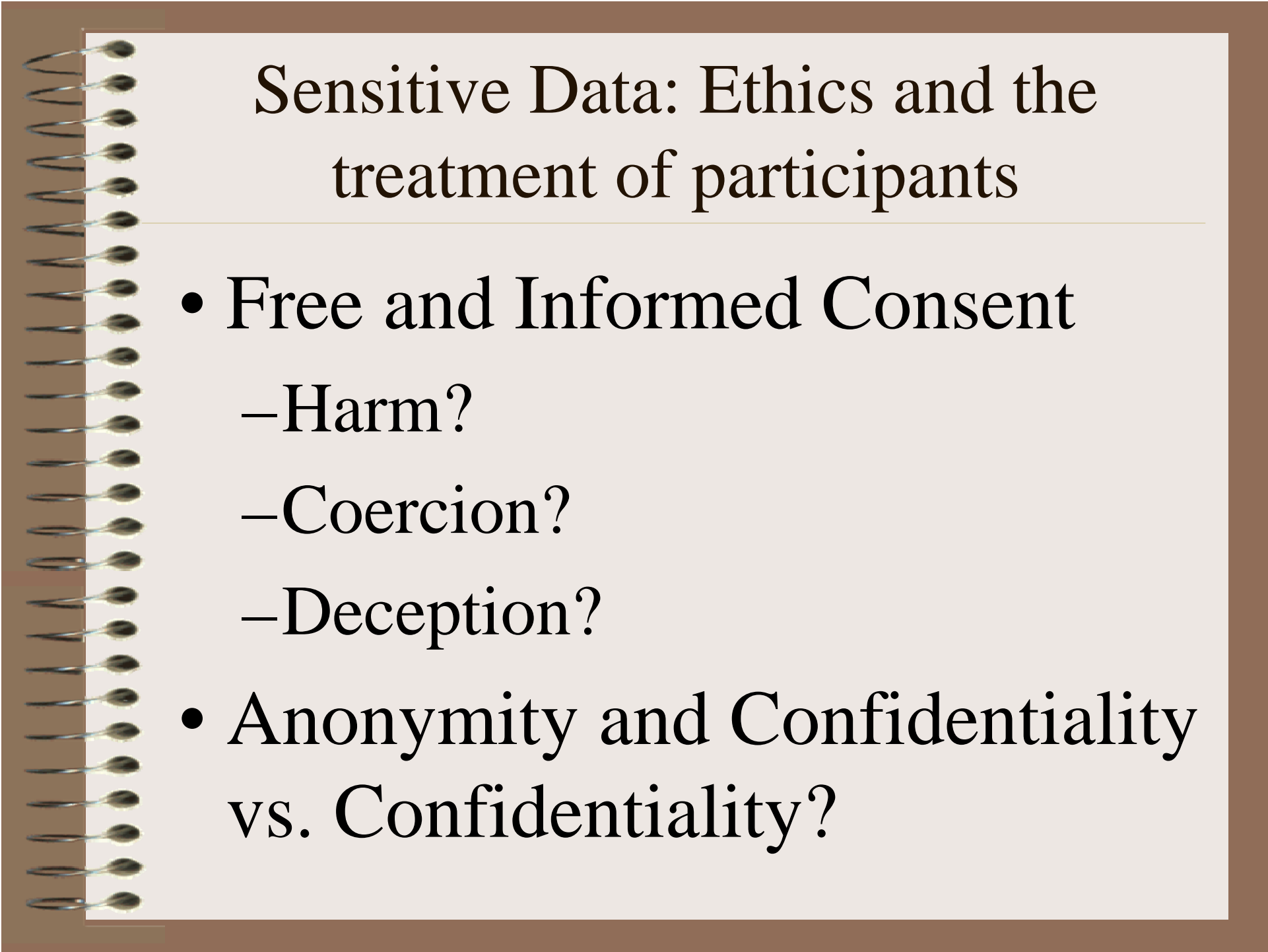
Sensitive Data: Strategies

- Trust, Rapport?
- Wording
- Question Order
- Indirect questions
- Anonymous

Sensitive Data: Research Ethics

How do you know that something is unethical?

- Ethics on a continuum and in a context
- Recent “discovery, still developing

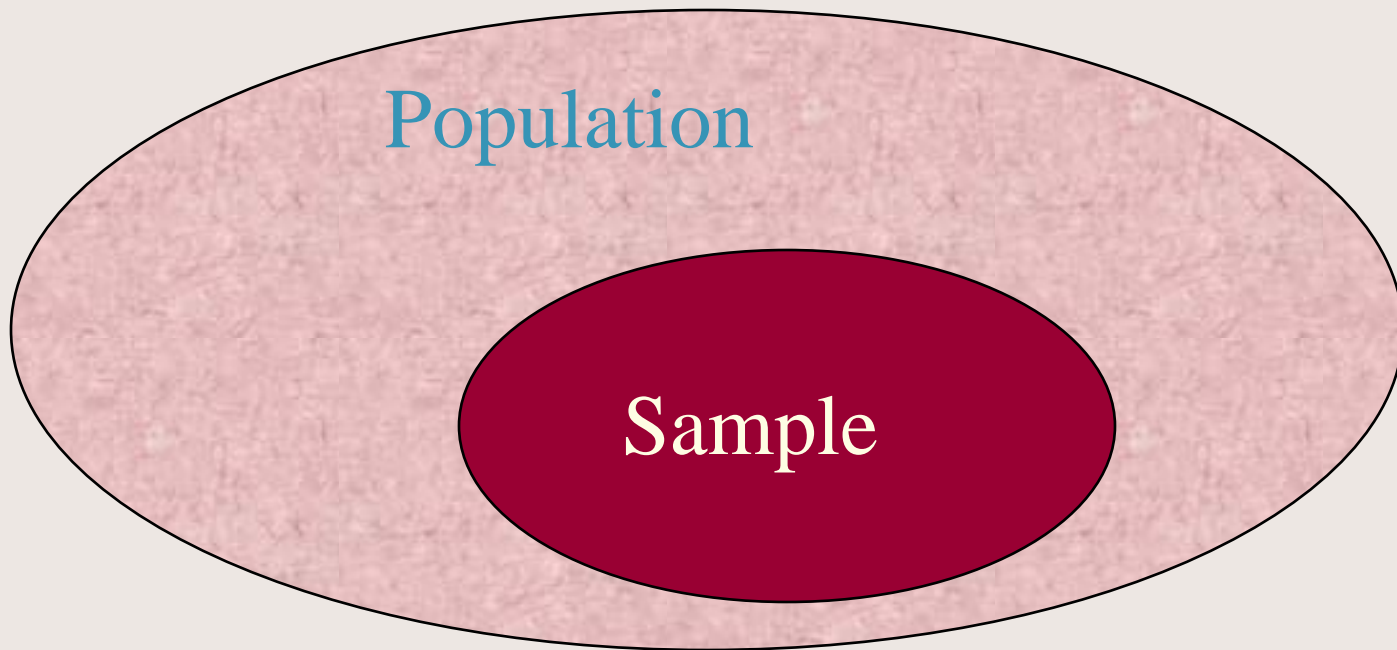
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Sensitive Data: Ethics and the treatment of participants

- Free and Informed Consent
 - Harm?
 - Coercion?
 - Deception?
- Anonymity and Confidentiality vs. Confidentiality?

Sampling: Finding participants

- Population--all the people you WANT to understand
- Sample--the people providing data



Sampling strategies

- Through sex worker
- Key informants
- Newspaper and online advertising
- Posters at sexual health centres, counselling services, spas and fitness centres, outreach organizations, etc.
- Respondent driven sampling



Next Steps

- Complete data collection
- Analyze the results
- Share the findings

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Feedback

Suggestions for improvements?

What analysis would benefit you in your profession?

Thank you

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