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	Tobacco Industry	E-cigarette & nicotine product industry (excluding pharma)	Pharma Industry
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5 Uses of Qualitative and Mixed Methods Approaches in Tobacco Control Evaluation and Assessment

Background

- Tobacco policy is complex and variable, and structured data may not be available.
- Qualitative approaches, as part of mixed methods studies, support impact assessment in specific ways.

Methods

- Comparative case studies with embedded interviews.
- 42 interviews (40-60 min each) with tobacco/nicotine experts and regulators.

Qualitative methods impact tobacco policy evaluation via **assumptions, temporality, comparison, data quality, and relevance.**

Qual methods help us to understand...	Examples
Assumptions made by policymakers/public about tobacco policies, goals, and products.	Tobacco policies are “part of a broader objective . Pulling out the effects of one policy, like ‘if you do X, it will have Y impact’... there are only a very few policies [for which] you can do that” (#29).
Temporality i.e., timing of policy implementation and enforcement.	“Some of the time frames [in our survey] are ‘in the past month’ – and if it was collected in January now, we're asking about December before the ban went into effect. Also, it wasn't like you flipped a switch, and the law was implemented ” (#11).
Comparison between cases, jurisdictions, and settings.	“In the UK, major groups in political life support a package of tobacco control measures. That's not the case here . I would say that the UK is better placed for such a measure than [our country] right now” (#10).
Data Quality i.e., information about the completeness and structure of the data.	“I think we need to do qualitative work on the field and make sure that we are capturing minoritized or vulnerable groups [in the data] that tend to be over-impacted by the use of vaping products to understand not only population trends, but also some subgroups of young people” (#21).
Relevance of the research for the policy context, market, and communities.	“We've been providing some training to our grantees across the State to have them doing some neighborhood conversations and getting some community local input... [and] to get a pulse of what's going on in the community , too. So that's something we're trying to infuse regularly” (#27).

Conclusions

Important qualitative approaches include:

- Primary data collection, e.g., case studies; expert elicitation; focus groups; interviews, surveys; oral history;
- Secondary analysis, e.g., policy, market and media surveillance; legal epidemiology; logic models; data notes; and narrative construction.
- Efforts to assess tobacco policies and the generalizability of findings would benefit from more standardized use of qualitative methods and collection of relevant data.

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