

Four colored squares are arranged in a 2x2 grid on the right side of the slide. The top-left square is orange, the top-right is green, the bottom-left is purple, and the bottom-right is red.

## Examining the 'social' in palliative care research: **a look at gender**

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# The 'social' – what's that?



- The social as 'factors' – the demographic social
- The social as 'background' – the soft toy social
  - The social as 'other' – the 'alien' social
- The social as 'relationship' – the outcome of when 'me' meets 'you'



# Traps for clinical players #1



- Do I have enough women in my sample?

Good demographic consideration for large samples [ $< 100$ ]

BUT

No consideration of different communication styles vis-à-vis researcher gender impact

No consideration of changes to research design or methods to accommodate above



# Traps for clinical players #2



- Have I taken gender into account in my qualitative study?

Gender NOT a demographic factor in qualitative studies

‘Family’ views not a substitute for unpacking gender dimensions

Gender is social ‘position’ meaning that there are unique personal experiences associated with not being one – or the other – how to capture that experience?

What is the breadth and depth of that experience – time spent with each individual/group?; common range of experiences possible?

Answers as ‘artifacts of who interviews/observes/reads? How to control for this?



## Traps for clinical players #3



- All men (people) are equal before my dissemination?

No consideration of different approach to dissemination forms and sites for men and women esp vis-à-vis class/ethnicity/religion

Gender itself is riven by generational factors (age) which produce differential attitudes and reactions to other genders, clinicians, information needs, relations to authority, and level of literacy.



# Social Principles in SOCIAL Research



1. The 'social' in research is about the relationship to experience incl. the researchers
2. Remember that each 'social' category implies separate communication challenges
3. Remember that each 'social' category requires reflection on adequate dissemination plans
4. Representatives on the research team are good but no substitute for PPI at design, data analysis, and dissemination



## Question for Slide 2



How does one accommodate the social influences in one's research/study?

- 1) Note the demographic presence
- 2) Have culture-sensitive methods
- 3) Select a wide range of different social samples



## Question for Slide 3



I single out gender as a factor to consider in my study becoz?

- 1) There are biological and social characteristics & needs that differentiate the populations (epidemiology, marked differences in income or occupation)
- 2) Women are half the population
- 3) It is increasingly a requirement in peer-review and ethical forums





## Question for Slide 4



Social influences such as gender need to be accommodated in my qualitative study design by?

- 1) Appropriate sized samples
- 2) Appropriate methods, analysis, and dissemination
- 3) Ensuring women are on my research team