EXAMPLE OF AN ANNOTATED OUTLINE
Annotated Outline

I. Background
   A. Family had existed before written history
      a. Maguara cave paintings in Bulgaria
      b. Rock paintings in Northern America
   B. Origins of the term family
      a. Probably originated around 1400 A.C.E.
         www.dictionary.com
      2. Fluid and dynamic construct
      3. Advocates moving towards a more abstract view of family
      4. Discusses the underlying assumptions of family
   C. Statement of Problem
      a. Misunderstanding the construct
      b. Addresses the need to minimize bias when researching family. Need to move away from the “traditional family” as a measuring stick.
      c. Family is a fluid and dynamic construct
   D. Purpose of Statement
      a. Describe the everyday experience of a family
      b. Multi-cultural approach
      c. Explore the unique interpretations of each communal unit
      d. Explore what is important to the participant in “family”
   E. Research Question and sub questions
a. How is “family” interpreted by the communal unit and how do the actions, beliefs, values, and assumptions of the unit create and maintain the construct, “family”?
   a. How do you know you are a family?
   b. What does “family” mean?
   c. What are some of the activities that others would recognize you belong to a “family”
   d. Who taught you about “family”
   e. What traditions / rituals help to create “family”

F. Nature of Study
   1. Qualitative Research
      a. A research approach that provides detailed narrative descriptions and explanations of the phenomena investigated. Methods used to collect qualitative data include ethnographic practices such as observing and interviewing.
   
   2. Ethnography
      The study of a cultural group or social group that is based on the interactions and observations. The objective is to generate a cultural portrait that is holistic and explored in the context of a larger cultural picture.

G. Rationale, Relevance and Significance
   a. The general focus of research about “family” is on differences and weaknesses.
      Challenges the assumption that a quantitative study cannot be inclusive.
   b. Attempts to define “family” have not been successful.
c. Scholars have offered multiple definitions of family.  

H. Definition of terms  
   1. **Communal unit**: Individuals who are participating in, sharing a relationship that is defined by in the unique perspective of the individual

I. Assumptions and Limitations  
   1. Diversity does not mean fragmentation  
   2. Possible to focus on similarities while honoring uniqueness.  
   3. Access to families may be limited by the participant’s definitions of what is private and public.  
   4. Issues of personal identity and power  

**Literature Review**

I. Introduction  
   A. Overview  
      1. Origins of the term family probably originated around 1400 A.C.E.  
      *www.dictionary.com*  
      2. Family is a fluid and dynamic construct  
      3. Move towards a more abstract view of family  
      4. Discuss the underlying assumptions of family  
   B. Overview of research question  
      1. How is “family” interpreted by the communal unit and how do the actions, beliefs, values, and assumptions of the unit create and maintain the construct, “family”?  
      2. Describe the everyday experience of a family from a multi-cultural perspective
3. Explore what is important to the participant and the unique interpretations of each communal unit

C. Overview of literature
   1. The intent of this study is to explore the construct of family across the dimensions of culture.
   2. A review of literature has shown that there is no agreement on what constitutes “family” and, much like an outline; the construct is colored and shaded by influences including history, culture, society, and individual experience.
   3. This diversity has been studied in terms of challenges to families, however little research has been done to explore how different cultures experience the construct of family in the United States.

II. Theoretical Framework
   A. Misunderstanding the construct
   B. Posits there is a disconnect between how families live their lives and the way that researchers theorize about them.
   C. Addresses the need to minimize bias when researching family. Need to move away from the “traditional family” as a measuring stick.

III. Overview of Literature
   A. History
      1. Discusses the place of historical input to research and the contextual view of history to understand the topic being researched. A review of the historical research in the development of family will illustrate the complexity of the topic as well as offer perspective and balance.
      2. Considers the ramifications of family studies that have been done in the past that reinforced societal norms. Lombardo, P. (2001). Pedigrees, propaganda, and paranoia: family studies in a historical context. *Journal Of Continuing Education In The Health Professions*, 21(4), 247-255.

**B. Diversity and Multi-Culturalism**

1. Explore interpretive practices will help to increase understanding about how families are created through converting ambiguity into their own realities. Harris, S.R., (2008). What is family diversity? objective and interpretive approaches. *Journal of Family Issues, 29*: 1407-1425


**C. Issues in Family Research**


D. Research Methodologies
   1. Most of the studies are qualitative that utilize interviews
   2. Review of existing literature

E. Evaluation of viable research designs.
   1. The study would fit several research designs
      a. Phenomenological
      b. Case study
      c. Ethnography
   2. Ethnography gives the opportunity to explore the realities of family life among different cultural heritages.

F. Summary

Research Design and Methodology

I. Overview of Research Design and Rationale
   A. Ethnography
      1. Based in cultural anthropology
      2. Opportunity to join with families and to interact in their own environment.
   B. Symbolic Interactionism
      1. Meaning is the product of social interaction and requires active interpretation to be acted upon.
      2. Each individual is an actor who interprets situations and elements with themselves to determine his or her role interactions


II. Sampling Design
A. Random purposeful
B. Recruited through gatekeepers
   1. Tribal counsel
   2. Pastors / Priests
   3. Community organizations

III. Data Collection
A. Review of historical literature regarding family
B. Observation
C. Interviews
D. Participation in family daily life and rituals.


IV. Data Instrumentation
A. Genograms to explore traditions, rituals, actions, assumptions of family

V. Data Analysis Plan
A. Create and organize files for data
B. Read through the texts and make notes to begin to form initial themes
C. Describe the settings, actors, and events using rich descriptive text.
D. Analyze for essential themes
E. Interpret findings
F. Present the findings in narrative form


IV. Limitations of Research Design
A. Small sample may not be representative of culture
B. Possibility of adjusting actions due to presence of researcher
V. Internal and External Validity
   A. Use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis
   B. Acknowledgment of personal bias, assumptions
   C. Acknowledgment of impact on family
   D. Use of independent review

VI. Ethical Considerations
   A. Information and data produced through human interaction
      1. Informed consent
   B. Researcher impact on family system
   C. Exercise reasonable care to protect participants
   D. Awareness of issues of privacy and confidentiality
   E. IRB protocols

VII. Conclusions
References


