**Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative studies (COREQ): 32-item checklist**

**Link Structure Article**

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| **Research team and reflexivity Personal Characteristics** |
| 1. Interviewer/facilitator Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group?  | p. 8, line 14 (Methods, paragraph 1)The lead author MB conducted the interviews.  |
| 2. Credentials What were the researcher’s credentials? E.g. PhD, MD  | P.9 line 8 (methods, paragraph 2)MSc. The credentials of the researcher and lead author are reported in the author section and again on p. 9 line 8 (methods, paragraph 2) |
| 3. Occupation What was their occupation at the time of the study? | p. 9, lines 8-10 (Method, paragraph 2)MB worked as a lecturer and PhD-candidate at the time of the interviews.  |
| 4. Gender Was the researcher male or female?  | p.1 line 5. (author’s details)MB female is female and this is clear from the author section, p.1 line 5. We did not pertinently report this in the methods section as it did not seem of relevance in the context of this study. If required we will of course add it and state it pertinently. |
| 5. Experience and training What experience or training did the researcher have? Relationship with participants  | p.9 lines 8-10 (methods, paragraph 2)The researcher is a PhD candidate. This gives an indication of the level of research training. The researcher also worked at the same university as the participants and knows four of them from day-to-day work. The researcher did not participate in the Link-Structure and therefore did not have much knowledge of it.This is reported on p.9 lines 8-10 (methods, paragraph 2) |
| 6. Relationship established Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?  | p.9 lines 8-10 (methods, paragraph 2)Yes, the researcher knows four of the participants from day-to-day work. This is reported on p.9 lines 8-10 (methods, paragraph 2) |
| 7. Participant knowledge of the interviewer What did the participants know about the researcher? e.g. personal goals, reasons for doing the research  | p. 8 lines 9-13 (methods, paragraph 1)The interviewers goals were described clearly in the letter of information and consent that was sent by email to all the participants. It detailed the interviewers position as a PhD candidate and the topic which she wished to explore. The contents of the letter of information is not detailed in this research article.  |
| 8. Interviewer characteristics What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator? e.g. Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic | p.9 lines 16-18 (methods, paragraph 3)We reported that a post-positive approach was taken whereby the researcher reports coding inductively however, is influenced by sensitising concepts.This is reported on p.9 lines 16-18 (methods, paragraph 3) |
| **Domain 2: study design Theoretical framework** |
| 9. Methodological orientation and Theory What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? | p.9 lines 11-15 (methods, paragraph3) We report that this is a thematic analysis and provide a reference to the article which informed our methodology |
| 10. Participant selection Sampling How were participants selected?  | p. 8 lines 9-10 (Methods, paragraph 1)Participants were selected through purposive sampling and this is reported on p. 8 lines 9-10 including the reason why they were suitable. (working in the education and clinical settings whilst holding the roles of educator and researcher). (Methods, paragraph 1) |
| 11. Method of approach How were participants approached? e.g. face-to-face, telephone, mail, email  | p. 8 line 10 (methods, paragraph 1)Participants were approached via email. This is described on  |
| 12. Sample size How many participants were in the study?  | p. 10 line 8 (results, paragraph 1)11 eligible, potential participants were app roached. This is described in on p. 8 line 10 (methods, paragraph 1).Nine participants opted to participate. This is described on  |
| 13. Non-participation How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?  | p. 10 lines 9 and 10 (results, paragraph 1)Two participants declined participation on account of limited time.  |
| **Setting** |
| 14. Setting of data collection Where was the data collected? e.g. home, clinic, workplace  | p. 8 lines 13 and 14 (methods, paragraph 1)The interviews were held at the place of work of the participants.  |
| 15. Presence of non-participants Was anyone else present besides the participants and researchers?  | p.9 lines 6-7. (methods, paragraph 2)Yes, an independent observer (LD with a PhD in ethics) was present and had the role of critical friend in the context of this research.  |
| 16. Description of sample What are the important characteristics of the sample?  | p. 10 lines 8-16 (results, paragraph 1)The demographic details of the sample are described. |
| **Data collection** |
| 17. Interview guide Were questions, prompts, guides provided by the authors? Was it pilot tested?  | p. 9 line 5 (methods, paragraph 1)The 5 key questions from the interview guide with their respective follow-up questions are presented on p.8 line 18 to p.9 line 4. (methods, paragraph 1)It was not pilot tested but discussed and re-drafted several times in collaboration with co-authors NS and WK. |
| 18. Repeat interviews Were repeat interviews carried out? If yes, how many? | N/A No repeat interviews were carried out. |
| 19. Audio/visual recording Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?  | p. 8 lines 14 and 15 (methods, paragraph 1)The interviews were audio-recorded. |
| 20. Field notes Were field notes made during and/or after the interview or focus group?  | N/AFieldnotes were made after interviews but these were not used in the analysis and currently not reported in the article. |
| 21. Duration What was the duration of the interviews or focus group?  | p.10, line 9 (results, paragraph 1)The interviews lasted between 40 and 60 minutes. |
| 22. Data saturation Was data saturation discussed?  | p. 10, lines 19 and 20 (results, paragraph 2)Data saturation was reached after the 7th interview. |
| 23. Transcripts returned Were transcripts returned to participants for comment and/or correction?  | p. 9 lines 20-23 (methods, paragraph 4)The full transcripts was not returned to the participants. However, all participants were given the opportunity to read the translation of their own words in the context of the article to determine whether the English translation captured the meaning and emotion they intended to convey.  |
| **Domain 3: analysis and findings Data analysis** |
| 24. Number of data coders How many data coders coded the data?  | p. 9 lines 12-14 (methods, paragraph 3)For the first two interviews LD and MB both coded independently and the discussed their coding with each other. For the remainder of the interviews MB coded the interviews.  |
| 25. Description of the coding tree Did authors provide a description of the coding tree? | N/AThe authors do not describe the coding tree in the article. We can add it if the reviewers feel that it would strengthen the article. |
| 26. Derivation of themes: Were themes identified in advance or derived from the data? | p.9 lines 12-18 (methods, paragraph 3 and 4) Themes were derived from the data. we report that the we coded inductively and that themes were derived from the data. We also describe that we use a post-positive approach. Therefore, whilst we attempt to code objectively, we are influenced by the sensitising theories: boundary crossing, brokerage and workplace learning.  |
| 27. Software What software, if applicable, was used to manage the data?  | page 9 line 11 (methods, paragraph 3)We used Microsoft word to manage data.  |
| 28. Participant checking Did participants provide feedback on the findings? Reporting  | p. 9 line 23. (methods, paragraph 4)Participants read the article in order to check the use of their own words in the context of the article. On participant requested changes to be made to the wording of the quotation but no disagreement with the themes or request for changes to the themes were made.  |
| 29. Quotations presented: Were participant quotations presented to illustrate the themes / findings? Was each quotation identified? e.g. participant number  | P.10 to p.17 (results from paragraph 2)Quotations were presented for every theme to illustrate the theme and the participant’s number has been added at every quotation.  |
| 30. Data and findings consistent Was there consistency between the data presented and the findings?  | P. 10 -17 (results from paragraph 2)We believe that there is consistency between the data and the findings. This was discussed within the team. Additional clarification was added to the findings subsequent to a reviewer’s comment.  |
| 31. Clarity of major themes Were major themes clearly presented in the findings?  | P. 10 -17 (results from paragraph 2)Six major themes are clearly presented in the findings. They are described and supported by quotes.  |
| 32. Clarity of minor themes Is there a description of diverse cases or discussion of minor themes? | N/A In this research, there were no minor themes identified. |