

Analysis of participant feedback

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Participant feedback on interviews

After each interview (1–30 only), a questionnaire was administered concerning the interview process itself. Learners could complete this anonymously. The resultant findings were consistent and so it was decided not to administer the questionnaire after interview 30 to minimise research ‘fatigue’ (Anderson, 1998; Clark, 2008). Interviewees found taking part in the research worthwhile: 97% enjoyed taking part (n=57), and 4 out of every 5 reported that their understanding of doing a project strengthened. The research fostered open discussion in a safe milieu. As Emily wrote, *‘it was safe to share without judgement’*. Discussion stimulated reflection: *‘the questions made me think really hard,’* stated Violet. Reflection in turn promoted participant understanding, especially of the project’s impact on self. Melissa thought that it *‘helped me understand my emotions towards my own experiences’*. Discussion in groups also nourished understanding of others’ perspectives. Martha wrote that it *‘helped me find out about other people’s perspectives and showed me that others were feeling the same way’*. Taking part boosted confidence and engendered pride. *‘It was nice to realise that I should be proud of what I’ve done,’* said Jessie. Therefore, participation was seen as enjoyable, interesting, and useful. As Lucy put it, *‘this interview has been highly enjoyable and has felt very rewarding’*. Overall, then, interviews had a positive impact on participants.

Interviewee transcript review

Transcripts were emailed to participants (n=79) for interviewee transcript review (ITR) (Hagens et al., 2009), except where this was judged to threaten confidentiality. Thirty-four responded by email; one responded in person. Most respondents were expressly grateful (n=29). Some endorsed their pseudonym (8) and expressed hope that their contribution would prove useful (5). *‘Thank you Jed, glad it was useful. The name is perfectly okay’* (Mx. Porter, 12.12.2019.) Some commented on the worthwhileness of participating in the interview or reading the transcript (10). *‘The session was, therefore, useful to me as a parent as it helped me focus back on Johanna’* (Ms. Thompson, 23.12.2019). Some criticised their own inarticulacy (6). *‘I hope you can pluck a few useful bits out of the miasma of ‘thing’ and ‘really’*” (Mx. Auden, 16.12.2019). *‘Gordon Bennet I sound common!’*

Haha' (Mx. Wright, 18.02.2020). Responses invariably segued into mundane project qualification, school, and other matter (19). *'Let me know when you know about marking the EPQ'* (Mx. Johnson, 20.03.2020). Five respondents explicitly spelt out their satisfaction with the transcription. *'That looks good to me. I trust you not to misrepresent me!'* (Mx. Fourier, 26.02.2020). There were two minor clarifications. *'For clarification, I mention Professor Marcus Feldman of Stanford University in the interview'* (Rose, 24.09.2019). There was one correction. *'I don't mind what name you use but I think you said you couldn't use Catherine because it is my actual name?'* (Emilia, 18.12.2019). Two items of new substantive content were supplied. *'The other day I met with a senior associate at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer law firm and a large part of our discussion was about my EPQ! Just shows you how important it is and how useful it's proven to be'* (Grace, 23.08.2019). Therefore, overall, although ITR helped sustain natural and good field relationships, it was inconsequential as a data quality assurance method.

References

- Anderson, G. (with Arsenault, N.). (1998). *Fundamentals of educational research* (2nd ed.). Falmer.
- Clark, T. (2008). 'We're over-researched here!' Exploring accounts of research fatigue within qualitative research engagements. *Sociology*, 42(5), 953–970. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038508094573>
- Hagens, V., Dobrow, M. J. & Chafe, R. (2009). Interviewee transcript review: Assessing the impact on qualitative research. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 9(47). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-9-47>