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Interview Questions for Qualitative Research: An overview of providing advanced questions to interview participants

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Abstract

This article investigates the practical knowledge gap when considering sharing interview questions with participants in advance of a qualitative research project. There is scant literature available for clear guidance on sharing interview questions, and even less empirical research testing the practicality of advanced questions to draw from for clear evidence. To address this challenge, this piece employs the narrative literature review style by looking at what is available for the researcher to draw from. It does this by investigating which literature and studies offer methods where advanced questions are used and how they are employed. It looks at ethical considerations and implications of such methods where they are utilized. Relevant articles illustrate that there are real benefits to disclosing questions in advance and on balance, it shows that advanced notice of questions is the preferred option by participants to enlist richer and more complete research data, as well as ensuring transparent and honest consent. The take-home message is the need to combine all scattered, individual viewpoints, bringing them together to bolster the already existing benefits and with it expanding the ethical compass. This would reach a wider audience and facilitate improved practical knowledge.

Keywords: *qualitative interviewing, advanced interview questions, inclusive research, research ethics, informed consent*

Introduction

In order to discuss how this article can assist in filling the practical knowledge gap surrounding advanced interview sharing, it is important to firstly illustrate what qualitative research is, then how important interviews are, and subsequently address previously published studies and articles on the same subject. This then serves to highlight the knowledge void better which this paper seeks to discuss.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is described as a variety of research approaches to discover 'qualities of phenomena, rather than their quantities' (Bazeley, 2021, p. 6). Those approaches include the looking for, watching, explaining, translating, examining, selecting and dissecting of what others see, how they act, and how they think about themselves and also about how they see the world surrounding them (Bazeley, 2021). To be able to find out about all the how's and the why's of knowledge, this approach requires an exploration of how this might be done, which is described as a method. A research method refers to selecting 'investigative procedures and techniques' (Schwandt, 2015, p. 200) enabling the collection of data. In order to begin an inquiry, certain considerations need to be taken into account, weighing up potential issues which could arise out of 'assumptions, principles, and procedures' (Schwandt, 2015, p. 202). This weighing up process is referred to as methodology, and methodology is the theory that looks at how an inquiry would advance (Schwandt, 2015). Although there are many ways to collect qualitative data, it is typical that interviews and observations are used for data collection (Schwandt, 2015), and it is in the context of interviews that this paper investigates interview questions. Qualitative interviewing focusses on the route to 'meaning making' (Warren, 2001, p. 83) where participants' interpretations, words and experiences are being sought by the interviewer (Warren, 2001).

The purpose of this review is to understand if there is any advantage or disadvantage to the research results by presenting interview questions to participants ahead of time or not, and this is presented as a narrative literature review, and not a systematic review. Ferrari (2015) explains about narrative reviews that they 'can address one or more questions and the selection criteria for inclusion of the articles may not be specified explicitly' (p.231). Bryman (2016) illustrates that a narrative review tries to find a 'reasonably comprehensive assessment and critical interpretation of the literature' (p. 91) in the chosen research area, and as such a narrative literature review is chosen.

In support with searching for current and recent literature, two broad questions were used across databases and search engines to find answers and explanations within the recent literature specific to qualitative research: 1) sharing interview questions with participants in advance, 2) when to share interview questions with participants. The method and review query of the literature on how selection is achieved is explained in further detail later on.

Interviews

As interviews are hugely beneficial in discovering and exploring certain aspects of research which require detail and depth (Braun & Clarke, 2013), interviews are also divided into structures. They are categorized as both structured interviews, which are closed and

necessitate a specific answer as in the context of surveys, and unstructured interviews which are open and allow for elaboration and are usually more flexible and informal (Bryman, 2016). Picking interview structures is chiefly guided by the research and the knowledge that is being pursued (Schwandt, 2015). However, both interview strategies have the same requirements, they necessitate questions to be asked of all participants. The structured interview usually sticks with a formal and precise interview schedule without deviation, whereas the semi-structured interview (a mix between structured and unstructured) has some flexibility and is a more general interview style, leaving the unstructured interview operating mainly with themes allowing for complete directional freedom (Bryman, 2016).

First and foremost, there is the initial question of whether this research overview is necessary and needed, as there is plenty of guidance available on how to conduct qualitative research. There is, however, little in the way of explanatory direction on when to present research interview questions to the participant. This paper considers if there is a void in explaining when to present such questions, specifically before an interview or during an interview. This may be of little interest to some researchers, but to others it could occupy and influence preparatory stages within their research and strengthen their justification. It is also considered that specific data gathering, like conducting a specific literature review on a subject, will always influence the individual evaluation and decision-making process (Snyder, 2019), but even so, there is scant literature as to whether presenting questions in advance is beneficial or not, and even less literature on proving that questions should not be presented ahead of interviews. In other words, this exploration looks at the best time when questions should be introduced to participants to be most beneficial. This paper finds that there is an educational interest in this subject and there is a lack of obtaining adequate debates and arguments dealing with this topic in published journals or textbook writings (Haukås and Tishakov, 2024). It is beneficial to the researcher making it useful to expand on, therefore, should interview questions be presented in advance of a face-to-face interview, or not. The general notion appears to lean toward withholding interview questions to ensure answers are genuine when asked on the day (Aycock et al., 2021) however, it would seem advantageous to provide at least the 'general scope of the interview outline and question themes' (Aycock et al., 2021, p. 10) in advance.

It is believed that, where language is concerned, there is always the assumption that the listener and the speaker understand each other (Yule, 2022) and this assumption is true in general, whether questions are viewed in advance or not. And even if they understand each other, the participant would not be expected to talk with the researcher in a manner that is representative of any normal conversation, for the participant knows he/she is an informant (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004). However, with the interviewer's effort at understanding the participant's answers correctly, the participant may be compelled to confront issues more

extensively than he/she might have ever had to, or had wanted to disclose, before (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004). This illustrates the very different emphasis between interviewer and participant which could dilute the over-all understanding of the research. Hiller and DiLuzio (2004) point out that there is a consensus to mainly 'understand the interview from the point of view of the researcher' (p. 19). And while there could also be topics relating to interlingual difficulties (Squires, 2009), the subject of interpreters, translators, and translations are not examined in detail here.

Randall and Phoenix (2009) note that memory is fallible, attributable to our memory being a 'dynamic amalgam of fact and fictionalisation' (p. 128), and this becomes an important focus when significant events are to be shared (Serry, 2023). While there are many conventional views on not sharing questions ahead of time when conducting interviews, there are instances where sharing questions is encouraged, especially when conducting online surveys. Braun et al. (2020) point out that sensitive issues might be 'ideally suited to sensitive research' (p.644), and by sharing the survey ahead of time would ensure the social comfort of the participant. This is especially pertinent where participants feel uneasy interacting face-to-face with a researcher, feel the need to be anonymous from the outset, or require 'time and space to reflect on earlier responses' (Braun et al., 2020, p.646). This method is described as underutilized as there is a presumption that such surveys, which allow participants to reply by writing answers in their own words in their own time, might not yield rich data, but this is challenged by Braun et al. (2020). Braun et al. (2020) argue that the qualitative online survey is a valid form of collecting rich data affording participants 'control over key aspects of their research participation' (p. 646). In addition, advance sharing of research questions is also recommended when conducting phone interviews where 'intuitive decision making' (Burke & Miller, 2001, p. 3) is involved, this refers to topics which the authors consider to be abstract and where reflection is required.

Previous publications

It is essential to establish how and if previous articles or studies have addressed the subjects of advanced questions, ethics and consent, and how this was described. To this end searches across various databases and search engines revealed methodological discussions of initial interest which are listed below. Not all are listed but those that are, provide the widest scope in published articles excluding online blogs. Those discussions form the cornerstone of the ongoing discussion into this subject and even though there are few, and they are scattered and wander across disciplines, they do however illustrate their own struggles and conclusions.

Search parameter timelines across at the recent 20 years yielded various published articles and only one study. Views and disciplines within many articles overlapped, and most

are mainly written for their specific field of study and very specific discipline. Individually they do offer wider clarity, focus and guidance surrounding their justification, methodology and timing on when and how sharing interview questions with participants is applied. There still remains a gap which sees all practises and results drawn together from across two decades to present a stronger, more cohesive platform of understanding and discussion for any researcher.

Van der Maren (2010) is specific in discussing the advantages and disadvantages of advanced interview questions as a sole subject. Hunt, Chan and Mehta (2011) describe the transition from professional clinician to qualitative researcher and the issues that could arise from prior knowledge as a professional. Their paper describes the difficulties and specificity of clinical research, and the challenges interviews can bring. The complications when conducting internet-based data collection is described by Kazmer and Xie (2008), who list several different media methods when collecting qualitative data in their conclusion. Rubin and Rubin (2005) are addressing answers to qualitative interviewing, discussing philosophical aspects of constructivism and positivism, whereas Robinson, Barron, and Pottinger (2021) advocating for the benefits of open interviews and provide a methodological foundation advocating its usage. Szulc (2022) wrote her article emphasizing the importance of minority groups and in her case, this related to those that have a 'lesser voice or power' (p.179), while Finn et al. (2023) discussed autistic candidates in interview situations. The article by Haukås and Tishakov (2024) is relevant as it deals directly with advanced interview questions but is very specific and tailored to applied linguistics. While the study by Day and Carroll (2003) was the only empirical study found to be relevant and dealing with advanced questions for participants head-on. It illustrated that advanced knowledge of interview questions did not diminish research authenticity and provided a fairer level playing field for participants.

Methods

This paper investigates the practical knowledge gap relating to the impact of sharing interview questions with participants in advance. The way this paper presents its structure is by way of a narrative literature review. Bryman (2016) illustrates that a narrative review investigates literature and research already published and involves a 'comprehensive assessment and critical interpretation of the literature' (p.91). This serves to underline what is already known about this subject as the review is contextual and offers a foundation for determining the impact of this research (Bryman, 2016). The narrative review is well placed as various methods and subjects were evaluated during this research, dealing with the diversity of the subject of advanced questions, and therefore requires a 'more interpretative and discursive synthesis of existing literature' (Bui & Deakin, 2021, p.3). As such, the

narrative literature review supports this research, and it plays a pivotal role in the realm of science for narrowing the gap in understanding (Baumeister & Leary, 1997).

Bryman (2016) illustrates that the narrative literature review (NR) is a method for reviewing literature with a critical eye, even though it is observed as being less focussed when compared to a systematic review (SR). The narrative review is broader in scope when compared to the systematic review, and this lack of focus may invite a certain bias relating to the 'subjectivity in study selection' (Ferrari, 2015, p.231), which is one of its main limitations. However, both NR and SR could suffer biases due to having been written with hindsight (Ferrari, 2015).

The study begins with an overview of previously available work (Green et al., 2006), then moves onto the literature that looks at exploring the practical knowledge gap. 31 articles were found to be relevant and selected, which offered a wider and deeper understanding of presenting advanced interview questions and associated ethical questions when conducting qualitative research. The findings, conclusions and insights boost the existing gap for researchers.

Even though only secondary data was included within this article and no primary research was conducted, Snyder (2019) refers to the importance of literature reviews being representative as the 'grounds for future research and theory' (p. 339). However, it remains the reader who is the ultimate decision maker when assessing the assembled texts provided for this argument, and not the researcher (Polkinghorne, 2007).

Literature searches

The literature searches are guided by two questions: sharing interview questions with participants in advance and when to share interview questions with participants? This allows for searches across internet's various search engines (Ferrari, 2015). Searching and filtering was conducted across science research databases like SCOPUS, ScienceDirect, Web of Science, PubMed, JSTOR, ERIC, DOAJ, as well as Google Scholar. Articles, journal entries, books, reports, blogs and reviews were excluded if they contained information that did not specifically relate to the questions of allowing sight of questions in advance or target the keywords qualitative interviewing; advanced interview questions; inclusive research; research ethics; informed consent. Additional appropriate search words were used, in combination with the keywords, to elicit specific articles as 'databases usually search through title, abstract and key words of the articles indexed' (Green et al., 2006, p.109).

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Where articles were selected and found to be relevant initially, specific keywords allowed additional insight into establishing the relevance of the article for this discussion.

Original articles always were preferred over other reviews on the same or similar subject (Ferrari, 2015). The literature found to be relevant by the author within this article, then varied between describing interview questions and its position within the interview, and writings where it was specifically mentioned that interviews were handed out beforehand to participants. No geographical limits were applied during the search.

There is also a limitation placed on some accounts within the chosen literature relating to advanced interview questions where they were mentioned. This relates to some of the literature that did not make their findings the sole focus of their study, even though they passed the inclusion criteria due to their reflectional thoughts and discussions on the subject (Bui & Deakin, 2021).

Care was taken to ensure literature and studies opposing advanced questions were included within the research framework reducing confirmation bias (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). This also helps to ensure that the selection criteria is not viewed as bias or being seen as having 'more rigorous methodological standards to the contrary evidence' (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, p.319).

Assessments of literature

The chosen articles were weighed up for their robustness (Snyder, 2019) before they were included for consideration. This robustness criteria had to include descriptive methods of interview techniques by allowing interview questions to be seen by, or shared with, participants in advance, coupled with elements, or explanations, which explained their reasoning when using this method. Additionally, key evaluation concepts in the assessment process looked at key results of the article(s), the conclusion and interpretation of the results, its limitations as well as the general impact (Ferrari, 2015).

It was important to note that the overriding interest remains in the participant and his or her opinion and/or views (Bryman, 2016), and this had to be obvious within every article. As such, conclusions had to establish whether such opinions or views would be influenced or manipulated by advanced knowledge or not. The epistemological approach of trying to unearth which option might be considered a better selection for research, involving semi-structured interviews, is the main discussion this paper tries to address, rather than define. Epistemology is defined as a 'theory of knowledge' (Bryman, 2016, p. 690), with a narrative literature review having its focus mainly on the selected topics and the already present understanding of said topics, leading to an examination, or analysis, of the subject (Snyder, 2019).

Diverging perspectives on prepared participants

Deciding whether sharing interview questions or not depends on the type of research that is being conducted, and the main purpose is looking at whether prepared interview questions make for better or worse interviews essentially.

First and foremost, any qualitative researcher who wishes to interview and gain knowledge about a specific subject matter needs a participant, or informant. This means that already, as argued by Haukås and Tishakov (2024), the participant is in fact the most paramount segment of the research process. This illustrates that only the participant can decide on the quality of the facts they bring to a research interview as being either 'complete or fragmented, censored or transparent' (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024, p. 58).

The authors further argue that sharing interview questions in advance could 'better the quality of the responses' (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024, p. 64). Van der Maren (2010) points out that it is only the participant who decides if any answers are the truth, part truths or 'more or less valid' ('plus ou moins valide', Google Translate trans., Van der Maren, 2010, p.131) in relation to interview questions. Any participant would like to feel ready as it is better to have prepared participants, than participants who 'invent bedtime stories so as to not lose face' ('inventent des contes à dormir debout pour ne pas perdre la face', Google Translate trans., Van der Maren, 2010, p. 132) when faced with questions they don't know the answer to. Further research demonstrates that interview questions might like to be shared with participants in advance of interviews assisting with 'recall and prepare specific examples and stories to share' (Serry, 2023, p. 62) during the interview process, instead of 'asking them on the spot' (Serry, 2023, p. 62) thereby applying undue pressure. The additional time to be able to prepare for an interview also permits participants to examine and reflect on their own beliefs in much greater detail, resulting in clearer and more subtle answers to questions (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024). Robinson et al. (2021) illustrate that complete clarity is called for, and by withholding questions, participants could be 'tricked' (p. 8) into answering in a way that could possibly misrepresent their organisation or compromise their professional integrity.

Another interpretation that deserves reflection, is the difference between public and private accounts. Cornwell (1984) found that when the relationship between interviewer and interviewee, or researcher and participant, was new and not yet formed, there was a likelihood that answers would represent a more acceptable public account, which she termed 'partial and selective' (p. 205). Cornwell (1984) also found that when rapport and a connection are established between the participant and the interviewer, it is far more likely that the response will be more of a private one, allowing deeper insight with personal viewpoints. So, it could be arguable that providing advanced notice of questions might at

least provide some possibility of a connection with the participant on the day, allowing for richer answers, rather than entirely surprising them and ensuring that this possibility is not present. The truth about which account is presented on the day remains unmeasurable, but there could be a combination of separate accounts as well as a merging of both private/public accounts.

A connection can also be built when there is relatedness during the interview, allowing for the development of questions as connections grow (Walton et al., 2022). Walton et al. (2022) illustrate in their findings that 'cultural connections' (p. 7) as well as 'similar social identities' (p. 7) assist in building rapport between participant and interviewer. This sentiment of similar identities has also been addressed by Devotta et al. (2016) with their insight into 'peer-interviewers' (p. 661) when conducting qualitative research specific to insider knowledge. The paper by Dempsey et al. (2016) speaks of careful interview preparation when dealing with family carers who provided 'end-of-life care for individuals with end-stage dementia' (p.480). This topic deals with traumatising events discussing preparations to mitigate harm by considering the vulnerability of the participant. Dempsey et al. (2016) suggest within their study that fairness and equality could be established by sharing personal experiences between the researcher and the participant, which would 'ensure that the researcher-participant relationship is non-hierarchical' (p.485). However, it must be acknowledged that sharing personal events, might place the researcher in a vulnerable position which is an ethical consideration (Dempsey et al., 2016). Furthermore, care must be taken that between being in a position of power to conduct interviews, and gathering sensitive personal data, that this does not lead to the exploitation of participants (Dempsey et al., 2016).

Knowing questions in advance might also invite 'social desirability bias' (Bryman, 2016, p. 217) as well as the possibility of bias in general (Bell & Waters, 2018) whereby the cross-over might relate to knowing the questions rather than building any connection with the interviewer through the questions.

It should also like to be considered that any advance disclosure of interview questions could trigger an adverse effect leading to 'overthinking the questions' (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024, p. 63) thereby generating worry and unease, which might adversely affect their decision to participate. It is also questionable whether preparing with interview questions might hinder spontaneity. Van der Maren (2010) lists objections on spontaneity by questioning whether spontaneous answers are either those which allow for free associations, or those where creativity and limitless improvisation direct misunderstood questions.

In a separate category of interviewing, where interviewing requires scoring results (such as employment and hiring), it has been noted that advanced knowledge might appear

to 'inflate interview scores' (Day & Carroll, 2003, p. 44), but it is unknown as to whether this advantage would 'improve their interview performance' (p. 31) gaining any benefit over those that did not receive the questions beforehand. In general, it is thought that participants should be able to bring their 'best selves' (Shalka, 2022, p. 7) to any interview, allowing for the reduction of stress with some advance preparation (Roberts 2020). Shalka (2022) refers to withholding interview questions as "'gotcha' approaches' (p. 7). Shah and Fife (2023) report on the same category that a participant is quoted as saying, 'I love it when they share interview questions in advance. Frankly, it's an accessibility issue because not all candidates will be able to process information immediately' (p. 57).

Ethical considerations for sharing interview questions

Additional consideration might also like to be given to participant's prior detailed knowledge of the research, allowing contributors the choice of taking part more willingly (Clark, 2010; Negrin et al., 2022). This could refer to being more transparent when obtaining consent, which touches on the subject of ethics. Miller and Bell (2012) illustrate that obtaining consent can be a rather difficult task when not all the facts surrounding the research are known, making it unclear 'what the participant is consenting to and where 'participation' begins and ends' (p. 2). Warren (2001) points out that the participants' understanding of 'the intent of the research' (p. 89) might not align with the understanding the researcher has and as such, this misconception can create confusion, even though a consent explanation and a participant information sheet is provided. Therefore, by affording advanced questions and providing more than the usual 'general information letter about the aims of a particular study and a description of participants' rights' (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024, p. 66), far more accurate and honest consent can be provided by the participant while also reducing 'potential harm' (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024, p. 57). Interestingly, Nunkoosing (2005) notes that consent is only partial initially, and at the beginning can only refer to the participation of an interview, and therefore, necessitates the disclosure of the interview transcript to complete the full consent of the interview. Nunkoosing (2005) points out that what is said in an interview might not be 'under the immediate control of the speaker' (p. 703).

While Day and Carroll (2003) point toward the subject of being fairer when providing prior knowledge of research questions, Chaudhary et al. (2022) draw references from their research with transgender and gender diverse (TGD) people and conclude that they would 'feel safer and more comfortable' (p. 2) with prior knowledge. Szulc (2022) highlights the need to provide advance interview questions to reduce any potential stressors when dealing with participants who have neurodivergent conditions. Developing this further, this might also be advantageous in the recruitment process of participants.

Results and Discussion

There are literature reviews and one article in support of advanced notice of interview questions (Burke and Miller, 2001; Chaudhary et al., 2022; Day and Carroll, 2003; Haukås and Tishakov, 2024; Miller and Bell, 2012; Roberts, 2020; Robinson, Barron, and Pottinger, 2021; Shalka, 2022; Szulc, 2022; Van der Maren, 2010), while Aycok et al. (2021) advocate that questions should not be shared in advance. It is also noteworthy to consider that there could be disadvantages when sharing questions beforehand, ethical and biases, and that those might require further investigations. It would therefore appear that many traditional views, those of not sharing questions with participants, remain unsubstantiated and appear to be based on private or subjective opinions and beliefs. The research conducted by Day and Carroll (2003) is unique in that aspect as it actively sought to investigate advanced interview question knowledge and its impact on scores and results, over those that did not have prior knowledge of interview questions, and more work in that category would still be recommended.

Having regard to the above and the limited published research, coupled with the lack of definitive results afterwards supporting either way of thinking, Patton (2015) puts it very relevantly in that 'Any given design inevitably reflects imperfect interplay' (p. 21). There are benefits to both sides, as there are negatives on both sides. One is not clearer than another, apart from the certainty that questions, not only themes, should be shared in advance when timelines or specific life events are to be recalled, including phone interviews. If there is an organisational, or policy, requirement that necessitates the provision of questions in advance, then this too should be documented in the preparatory stage of the research. Overall, Haukås and Tishakov (2024) illustrate that there is a lack of clarity concerning such methodological approaches when documenting advanced knowledge of questions, and this extends to ethical considerations. Such concerns, when addressed, ensure that the quality of the study is improved (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024). Furthermore, additional consideration must also be given to the feelings of anxiety between interviewer and participant, with or without prior knowledge, which might be attributable to the topic itself, or relate to the chosen interview medium (Kazmer & Xie, 2008).

It is impossible to ascertain the knowledge of each participant ahead of time, with or without preparation, with or without questions. Additionally, the 'credibility of a qualitative research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher' (Golafshani, 2003, p.600) and must therefore include participants. By sharing interview questions in advance, it is advocated that interview participation can be enriched and the 'participants' rights and benefits strengthened' (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024, p. 65). Furthermore, Day and Carroll

(2003) found that any advanced knowledge of research questions 'did not decrease the interviews' validity' (p. 44) as the participants considered this process to be a fairer method. While there is still the consensus that providing questions in advance provides perfect answers and presentations, it cannot be proved that interview performance is enhanced (Haukås & Tishakov, 2024; Day & Carroll, 2003).

Conclusion

All in all, it is favourably submitted that participants be allowed to see interview questions before an interview. Based on the restricted findings and limited empirical evidence, and on balance, it would seem an important step for any researcher to consider whether presenting research questions ahead of time to participants is in the interest of their research. While there is some literature out there that provides, describes and justifies evidence on presenting interview questions on the day is good, better or even necessary, comparably, far more literature is found which reflects on, and explains, the benefits of prior presentation.

Combining all accounts allows for a more rounded and justifiable methodological approach assisting with guidance, description and showing justification. This is especially pertinent when personal feelings and life events are to be recounted and investigated, or where minorities are included. This is also true when conducting sensitive online surveys. By allowing sight of questions beforehand ensures that more complete, transparent, and honest consent from any participant taking part in a research study is obtained (Haukås & Tishakov 2024). Additionally, the possibility of seeing questions before any interview, empowers a fairer involvement (Day & Carroll 2003) allowing for reduced stressors, especially if participants have specific requirements (Szulc 2022), and where time constraints are involved.

However, simply because there is more literature in support of advanced interview questions and only some against, does not imply that it is better or more beneficial. It might also be viewed that, due to insufficient literature standing against allowing sight of advanced questions, conclusions are not bias-free.

Having regard to these views, it is suggested that further explorative empirical research be conducted to increase the interest in ethics and observe the advantages on data collection for future researchers. The data should include practical guidelines, examples, and suggestions of the pros, and cons, for allowing participants sight of questions in advance.

Further Scope and Limitations

The unresolved issue of not knowing what really transpires when questions are allowed to be viewed by participants ahead of interviews, should lead to adjustments of

practises when conducting qualitative interviews. There are real positive benefits for allowing questions to be seen beforehand, an option supported by many participants, which are not taken full advantage of. Methods could be altered to accommodate greater qualitative rigour allowing for more transparency, scrutiny and clarity and this would on balance, create a more secure environment. It would lead to the gathering of richer and more complete data results when conducting interviews and is especially true when seeking and presenting informed consent from participants. Baumeister and Leary (1997) remind us that to simply stop at the present with the current literature to hand, without pointing out 'unresolved issues and questions' (p.320) by way of looking ahead, might be seen as erroneous.

Furthermore, when looking at timing around when advanced interview questions should be seen or presented, it is evident that there are no guidelines listed that might yield clarification or clues on better or less robust data. Should timings be 24 hours or 48 hours in advance or maybe even one or two weeks beforehand. It might also like to be given weight in the research methodological stage to provide some insight on the choice of timing and why.

It is accepted that the conclusion of allowing sight of questions in advance might be viewed critically or even rejected. Indeed, results and experiences are short of broader evidence. In addition, there is ongoing disagreement concerning the criteria for validity and other quality-related concepts in qualitative research (Kuzmanić, 2009). This continuing conflict could be preventing the broader acceptance of sharing research questions in advance as well. However, the limited evidence available is both very persuasive and highly compelling, driving a robust hypothesis in support of change going forward. It is therefore suggested that these criteria might like to be documented in the methodological stage of any future research for clearer insight into the author's thinking as well as ensuring that participant contribution is achieved justly. Simply put, the practical knowledge gap could be bridged by prioritizing actual quality over the worry of acceptance in mainstream science (Kuzmanić, 2009).

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Author Background

Kai Maurer is a PhD research student at the University of Kent. His research deals with the subject of safeguarding children by examining how online harm is understood by multi-agency safeguarding professionals. His PhD research journey is with the University of

Kent's Centre of Child Protection (CCP), which is part of the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR), embedded in the division for the study of Law, Society and Social Justice (LSSJ).

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