

The Ninth Annual  
**Qualitative Research Symposium**  
**2025**

**TRANSPARENCY, OPENNESS AND RIGOUR**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 -  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**Book of Abstracts and Schedule**

Centre for  
**Qualitative Research**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

## QRS 2025 PROGRAMME

### Day 1- Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January

	<b>10 East 0.17 (Transparency)</b>	<b>10 East 0.13 (Openness)</b>	<b>10 East 0.18 (Rigour)</b>
<b>09:00-10:30</b>	<b>Registration and Help Desk Open</b> 10 East Reception <b>Tea &amp; Coffee Served</b> 10 East Pavillion		
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	QRS 2025 Opening and Introduction		
<b>11:15-12:15</b>	<b>Session 1A</b> <b>Open Research Infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tamarinde Haven</li> <li>• Jenni Adams</li> <li>• Xavier Salet</li> </ul>	<b>Session 1B</b> <b>Involving Participants in Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aimee Grant</li> <li>• Gabriela Gore-Gorszewska</li> <li>• Faith Martin</li> <li>• Theresa Taylor</li> </ul>	<b>Session 1C</b> <b>Creative Approaches to Qualitative Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lucy Barker</li> <li>• Josie Scammell</li> <li>• Sarah Bloomfield &amp; Evelyn Mooney</li> <li>• Amélie Doche</li> </ul>
<b>12:20-13:00</b>	<b>Session 2A:</b> <b>Lightning Talks 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiona Clarke</li> <li>• Elizabeth Kaplunov</li> <li>• Laura Hodgetts</li> <li>• Kerrie Howard</li> </ul>	<b>Session 2B:</b> <b>Reflexivity in Qualitative Methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will Mason</li> <li>• Nai Lang</li> </ul>	

<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b> 10 East Pavillion		
<b>14:00-15:15</b>	<b>Keynote Lecture 1:</b> Dr. Madeleine Pownall Rigour with Vigour: Redefining Open Science for Qualitative Research		
<b>15:30-16:30</b>	<b>Session 3A:</b> Critical Discussion on Open Research: • Nicki Lisa Cole • Tomi Koljonen & Leighann Spencer • Simon Brownhill	<b>Session 3B:</b> Working with organisations: • Natalie Rothwell-Warn • Jennie Golding • Ceri Morgan	<b>Session 3C:</b> Considering the place of AI in Qualitative Methods: • Steve Powell • Reka Jablonkai
<b>16:30-16:45</b>	<b>Tea and Coffee Served</b> 10 East Pavillion		
<b>16:45-18:00</b>		<b>Qualitative Research Clinics (for ECRs and PhD Students)</b>	<b>Qualitative research and Artificial Intelligence Workshop delivered by Causal Map</b>
<b>19:00</b>	<b>QRS Dinner at The Architect (Bath city centre)</b> (Optional: Meet at 18.15 in the School of Management reception to take the bus into town with other attendees)		

## Day 2- Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January

	<b>10 East 0.17 (Transparency)</b>	<b>10 East 0.13 (Openness)</b>	<b>10 East 0.18 (Rigour)</b>
<b>08:30-09:30</b>	<b>Registration and Help Desk Open at 10 East Reception</b>		
<b>09:30-10:45</b>	<b>Session 4A</b> <b>Experiences of Open Research Advocacy and Practice:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jazmine Parrot</li> <li>• Sam Finnerty</li> <li>• Annayah Prosser</li> </ul>	<b>Session 4B</b> <b>Rethinking Rigour in Qualitative Methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elane Bastos</li> <li>• Anastasia Sergeeva</li> <li>• Adira Daniel</li> </ul>	<b>Session 4C</b> <b>Considering openness by and for different participant groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Fletcher</li> <li>• Chloe Storer</li> <li>• Eira Patterson</li> </ul>
<b>10:45-11:00</b>	<b>Tea and Coffee Served</b> 10 East Pavillion		
<b>11:00-12:15</b>	<b>Keynote Lecture 2</b> <b>Prof. Sarah Neal</b> <b>From timelines to poets: maximising data diversity and innovating data interaction</b>		

**QRS 2025: Transparency, Openness and Rigour**  
 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025, University of Bath  
 Schedule and Book of Abstracts

<b>12:20-13:00</b>		<b>Session 5A</b>	<b>Session 5B</b>
		<b>Lightning Talks 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hashil Al Saadi</li> <li>• Evangeline Gowie</li> <li>• Sarah Bloomfield</li> </ul>	<b>Lightning Talks 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chloe Moody</li> <li>• Gemma Mason</li> <li>• Lu Chen</li> </ul>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b> 10 East Pavillion		
<b>14:00-15:15</b>	<b>Session 6A:</b>	<b>Session 6B:</b>	
	<b>Thinking Differently About Recruitment and Analysis in Qualitative Research to Improve Openness, Transparency, &amp; Qualitative Rigour</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tisha Dasgupta</li> <li>• Elana Payne</li> <li>• Juliette Ttofa</li> <li>• Sergio Silverio</li> </ul>	<b>Dilemmas in Development: Navigating transparency, rigour and openness in resource-poor contexts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vibhor Mathur</li> <li>• Clare Hawkes</li> </ul>	
<b>15:20-15:45</b>	<b>Closing Plenary</b>		

## **THE BRYAN C CLIFT KEYNOTE LECTURES**

**The Bryan C Clift Keynote Lectures** were so named to recognize and honour Dr Clift. He was employed at University of Bath from 2014 – 2023. Dr Clift has a passion for qualitative research and collaborating across disciplines. Since arriving at Bath in 2014, Dr Clift worked to provide the space and opportunities for researchers of all levels within the University of Bath and well beyond to connect. He, alongside Professor Julie Gore, were the two founding Directors of the Centre for Qualitative Research (CQR) in 2019. In January 2024, Dr Clift took up a new post at North Carolina State University, USA. He still contributes regularly to the CQR as an international affiliate, and as an honorary Senior Lecturer in the Department for Health at University of Bath. Traditionally, the Keynote Lectures for the QRS is held for invited speakers whose work contributes directly to the theme of the Symposium of a given year.

### **Tuesday's Keynote Speaker**



#### **Dr. Madeleine Pownall**

**Associate Professor  
Leeds University  
School of Psychology**

#### **Rigour with Vigour: Redefining Open Science for Qualitative Research**

Open science has emerged as a transformative movement aimed at increasing transparency, accessibility, and reproducibility in research. Its tools and practices — such as pre-registration, open data, and open peer review — have become integral to conversations about robust methodologies. However, these practices often reflect the priorities and epistemological assumptions of quantitative research. In this talk, I will examine whether open science is indeed truly open to all, questioning its applicability to qualitative approaches and cautioning about the impact of imposing quantitative standards on qualitative inquiry. I will consider how open science frameworks can unintentionally marginalise qualitative research by prioritising inappropriate standards, such as reproducibility, over other forms of rigour, such as contextual validity, reflexivity, and ethical responsiveness. I will also discuss how we might rethink and adapt open science tools to align with the unique strengths of qualitative research, ensuring they enhance rather than constrain its practices. Through a critical exploration of these themes, I will propose pathways for integrating qualitative perspectives into open science without sacrificing the complexity, flexibility, and depth that define qualitative inquiry.

## Wednesday's Keynote Speaker

**Professor Sarah Neal**  
**Sheffield University**  
**Department of Sociological Studies**



### **From timelines to poets: maximising data diversity and innovating data interaction**

What is the relationship between rigour and qualitative research? A response to this question might involve a return to Guba and Lincoln's (1988) four criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. It might also involve a response that reflects on the complex social contexts of qualitative investigation and seeks to incorporate these complexities into the research process. From this perspective, the challenge is to find ways of suturing a more expansive principle of rigour into the *design* and the *doing processes* of qualitative work in order to maximise the diversity of datasets and develop imaginative forms of data interaction.

As Urry and Law (2003) observe, traditional social science methods are ill equipped to respond to the multiple social realities of 21<sup>st</sup> century worlds and remind us that 'what is known depends on perspective' (2003: 6). Viewing rigour through this optic and through facet methodology's emphasis on 'artful research' (Mason 2011) the paper argues first, for what might be called qualitative methods assemblages, empirical design that is committed to providing a variety vantage points through which to access the relational, multi-dimensionalities of contemporary social life. And second, for building on participatory approaches to collective and democratic data interaction and re/interpretation through creative engagements with qualitative datasets that emerge from complex social worlds.

Drawing on the experience of two research projects, **Just Turn Up: Informal Sport and Social Participation in the Superdiverse City** (ESRC) and **Living Brexit in Rural Britain** (The Leverhulme Trust), the presentation will situate these arguments in two distinct moments in the qualitative process in each project. The first moment considers the dynamics of data interaction on the JTU project and discusses the ways in which the research team worked with two poets 'in residence' on the project as a strategy to open up data about everyday urban leisure practices to novel forms of interaction and creative re/interpretation. The second moment focuses on the Living Brexit project's efforts to design in effective, pluralist strategies of 'being there', engaging interlocutors and listening well. It will focus specifically on the experience of generating data diversity in combining group-based interviews with individual biographic-place timelines as inventive routes for discussing the politically sensitive themes of Brexit, migration and social change in rural places.

## TALK ABSTRACTS

(Organised Chronologically by Session)

### Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January- 11:15-12:15

#### Session 1A: Open Research Infrastructure

##### **1- Preregistering Qualitative Research: Status Quo**

Tamarinde Haven, Assistant Professor, Tilburg University

Preregistration involves putting a study design and analysis plan in an open repository, which can boost transparency. Originally designed to combat irreproducibility in quantitative research, preregistration might also promote openness, transparency and rigour in qualitative research. Some authors may object to the idea of preregistering qualitative research. I used a Delphi study design with a team of qualitative scholars to construct a preregistration template for qualitative research. The form is available as a registration option on the Open Science Framework (osf.io). The form has been used over 1500 times. In my talk, I will explain the relevance of qualitative preregistration, elaborate on how the form was designed, and take stock of how it has been used since. I will dwell on the need to engage in rigorous preregistration and the inherent challenges of being fully transparent for iterative qualitative research.

##### **2- Beyond Open Science: Fostering dialogue about openness across methodological differences through Library-led initiatives**

Dr Jenni Adams, Open Research Manager, University of Sheffield

This paper explores the role academic libraries can play in surfacing open qualitative research practices and creating space for dialogue about the meanings and parameters of openness in different methodological contexts. Until the discourse of open research becomes one that is habitually rather than only exceptionally inclusive of all methodological perspectives, centrally-led initiatives at the level of institution, funder, REF or beyond can only fail to engage research communities at large in conversations about openness. A framework of openness tailored to confirmatory, quantitative research lacks the ability to register practices and approaches which lie outside these practices' epistemic norms. This can lead not only to a failure to engage with those conducting qualitative and interpretive research, but potentially also to the devaluation of this work, especially in the context of initiatives to develop open research metrics. This paper explores a current project linked to the University of Sheffield's appointment of Open Research Champions across all faculties. Employed by the University Library, four PGR Open Research Project officers will work with the Champions to develop and document events and activities within and across research areas and methodologies, with a particular focus on what openness means, and how it is embodied at a practical level, in contexts and methodologies outside the dominant perspective of 'open science'. In this way, we aim to build on previous work (case study development, data stewardship work with qualitative researchers, cross-disciplinary Open Research Conversations) to engage qualitative researchers in the shaping of institutional understanding/s of open research.



### **3- Investigating reporting practices among researchers who archived their data at UK Data Service**

Xavier Salet, John Gelissen, Guy Moors & Jelte Wicherts. Tilburg University.

This abstract describes research that we are currently undertaking into qualitative datasets that were archived from 2021 onwards at UK Data service. Here, we are collecting qualitative datasets that have unrestricted access, with the following research question in mind: How do researchers secure the traceability of their data claims in research publications based on openly available qualitative datasets? As data archiving in itself is still a rare practice in qualitative research, publications with openly accessible primary qualitative data form a unique category. By examining these pioneering works, we offer insights into how qualitative researchers can link their research practices more readily to their primary data. This is not only relevant considering current calls for more transparency, but can aid primary researchers in making their argumentation more accessible and secondary researchers in understanding how they can expand insights into the data. In our presentation, we will focus on early insights from our project. We will also provide a historical overview of past projects that examined qualitative knowledge claims, and how this informed our decisions in developing our protocol. As our project carries the risk of exposing researchers for past practices, we will only show fictional examples that represent practices that we find. We think it is unfair to single out researchers who have taken it upon themselves to open their work for scrutiny, and whose reporting practices emerge in a complex interplay of research hierarchies, editorial demands, and writing traditions.

## **Session 1B: Involving Participants in Data Sharing and Analysis**

### **1- How the community allowed us to say no to funder data sharing requirements: early thoughts on ethical sharing of longitudinal qualitative data from the Autism from Menstruation to Menopause study**

Presenter: Aimee Grant, Senior Lecturer in Public Health and Wellcome Trust Career Development Fellow, Swansea University.

Authors: Aimee Grant, Rebecca Ellis, Harriet Axbey, Krysia Waldock, Ami Nisa, Kathryn Williams, Madeleine Sinfield, Ellen Firth, Willow Holloway, Monique Craine, Selena Caemawr, Hazel Lim, Christina Nicolaidis, Helen Kara, Amy Brown

Being Autistic is often misunderstood and can be highly stigmatised. "Autism from Menstruation to Menopause" is a longitudinal qualitative study, which aims to interview 100 Autistic people Assigned Female At Birth up to 10 times each over a five-year period. We believe it will generate the largest qualitative data set on the lives of Autistic adults ever. It is funded by the Wellcome Trust who require data sharing as standard. The Autistic community were involved in the development of the grant application and, through a community council, they co-govern the study. Together, the academic and lay researchers have challenged automatic data sharing, allowing all participants the opportunity to be part of the project without it. The first wave of data collection is ongoing with 81 participants recruited so far; 44 participants refused and 37 opted in to data sharing. During wave 2 (54 interviews to date) and all subsequent waves, all participants who opted in to data sharing will be asked to confirm their consent. Most (36) have confirmed their decision, and have also reviewed the demographic details that they would like shared with their transcripts, with one choosing to remove

some details shared with our study. We believe a more nuanced approach to data sharing of qualitative research is essential. This is particularly relevant in studies: with a longitudinal component, where participants may be at risk of being identified from their transcripts, where data are particularly sensitive or could be used for purposes considered unethical to the original researchers.

## **2- ‘I’m telling you my story, not publishing a blog’: Considerations on data sharing in qualitative health psychology research on sensitive topics..**

Gabriela Gore-Gorszewska, Postdoc, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, PL

Qualitative research plays a pivotal role in health psychology, offering insights into the intricacies of health-related issues. Due to its inherent specificity, qualitative research challenges the applicability of standard open science postulates, data sharing (DS) in particular. Beyond the guiding principle that data should be ‘as open as possible, as closed as necessary’, the existing resources to address these issues are limited. This talk aims at enriching the ongoing debate by leveraging my research experience in conducting in-depth interviews with 70 middle-aged and older adults (ranging from 50 to 82 years old) regarding their sexual lives and history, conducted as part of two research projects. I will address various challenges in implementing DS requirements, stemming from the responses and reservations expressed by my participants, as well as from my own considerations in my dual role as both interviewer and researcher. I will discuss aspects such as investigating vulnerable populations, hesitancy to share data among specific groups, working with research participants new to the process, conducting comprehensive interviews yielding rich personal information, as well as grappling with issues related to informed consent and ethical dilemmas surrounding potential data misuse, both within and outside academic circles. A universal approach to data sharing in qualitative research proves impractical, emphasising the necessity for adaptable, context-specific guidelines that acknowledge the methodology's nuances. The anticipated risks associated with opening data should be thoughtfully balanced against potential benefits, while accounting for prospective participants' concerns and ethical judgement of the researcher.

## **3- Navigating Transparency, Rigour, and Openness in Qualitative Research on Self-Harm in Rwanda: A Reflexive Account**

Dr Faith Martin, Senior Lecturer, Dept of Psychology, University of Bath

Joseph Kalisa, Faith Cheonga, Belise Isingizwe, Yves Gashugi, Evangeline Ishimwe - project researchers, University of Rwanda  
Shu Yi Ong, Sarah Wicker, students, Cardiff University  
Professor Vincent Seizbera, Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Rwanda

This paper explores adaptations and ethical challenges when address openness, rigour, and transparency in a study exploring perceptions and experiences of young people's self-harm among young people, parents, and healthcare professionals in Rwanda. We focus on issues arising during analysis and validation. Data were collected via interviews, conducted by Rwandan research psychologists. Inductive thematic analysis was conducted by a multi-national team. This process required us to transparently address tensions between local perspectives and dominant Western frameworks, resisting the positional superiority of Western psychological paradigms. Open discussion of these tensions allowed us to prioritise local voices, acknowledging the challenges of integrating diverse epistemologies, and the ethical dilemmas associated with questions of action to address

conceptualisation of spiritual causes for self-harm that young people described as creating harmful stigma. Initial validation sessions revealed power dynamics that limited contributions from parents and young people, as senior professionals dominated discussions. We therefore developed a drama-based approach to share findings separately with these groups. This prioritised inclusivity and challenging the textual biases in traditional validation methods. Challenges of maintaining confidentiality and not distressing participants were addressed. The drama sessions produced valuable insights into the pervasive impact of stigma, the critical role of family support, and striking differences in interpretations between parents and young people, particularly around the causes of self-harm. By integrating creative methods and privileging local epistemologies, we demonstrate how transparency, rigour, and openness can be operationalised through culturally resonant, ethically grounded practices.

#### **4- Involving people with lived experience of psychosis in qualitative data analysis and write up**

Dr Theresa Taylor & Maria João Tralhão Dolan

Within mental health research there is an increased focus on involving people with lived experience of mental health conditions to improve research quality and rigour. However, participation is often limited to the research design, exploring the usefulness of the research question, or to important but subsidiary aspects, such as appropriateness of study materials. In this talk we outline a case example of involving people with lived experience of psychosis in qualitative data analysis and study write up. The qualitative research explored whether people with psychosis experienced a relationship with an app attempting to treat their paranoia and analysis was done via the framework method. Thus people with lived experience were given basic training in qualitative methods and framework analysis as part of their research involvement. This talk will outline a proposed framework for finding, training and involving people with lived experience in qualitative data analysis and write up based on the researchers' experiences in completing this piece of work. The talk will also include reflections from both a clinician and a person with lived experience on how this public engagement impacted the outcomes of the qualitative research, and its rigour. Challenges, pitfalls and areas for improvement will also be explored.

## Session 1C: Creative Approaches to Qualitative Research

### 1- Using collage and found poetry to become a more reflexive researcher.

Dr Lucy Barker, Associate Professor, Northumbria University

Collage and poetic inquiry have become useful tools across disciplines as a form of qualitative inquiry and a form of arts-based research (ABR). I present collage method and poetic transcription (Richardson, 2002) from a recent doctorate study, as a way of reflexivity in research that embraces openness transparency and rigour, as well as participatory and collaborative approach to research. Turnign transcripts into Haiku and Tanka styles of poetry can be a powerful way of troubling and disrupting the data in research, and readers may find that hidden preconceptions are exposed by stripping back the transcripts into poetic stanzas to get to the core or essence of their meaning. Houtt et al. (2020) attests that 'poetic methods can surface voices in different ways' (p.90). Madison (1991, 2004) and Richardson (2002) use poetic transcription to represent participants' speaking styles and worldviews more authentically, as well as allow participant ownership of their stories. The data in my study were further diffractively analysed through other art and literature, to reveal deeper meaning for pre-service teachers on the phenomenon of inclusive practice during classroom placements. My aim as an a/r/tographer, where I position myself as Artist, Researcher, and Teacher was to co-create with the participants through collaging and sketchbooks, to be reflexive and analytical (Springgay, Irwin, and Kind, 2005), was for the readers to feel the embodied experiences of the participants and encounters in the classroom for inclusive practice, so that they would feel with, rather than about them reinforcing openness and transparency in the research process.

### 2- Creative writing as an analytical tool: tensions in transparency and ethical decision making

Josie Scammell, DPhil student, University of Oxford Department of Education

Staring at the data in front of me, I felt frustrated. If I stuck to traditional analytical methods, I would lose the story within the data; the spaces in-between. If I instead told the story, would I lose claims to transparency, to rigour. It felt ethically uncomfortable to omit the spaces in-between, the story cropped; reduced. But using creative writing as an analytical tool didn't feel ethically comfortable either. Where was the transparency; the rigour? Whilst my ethnographic case study used 'traditional' research methods, when it came to analysing findings, a 'traditional' approach didn't quite fit. I instead found storytelling methods to be a useful tool to view, understand and present this narrative. However, I encountered tensions when it came to transparency and rigour, and ethical decision-making within this. There is growing attention on cultivating transparency and rigor within creative research methods, however when it comes to creative analytical methods, existing research leaves many questions unanswered. Existing research suggests enhancing rigour through using systematic procedures, to ensure replicability and transparency. Whilst this may work for traditional methods, there is tension between defining systematic frameworks, and creativity itself; tensions around replicability. In conjunction with reviewing existing guidance on rigor in creative analytical approaches, this paper reflects on my own experiences of exploring transparency and rigour when using creative analytical approaches: questions addressed, and those left unanswered. This paper thus highlights the tensions within this and highlights the necessity of further research and training around creative analytical approaches in general.

### **3- Employing a world-café for research purposes: warts and all**

Presenting: Sarah Bloomfield, Senior Lecturer in Work and Organisational Learning, The Open University & Evelyn Mooney, Regional Education Manager, Ireland, The Open University

Coauthors: Abigail Salter, Kristen Reid, Helen Marshall, Maria Smith

The presentation will provide a 'warts and all' reflection on our experience of running a World Café for data collection purposes. As an approach, the World Café (WC) aims to facilitate development of a set of socially constructed themes emerging through guided dialogue and a 'cross pollination of ideas' (Löhr et al 2020). Although originally intended as a method for facilitating participatory action among diverse groups, the WC methodology has more recently been used as a data collection method within academic research. As such, the WC has similarities with a focus group methodology in capturing and sharing diverse perspectives, but with the additional dimension of allowing for a larger group of participants to simultaneously take part in the discussion (Alfred, 2011). As a cross-functional, cross-functional project team, we chose to use a WC approach within a research project investigating the lived experience of the three-way work-based learning pedagogical approach employed within degree apprenticeships. During the QRS presentation we will talk through some of the challenges we faced setting up, running, and interpreting findings using our WC approach. This included issues around ethics approval, recording data, analysing outputs, and losing control, and issues around actual and perceived qualitative rigour. Alongside the challenges however we will also discuss some of the novel insight that we developed through using the WC method. We will end with a discussion of some ideas we now have about 'how to' do a WC for research purposes.

### **4- Data as Creata, Data as Erotica: Towards an Ethics of Desire in Qualitative Data Analysis**

Amélie Doche, Doctoral Student, Birmingham City University

This paper diffractively examines policies that promote 'transparency' in qualitative research, set against the backdrop of our 'society of evidence' (Han, 2015), which prioritises transparency and clarity – often at the expense of productive ambiguity. Here, I explore the potential of conceptualising data as collectively produced – a process of creata – within an ethics of 'desire' (Lacan, 1997) and 'lovemaking' (Lather, 2013). I illustrate this approach with several types of qualitative data – i.e., social media data, interviews, and observations – drawn from my ongoing doctoral research on discourses of value in contemporary book culture. The structure of this paper is threefold. Firstly, I situate open data within broader cultural practices that value transparency, including the performance of authenticity and vulnerability on platforms like Instagram, the rise of the personal essay and memoir, and the growing reliance on data analytics and algorithm-driven culture. Secondly, I discuss the ethical implications of seeing data as either datum (i.e., something given) or as a 'becoming' that unfolds through the researcher's dialogical engagement with their research topic. Lastly, I draw on Zohar and Marshall's (1995) metaphorical application of 'wave-particle duality' from quantum physics to situate academic rigour not in the particle-like, factual, and replicable 'evidence', but in the 'wave-like' openness to the Other. I conclude by proposing that data – as both creata and erotica – resists ownership by individuals or institutions, highlighting how open-access policies unintentionally limit the transformative possibilities inherent in qualitative research.

## Session Two: 12:20-13:00

### Session 2A: Lightning Talks 1

#### **1- Introducing Teammate Compassion: A qualitative exploration.**

PRESENTING: Fiona J. Clarke - PhD student (School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Birmingham, UK [f.j.clarke@bham.ac.uk](mailto:f.j.clarke@bham.ac.uk))

NOT PRESENTING: Prof Jennifer Cumming - Professor of Sport and Exercise Psychology and Director of the SPRINT Project (School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences and Institute for Mental Health, University of Birmingham, UK [j.cumming@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.cumming@bham.ac.uk)) Prof Jessica Pykett - Professor of Social and Political Geography (School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham, UK [j.pykett@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.pykett@bham.ac.uk)) Dr Shushu Chen - Associate Professor in Sport Policy and Management (School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Birmingham, UK [s.chen.5@bham.ac.uk](mailto:s.chen.5@bham.ac.uk)) Dr Amber Mosewich - Associate Professor (Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, University of Alberta, Canada [mosewich@ualberta.ca](mailto:mosewich@ualberta.ca)).

Abstract This preregistered study (Clarke et al., 2024) introduces the novel concept Teammate Compassion, an interpersonal form of social support among athletes. In female sport, self-compassion has been promoted as an answer to the mental health crisis (Mosewich et al., 2013). Yet significant barriers to self-compassion exist, making the construct partially inaccessible for some (Frentz et al., 2019). The first study aimed to conceptualise teammate compassion by exploring female team sport athletes' opinions and experiences. Semi-structured interviews with ten athletes representing grassroots to semi-professional levels revealed that the construct was intuitive, appealing, and would support mental health and performance by instilling a local culture of encouragement and care. Situating the research within the Open Science Framework positively impacted the rigour, by facilitating transparent discussions with participants. The transparency further strengthened the rigour by allowing for reflective conversation with four undergraduate students and the wider research team. Run as weekly tutorials, discussions with student athletes challenged the lead researcher's assumptions about the topic and identified a need to align the remaining project plans with the evolving knowledge base. Open, reflexive practice therefore led to two main lessons learned: (1) gender polarisation of the research topic is a salient theme that directly influenced the aims of a future study; and (2) the underpinning research philosophy was impacted, marked by a shift towards a pragmatic approach to knowledge co-creation.

#### **2- Culturally responsive teaching practices in an adult education environment**

Dr Elizabeth Kaplunov, Senior Lecturer, Regent College London.

It is well established that motivation affects how a learner acquires and uses new skills (Dweck, 1986). The motivational processes include those based on Self-Determination theory can lead to higher cultural identity of low performing students (Chirkov, Ryan and Willness, 2005). This is relevant to learning as according to Ginsberg and Wlodowski (1995) learning is not culturally neutral. It has been shown in most intervention studies that it is important to reflect on cultural bias as well as tailoring interventions to individual student needs, as well as culturally responsive training for teachers conducted both individually and in groups. The intervention studies mentioned are from school

settings in US and Europe as well as being mostly qualitative. This means that current research may lack rigour and generalisability due to the samples being from US or Europe and in school settings only. Therefore, future studies could be improved by including information from non-Western cultures and other settings (such as university), which would make it possible to generalise the findings to a wider population. This project presents insights of staff as to why they use certain culturally responsive practices in teaching adult students at a university in the UK. The project follows the theme of rigour by expanding the knowledge corpus on the topic to a new group of participants, thus expanding the generalisability. Additionally, this qualitative investigation is based on a quantitative survey findings about cultural practices used by lecturers, meaning that there is a strong evidence base for the qualitative research (as the survey is a validated empirical survey), further increasing the rigour. The approach is very systematic and open and transparent. Also, the idea of discussing the barriers and facilitators with lecturers in terms of their own practice encourages lecturers to reflect in an open way on their teaching skills.

### **3- Who am I within a piece of research and how much of myself do I share? – the difficulty in managing positionality within qualitative research while maintaining a post in the phenomenon of interest.**

Laura J Hodgetts - Teaching Fellow and Undergraduate Lead for Posture, Movement and Handling - Birmingham City University

My PhD thesis explored how Approved Educational Institutions optimise the use and application of the Future Nurse Standards (Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC),2018, NMC, 2023; NMC, 2023a; NMC, 2023b) within pre-registration nursing using an adapted Constructivist Grounded Theory approach (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021; Charmaz,2014). While this selection had many benefits (Charmaz, in Jarvinen et al., 2020; Charmaz and Belgrave,2018) within my study, the ability to manage multiple influences became fraught with challenges – particularly when I was initially planning how to grapple with and manage the ‘shared space’ within semi-structured interviews (Bourke,2014; Mason-Bish,2019; Darwin Holmes,2020). As I deliberately chose not to ‘bracket’ myself as is commonly done within phenomenologically driven research (Bayuo et al., 2023; Olekanma et al., 2022; Hopkins et al., 2017), an alternative method of balancing and maintaining openness while remaining critical of my positionality without lacking authenticity or being seen as an ‘add-on’ needed to be sought. However, as part of that search for balance of inclusion and appraisal of ‘self,’ while continuously immersing myself within the research, several questions emerged from the research process, which included: • How much do I ‘give’ of myself within this research? • What is enough to demonstrate that I have considered my position/influence/bias drawn from my own experience • If people allude to my own experience – how do I negotiate this without appearing leading or changing the nature of an interview due to the ‘Hawthorne Effect’ (Mostafazadeh-Bora; 2020; McCambridge et al.,2014; McCarney et al.,2007)—but in reverse. • If you are interpreting the words of others, how much of the ‘word’ creates that balance between participants feeling listened to and heard within the study so that the openness established between the participants is visible within the study as a whole without detracting from your interpretation?

#### **4- Duo-interviewing**

Kerrie Howard, lecturer, Royal Holloway University of London, U.K.; Norah Mohammad Almubarak, King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia (not presenting) Sarah Bloomfield, senior lecturer, Open University, U.K.

In this paper, we explore the concept of duo- interviewing, or interviewing in pairs, and its potential in strengthening data collection and analysis. Though multiple interviewing, where several researchers work on the same investigation, is widely discussed in literature, little attention has been paid to duo-interviewing, sometimes referred to as co-interviewing. There are two notable exceptions: a study by Redman-Maclaren et al. (2014) in the context of interviews for HIV research in Papua New Guinea, and Velardo & Elliott's (2021) study of doctoral student's wellbeing in an Australian university. The latter of these studies discusses positive considerations such as enhanced focus for researchers, and opportunities for rich theory generation, as well as issues of power and difficulties for interviewees in focusing on two interviewers. Though offering valuable insights these studies are limited by their focus on the experience of a single study. In our study, we will analyse two distinct research projects, both using duo-interviewing as a methodological approach to data collection, to compare different dimensions of this research technique. To conduct our analyses, we will ask: What is the role of each interviewer in the interview? How is the interaction between the interviewers characterised? How does the interviewee respond to each interviewer? And how does the interviewee respond to the interviewers? In doing so, we will reflect on themes such as ontology, epistemology, power, cultural differences, and reflexivity and practice, accounting for the positions of participants and researchers. Our study will offer insights about the value of duo-interviewing to the research process, its rigor and transparency, and consequently practical implications to consider when deciding to adopt this approach.

### **Session 2B: Reflexivity in Qualitative Methods**

#### **1- The ethics of omission: care, rigour, and representation in qualitative research**

Will Mason (University of Sheffield, Senior Lecturer) Steph Scott (Newcastle University, Senior Lecturer) Naomi Griffin (Newcastle University, Research Associate).

The ethics of omission: care, rigour, and representation in qualitative research This paper centres omission - understood as the practice of 'leaving out' - as a routine, but largely untheorized feature of qualitative research. Qualitative studies routinely generate datasets that extend (substantially) beyond the expected parameters of a research proposals and questions. Where a substantial body of work has examined what to include in qualitative data analysis, comparatively little attention has focused on the choices that researchers routinely make about what to omit (leave out) from their studies. In some cases, the omission of data can be an inadvertent consequence of inclusion; including one thing may mean omitting another. In other instances, omission can be a very deliberate act, driven by complex analytical, interpersonal, and ethical priorities. Drawing on our own reflexive accounts of omission, across two empirical projects, this paper draws attention to the complexity and value of a more balanced view on what we leave out, as well as what we include, within qualitative research. This, we argue, is a matter of transparency and rigour. Beyond this, however, we also suggest that more serious attention to omission can advance wider discussions of ethics, reflexivity, and representation in qualitative research.



## **2- Understanding Through Self: An Autoethnographic Exploration of a Female Chinese Researcher's Positionality in Chinese Female Students' Mental Health Narratives**

Nai Lang, PhD Student, University of Bath

This paper explores how a researcher's shared cultural, gender, and educational backgrounds with participants influence qualitative research through reflexive practices and autoethnographic insights. Focusing on the mental health experiences of Chinese female university students, it examines how openness and transparency in reflexivity enhance the interpretation of sensitive narratives. Drawing on autoethnography (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011), the study addresses three questions: (1) What ethical and methodological challenges emerge in balancing researcher neutrality with empathy? (2) How can reflexive practices aid in navigating positionality? (3) What role does autoethnographic reflection play in uncovering layered meanings? The researcher, with a personal history of mental health struggles, uses reflexive tools such as journaling and counseling (Etherington, 2004) to document moments of emotional resonance and explore their impact on data interpretation. The findings highlight how researcher identity and cultural context shape narrative co-construction (Adams, Holman Jones, & Ellis, 2015). By embracing openness about positionality, this paper demonstrates how shared identities can foster deeper connections while addressing ethical complexities in qualitative research. Reflexivity ensures that researcher subjectivity becomes an asset, contributing to rigorous, ethically sensitive insights into mental health experiences within a familiar cultural framework.

### **Session 3A: Critical Discussion on Open Research**

#### **1- Process over Product: How Qualitative Research Traditions Enhance Open Science**

Dr. Nicki Lisa Cole, Senior Researcher, Know Center Research GmbH, Graz, Austria  
(presenter) Dr. Agata Bochynska, Senior Academic Librarian, University of Oslo, Norway.

Flipping Theme 1 on its head, I draw on the results of a review study to explain how Open Science can be enhanced by incorporating established qualitative research practices. We found through a review of literature that discusses reproducibility, replicability and/or Open Science in relation to qualitative research that many authors perceive significant barriers to engaging with Open Science, generally, and data sharing and reuse, specifically. These barriers are ontological, epistemological, and ethical in nature. Yet, while these barriers are well established within the literature, so too is the idea that established practices within qualitative research can enable openness, including data sharing, and some forms of reproducibility, like conceptual or methodological replication. Documentation practices within qualitative research, including the creation of field notes, the use of thick description, and creating process and analytic memos can provide context details and insight into the analytic process that would be necessary for another researcher, or educator, to effectively and ethically reuse qualitative data. The practice of reflexivity, and incorporating it into documentation, can help to balance out the barrier to reuse created by research subjectivity and positionality. The establishment of rapport and trust between researchers and participants can enable active, ongoing informed consent to support ethical data sharing. Our findings indicate that Open Science has much to learn from qualitative research, not just in terms of how Open Science norms and practices can be expanded to include diverse epistemologies, but in how qualitative research traditions can be instructive in opening the research process.

## **2- Towards a genre repertoire understanding of research transparency**

Tomi Koljonen & Leighann Spencer, University of Liverpool Management School

There is broad consensus that transparency is increasingly important in management and organisational research. However, in the context of qualitative research, there are concerns about researchers applying inappropriate transparency criteria or templates in their work. As current writing on research transparency is prescriptive, and often built on the logic of 'doing more transparency' is better. In this article, we sought to understand how qualitative management researchers are actually enacting and communicating transparency practices in their research. To do so, we conducted a comprehensive genre analysis of qualitative research published in six management journals in the last five years, which enabled us to map out 'in-use' practices and outline three genres of writing about research transparency: Shorthand, Diary, and Critique. Based on this framework, we motivate a genre repertoire approach to research transparency which problematises the logic of more is good, and instead highlights awareness and criticality over writing about transparency, as well as appreciating the plurality of qualitative research in evaluating and applying transparency criteria. Our manuscript addresses all of the key themes of the workshop by i) discussing the role of transparency in qualitative research, ii) suggesting (sometimes critically), alternatives to approaching issues of transparency in qualitative work, and iii) takes research transparency as an empirical object of inquiry.

## **3- Translating Transparency: Navigating Openness with Multilingual Participants**

Dr Simon Brownhill, University of Bristol, School of Education, Senior Lecturer in Education (Teaching and Learning). Dr Miguel García López, University of Bristol, Department of Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin American Studies, Senior Lecturer in Hispanic Studies

The demand for qualitative researchers to embrace 'open research practices' has resulted in many questioning "how" these can be embedded at each stage of the research lifecycle (Kapiszewski & Karcher, 2019). This presentation explores "how" we navigated ethical openness in our qualitative research project with multilingual participants. 'Queer Screen Cultures in the 21st Century' sought to increase the visibility and agency of LGBTQIA+ people and minoritized communities in audio-visual media; this was achieved through training and knowledge exchange activities as part of a six-month, externally-funded collaboration with the Observatory for Diversity in Audiovisual Media in Spain. Institutional ethical approval was secured to undertake this research, our written assurances of openness and transparency being informed by Aguinis et al.'s (2024) research transparency index criteria, e.g., research design. Of importance was the submission of our application to the Ethics Committee in English alongside the preparation of materials in Spanish, especially those which were participant-facing. Our presentation explores how we ensured research transparency by embracing a sequential approach to translation: 1. Written – digital/printed documents were translated using a communicative rather than a literal approach to support non-academic participants 'idea-by-idea'. 2. Oral – explanations of/discussions about the written documents and answers to participants' questions were mediated in their language by a native speaker. We argue that this approach positively contributes to the ethical "how" of 'open research practices' for qualitative researchers, facilitating researcher transparency and providing participants, especially those who are multilingual, with a deep and meaningful understanding of the research.

## **Session 3B: Navigating Openness with Organisations**

### **1- Finding routes to openness and transparency in research studies so well-being can improve.**

Natalie Rothwell-Warn, University of West England (UWE)

Finding a way to carry out a different approach to research in secondary schools in England with teachers and their students about their well-being was challenging on many levels. Research into interventions designed to support well-being in schools has found that these are ineffective due to the tension that remains between promoting self-care, for example, and still having to teach and learn in a stressful environment. I, therefore, perceived a need for a research approach which could foster openness and transparency about teachers' and students' experiences of teaching and learning which could help us to understand why well-being was not thriving in schools. The careful design of a methodological approach included structuring conversations between teachers and students so they felt able to consider why their teaching and learning experiences were the way they were. These discussions led to openness and transparency about causal mechanisms, such as the English Baccalaureate and teacher appraisals. These factors triggered detrimental events and encounters between teachers and students and revealed how divisive the teacher-student, student-teacher relationship had become and how this impacted on their respective well-being. Through their openness and transparency, the participants were able to identify how their teaching and learning experiences needed to change so well-being could improve. Both groups shared views for themselves and each other about changes that are needed. These included being shown greater care, concern and respect and being recognised as essential in feeding back the effects and impact of their experiences on their well-being.

### **2- Challenges to openness: the ethics of navigating curriculum implementation research in collaboration with edu-business**

Jennie Golding, Associate professor mathematics education, UCL.

I draw on a large, longitudinal 'classroom-close' study carried out 2016-23 as five linked components that between them drew data from mathematics classrooms of 5-18 year old learners. The focus was the ways in which teachers and learners implement a mathematics curriculum with a renewed focus on mathematical processes that are known to be demanding – mathematical reasoning, problem-solving and communication. Of particular interest was the use teachers and learners made of both curriculum and assessment materials produced by the market leader in such mathematics materials, here conceptualised as an 'edu-business'. The studies drew considerably on the voices of learners (and teachers) within that. Between them, they have supported a range of developments in funder and national policy and practice, and have also led to theoretical developments in the field. Critically, the studies were funded by the edu-business in question. I was employed as an independent researcher, and led a team of five other subject- and phase-expert researchers across the studies, as well as several edu-business internal 'researchers' who functioned as research assistants. In this presentation, I interrogate the ethical challenges around research transparency, openness and trustworthiness both inherent in such arrangements, and those that emerged during the course of the studies in relation to the researcher-edu-business collaboration. I ask in particular: • Do these ethical tensions of the collaboration warrant the impact on learning achieved? • How do such tensions vary with the age/stage of the focus learners?

### **3- What should inpatient psychological therapies be for? Qualitative views of service users on outcomes**

Ceri Morgan (Clinical Psychologist), Pamela Jacobsen & Lucy Clarkson

There is limited research on what, when and how outcomes should be measured in psychological therapy trials in acute mental health inpatient wards. We recognised the importance of transparency and aimed to consider what outcomes service users think are important to measure. Our qualitative study explored the views of 14 participants, who had an inpatient admission within the last year, on outcomes of psychological therapies using semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed using thematic analysis from a critical realist perspective with both inductive and deductive coding. The 126 outcomes that were important to participants were mapped onto an established taxonomy of outcomes across different health areas and the socioecological framework to consider the wider context and help summarise the outcomes. Most outcomes were mapped to the intrapersonal and interpersonal level. In addition to the outcome mapping, three themes were constructed from the qualitative data: (1) I am not a problem I am a person, (2) Feeling cared for and loved, (3) What does getting better look like. Our results highlight the need for patient-reported outcomes which are cocreated with service users, disseminating research and training on preventing dehumanising experiences, enhancing psychological safety and therapeutic relationships and improving access to psychological therapy. Importantly, a People with Personal Experience Involvement Committee were consulted which included a focus group during the early planning stages. We also collaborated with a person with personal experience, at every stage of the research. Our talk will discuss what this included and how it impacted the qualitative rigour.

## **Session 3C: Considering the place of AI in Qualitative Methods**

### **1- Rigorous Workflows in AI-Assisted Qualitative Research**

Steve Powell, Director at Causal Map Ltd. Gabriele Caldas Cabral, Outreach Coordinator at Causal Map Ltd.

AI tools are becoming increasingly prevalent in qualitative research, yet concerns about their rigour and transparency persist. This presentation introduces a generalised workflow (with accompanying software) for incorporating AI into qualitative research with 5 key-principles: 1) Each workflow should consist of a succession of basic steps such as identifying clusters of tags. 2) The same steps applied to the same data should produce the same results. 3) The instructions and results for each step should be independently verifiable. 4) Steps should be sufficiently simple that human-human and human-machine inter-rater reliability should be high. 5) The workflows should enable not only simple identification and processing of themes but also identification and visualisation of links between themes to be able to produce causal maps, social network diagrams, etc. We will discuss the points at which human input and oversight remain essential and present a case study (<https://www.causalmap.app/resources/dprp-qualia-cm/>) from our work with QualiaInterviews and the Causal Map app, demonstrating how AI can enhance qualitative data analysis while maintaining research integrity. This presentation addresses Theme 2 by critically examining openness and transparency in AI-assisted research and aligns with Theme 3 by using empirical examples to explore the impact of these factors on qualitative rigour. Key Points: 1. A systematic, rigorous and transparent approach for integrating AI into qualitative research workflows 2. Potential pitfalls of AI-assisted analysis 3. Case study: AI application in causal qualitative data analysis 4. Implications for transparency and openness in AI-assisted qualitative research

## **2- Qualitative rigour through corpus-based techniques and GenAI**

Reka R. Jablonkai, Senior Lecturer University of Bath,

Carmella Jodrell, EdD candidate, University of Bath & Rui Yan, PhD candidate, University of Bath

In qualitative research, rigour is often ensured by being thorough, transparent and critical. This can be achieved by questioning methods and being open to critique and revision which often involves other researchers and more recently specific technologies. The present paper proposes two technologies, corpus-based techniques and GenAI, can be applied to ensure rigorous analysis of qualitative data, especially textual data. A recent development in corpus-based approaches is to apply corpus-based techniques to a wide range of areas in applied linguistics and social sciences (Pérez-Paredes, 2021; Seale & Charteris-Black, 2010). Firstly, the paper will demonstrate how quantitative and qualitative corpus analysis techniques, such as keyword analysis and the analysis of collocations, concordance lines and frequent multi-word items can be used to identify and examine key themes when analysing qualitative data (Jablonkai et al., 2024). Secondly, it will showcase, how GenAI can enhance the rigour in interview data analysis. The paper will take a critical approach and while highlighting how to harness the largely untapped potential of corpus-based techniques and GenAI for analysing textual data, it will also put these techniques for qualitative data analysis into perspective.

## **WORKSHOP: Exploring AI-Driven Qualitative Interviewing - A QualiaInterviews Demo**

Steve Powell, Director at Causal Map Ltd. Gabriele Caldas Cabral, Outreach Coordinator at Causal Map Ltd.

Automated interviewing using generative AI presents a novel twist on interviewing techniques. We present one of several new platforms for AI-led interviewing, QualiaInterviews (<https://www.qualiainterviews.com/>). It conducts interviews autonomously, adapting responses and generating new questions in real-time, also adapting to the respondent's language. This approach addresses challenges of scale and standardization while maintaining flexibility for diverse contexts and is explicitly aimed at delivering loosely-structured explorative interviews. We will demonstrate the QualiaInterviews app and discuss its strengths and weaknesses for qualitative research. At the end, we will also invite participants to engage in a brief chat-based interview with Qualia, exploring their own experiences in qualitative research. This presentation aligns with Theme 3, using empirical examples to explore how openness and transparency impact qualitative rigour in the context of AI-driven interviewing.

## DAY TWO- Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January

### Session 4A: Experiences of Open Research Advocacy and Practice:

#### **1- Experiences of a novice qualitative researcher: navigating transparency and openness**

Jazmine Parrott (presenting) & Samantha Hughes, University of Gloucestershire

For my MSc by Research, I am currently exploring the meanings and motivations of women's tattoos in relation to their sense of self, using a combination of photo-elicitation (Bates et al., 2017) and interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith et al., 2022). In my presentation, I will share my journey of navigating openness and transparency as a novice researcher. First, I will address the challenges I faced due to the lack of openness in published qualitative research that employs photo-elicitation. This will include discussions around the limited resources available to guide the implementation of the method and the limited audit trails available within published papers. Secondly, I will discuss how I prioritized transparency with my participants to ensure my work was both participant-led and empowering. This will include discussions around open communication, balancing creative freedom while ensuring participant contributions align with the research aim and navigating the challenging issues of anonymity within participant photography. The presentation will conclude with reflections on my learnings and recommendations for how we might encourage openness and transparency in qualitative research. I hope that through sharing my experiences, I can help inform qualitative scholars about the challenges that novice researchers face when published research lacks openness and the need for transparency with participants.

#### **2- Between Openness and Ethics: Reflections on Transparency in a Scientist-Activist Ethnography**

Dr. Samuel Finnerty, Senior Research Associate, Lancaster University

This talk addresses the theme of Openness, Transparency, and Rigour by examining the opportunities and tensions of open practices in an ethnographic study of UK-based scientist-activists from Scientists for Extinction Rebellion. This social-psychological study explored how scientist-activists negotiated and performed their identities within climate activism, with most observed actions occurring in public protest settings. While public-facing activities naturally lend transparency, fieldnotes captured rich, sensitive insights into interpersonal dynamics, moral deliberations, and instances of civil disobedience, highlighting ethical tensions around open data sharing. These complexities are compounded by evolving legal frameworks on disruptive protest, adding layers of complexity to protecting participants. Building trust was essential, requiring prolonged engagement and assurances of confidentiality, which open-sharing expectations often complicate. Open Science practices were integrated where possible, including an embargoed pre-registration outlining research questions and methodology. Yet, without established guidelines on how to uphold Open Science standards while safeguarding participants in such contexts, questions arose throughout the research process about how to balance transparency with ethical responsibilities. Full transparency would risk breaching confidentiality, undermining trust, and potentially causing harm. This talk asks: how can we advance research rigour and confidence in qualitative research without compromising participant safety and trust? Ethnographic research provides an interesting case for thinking about how we can inform evolving standards for transparency in qualitative research while respecting both openness and ethical imperatives.

### **3- From Loneliness to Engaged Community: Reflecting on (almost) a decade of advocacy in open qualitative research**

Annayah M.B. Prosser, Assistant Professor (Lecturer), School of Management

Open research remains a minority practice in many disciplines and methodologies. Many open research advocates work alone, or are outnumbered in their departments, institutions or disciplines by those who disagree with them. Navigating this can be difficult for those who see openness as a large part of their values or identity, or who feel a moral imperative to make their research openly accessible. In this talk, I apply insights from my research on moralised practices and social change to explore experiences of open research advocacy in the qualitative domain. I will speak frankly about my own experiences advocating for open qualitative research over the past decade, including as a student and new faculty member across a number of different social scientific disciplines. I will explore the conflicts and difficulties I encountered along the way, and provide guidance for how advocates may deal with conflicts compassionately. I will discuss how I navigate openness in my work, alongside the tensions of between being seen as 'too open for some and 'not open enough' for others. I will also shed light on the psychological impact of advocacy, including strategies for avoiding 'activist burnout' (Prosser et al, 2024). Through this reflection, I provide a personal retrospective analysis of how much has changed, and what more still needs to be done to ensure open research is inclusive of qualitative methods. I conclude by discussing strategies for addressing these issues, including how open qualitative researchers can mobilise as an international community to support and encourage each other.

## **Session 4B: Rethinking Rigour in Qualitative Methods**

### **1- Rigour, openness and transparency in Post Qualitative Inquiry**

Eliane Bastos, PhD Researcher, University of Bath

This paper ponders the notions of rigour, openness and transparency in Post Qualitative Inquiry (PQI). With its roots in post-structuralism, PQI defies definition. It seems to be characterised by a constellation of "methodologies-to-come", which decentre the privilege of knowledge in research, involve a critique of representational logic, are post-anthropocentric, honouring method as performative, ethics of immanence and inviting the researcher to think differently with data (Le Grange, 2018). With a refusal of method at its core, PQI researchers are challenged to rethink questions of rigour, which assume strict adherence to well controlled, scientific methodologies. Additionally, PQI is allied with new-materialisms, which acknowledge the role of matter in knowledge production. Barad's (2007) notions of intra-action and entanglement are of particular relevance. According to Barad (2007, p. 33), intra-action "signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies", where to be entangled is to lack an independent, self-contained existence, pre-existing the intra-relation and its agents. As a result, Barad proposes an ethico-onto-epistemology (2007, p.185) which recognize that practices of knowing and being are mutually implicated, and cannot be separated. Again, this has serious implications for PQI researchers as they grapple with issues of openness and transparency. This is because by acknowledging the agentic force of matter and the emergent nature of knowing in being, the PQI researcher can only trace responses to the knowledge production process, which may or may not be intelligible to others. These challenges have significant implications, especially for early career researchers and for the communities of research they belong to.

## **2- Theorizing as Problem-Solving: The Logic of Pursuit**

Anastasia Sergeeva (Senior Lecturer, University of Bath; presenting author) Akhil Bhardwaj  
(Senior Lecturer, University of Bath).

The growth of knowledge in management studies hinges on the development of novel research programs. However, the path from the discovery to justification of research programs is opaque and fraught with hazards. This paper introduces the logic of pursuit to aid qualitative researchers in transparently navigating these hazards and in ascertaining whether they should continue working on a particular line of inquiry. Transparency also enables peers to better ascertain the validity of the claims. To that end, this paper frames theorising as a problem-solving activity where choices involved in both problem formulation and solution development are made openly. This openness in the process of inquiry promotes rigour by way of critical engagement with one's epistemic community.

## **3- A Critical Review of Interview Methods in Relationship Science**

Adira Daniel, PhD Student, University of Western Ontario

Qualitative methods are often undervalued in relationship science, despite their potential to illuminate the nuanced dynamics of romantic relationships. This study critically examines the use of interview methodologies in romantic relationship research through a scoping methodological review. Specifically, we describe the characteristics of qualitative approaches employed in this literature and appraise the methodological coherence of these studies, including their alignment of research aims, epistemologies, and methods. By consolidating examples of high-quality, methodologically coherent research, this project offers practical insights for researchers adopting qualitative approaches in relationship science. Preliminary findings suggest that interview-based studies often foreground underrepresented populations—such as non-heterosexual and intercultural couples—highlighting the value of qualitative methods in amplifying marginalized voices. However, despite their rich contributions, such studies often lack transparency in documenting methodological decision-making, hindering their replicability and broader application. This research aligns with the conference's focus on openness, transparency, and rigour in qualitative scholarship by addressing key challenges in interview methodology. It advocates for explicit reporting practices, including detailed accounts of coding processes, researcher reflexivity, and methodological rationale, to strengthen qualitative rigour. Furthermore, it interrogates the ethical implications of transparency in interview-based studies, such as negotiating participant confidentiality alongside demands for open data. Ultimately, this review underscores how openness and transparency can enhance the credibility and impact of qualitative research while fostering methodological innovation in relationship science. It offers a roadmap for researchers to conduct and report qualitative studies with greater clarity, consistency, and accountability.



## **Session 4C: Considering openness by and for diverse participant groups**

### **1- Opening Up Research for People with Cognitive Impairments**

James Rupert Fletcher Assistant Professor in Digital Futures School of Management,  
University of Bath

People with dementia have historically been stereotyped as unreliable research subjects and excluded from participation, with information about their lives collected from proxies. This risks ethically unjust and methodologically weak research. It excludes people from involvement in research about their own lives and prevents researchers from accessing people's unique lived experiences. Advocates are now pursuing research with dementia, involving people with dementia in designing, conducting and disseminating research. Using "creative" methods, such as photography, can make research more accessible and enjoyable for some people with dementia when compared with interviewing or surveying. The IN-CITU project supported passengers with dementia to record, photograph and film public transport, building a multimedia map of challenges they face when travelling. They created transcript poems corresponding to their photographs, and curated research footage for a short film. These creative approaches allowed people to be meaningfully involved for whom traditional methods, based on question-response and recall, might have been challenging or even distressing. Nonetheless, including people with dementia can pose challenges. Mental capacity requirements intensify ethical processes, and it took 26 months to negotiate IN-CITU's regulatory approvals. Such research also demands more flexibility than is typical for pre-designed research protocols. During IN-CITU, it was common for journeys to be rearranged several times at very short notice, and some participants became too unwell to travel, necessitating new modes of participation. Attending to these challenges, IN-CITU shows that, with methodological care, research can be opened up for people with dementia.

### **2- After Afghanistan: the military, identity, the IWM and me**

Chloe Storer: King's College London and Imperial War Museum.

Over the last twenty years, 150,610 British service personnel served in Afghanistan, with over 600 suffering life-changing injuries and 457 personnel losing their lives. This does not include the mental health casualties. This PhD project utilizes oral history to explore, in soldiers' own words, how they experienced Operation Herrick, and how mental well-being, media, memory and identity have altered their narrative over time. It uses oral history interviews conducted by the Imperial War Museum (IWM) and new ones conducted with the same soldiers to understand how narratives, and their sense of self change over time. Photo elicitation was also used, with the photo's being chosen by participants, to encourage co-creation and transparency throughout the process. The military are a traditionally hard-to-reach group. This presented several challenges in openness in the research, not least in getting ethical approval. This will be discussed, as will the notion of identity in the research process. Not only is my own identity as a young woman at play in the interview, so is the changing nature of theirs. Narrators began the process as a soldier, having completed a tour but have since moved into other roles such as fathers, leaders, and friends. Using a novel method, this paper shares preliminary findings on the role of identity in the historical narrative of Afghanistan and how this has changed in just ten years. The paper will consider this with a frank discussion on openness and transparency in the research planning, process and outputs.

### **3- Voices from beyond the walls: Empowering participants through ethical co-construction in a study of prison education in English prisons.**

Eira Wyn Patterson The Open University Staff Tutor

The presentation will draw on theoretical principles established through a systematic review of literature that explored enhancement of rigour in a range of qualitative research studies (Patterson, et al., 2023). These theoretical principles will be applied within a case study drawing on a currently being carried out into education within prisons in England, 'Voices from beyond the walls'. The design and early stages of implementation of this project will provide case study examples for exploration of inter-relationship between ethics, empowerment of participants and reflexive openness within the methodological context of Activity Theory (Engstrom and Patterson, 2024). Thematic synthesis within the systematic review (Patterson, et al., 2023) identified seven descriptive themes, and the presentation will focus on the following three: participant trust and communication of truth; reflexivity and researcher identity; and reader confidence and transparency. These descriptive themes were developed into three analytical themes, of which this presentation will explore ethical co-construction, drawing on a view of the researcher as mediator between participants and reader. Drawing on the empirical case study examples, the influence of the researcher in enabling authentic sharing of participant voice, through a process of reflexive openness (McClellan, et al., 2018) will be considered through a lens of engagement and empowerment of participants. The nature and significance of openness and transparency and the extent to which the ontological perspectives of the researchers shape the findings, as their voices are 'written into' the participants stories will be explored (Barusch et al. 2011: 12, cited in Patterson, et al., 2023).

## **Session 5A: Lightning Talks 2**

### **1- How Openness and Transparency can lead to better Results in Qualitative Research: The case of L1-Reflective Group Conversations (RGCs)**

Hashil Al Saadi, PhD Language Lecturer Sultan Qaboos University – Oman

One of the emerging trends in educational research is to view research as a practice offering valuable benefits to the participants in the same way it does to the researcher or the funding body. As such, in qualitative research, participants are viewed as active members and 'partners' in the research process. They equally have the right to gain benefits in return for their participation. This is an ethical commitment delivered by the researcher in his/her effort to adopt 'open research practices'. Such commitment should be communicated with the participants as transparently and openly as possible prior to the commencement of data collection.

In this interactive talk, I will demonstrate how maintaining openness and transparency in my qualitative research using "L1-Reflective Group Conversations" encouraged the students' active participation and engagement in the data collection process. Prior to their participation in the research, the students received clear explanation of how their participation in the reflective discussions would contribute to their personal and linguistic development in addition to enhancing their awareness of their language learning strategies. Tips for replicating this method will be shared with the audience.

## **2- 43 actions to overcome eight barriers to qualitative data sharing: A Scoping Review**

Evangeline Gowie, Open Research Co-ordinator, University of Reading (Presenting) Dr Anna Tsakalaki, Lecturer

We present the preliminary findings of a scoping study on the actions a researcher can take to overcome common barriers to sharing interview transcripts. In preparing our own transcripts for deposit, we struggled to identify guidance addressing the practical issues we were facing at a detailed enough level to be helpful to us. As we searched through the extensive literature on the subject, we reasoned that it may be beneficial for other researchers to have access to the results of this exercise. We therefore began a formal scoping review, focusing specifically on the practical steps that researchers can take towards opening their transcripts. From the extracted concerns, we constructed eight themes: confidentiality, consent, misappropriation of data, context, copyright, IRB approval, researcher distress and time and money. We have presented the preliminary findings in the form of a table based 'tool', organised via these themes, which we used to develop our own data management plan. This talk will give an overview of this tool, with the hope that it will save time for people who, like us, are new to the practice of open qualitative data.

## **3- Employing a co-interviewing approach to gain insight into female entrepreneurship practices in the Arab world**

Sarah Bloomfield (presenting) Senior Lecturer in Work and Organisational Learning, The Open University Business School, UK Visiting Research Fellow, School of Management, University of Bath, UK Norah Almubarak (not presenting) Assistant Professor in Finance, King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia Visiting Research Fellow, School of Management, University of Bath, UK

Our talk will focus on the co-interviewing methodological approach that we have employed within a research project exploring female angel investing practices within the Arab world. The majority of entrepreneurship research to date has focused on Western contexts, missing out on more diverse perspectives from other cultural and regional backgrounds. Where research has been undertaken in the Arab context, there has been minimal focus on the experiences of women. Our research makes a contribution through its demonstration of how a co-interviewing approach can enable researchers, from both within and outside, to gain insight into the under-researched context of female entrepreneurship in the Arab world. Within our research project we have been conducting all our interviews together, and then generating additional data through recording our joint reflections after each interview. We have also been gathering feedback on the experience of co-interviewing from our research participants at the end of our interviews. The identity and positionality of both the researchers and researched have a significant impact on research methodologies and insights that can be gained from them. As researchers we use our differences, and our understanding of each other, within our practice. Within our talk we will reflect on the benefits of having a Saudi and British female interviewing together, and the impact that has both on ourselves, our interviewees, and the research data. We will also reflect on the challenges faced getting to that interview stage in line with the conference themes, given the different systems – both formal and informal – within the UK and Saudi Arabia

## Session 5B: Lightning Talks 3

### **1- Embarking on Qualitative Research with People Living with Dementia: Reflections of a PhD Student**

Chloe Moody, PhD student in Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath.

With global cases exceeding 55 million, the World Health Organization has acknowledged dementia as a public health priority and, subsequently, there has been an exponential growth in dementia research interest. The need to bridge the research-practice gap and strive for high quality dementia-care and support, is paramount. This talk will summarise my experience of embarking on a qualitative PhD project seeking participants living with dementia in residential care settings, and the process of situating myself within a field of research as an 'outsider' with no prior network. First, I discuss the reflective model which has been utilised during my first year of study, before describing the challenges of being an outsider within the scope of dementia care research. Second, I highlight the avenues taken to establish myself as a PhD researcher within this field, reflecting on my areas for professional development, gaining knowledge and skills to effectively pursue my project with integrity, and the support of my newly established networks. Third, I outline a pathway for PhD researchers who aspire to conduct mutually informed qualitative research with people living with dementia, and how to situate themselves in the field from the 'outside'. This reflexive account demonstrates how a PhD researcher overcomes the challenges associated with entering the space and the apparent disconnect between research and practice, taking steps to build relationships with their target population and practitioners to produce informed and impactful research.

### **2- The Lived Experience of Epilepsy and the perceptions of health professionals. of working with this client group.**

Gemma Mason UKCP Registered Psychotherapist and Epilepsy Researcher

Epilepsy is a misunderstood condition, surrounded by outdated stigma. Individuals with epilepsy (IWE) tend to hide or downplay their condition for fear of judgement and exclusion from social and work settings. My research, using narrative analysis, aims to bring their lived experiences and what response they would like from the health professionals who treat them into the open. Through interviewing health professionals, I intend to reveal their reactions to working with this client group. Through a rigorous analysis of these two groups, new data is anticipated to outline clearer communication and, in time, an improvement in the treatment and understanding of this condition.

### **3- A Mixed Qualitative Exploration of Communication in Traditional Chinese Medicine in the UK.**

Lu Chen (Doctoral Student, KCL); Deborah Chinn, Chris Tang

This study investigates the communicative practices of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) in the UK, aiming to deepen our understanding of the interactional dynamics between TCM practitioners and patients in non-NHS private settings. Recognizing TCM's growing global presence and increasing integration within UK healthcare, this research addresses the limited focus on communication within TCM consultations. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates video-based conversation analysis (CA) to examine the multimodal nature of TCM interactions, with semi-structured interviews

capturing both practitioner and patient experiences. This dual-method approach enhances the study's rigor by triangulating the data from CA with thematic insights from interviews, thereby providing a more comprehensive view of TCM interactions. The findings from CA allow for a close examination of the micro-level communicative strategies used during consultations, while the interview data offers a complementary lens into participant perspectives, revealing potential alignment or dissonance between observed practices and participant-reported experiences. By integrating these qualitative methods, the study deepens our understanding of how TCM practitioners and patients navigate the communicative and cultural challenges within private TCM settings in the UK. This research also holds practical implications for enhancing communication training for TCM practitioners, potentially informing industry regulations and best practices within the broader field of medical communication.

## **Session 6A: Thinking Differently About Recruitment and Analysis in Qualitative Research to Improve Openness, Transparency, & Qualitative Rigour**

**Symposium Chair: Sergio A. Silverio, University of Liverpool**

Openness and transparency are key aspects of qualitative research. There has been recent evidence to suggest that by making qualitative research open and transparent we may endanger participant anonymity which is key for people to trust in the research that we do. Analytical rigour is achieved when we work with the participant group to understand their narratives about their key experiences of their lives and across the life course. This has meant that we will have to innovate as qualitative analysts in order to ensure that we have the best possible circumstances to collect the best possible data and produce the best possible analysis. In this symposium we present for talks looking at innovative ways of recruiting participants and analysing data. The first talk is about updating the way in which we undertake maximum variation purpose of sampling to ensure we achieve recruitment of my minority groups. The second talk looks at how we can access LinkedIn to recruit people who are otherwise hard to reach because of their public profile. The third talk looks at how intuitive inquiry can not only guide recruitment in a niche population but also aid in analysis. And the final talk looks at how we can compare methodologies to better understand the experiences of niche populations. Together these talks demonstrate cutting edge innovation in the field of qualitative research with specific populations who are either marginalised or under-represented in research due to their specificity.

## **1- Filling in the gaps: A new approach to maximum variation sampling in cross-disciplinary qualitative health research with 'hard-to-reach' groups.**

Tisha Dasgupta, King's College London, PhD Student & Research Associate - Presenter Aricca D. Van Citters, Dartmouth College, Researcher Eugene C. Nelson, Dartmouth College, Emeritus Professor Abigail Easter, King's College London, Reader in Perinatal Mental Health Gillian Horgan, King's College London, Researcher Hiten D. Mistry, King's College London, Programme Manager Harriet Boulding, King's College London, Senior Research Fellow Peter von Dadelszen, King's College London, Professor of Global Women's Health Hannah Rayment-Jones, King's College London, NIHR Advanced Fellow Laura A. Magee, King's College London, Professor of Women's Health Sergio A. Silverio, University of Liverpool, Lecturer in Medical Psychology & Lifecourse Health

Maximum variation purposive sampling, which involves a researcher purposefully selecting the sample based on varied dimensions of interest relevant to the study aim, is frequently used but difficult to achieve. These dimensions of interest: participant characteristics, study variables, treatment group, or outcome group, are plotted against each other on a recruitment matrix, called the sampling frame. The issue arises when the number of possible combinations of the dimensions of interest outnumber the number of persons who are intended to be interviewed. Often relying on snowball recruitment, this methodology is particularly difficult to implement when the population of interest is in some way 'hard-to-reach'. Furthermore, digital methods which now aid both the recruitment and undertaking of qualitative interviews and focus groups have paradoxically brought participants and researchers closer together and further apart. We provide a detailed adaptation of maximum variation sampling to cope with modern recruitment of participants who are seldom heard to large scale studies in cross-disciplinary qualitative health research. Using a case study of The RESILIENT Study of post-pandemic planning of maternity services across the four UK nations, we present an adapted seven stage approach comprising: (1) Stakeholder engagement, (2) Agreeing the dimensions of interest, (3) Advertising the study, (4) Random sampling, (5) Purposive sampling, (6) Targeted sampling, and (7) Selective sampling. The proposed strategy was successfully used to recruit 55 women and partners of varied demographics, with a focus on social and medical complexity, to online in-depth interviews for the RESILIENT study.

## **2- Leveraging LinkedIn for Enhanced Openness and Transparency in Qualitative Research Engagement**

Elana Payne, King's College London, Research Assistant in Medical Psychology - Presenter Sergio A. Silverio, University of Liverpool, Lecturer in Medical Psychology & Lifecourse Health

Social media platforms have become powerful tools for researchers to connect with participants, particularly in qualitative studies that require specific populations. This talk explores how utilising LinkedIn, especially its Premium features, can enhance openness and transparency in participant engagement, thereby improving qualitative rigour across various research contexts. The platform's advanced search capabilities allowed for precise filtering based on criteria such as job title, industry, and experience level. This precision ensured that the recruited participants closely aligned with the study's objectives, enhancing the credibility and validity of the findings whilst also reducing time spent sourcing potential participants. Researchers could introduce themselves professionally, provide detailed information about the study, and address any ethical considerations upfront. This openness

fostered trust and encouraged higher response rates, as participants felt assured about the legitimacy of the research and the intentions of the researcher. It also enabled a certain amount of rapport building with a potential participant, prior to engagement with the study. However, the use of LinkedIn Premium comes with considerations such as subscription costs, which may impact research budgets. The presentation will discuss strategies to maximize the benefits whilst mitigating costs, such as targeted recruitment to reduce unnecessary outreach and allocating specific time periods for recruitment to minimise the time-period for which a subscription is required. In conclusion, leveraging LinkedIn for participant engagement demonstrates how openness and transparency can be utilised in qualitative research.

### **3- Intuitive Inquiry: An “epistemology of the heart” (Anderson, 2004, p.308)**

Juliette Ttofa, Liverpool John Moores University, PhD Student - Presenter  
B. Les Lancaster, The Alef Trust, Director & Emeritus Professor  
Peter Blundell, Liverpool John Moores University, Senior Lecturer  
Sergio A. Silverio, University of Liverpool, Lecturer in Medical Psychology & Lifecourse Health

Intuitive Inquiry is a transpersonal research method that blends subjective (personal, intuitive) experiences with objective (empirical, intellectual) analysis. Valuing the integration of wisdom with science, this method places emphasis on using the researcher’s intuition as a valid form of knowing alongside empirical evidence. Embracing a holistic perspective, Intuitive Inquiry is used to explore complex human experiences, often characteristic of psycho-spiritual development, including spiritual and transcendent phenomenon. Anderson (2011) advocates for a research approach extending beyond academic rigour and theoretical advancement to prioritize practical applications and meaningful impacts on human well-being and social justice as central to the research process. Intuitive Inquiry provides a clear methodological framework (Anderson, 2004), and unfolds in a hermeneutical process of five iterative cycles, allowing researchers to revisit and refine their original perspectives (known as ‘lenses’) based on emerging insights and interpretations (Anderson, 2011). Due to its emphasis on intuition and personal experience as valuable sources of knowledge (Anderson, 2011; Anderson, 2019), Intuitive Inquiry encourages researchers to use creative and varied transpersonal methods to access profound insights and subjective experiences (Anderson, 2011; Anderson, 2019). Intuitive Inquiry is grounded in the belief that qualitative research should contribute positively to individuals, communities, and society at large “for the greater good” and without “ill effects” (Anderson, 2011, p. 316). Researchers are encouraged to choose research topics that seem to be ‘calling them’, as this may be “a call from the culture at large for change” (Anderson, 2004, p.308).

#### **4- Who has time for qualitative analysis anyway? A comparison of small-n Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and small-n Grounded Theory Analysis.**

Sergio A. Silverio, University of Liverpool, Lecturer in Medical Psychology & Lifecourse Health - Presenter Laura Sambrook, Liverpool John Moores University, Research Assistant Rebecca E. Fellows, Bangor University, Research Project Support Officer Elana Payne, King's College London, Research Assistant in Medical Psychology

For niche populations we often are told that the only viable analysis is interpretative phenomenological analysis with no other possibility of achieving analytical depth in what we are writing. This demonstrates that as qualitative analysts we are not willing to show a level of methodological dexterity which can be found in other methodologies outside of IPA. The issue arises where people see an investment in methodologies like interpretive phenomenological analysis as required to do justice to the data despite the fact that it may not be the most appropriate methodology for understanding the nuances of those peoples' experiences. Many people would argue that grounded theory analysis requires lots of people in order to develop theories about a specific phenomenon, experienced by a specific group of people, in a specific context. However recent work has shown that grounded theory analysis can cope with smaller numbers of participants in research studies using qualitative interviews, in particular. We present findings here of two studies: The first with two participants who are fathers of stillborn babies; and the second with three participants who are women who underwent a termination of pregnancy. We demonstrate that the timing required for grounded theory analysis was not only less, but was deemed to have produced a better investment of time as compared to interpretive phenomenological analysis. Moreover, we observed in this comparative methodological study is that the GTA was able to provide the 'what happened' whilst the IPA was able to elucidate the 'how it was experienced'.



## **Session 6B: Dilemmas in Development: Navigating transparency, rigour and openness in resource-poor contexts**

**Symposium Chair: Vibhor Mathur, University of Bath**

The importance of transparency, rigour and openness across all stages of research is gaining increasing prominence. However, the application of these principles is dependent on, and thus complicated by, the nature of the research project, the site of study, and the relative relationship between researchers and the researched. Especially, when the 'researched' have been put in a position of vulnerability and marginalisation through systematic exclusion and coloniality. Across our three research projects, we conduct investigative, exploratory and evaluative research around the governance of exploitative labour; meanings of exploitation, power, freedom and needs for those in conditions of 'exploitation'; and finally the effects of development interventions on people's lives and wellbeing in slums in South Asia. In this symposium, we aim to reflect on, and describe our experiences of navigating, and building more knowledge around what 'transparency, openness and rigour' can look like in resource poor contexts, within development research in the global south. Our presentations will focus on themes like 1. Our unique and dynamic positionalities, going across gender, nationality and relationships with participants; 2. Power relations and information (a)symmetries in development research 3. Transparency, participation, relationships and rigour with participants in marginalised and resource-poor contexts 4. Openness in data ownership, analysis and dissemination We aim to present our methodological journeys and strategies to engage with the ethical and relational dynamics emergent from such experiences in the field. We aim to reflect on our positionalities, as well as question what the role of the 'researcher' in development research can and should be.

### **1- Dilemmas in Development: Exploring 'Balance' in Research Relationships**

Vibhor Mathur, University of Bath, PGR

This presentation aims to explore the tensions and 'balance' between sharing of information, sticking to roles and dynamics of participation in rigorous, responsible and yet meaningful research with vulnerable participants. Over 2 years, I conducted 14 months of ethnographic fieldwork studying the lives, labour and relationships of residents of urban slums in India; and evaluating the effects (if any) of a cash transfer and community organising intervention. Cash is a unique intervention as it affects all aspects of participants' lives and can create relations of patronage with marginalised participants. This can flow into relationships with researchers, and compromise robust informed and meaningful participation. One of the strategies to deal with this, was to downplay my connection to the cash transfers and portray myself as a younger 'student', to assuage power imbalances. In other situations, spending long periods of time in the community forced me to move out of a 'neutral', 'passive' observer role to a more involved and activist role, such as in cases of forced evictions or advocating for school scholarships for children. Finally, to make this research politically potent for the participants, we involved them in not just data analysis, but also public outreach and dissemination to policymakers and media at key moments (eg. before elections or at conferences). This presentation aims to explore these thorny, and contextually rooted, dilemmas on the appropriate boundaries of 'roles', on the balance between complete transparency and responsible relationship and identity management, and on the red lines of practice in such research.

**2- Ethical challenges when working with “absolute rock stars” in Dhaka: doing PhD ethnography with children making leather gloves in Dhaka under a programmatic umbrella.**

Clare Hawkes, University of Bath, PGR

Excellent is the academic term for the best. Moravcsik describes transparency as “a precondition for scholars to demonstrate their excellence” (Moravcsik, 2019). Reflecting on my experience of transparency in fieldwork with children and young people (CYP) in Dhaka’s leather sector, I think of my supervisor’s term for the very best contributors to my PhD, “absolute rock stars.” Knowledge relating to working CYP is rarely created by them, rarely acknowledges their lived realities, and decides what is best for them without considering their priorities and needs (Boyden, 1998, Howard, 2017). My research challenges this approach, treating CYP as experts in their own lives. My deeply contextual ethnography required building trust with CYP and others, including individuals using generational and intersecting powers to oppress children. Involving those adults in research activities potentially risked losing children’s trust. Being transparent, anticipating children’s concerns about research choices helped negotiate potential tensions in research relationships. Linked to a large regional research programme, my fieldwork ran in parallel with two high profile interventions. Those projects’ fieldworkers facilitated my introduction to the community and relationship-building across several dimensions of outsider status (Latchem-Hastings et al, 2019). Proximity risked obscuring my research objectives. Transparency helped manage the community’s expectations of me. Being close to a team of groundbreaking qualitative researchers, I benefited from seeing them plan for and deliver transparency in data sharing and the publication of findings. The paper is a reflection on transparency as a means of negotiating power relations in the field, and advocacy for PhD places in research programmes.