Power of persistence: bringing meaningful qualitative findings to the forefront
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Disclosure
• Conflict of interest disclosure
  – The presenters report no conflict of interest

Learning Objectives
• At the end of the session, participants will be able to:
  – Discuss potential strategies for improving qualitative manuscript submissions.
  – Identify potential “red flag” components when submitting a qualitative manuscript.
  – Determine the most appropriate journal(s) for manuscript submission based on factors related to topic and methodology.
  – Understand the qualitative reviewer’s perspective when evaluating qualitative research.

The BMJ vs. Qualitative
Tweeted rejection letter
• “Low priority”
• “Unlikely to be highly cited”
• “Lacking practical value”
• “Not of interest to our readers”

Open letter response
• “The BMJ’s readers (not to mention its reviewers and editors) may not have been formally trained to read, conduct, or evaluate qualitative studies. We see these caveats as opportunities not threats.”

Qualitative is NOT Quitting
• The number of published qualitative phenomenological studies in health professions literature has grown dramatically over the last four decades.
  – CINAHL Complete
    * “phenomenological research OR phenomenology research”
    * 1977 to 1987 → 17
    * 1988 to 1997 → 742
    * 1998 to 2007 → 4,192
    * 2008 to 2018 → 9,047
Quality in Qualitative

- Research question
- Methodological rigor
- Transparency with thematic analysis and development
- Clarity and completeness of reporting results
- Are conclusions supported by the aim of the methodology?

Where to go from here?

- Theoretical framework
- Literature review
- Research question(s)

Sample Reviewer Comments

- Use of clear subheadings
  - Program and Participant Description
  - Pilot Study
  - Data Collection
    - Appendix or table the interview guide
    - Data saturation
Methods
- Data Analysis
- Transparency

Sample Reviewer Comments

Thematic Development
- Include a figure or table to illustrate the process the researcher used to link participant quotes to the theme

Thematic Development Table

Establishing Rigor/Trustworthiness
- Create a table to describe strategies used in your study to establish trustworthiness

Using Visuals
Using Visuals

Results

• Reviewers often question whether the findings were from the perspective of the participants or the researcher
• Direct quotations
  • How many?
  • Table format?
  • Integrate in narrative?
• Length of manuscript becomes an issue

Standards for Reporting

• EQUATOR Network and NLM’s Research Reporting Guidelines and Initiatives
• Qualitative
  – COREQ
  – SRQR
• Other resources
  – CASP

Other strategies

• Journal “fit”
  – Consider target audience
  – Email abstract
  – Reference list
  – JANE (Journal/Author Name Estimator)

After the response(s)

• STAY CALM and PERSEVERE
• Take time to reflect before responding to reviewer comments
• Talk with the editor
• Seek colleagues not involved in the project for feedback

After the response(s)

• Volunteer as a reviewer of qualitative manuscripts
• “Know when to hold’em, know when to fold’em…”
• Test of fortitude
Questions...comments...your experiences?

Panel Discussion

References


