A reflexive lens on preparing and conducting semi-structured interviews with academic colleagues

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Abstract

In qualitative research, researchers often conduct semi-structured interviews with people familiar to them, but there are limited guidelines for researchers who conduct interviews to obtain curriculum-related information with academic colleagues who work in the same area of practice but at different higher education institutions. Using a pragmatic constructivist stance, we address the practicalities of conducting semi-structured interviews with fellow educators who work in the same area of professional practice, where the researcher has to address the dual roles of "insider" and "outsider" as well as that of researcher and participant. Interviewing academic colleagues offers a unique opportunity for rich data collection, but researchers should adopt a flexible conversational style during interviewing within research parameters and be acutely aware of their positionality and fluidity of roles. This article contributes to existing knowledge by drawing on the work of previous scholars in various areas of research and

research methodology thereby offering a practical and theoretical perspective on conducting qualitative research interviewing in higher education institutions where the role of researcher and participant can become blurred. These guidelines and insights will also benefit researchers who conduct research with peers who work together in the same area of expertise, in similar contexts and with whom there are varying levels of working relationships.

Introduction

Academics working in institutions of higher learning in health sciences often have to fulfil multiple roles simultaneously – that of educator, postgraduate student, student fieldwork supervisor, researcher and clinician. In specialized practice fields, academic communities can be quite small, with educators employed at different higher education institutions either knowing of, or knowing each other. When an educator embarks on curriculum related research in a particular field of practice, they inevitably need to interview colleagues within their own institution or at other similar institutions. Researchers may have to interview colleagues they know well or not at all, or they may have to interview colleagues with higher qualifications than themselves or with perceived greater curriculum experience or vice versa. Participants may themselves also be researchers (Probst, 2016). In certain situations, researchers may have to participate in the research too, since their voices may be needed to complete the spectrum of input. In small communities, collecting qualitative data as a peer or colleague appears to have unique challenges and opportunities (Aburn et al., 2021; Coar & Sim, 2006; Quinney et al., 2016). In higher education contexts, conducting research as an insider offers many benefits and challenges (Fleming, 2018; Mercer, 2007) however there appears to be limited practical guidance on how to navigate the challenges within the context of curriculum related research within a small community of educators.

South Africa has a small academic community of occupational therapy educators who lecture in the area of vocational rehabilitation. These lecturers are dispersed across the country at eight higher education institutions and are often the only educators responsible for vocational rehabilitation content within the larger occupational therapy program within their department or division. Within the South African context, we identified a need to establish a curriculum framework for the education of occupational therapists as part of their first professional degree. As part of the research, it was important to establish the planned vocational rehabilitation curriculum from a national perspective and to explore the views of educators in developing their curriculums. The development of a curriculum framework and the implementation thereof would contribute to limiting students graduating with varying levels of experience in vocational rehabilitation thereby improving client intervention.

It is within this environment that I (first author) as a vocational rehabilitation educator, having gained ethical approval, started analyzing curriculum related documentation, and conducting interviews with fellow educators in vocational rehabilitation. I felt that collecting data through interviews would be invaluable in engaging with educators (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Christensen et al., 2015; DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019; McGrath et al., 2019). As a qualitative researcher, I wanted to avoid feelings of discomfort and unease which could emerge during interviewing. Interviewing colleagues meant that I had to be sensitive towards professional relationships. If educators perceived the interview process to be threatening, our current and future academic relationships could become strained. Positive interview experiences fostered by appreciating educators' expertise and acknowledging their value in person, would lead to positive relationships and in turn, to constructive data collection and future collegial networking.

Herein lay the interviewing conundrum. How could I harness the benefits, challenges and opportunities of interviews during the research process? Leading from this question, were

issues of researcher positionality – would, I, the researcher be seen as an 'insider' or 'outsider' and could I be both researcher and participant? In this paper, we explore the qualitative research process and highlight practical issues arising from conducting interviews with close academic colleagues.

Methodology and philosophical assumptions

The larger study adopted a sequential mixed methods research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Curry & Nunez-Smith, 2015), with the qualitative component comprising of interviews with academic colleagues. To guide the research process, I clarified my philosophical assumptions as suggested by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) when conducting mixed methods research. I focused on pragmatism, as a paradigm, and was largely concerned with actions, being problem centered, pluralistic and orientated in the real world (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This led to understanding that each institutional context was unique and provided insight into the practicalities of the planned and delivered vocational rehabilitation curricula.

Constructivism further informed the use of interviews as a research tool. Ontologically, the reality of the planned and delivered curricula were jointly constructed by the perspectives of all the participating educators at different academic institutions given their unique contexts. From an epistemological aspect, knowledge was acquired by going to the educators in their own lecturing environments (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I incorporated the philosophy of axiology into my interviews by acknowledging the influence of my values on interactions with participants (Biddle & Schafft, 2015). Simultaneously I was continuously aware of researcher identities and how this potentially could affect data collection and analysis. Frequent meetings and discussions with the research supervisors, maintaining a researcher journal and remaining ethically attentive contributed to harnessing the strengths of my values and researcher identities

and minimizing limitations thereof. My researcher identities facilitated a multi-dimensional research lens in interpreting the data and was a strength in this study.

I therefore maintained a 'pragmatic constructivist stance' as co-constructor of the data during interviews by conducting interviews conversationally, respecting each educator as an academic colleague, engaging authentically with the educator in their lecturing context, upholding research integrity, being practical and retaining the core values of research.

Researcher positionality: Dual roles

Two main role challenges emerged during the interview process affecting positionality within the interviews (Berger, 2015; Witcher, 2010), and potential for bias and power imbalances.

My own role in the interview process, as 'insider' and/or 'outsider', created duality and defining my position was difficult. I was either viewed as an 'insider' belonging to the group of academic colleagues or as an outsider coming from a different academic institution. Potential participants were all occupational therapy educators in vocational rehabilitation and theoretically, colleagues on an equal level, but from different academic institutions. Despite professional equality, inherent imbalances exist between the researcher and those being researched (Råheim et al., 2016). Although various authors have addressed researching colleagues, peers, people known to the researcher and small connected communities (Damianakis & Woodford, 2012; McConnell-Henry et al., 2010; McDermid et al., 2014), none appeared to adequately address fluid positionality and the possible benefits of duality for the interviewer within this unique context of higher education.

During interviews, my positionality was tangibly fluid as I was neither an 'insider' nor an 'outsider'. Although as an 'insider' I was familiar with the specific research content, as an 'outsider' I was not part of the educational institution of the participants. My positionality in

the interviews therefore fluctuated depending on what was being discussed and was never constant (Simeon, 2015). I had to remain cognizant of the overlap of my roles as both 'insider' and 'outsider', a privileged position in which the strengths and limitations of both could be harnessed and mediated by philosophical assumptions during interviewing. This dual and fluid researcher positionality contributed towards richness of data and facilitated the flow of the conversation.

The second dual role challenge was my own role as both researcher and participant in the study. Given my own experiences in developing the vocational rehabilitation curriculum at my institution and as coordinator and educator, my input was valuable in the collective curriculum. Nonetheless this role was uncomfortable as I had to completely shed my researcher identity and don a participant role. Once I assumed this role as educator and participant I felt comfortable and although an unusual role for a researcher as a participant (Probst, 2016), it was a rewarding process. I felt affirmed in what I was teaching and welcomed the opportunity to share my experiences which I had never done previously.

Researcher identities

Although the research question drives paradigm and methodological choices, defining researcher identity also contributes towards these choices which then influences data collection and interpretation of findings. Throughout the interview process, I scrutinized my identity as researcher and the impact thereof during the research process.

As researcher and interviewer, I simultaneously occupied a number of identities shaped by past experiences, which continued developing as the research progressed. I had to make sure that these identities did not influence the research process whilst recognizing their potential contribution to the richness of the research.

Within South African academia, I have many years of experience as an occupational therapy educator in vocational rehabilitation, lecturing extensively at both under-and postgraduate levels. I have also maintained a second identity as an active occupational therapy clinician. My clinical identity is rooted in providing physical and mental health rehabilitation, private practice, industry, public health and community based rehabilitation. The combination of educator and clinician identities naturally gave rise to a mentor identity. Teaching, practicing and mentoring has led to a fourth identity as a researcher.

I had to be mindful of my various identities and contextual experiences during the interview process to limit both positive (understanding content and context) and negative (contributing towards power imbalances) biases. Reflexive bracketing consistent with constructivism (Gearing, 2004) was helpful in identifying my potential biases as researcher (Tufford & Newman, 2012) as I had to be open about my values and identities.

Ethical attentiveness

Ethical guidelines for health researchers are provided by the Health Professions Council of South Africa as well as from the institution at which the research process is reviewed and approved (ethical clearance details to be provided). These bodies usually only guide the research process (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) and do not address the ethical issues related to qualitative interviewing. Qualitative researchers need to be constantly and continuously attentive to ethics and maintain "ethics in practice" (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Heggen and Guillemin (2012) use the term "ethical mindfulness" (p. 472) to mediate between ethical principles and ethical guidelines. Ethical mindfulness has five features: acknowledging ethically important moments, attending to discomfort, articulating what is ethically at stake, reflexivity and courage (Heggen & Guillemin, 2012).

I had to maintain 'ethical mindfulness' throughout interviews with academic colleagues. The importance of ethical attentiveness whilst interviewing academic colleagues and managing their data was frequently subtle, unexpected and emerged gradually. Respect for the participants and doing no harm involved protecting their personal academic confidentiality and integrity and that of the institution for which they worked. I had to approach the interview process from a point of mutual learning and equal participation, facilitating comfort, respect for colleagues and negating power imbalances.

Being ethically attentive spoke to my core values and I employed respect, openness, honesty (especially about my own limitations), sharing, flexibility, a non-judgmental view and giving positive feedback – during the interview process. The practice of reflexivity was inter-woven with ethical attentiveness as both required an awareness of myself and my influence on the process. As interviewing is qualitative and intersubjective, researchers have to maintain reflexivity (Band-Winterstein et al., 2014; Berger, 2015; Rae & Green, 2016). Reflexivity is aligned with both pragmatic and constructivism's ontological and epistemological assumptions.

Personal and epistemological reflexivity (Dowling, 2006; Finlay, 1998); strategic reflexivity and ethical reflexivity (Finlay, 2012) were captured in a daily researcher journal (Band-Winterstein et al., 2014). The researcher journal contained personal notes, emails, and literature references written in the first person, capturing the research journey, methodological decisions and moments of enlightenment. I used a descriptive and explanatory style (Finlay, 2002a) to record my personal and research growth, and insight. I used reflexivity to balance subjectivity and objectivity as well as my involvement and detachment. Immediately after each interview, I jotted short notes. Maintaining confidentiality, I later shared personal challenges, revelations and emotional observations of research significance with my supervisors who were able to reframe difficult issues; balancing self-awareness and research focus (Finlay, 2002b).

Gaining access and initiating the research process

A multiple reality ontology (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) informed the inclusion of all educators and coordinators of undergraduate vocational rehabilitation curricula, myself included. I contacted the heads of the occupational therapy departments and with their written informed consent; contacted the specific educators. All educators agreed and completed informed consent and biographic forms that they returned electronically. I then clarified any research related matters telephonically and all participants appeared to be enthusiastic and positive.

Contrary to the positive attitudes at the outset of the research, participants were reticent to share their existing curriculum documents despite institutional, departmental and personal approval to do this. I perceived that my 'researcher identity' and role as an 'outsider' may have led to feelings of discomfort and/or lack of confidence in sharing this information. Additionally my role as doctoral student and researcher could have implied a position of power (Ledger, 2010). My perception was that this reticence could also permeate the interviews scheduled subsequent to the receipt of these documents. At this point, I decided that I needed to do more to create a comfortable engaging relationship founded on rapport and trust (McConnell-Henry et al., 2010; McDermid et al., 2014; McGrath et al., 2019) essential for data collection as well as methodological and ethical rigor (Guillemin & Heggen, 2009). I planned a personal 'greet, meet, share and get-to-know-each other' conversation, with each educator turned participant at their institution. Participants received the request for these informal conversations positively. These conversations could serve as a platform to dismantle any misperceptions and provide ample opportunity to level any perceived power imbalances.

During these informal conversations, I started sharing who I was and how the research had emerged. I personally explained the research process again, answered questions and reiterated

the value and assurance of confidence and anonymity of the participants and the institution as discussed in the Informed Consent Documents. I explored the biographic background of the participant and started conceptualizing the vocational rehabilitation curriculum relative to the occupational therapy program with the educator's support – an aspect I would not have understood from the curriculum documents. I clarified my identity as researcher only - but with various contextual experiences. Participants provided their curriculum documents with brief explanations during these meetings. Although these conversations were financially costly and time consuming, both the participants and myself benefitted significantly. I felt less anxious in many of the unfamiliar university physical environments and more comfortable with the participants. Informal unsolicited feedback after the conversations indicated that participants felt more relaxed and comfortable, and positive about my identity as researcher. From a methodological view, I perceived an equilibrating effect on power imbalances between myself and participants.

Preparing the interview schedules

A well prepared and thoroughly developed interview schedule is foundational in contributing to trustworthiness (Kallio et al., 2016). I based the questions for the interviews on two main information sources. Firstly, I studied the literature on curriculum theory from an educational and medical perspective. Secondly, I conducted a literature review on published South African occupational therapy literature relating to vocational rehabilitation, education or curricula from 1994 onwards.

I carefully considered the following interview parameters whilst formulating questions: questions had to be divided between two separate interviews, one exploring the planned curriculum and one exploring the delivered curriculum, keeping in mind that curriculum information could also be obtained by reviewing curriculum documents and not only during

interviews. Interviews also had to be concluded within 60 to 90 minutes. I arranged the questions to progress logically from general to more complex. Two interview formats were developed: one for myself, containing the interview questions and probes, and a second one, for the participants, with only questions (Supplementary material).

Consistent with both the pragmatic and constructivist paradigms of solving problems and being situated in the real world, I developed a field note format which would work in different academic settings, facilitate capture of research events and contexts of the interview, whilst contributing to reflexivity during research journaling. Field notes captured the description of the physical interview environment, the context in which the participant arrived for the interview, interview flow, challenges, obstacles and lessons learnt.

Piloting the interview schedule and interview

Pilot testing of the interview schedule is important for many reasons but allows the researcher to determine whether the questions are aligned with the research objectives and facilitates a conversation (Kelly, 2010). I conducted pilot interviews in two phases – theoretical and practical. Firstly, four independent experts not involved with the research but with experience in education, under-and postgraduate teaching, research and clinical work, scrutinized the interview schedules for research purpose, language clarity and ease of understanding. These experts consisted of a nursing science and education expert (both with phd qualifications) and two occupational therapy clinicians. Each person gave individual feedback in person. This was followed by practical interviews conducted with an academic colleague from a different institution with recent experience in vocational rehabilitation education but who no longer worked in this capacity. Both the theoretical and practical piloting increased my confidence and preparedness (Bryman, 2012; Majid et al., 2017). I simulated all aspects of the interviews

including location, use of recording devices, field notes and the interview process. I made changes where necessary throughout the piloting process.

Interview practicalities

I prepared for the interviews by considering certain practical measures. Equipment failure and poor quality of interview recordings could lead to data loss and loss of the essence of the interview (Kelly, 2010; Poland, 2012), I therefore used two voice recorders simultaneously.

I ensured that both a suitable date and time, and sufficient duration for the interviews by engaging with the participants. I deliberately scheduled longer appointments than necessary to have sufficient time for the setup, conducting and concluding the interview. The intention was to circumvent participants having to cut short the interview due to other pre-scheduled engagements. I carefully considered the selection of interview venue because researchers are responsible for ensuring an optimal environment (Alsaawi, 2014). Choosing a location has many challenges and could be linked to perceptions of power (Kelly, 2010). In this study, I chose to let the participants choose the venue, as I met with them on-site.

I sent interview schedules to the participants prior to the interview, giving them an opportunity to prepare or make notes. I sent the schedules via email in non pdf format giving the participants the freedom to comfortably format the documents.

I carefully chose clothing that would blend in with institutional culture and avoid distraction. Wearing formal clothing could contribute towards barriers inferring a hierarchical structure (Dearnley, 2005) which I wanted to avoid, given my position in vocational rehabilitation. Neutral researcher clothing with minimal jewelry presented a professional yet informal and practical self-presentation. Finally, I prepacked a 'researcher interview kit' with a number of

research necessities including refreshments, equipment and stationery. I did not want to scramble for these nor expect the participant to provide them.

Conducting the interviews - facilitating an academic conversation

Given my 'pragmatic constructivist stance', I wanted to facilitate conversations between two academics that would create an understanding of the planned vocational rehabilitation curriculum in one interview and the delivered curriculum in another. I wanted to balance gathering rich data with maintaining a conversation. To achieve this balance, I had to engage actively on the topic and respond appropriately to the participant without derailing from the research topic. I used a semi-structured interview style, positioned between a structured and in-depth interview style using pre-set questions with the flexibility to converse about other related topics as they emerged (Bryman, 2012; Ryan et al., 2009). I shared the interview schedules beforehand (without the probing questions). This did not limit the explorative nature of the interview and I did encounter prepared answers but rather this sharing engendered a sense of comfort and ease between the researcher and participant. Quinney et al. (2016) state the preparing participants before data collection is appropriate and we therefore deemed sharing the interview schedules as part of participant preparation.

The conversational, semi-structured interviews relied on establishing trust and rapport (McConnell-Henry et al., 2010; McDermid et al., 2014; Whiting, 2008) which I fostered through frequent personal communications and during the first informal conversation. I maintained a level of comfortable and appropriate self-disclosure that contributed towards rapport. In trying to establish conversation between two academics, I decided to implement reciprocity and share information (Clarke, 2006) without compromising the quality of the interview.

I interviewed participants on two separate days where possible due to physical and emotional demands on both the participant and researcher. As participants chose the interview location, these locations at times were suboptimal due to either noisy students moving between classes or uncomfortable, as I had to perch recording devices amongst office paraphernalia.

Three elements were pivotal to conducting the interviews. Firstly in preparing for the interview, I reviewed notes from my first conversation with the participant, all relevant curriculum and biographic documents and interview schedules. Secondly, I attempted to prevent researcher fatigue by resting before the interview, ensuring that I was fully engaged and in the moment. Thirdly, I genuinely desired to understand the planned and delivered curriculums from each participant, and this permeated into both preparation and interviewing style.

Power imbalances were negated as participants had the opportunity to prepare for the interviews and knew what to expect. Many of the participants did not hesitate to share prepared notes on the interview templates, providing additional information.

Finally, I engaged, as participant, in two interviews with an expert on curriculum development in health science education, but who was not an occupational therapy educator. Although Morse (2009) suggests being interviewed by a member of the research team, we considered that this may contribute towards bias and therefore limited this by using an external researcher with experience in higher education. The same procedures were followed with the roles reversed. I then became a participant and source of information. These interviews took place after a significant amount of time had passed to limit the influence of previous interviews on my responses. We also firstly engaged in a preparatory interview for the same reasons as for the other participants.

Post interview

Once the interviews ended, I invited the participants to add any information they deemed relevant. After the voice recorders had been switched off, I intentionally allowed for additional time for informal conversation and possibly the opportunity to view the department's facilities. I gave each participant a small token of appreciation purchased from a protective workshop for people with disabilities aligned with vocational rehabilitation service delivery, thanking them for their time and serving as a reminder of the interviews. Participants responded appreciatively to this gesture. I downloaded interviews from the voice recorders immediately after the interview and saved them securely. Field notes and reflections were written up and an email sent to the participants thanking them for their participation.

Discussion

Conducting semi structured interviews with colleagues in an academic setting proved both challenging and rewarding. Although some publications address interviewing people familiar to the researcher, there are few guidelines on how to manage the practicalities of conducting interviews within a small academic setting. My research compass followed a pragmatic paradigm intertwined with research rigor and ethical attentiveness. Rigor in the research process supported by theoretical constructs, and open and honest discussion with role players were essential in this context.

Theoretically, interviewing provides an opportunity to gather rich data but it was initially an anxiety provoking process to 'intrude' in the individual curricula of each educator who were uncomfortable in sharing their curricula outside of the institution for research purposes. I conducted fourteen semi-structured interviews with seven participants at various geographical locations. Besides the cost involved, this was a time consuming process which usually resulted with me being in unfamiliar environments. The additional informal 'greet, meet, share and get

to know each other' contributed immensely to my anticipation of challenges and appeared to level the power balances between myself and participants before formally collecting data. Had I attempted this on the same day as data collection, we would have had insufficient time. The additional informal session also allowed enough time for rapport and comfort in the interview relationship. Subsequent to this informal interview, all further arrangements followed smoothly.

I found that theoretical and practical piloting interviews were invaluable in preparing for the actual interviews. Successful interviews with academic colleagues relied on good preparation and effective time management. I had to allow for sufficient time for set up, conducting the interview, closing the interview, post interview practicalities and writing field notes. Conducting semi structured interviews with colleagues in person, on-site, gave me the opportunity to contextually experience each university and associated teaching resources. As a result, I gained greater awareness and sensitivity towards the various vocational rehabilitation curricula.

Although I carefully considered the aspect of 'insider/outsider' positionality and the possibility of feelings of mistrust, I did not overtly experience either. The level of commonality as educators in one area of occupational therapy and having a common goal to work together on the curriculum, made the fluidity of the 'insider/outsider' positionality less tangible. Being in an academic environment requires one to display academic integrity at all times and in my opinion, therefore trust of each other with similar backgrounds.

Maintaining the balance between the flexibility of an academic conversation and the interview schedule was not an easy process. I had to maintain an appropriate level of reciprocity while conversing as equals. I had to be constantly mindful that I was the researcher and therefore not

to overshare, that there was both an outcome and time constraints to this relationship. This lead to overwhelming feelings of fatigue after the interview.

Unexpectedly, participants gave positive feedback with one concluding that the experience had been cathartic as she had not articulated her views before. Participants appeared to value our interactions and some intended to use the interview transcriptions in their teaching portfolios. This is consistent with Aburn et al. (2021) who states that participants experienced the sharing of information as helpful in their own understanding.

As an educator of vocational rehabilitation, my participation in this study was indispensable. Without my input, the description of the delivered undergraduate vocational rehabilitation curriculum would be incomplete. As a participant, in my own research, I had to manage potential bias during interviews through the practice of reflexivity using a researcher journal and reflexive bracketing. Rather than conducting my participatory interviews after the other interviews, I would have preferred being interviewed before conducting the other interviews. I would have been better equipped to step into the shoes of participant. Conversely this may have created a bias towards the participants.

Academics interviewing other academics should always remain engaged, honest and authentic without being pretentious whilst managing differing roles (Coar & Sim, 2006). I had to remain cognizant of my subjective being and various identities. Ignoring the potential impact of these elements could lead to distrust and confusion in the interviewee (Finlay, 1998).

Concluding remarks

Interviewing academic colleagues using a conversational stance was very humbling and rewarding. Challenges turned into opportunities when guided by the philosophical constructs of pragmatism. Personal interviews gave academic colleagues a secure platform for discussing

their curricula and gave me the opportunity to understand how the vocational rehabilitation curriculum was threaded through the different occupational therapy programs.

Thorough theoretical and practical preparation are essential – more so in a small academic community where participants are familiar with each other and often work together. Being constantly ethically mindful and being extra vigilant about maintaining confidentiality are critical elements. A researcher must be very sensitive to the participants – for their input, time and for revealing information not often shared. Giving the participants an opportunity to review their transcripts and remove information they did not feel comfortable with sharing further contributed towards this aspect.

In this environment, one must never make assumptions. The researcher must be astute enough to anticipate potential assumptions, to acknowledge them and then to dismantle them. Having sufficient time to do this in an informal environment before data collection is invaluable. Revealing my identities as this stage of the research levelled the playing field and upon reflection, I realized that as educators we all had similar experiences. We are clinicians first and foremost and by a process of osmosis mostly, we become educators gradually building teaching skills.

Building a research support team who understand the context but who are not directly involved is very helpful for the researcher. This facilitated a safe space, without breaching confidentiality, to debrief, to gain support and have the courage to continue the research process. It takes courage to interview academic colleagues – it takes courage to be interviewed by an academic colleague but we have a common goal, that of educating our undergraduate students to ultimately serve the needs of our clients. Engaging in an authentic and honest manner whilst acknowledging my identities and experiencing positionality fluidity enabled a positive research experience.

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Planned curriculum interview schedule

1. Looking at the planned curriculum - that which is on paper - please share with me how this was developed.

2. How would you describe the purpose or outcome of the curriculum?

3. Tell me more about the theories and models which you include in your curriculum.

4. What teaching and learning strategies do you plan to include in the delivery of your curriculum?

5. Who do you plan to involve in teaching within the classroom situation and/or skills lab?

6. Is there an opportunity for fieldwork – client contact - in your planned curriculum? Please tell me more about this.

7. Have you had an opportunity to be involved in the review, reform or evaluation of this curriculum? If so, tell me what did this process involve?

8. In summary, what do you think the strengths are of the curriculum you have planned?

9. And the limitations of the planned curriculum?

Delivered curriculum interview schedule

1. Could you please share the delivery (implementation) of your planned curriculum?

2. What resources do you have to deliver the curriculum?

3. What are your perceptions of how students experience this part of the occupational therapy program?

4. If you could change anything about your planned curriculum to ease delivery thereof, what would it be?

5. Moving onto the topic of the core curriculum in vocational rehabilitation which we are
    hoping to develop with this research. I am looking to establish a definition – or clarify the
    term "*core undergraduate curriculum in vocational rehabilitation*". How would you
    describe this concept?