Reviewer's report

Title: Understanding recovery in the context of lived experience of personality disorders: a collaborative, qualitative research study

Version: 2  Date: 21 January 2015

Reviewer: Kota Takaoka

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In Method

Major Compulsory Revisions
1: You need to show the detail of the sample because the age range is wide. The range of 26-65 years old means a variety of life histories. Generally speaking, those factors affect their theme of personality disorder.

Minor Essential Revisions
2: You mentioned “a number of specialist personality disorders services in the UK do not require formal diagnoses”. However, even if you don’t need to cover differences of the diagnosis of personality disorder, they have different symptoms, relationship style, or time of the onset their symptom etc. So, how about showing their basic information?

Major Compulsory Revisions
3: Explain why you think the 6 participants are enough to show your results are reliable.

Major Compulsory Revisions
4: You touch a little with thematic saturation issue as qualitative research. You need to show the saturation issue in method part.

Minor Essential Revisions
5: Show your interview guide. This is because, in data collection, you need to show how you pay attention to avoid suggestibility and contamination to interviewees.

Major Compulsory Revisions
6: You state that a collaborative approach was your research strength. However, I, as a reviewer, couldn’t imagine how strong it was. You need to explain how effective your collaborative research group was. Explain the thematic process: why change and arrange the initial themes into the final themes and how it was going, in the discussion between each researcher using table 2.

In Result
Major Compulsory Revisions
7: You need to explain the reason why do you use the term “reconciling”. When I read your data, there was no in-vivo code about reconciliation. From the data, it sounds like just “arranging” or “balancing” between internal and external world instead of “reconciling”. If you want to use the term “reconciling” in theme, you need to show more impact data about reconciliation.

Discretionary Revisions
8: Once again, I consider the wide range of participants’ age. For example, 26 years old and 65 years old who have personality disorder are different psychologically, physically, socially and spiritually. Please describe the detail of reason why you can neglect each of their backgrounds (age factor and first disease onset).

In Conclusion

Minor Essential Revisions
9: As you mentioned in the limitation, the 6 participants were chosen from the same group. Therefore, you just showed the hypothesis about recovery about personality disorder. As qualitative research, you need to tell differences between hypothesis generation and hypothesis testing in your conclusion.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.