

The Silent Practice: A mixed-methods exploration of practising therapists' experiences of publishing their research

Research has a tangible potential in
changing peoples' lives (BPS, 2018)

The future of psychotherapy is
reliant on research (UKCP, 2022)

“Clinical experience, wisdom, novel hypotheses ... are
often lost ... We are letting knowledge from practice drip
through the holes of a colander” (Kazdin, 2008, p.155).

Objectives

- To identify commonly-held beliefs about being a therapist and researcher.
- To explore the personal and social experiences of being published therapist-researcher.

The aim being to support more practising counsellors,
psychotherapists and Counselling Psychologists to
publish their research independent of academia.

Methodology

A qualitatively-driven mixed-methods research study
in two phases.

Phase 1

An online mixed-methods survey with demographic &
Likert-scale questions, and a Story Completion task:

*You have just found out that a therapy colleague of yours,
Sam, has had an article published following undertaking
research within their private practice.*

What happens next?

Phase 2

Free-Association Narrative Interviews exploring:

- personal and social
- conscious and unconscious
- narrative dynamics in action

with practising counsellors, psychotherapists and
Counselling Psychologists who have published their
research independent of academia.

Phase 1 Analysis

Qualitative participant responses

“studies on my
own clients...
would be
unethical” (#70)

“I feel jealous
and full of
envy” (#19)

“super proud
of my
colleague”
(#101)

“cannot afford
to work less...to
do unpaid
research” (#61)

89% stated research is
very important to therapy



Quantitative online survey data

74% stated their
training included
research process
and output



60% stated research
was positively
spoken about during
their training

23% stated they had
published their research

Author

Alan S McPherson
(am3756@live.mdx.ac.uk)

Supervisors

Dr Deborah Bailey-Rodriguez (Middlesex University)
Dr Alistair McBeath (Metanoia Institute)

for more
info...

