

Topic Guide – Participants with Lived Experience

Research Questions

1. What types of risk-taking behaviours are talked about by people with experience of a bipolar diagnosis?

Aims of the interview: (1) define risk taking and risky behaviours, (2) personal experiences of risk-taking, (3) impact of risk-taking behaviours, (4) feelings/ emotions related to risk-taking, and (5) access to support

Introductions

Thank you: Thank you for taking part in this interview as part of my research into the language of risk-taking in bipolar. The aim of this research is to understand more about how risky behaviours are presented in bipolar and to create a lexicon of risk-taking which can be used to search for risky behaviours on social media and in medical records. Ultimately the aim is to identify if there are any areas where further support would be beneficial.

Describe interview: I'll begin the interview by asking a number of open-ended questions about risk-taking, and I want to emphasise that there are no right or wrong answers, this is to find out about risk-taking from lived experience. I'll start by asking about your general view of risky behaviour and the types of risks you may have taken, and then I'll ask you some more questions based on the types of risks you've identified. In the second part of the interview, I'll ask you to complete a rating exercise to determine the relevance of certain risky behaviours if you're happy to do so, and there will be time at the end of the interview if you want to discuss anything else that wasn't covered by the questions.

Disclosure: I won't be making any judgments on anything that you tell me today and I'd like you to feel as comfortable as possible so please tell me if you'd like to move on to a different question or if you'd like to take a break. Everything you say to me will remain confidential unless what is said in the interview makes me think that you, or someone else, is at significant risk of harm. In this case I will have to break confidentiality and speak to a member of staff about this, but where possible, I will tell you if I have to do this. For example, if you tell me that you are currently having very strong thoughts about suicide I will need to disclose this, but if we are speaking about something that happened in the past and is not a present risk then this will not need to be disclosed.

Consent for recording: I'm going to be recording the interview using Teams so that it can be transcribed for qualitative analysis after the interview, I know that it may feel a bit uncomfortable but just try to ignore it as much as possible. Are you happy to proceed with the interview on the basis of everything I've just discussed?

Opening Questions

- Can you tell me about yourself eg, where you live, what you like to do, any hobbies you have?
- How do you refer to your diagnosis? (eg. prompts - bipolar, bipolar disorder, manic depressive)
- Can you tell me about when you first diagnosed?
 - What were some of the symptoms you were experience that led to your diagnosis?
 - Can I ask if you take medication for bipolar?

Part 1 – Main Interview Questions

And so now we'll move on to some more in-depth questions so I can understand more about your perspective of risk-taking in bipolar.

Defining risk-taking

- What does the term risk-taking mean to you?
- What types of risks do you think people with bipolar might take?
- Can you tell me about any of your risky behaviours?
 - Can you tell me about the relationship between mood and risky behaviour X?
 - Are there any factors that make you more or less likely to engage in risky behaviour X, other than your mood?
 - Can you tell me about the relationship between medication and risky behaviours?
 - What are the biggest impacts that risky behaviour(X) has had on you or other people?
 - What emotions do you associate with this risky behaviour?
 - FU - How does doing something this make you feel at the time?
 - FU - How do you feel about that [risky behaviour] when you reflect back?
- Thank you for sharing that with me. Are there any other risky behaviours that you'd be happy to talk about? (then repeat questions in red)
- Are there any risky behaviours that you associate with positive outcomes?

Support

- Considering the risky behaviours we've talked about today, are there any that you would like help for?
 - What kind of support would you like?
 - How would you ideally like to access this help?
 - Have you ever tried to seek help for [risky behaviour X]?
 - What did you do?
 - How did that go?
- Do health professionals ever ask you about risky behaviours?
 - Which ones do they ask about?
 - Are there any we have talked about they don't ask about?
 - Why do you think this is?

General Prompts

- I am sorry to hear you are having a hard time
- I'm sorry that sounds like it must be really difficult

Part 2 – Examining Risk Taking Behaviours from Literature

The next part of the interview includes a survey of 17 risk-taking behaviours that have been cited as being relevant to the study of risk-taking in the literature. I'd like you rank each behaviour according to how often you may have engaged with that behaviour (1: Never, 5: Frequently). If there are any behaviours that you don't feel comfortable talking about, please skip them. I'll give you some time to complete the online form and then I'd like to ask a few follow-up questions.

Qualtrics Link: https://lancasteruni.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_em7EjGYDfIZRyHY

Risk-Taking Behaviour	I never do/ have done this (1)	I rarely do/ have done this (2)	I sometimes do/ have done this (3)	I do/ have done this fairly often (4)	I do/ have done this very frequently (5)
Suicidal ideation					
Eat excessive amounts of food					
Shop without worrying about running up debts					
Start an argument					
Initiate relationships with strangers					
Excessive alcohol consumption					
Seek out and engage in casual sexual relations					
Go to a potentially dangerous place where I wouldn't normally go					
Dangerous or aggressive driving					
Self-harm					
Hit someone or break something					
Attempt suicide					
Gamble					
Recreational drug use					
Make risky investments					
Shoplift or steal something					
Set fire to something					

- Are there any risky behaviours that aren't described above that you think are important to consider in the future?
- Have you ever been asked to complete a questionnaire which asks about risky behaviours before?
 - Can you tell me about your experience ?

Closing Questions

So we've reached the end of the interview. I just want to say thank you again for taking the time to speak to me about such a personal topic.

- How do you feel about the questions I asked?
- I'd really like to hear your thoughts and feedback on anything we discussed today, or to know if there was anything else that you'd like to talk about that didn't come up in the questions?
- Would you like me to provide you with a transcript of the interview when they have been transcribed/ or contacted with the details of any publications that use this research?

Thank you for your further thoughts, this has been really insightful for me.

- Would you be happy for me to call you tomorrow to check-in, as we've covered a lot of sensitive topics today?
- In which format would you prefer the £30 reimbursement offered for this study e.g. bank transfer, voucher etc.

Inform participant that I'm turning the recording off.

Provide participant with debrief sheet.

Extra: Does changing or stopping medication increase the likelihood of risky behaviours?