Using Photography and Facilitated Conversations to Empower Marginalized Communities

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Introduction
How do you know what you know?
How do you know what you know?

➢ Direct experience
How do you know what you know?

- Direct experience
- Indirect experience: Listening to others
How do you know what you know?

- Direct experience
- Indirect experience: Listening to others

- Whose voices do you listen to?
Usual Approach to Research

- Researcher (an outsider to the community) chooses the topic to study
- Researcher chooses method of investigation
- Researcher chooses whom to recruit or survey for information
- Researcher collects data
- Researcher analyses data
- Researcher comes to conclusions
- Researcher disseminates findings

Researcher has decision-making power throughout the process.
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Why does power-sharing matter in research?
Empowerment.
Empowerment.

Ethical treatment of vulnerable communities
Empowerment.

Ethical treatment of vulnerable communities.

Accuracy of data.
Empowerment.

Ethical treatment of vulnerable communities.

Accuracy of data.

Insight.
Photovoice: Participatory Action Research

➢ Type of CBPR
➢ Mixes research with advocacy
➢ Based in photography
How does Photovoice work?

➢ Identify the issue or the question to explore
How does Photovoice work?

➢ Identify the issue or the question to explore
➢ Recruit participants
How does Photovoice work?

➢ Identify the issue or the question to explore
➢ Recruit participants
➢ Training
  ➢ Photography basics
  ➢ Ethical and safe photography
How does Photovoice work?

- Identify the issue or the question to explore
- Recruit participants
- Training
  - Photography basics
  - Ethical and safe photography
- Photography
  - Photo assignments
Discussion / Data Analysis

➢ Small group discussions
➢ SHOWED mnemonic:
  ➢ What do we See here?
  ➢ What is really Happening?
  ➢ How does this relate to Our lives?
  ➢ Why does this issue Exist?
  ➢ What can we Do about it?
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➢ Participants identify the themes and patterns emerging
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➢ Participants identify the themes and patterns emerging

➢ Repeat: 4 weeks to 1 year
  ➢ Photo assignments
  ➢ Taking pictures
  ➢ Discussions
Discussion / Data Analysis

➢ Small group discussions
➢ SHOWED mnemonic:
   ➢ What do we **see** here?
   ➢ What is really **happening**?
   ➢ How does this relate to **our** lives?
   ➢ **W**hy does this issue **exist**?
   ➢ What can we **do** about it?
➢ Participants identify the themes and patterns emerging

➢ Repeat: 4 weeks to 1 year
   ➢ Photo assignments
   ➢ Taking pictures
   ➢ Discussions

➢ Selection of final photography
   ➢ Captions
Conclusion of a Photovoice Project

➢ Exhibit
  ➢ Invite local decision-makers
➢ Action plan
Conclusion of a Photovoice Project

- Exhibit
  - Invite local decision-makers
- Action plan

- Can change people’s opinions about themselves and their environments
Conclusion of a Photovoice Project

- Exhibit
  - Invite local decision-makers
- Action plan

- Can change people’s opinions about themselves and their environments
- Moves them from being passive bystanders to active participants
Strengths of Photovoice

➢ Can be used with any marginalized population
Strengths of Photovoice

➢ Can be used with any marginalized population:
➢ Can explore a variety of topics
Case Example

➢ Population:
  ➢ Resettled Burmese Refugee Adult Women

➢ Topic:
  ➢ Well-being

➢ Tampa, 2013
I feel this house [has] seen many problem but we don’t have a bill for month. In here we have to pay the bill every month and also water too. Everything is a price not free.

- P. M.
In our country we don’t have any refrigerator, so after we bought the meat we have to... cook right away. We cannot store the meat... It is a good thing to have a refrigerator. ... But the bad thing is we have to pay the electric bill because it is so high. ... We can pay the bill but only if my husband is working. But we just live paycheck to paycheck. We don’t have any extra money.

- N. M.
When we arrived in the US, we need to learn English in order to get a job. It is really hard for us because we are old, not like young people, so if we have an English teacher who speaks our language, we can learn more and more easily...

- P. P.
Findings

➢ Financial challenges
➢ Language learning
➢ Importance of cultural practices:
   ➢ Refugee-run community garden
Case Example

➢ Population:
  ➢ Adults who use wheelchairs

➢ Topic:
  ➢ Accessibility

➢ Orlando, 2015
Safety

This is an example of the disconnect of ADA and Accessibility. The ramp is blocked by a parking spot, with a pole in front of it. There is not enough room between the cars for a chair to get through. The ramp in the back of the picture is also blocked. The width of the ramp does not allow a person in a chair room to open the door without falling off of the ramp. This ramp is dangerous, inaccessible, and ADA compliant. Stairs are my nemesis, especially when I must go around to the back of a building that is poorly lit and isolated to use a ramp. Would you send your daughter back there? I'm already vulnerable, I can't defend myself physically. So sure, I'll go out to the dark alley to get into a building, alone. Every time I have to do this, I wonder if my story will end up on "Forensic Files". Police tell women to stay in well lit areas....ummmm, should I carry a flashlight?

- A. P.
A park bench: Family, friends, and becoming one with nature. Once again to me it means inclusion and acceptance.

— D.F.
I have to plan every aspect of my day, every day. Imagine planning each step you take on a grocery trip, it is exhausting. These parking signs bring me relief because I know these spots are easily accessible.

- J. L.
Findings

➢ The built environment presents more of a challenge than their disability
➢ Changing the built environment to be more accessible allows them to participate fully and safely in society
Bottom line:

Power-sharing in research empower marginalized communities to speak for themselves.

We just provide the platform.
This presentation was prepared in compliance with ISO 20252 International quality standard for market, public opinion and social research.

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