

Project “ADULATION- Adult Education for Social Change”

2020-1-CY01-KA204-065947

“ADULATION Training toolkit to enhance citizenship of adult and senior learners”

Intellectual Output 3

TOPIC 1: HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

PHOTOVOICE

TOOL 1

OVERVIEW OF METHOD - Photovoice

Photovoice is a qualitative method used for community-based participatory research to document and reflect reality. It is an empowering and flexible process that combines photography with grassroots social action. It will empower the learners regardless of status, including those categories of people who face discrimination based on their language, gender, race, class, disability, etc.

Participants will have the opportunity to express their perspectives by photographing scenes highlighting their life experiences concerning the research themes. In the following phase, the participants will meet to display their photographs. They will be divided into groups and asked to discuss how the shots relate to the research themes.

The method will produce a considerable amount of visual material, and the partners will hold photo exhibitions, creating an even more significant impact through the implementation of this project

METHODOLOGY

Photovoice methodology is a participatory action research strategy that can motivate youth mobilisation for community change¹. It is a visual research methodology that intends to promote social change. Photovoice has been used to examine change in empowerment in vulnerable communities².

Photovoice was created in the early 90s by Caroline C Wang and Mary Ann Burris to bring attention to the daily life experiences of women living in Yunnan Province, China, regarding decision-making for regional development³. In other words, photovoice is a method by which people can recognise, represent and improve their community through a photographic procedure. Therefore, one should look into the goals that need to be fulfilled for Photovoice to succeed in the proposed social matters. The three goals are as follows⁴:

- Empower people to record and review their community's strengths and concerns
- Encourage critical dialogue and understanding of crucial concerns through substantial and small-scale groups discussion of photographs
- Reach policymakers.

¹ C Wang, 'Youth Participation in Photovoice as a Strategy for Community Change', *Journal of Community Practice*, 147 – 161, 2008

² K Budig, J Diez, P Conde, M Sastre, M Hernan, M Franco, 'Photovoice and empowerment: evaluating the transformative potential of a participatory action research project', *BMC Public Health*, 2018

³ C Wang, M A Burris, 'Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use of Participatory Needs Assessment', *Health and Education Behaviour* Vol. 24, Issue 3, 1997, published by SAGE.

⁴ *Ibid.*

The history of Photovoice builds upon Freire's methods, in which the terms *photo novella*, *foto novella*, and *photonovel* are used to illustrate the process of using photographs or pictures to tell a story or to teach language and literacy⁵.

Through ethnographic techniques that merge photography, critical dialogue and experiential knowledge, the participants exhibit their society's concerns to characterise their culture, reveal social issues and promote social change. The proposed methodology has been effectively implemented in education, public health, disability studies and refugees⁶.

Photovoice is one of the numerous qualitative methods developed in *Community-based participatory research* (CBPR). The participants use photography and stories about their photos to recognise and represent issues that are vital to them, which could facilitate researchers in having a greater understanding of the issue⁷.

Photovoice Methodology can be divided into the following phases⁸:

Phase 1: Identification of participants. The communication with the participants should not last more than one hour. An initial semi-structured interview at this phase should be carried out to build rapport with each one of the participants. It should be utilised to recognise and realise the participant's perceptions of the community and to achieve awareness and gratitude for the individual's ideas. Participants should be shown how to use a camera and provided with a '*photography mission*'.

Phase 2: Taking the Photographs. Participants should be given some time (from 3 days to 2 weeks, depending on the activities proposed) to take photographs around their community. Participants should be advised to select a limited number of photographs. This would allow a deep and detailed group discussion about each of them.

Phase 3: Follow-up (interview). The follow-up interview should not last more than 90 minutes, during which the participants should be guided into telling a story about the photographs. The facilitator should identify which of the pictures is the most important for each participant and encourage a deep analysis of that picture and what the participant wants to communicate through it.

Phase 4: The top 5 photographs are to be presented in a community presentation or display. All of the photos and associated descriptions that will be published should be written and reviewed by the

⁵ P Freire '*Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 30th Anniversary Edition*', p 192, 3rd Ed. , 2015

⁶ C A Sutton-Brown '*Photovoice: A methodological Guide*', Photography and Culture, 169 – 185, 2014

⁷ C Nykiforuk, H Vallianatos, LM Nieuwendyk, '*Photovoice as a Method for Revealing Community Perceptions of the Built and Social Environment*' 103-124, International journal of qualitative methods Vol 10, 2011

⁸ *Ibid.*

participants themselves. The reviewal procedure assists the participants in ensuring that the summary precisely reflects what they intended to convey.

Phase 5: Presentation or Display of the Photographs. The results of the projects should be shared with communities at local events, presentations at local gathering places, community websites and municipal councils.

Facilitators should keep in mind that the final goal of Photovoice projects is to empower the participants. Future research should be able to evaluate and assess the impact it has had on participants' empowerment alterations and how to maintain these individual and social changes⁹.

⁹K Budig, J Diez, P Conde, M Sastre, M Hernan, M Franco, '*Photovoice and empowerment: evaluating the transformative potential of a participatory action research project*', BMC Public Health, 2018

Tool 1 – Introduction to Photovoice

Aim & Objectives

The overall aim of this session is to gain an understanding of the Photovoice method and how to implement a Photovoice Project.

Moreover, this session aims towards providing adult educators with an understanding of how this method can be used to address the topic of “Human Rights and Climate Change”, as well as other important issues.

Time

60 minutes

Materials Needed

For the implementation of this introductory session, standard workshop materials will be needed, such as flip charts, paper and markers.

Methodology and Techniques

Participants will use video and/or photo images to capture aspects of their personal environment and experiences and eventually share their perspectives through them. The purpose of these pictures being captured, displayed and narrated is to draw the attention of the public and the policymakers to specific issues in the hope that they will spur change.

Photovoice consists of five main concepts:

- Teaching images
- Pictures have the power to influence policy
- The act of creating and defining the images that shape healthful public policy should involve all community members
- The process entails bringing an audience of policy makers and other influential people to the table
- Photovoice highlights individual and community action

The Photovoice technique operates on the foundation of the following key principles:

- Helping those without a voice be heard by enabling them to record and reflect on their experiences and their communities' positive or negative conditions.
- Promoting critical consciousness by providing the opportunity to choose, discuss, and reflect on the subjects of each photograph. This allows for a better understanding of the participants' circumstances and the economic, social, psychological, and political forces that shape them.
- Achieving changes that improve conditions and enhance lives by reaching and influencing policy makers.

In order to achieve the aforementioned goals, it is vital to understand that Photovoice intends much more than just giving participants cameras and asking them to capture pictures and videos. The method followed by the facilitator is to start by guiding participants on using a camera and then discuss safe and ethical documentary practices. It is crucial to meet the facilitated group regularly, to show and discuss the images taken, and to be able to state opinions and feelings in a safe and supportive environment.

A Photovoice project can be an inexpensive and powerful tool for social and personal change and impact. Still, it needs to be thoroughly planned and carefully executed, with clear set goals.

The current session explores the method from a theoretical standpoint and does not implement it directly. However, it is essential for the successful implementation of the following Photovoice sessions included in the current Toolkit.

Preparation

The facilitator needs to be thoroughly informed and acquainted with the method of Photovoice.

Instructions & schedule of the session

This session focuses on training the participants on how to implement a Photovoice Project and represents a crucial step in attaining successful results.

1. The facilitator starts with technical training. This part includes providing guidelines on the basic use of the camera equipment and the fundamental photography techniques. During this discussion, the facilitator touches upon specific subjects such as operating the camera, composition, adjusting the light conditions using film and shutter speed and other techniques, using a flash, editing (digitally or otherwise), and how to shoot moving subjects, etc.

2. The second step is providing guidelines in ethical and safe photography. During this discussion, the facilitator should highlight the fact that, while photographing subjects, participants should keep in mind that they may find themselves in unpleasant situations (such as capturing private, embarrassing, or illegal behaviour).
3. When working in a group setting, it is essential to set ground rules and clarify why they are necessary. As mentioned earlier, Photovoice is a collaborative process, so the facilitator should highlight this. Also, the facilitator should establish a safe space and a mutually supportive team, explaining the importance of active listening skills. Moreover, engaging in group-building exercises can serve the scope of this session.

Debriefing

Pose the following questions to the participants:

- When is it ethical to take photos?
- How do you ask permission to take a photo?
- Should you ask subjects to sign a release form?
- How do you react if the subject refuses to be photographed?

Expected Outcomes

Knowledge

- Understand the main principles of the Photovoice method
- Know the key concepts of the Photovoice technique
- Acquire a thorough understanding of ethical photography

Skills

- Ability to use a camera
- Practice safe and ethical photography
- Develop teamworking skills
- Develop active listening skills

Attitudes

- Implement safe and ethical photography

Tips for Facilitators/ Trainers/ Mentors

There are some general guidelines that a facilitator should take into consideration when planning a Photovoice activity.

- By nature, Photovoice requires the participation and collaboration of the participants, who should participate in the project's planning and implementation. Additionally, the learners' needs and unique characteristics should always be considered when planning a training session.
- Participants will need training, no matter their background. It is essential to consider that some adult learners might never have used a camera before, while others might be familiar with one. In either case, basic training on the fundamental techniques of documentary photography and the use of the equipment should be provided to them.
- Guidelines regarding photography ethics and how to keep themselves safe should be provided to the learners.
- Participants of any Photovoice activity need support and the opportunity to express themselves. Participants must have the chance to show and discuss their photos. Creating a safe and supportive environment where they can learn a new skill and gain confidence in their ability to express opinions and ideas is crucial to the process.
- Each Photovoice project should have a more significant meaning besides completing a training session. Participants should have the chance to see their photos used positively and significantly. One way to achieve this is by hosting an exhibition with the pictures taken.