# Photovoice

Step-by-step process:

Full resource: https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/online/all/?id=20817

Photovoice follows a particular process to ensure the research maintains its emancipatory, transformative character. Here is the step-by-step guidance (adapted from Wang, 1999, pp. 187-189, emphasis in original):

* Select and recruit a target audience of policymakers or community leaders.

As the research is about bringing about social change and transformation, the recruitment of stakeholders at this early stage is key.

* Recruit a group of photovoice participants.

The photovoice participants come from minoritized communities, who are usually invisible and unheard.

* Introduce the photovoice methodology to participants and facilitate a group discussion.

The meeting offered in this step enables stakeholders and community members to formulate their positions and opinions, which in turn helps to identify the focus for the photovoice research.

* Obtain informed consent

At this stage, the researcher will ask stakeholders and participants to consent to participating in the project. This step is important. Not all groups of communities and stakeholders may provide written consent. But because photovoice research requires significant commitment from those taking part, the consent stage is almost a contractual relationship. Effectively, by consenting to the participation in this project, participants commit to undertaking the research, and stakeholders commit to implementing actions emerging from the research.

* Pose an initial theme for taking pictures.

In collaboration, the research participants, the stakeholders, and the researcher formulate the theme for taking photographs.

* Distribute cameras to participants and review how to use them.

At this stage, the researcher ensures that research participants are appropriately trained in the use of the cameras, but also in the principles of photography. Guidance provided by the researcher would include information on how to take photographs ethically and how to obtain consent from bystanders in pictures, for example.

* Provide time for participants to take pictures.

Most often, the timeframe for photovoice research is from a few days to a few weeks.

* Meet to discuss photographs. SHOWeD technique:
* What do you **S**ee here?
* What is really **H**appening here?
* How does this relate to **O**ur lives?
* **W**hy does this situation, concern, or strength exist?
* What can we **D**o about it?

This discussion meeting is effectively the analysis phase of the research. All participants are asked to present one or two of their series of photographs using the SHOWeD questions. Through presenting their own photographs and listening to others' presentations, the group should come to a consensus regarding the most important factors emerging. These, in turn, are then used to formulate actionable recommendations.

* Plan with participants a format to share photographs and stories with policymakers or community leaders.

In this final stage of the photovoice research, the researcher facilitates the meeting between participants and the stakeholders. The aim of this meeting is to share the recommendations and to kickstart their implementation.

Source:

Wang, C. C. (1999). Photovoice: A participatory action research strategy applied to women's health. *Journal of Women's Health*, 8(2), 185-192.

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