

# Photovoice methodology

**Mikateko Mathebula & Carmen Martinez-Vargas**

SARCHI Chair in Higher Education and Human Development Research Programme, UFS

School of Nursing, University of the Free State

15 June 2019

T: +27 51 401 9856 | [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za/hehd](http://www.ufs.ac.za/hehd)

 UFSUV |  UFSweb |  UFSweb |  ufsuv

**MartinezVargasC@ufs.ac.za**  
**HoppenerM@ufs.ac.za**

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# **1. Photovoice: Theoretical considerations**

- Participatory paradigm
- What is photovoice?
- Photovoice guide
- Examples (Literature)

# **2. Photovoice: Practical considerations**

- Pre-Projects: Documents and design
- Project implementation: Activities
- Post-Project: Dissemination

# Participatory paradigm

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Positivism</i>	<i>Postpositivism</i>	<i>Critical Theory et al.</i>	<i>Constructivism</i>	<i>Participatory<sup>f</sup></i>
Ontology	Naïve realism— “real” reality but apprehensible	Critical realism—“real” reality but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible	Historical realism— virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time	Relativism— local and specific co-constructed realities	Participative reality— subjective-objective reality, co-created by mind and given cosmos
Epistemology	Dualist/objectivist; findings true	Modified dualist/ objectivist; critical tradition/community; findings probably true	Transactional/ subjectivist; value- mediated findings	Transactional/ subjectivist; co-created findings	Critical subjectivity in participatory transaction with cosmos; extended epistemology of experiential, propositional, and practical knowing; co-created findings
Methodology	Experimental/ manipulative; verification of hypotheses; chiefly quantitative methods	Modified experimental/ manipulative; critical multiplism; falsification of hypotheses; may include qualitative methods	Dialogic/dialectical	Hermeneutical/ dialectical	Political participation in collaborative action inquiry; primacy of the practical; use of language grounded in shared experiential context

# What is photovoice?

- Participatory approaches
- Created by Caroline Wang 1992
- Give a voice to people who often have little or no opportunity to express their views within their own communities or to influence decisions that may affect their lives.
- Participants have control to tell their stories and perspectives in their own way (Empowerment)
- PV does not require literacy/writing skills
- Deliberative space as central (Cycles of individual/group reflection)
- Epistemic justice

# Photovoice guide



 **PhotoVoice**  
Facilitator's guide

**Rutgers** For sexual and reproductive health and rights

## 1 | PhotoVoice structure

To get optimal results and impact from your PhotoVoice training, it is best to stick to the step by step structure of the PhotoVoice method.

Learning to understand the basics of photography and photos by watching, discussing and using the camera!

Block I  
PhotoVoice Training —  
Getting started

Identifying the link between PhotoVoice and the research question by individual reflection.

Block IV  
Research  
Question

Answering the research question by taking pictures, starting the individual selection process and making captions.

Block V  
Fieldwork

Block II  
The Basics of  
Photography

Categorizing the pictures, making the group's final selection, and finalise the captions.

Block VI  
Selection  
Process

Create awareness with the results by organizing an exhibition for stakeholders.

Block VII  
The Exhibition

Block III  
How to Work  
a Camera?

# Some examples

**Example 1:** Aber, A., Waxman, N., Khatib, A., Bamfo, A., Simon-Ogan, D., & Wilson, S. (2017). Use of Photovoice to Highlight Environmental Justice Issues: The Power of Photography in Buzzard Point, Washington, DC. *Environmental Justice*, 10(2), 36-42.

**Example 2:** Ciolan, L., & Manasia, L. (2017). Reframing Photovoice to Boost Its Potential for Learning Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1609406917702909.

**Example 3:** Cornell, J., & Kessi, S. (2017). Black students' experiences of transformation at a previously "white only" South African university: a photovoice study. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(11), 1882-1899.

**Example 4:** Klugesherz, M. B. (2017). " Four Years of Ramen and Poverty": Using Photovoice to Engage the Voices of Food Insecure Students.

**Example 5:** Moya, E. M., Chavez-Baray, S. M., Loweree, J., Mattera, B., & Martinez, N. (2017). adults experiencing homelessness in the Us–Mexico Border region: a Photovoice Project. *Frontiers in public health*, 5, 113.



## 2. Photovoice: practical considerations

PRE-PROJECT	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	POST-PROJECT
<b>Drafting the Photovoice project:</b> Research proposal Consent form Cameras contract Attendance sheet Compensation forms	<b>Activities:</b> Ice breaker Introduction to the project Schedule Inform consent Bank forms Cameras contracts	Dissemination strategies (Public Exhibitions, Public presentations, website, book, policy brief, publications) LTR
<b>Selecting the participants and collecting bio information</b>	<b>Activities:</b> River of life World café Photography training (Theoretical and practical) Storyboards Photos selection Captions and tittles	
<b>Photovoice schedule (Design)</b>	Stakeholders matrix Dissemination plan	

# What we did in the Miratho project

- We held Photovoice workshops over a four day period in the Free State in May and August 2018:
- **The first day** of the workshop was dedicated to working on River of Life drawings as the first step of reflecting on students' educational journeys at university and using visual methods to aid in story telling.
- **The second day** involved exploring students' understandings of 'inclusion/exclusion' and identifying any concepts that needed to be better explained before they began working on their stories. The day was therefore dedicated to brainstorming ideas around experiences of inclusion and exclusion in students' university lives, and how these experiences affected and/or continue to affect their learning.



# What we did in the Miratho project

- Once the main issues were understood by the participants, and the stories to focus on were clear for the group, the **third day** was dedicated to photography training, including ethical considerations for taking photographs of people for research and artistic purposes.
- The **fourth day** focused on the curation of the photos and the enhancement of their stories. Students had time to reflect on their stories and how to tell them through the photos they took, including giving each photograph a caption and deciding on a title for their photo stories.
- We held an exhibition in 2019; did more workshops and developed a collective book. Also used photographs and video clips from the event to create short videos which we will share at our stakeholder meetings.

# Website for Miratho and Access projects

- <https://www.ufs.ac.za/miratho>
- <https://photovoicecrhed.wixsite.com/accessandaspirations>

# Nursing/health related photovoice project example

JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S HEALTH  
Volume 8, Number 2, 1999  
Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.

## Photovoice: A Participatory Action Research Strategy Applied to Women's Health

CAROLINE C. WANG, Dr.P.H., M.P.H.

### ABSTRACT

Photovoice is a participatory action research strategy that may offer unique contributions to women's health. It is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. Photovoice has three main goals: to enable people (1) to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussion of their photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers. This report gives an overview of the origins, key concepts, methods, and uses of photovoice as a strategy to enhance women's health.

### INTRODUCTION

PHOTOVOICE IS AN INNOVATIVE participatory action research (PAR) method based on health promotion principles and the theoretical literature on education for critical consciousness, feminist theory, and nontraditional approaches to documentary photography. Photovoice enables people to identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. It provides people with cameras to photograph their perceived health and work realities. Photovoice has three main goals: to enable people (1) to record and reflect their personal and community strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through group discussions of photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers. This article sets forth the theoretical underpinnings of photovoice, key concepts, and methodology. Drawing examples from field experience in China and the United States, the contributions of photovoice as a PAR strategy for promoting women's health are described.

### THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The photovoice concept was developed initially by Wang and Burris to enable Chinese village women to photograph their everyday health and work realities.<sup>1,2</sup> Three main sources underpin this technique: (1) the theoretical literature on education for critical consciousness,<sup>3</sup> feminist theory, and nontraditional approaches to documentary photography, (2) the efforts of community photographers and participatory educators to challenge assumptions about representation and documentary authorship,<sup>4,5</sup> and (3) the application of the process in the Yunnan Women's Reproductive Health and Development Program supported by the Ford Foundation.

Of particular interest here are the roots of photovoice in feminist inquiry. Weiler has identified three themes that characterize a feminist methodology.<sup>6</sup> The first theme, an appreciation of women's subjective experience as researchers, advocates, and participants, builds on the understanding that feminist theory and practice carry out programs and policies by and with women instead of on

# Thank you for your attention

[Hoppenerm@ufs.ac.za](mailto:Hoppenerm@ufs.ac.za)