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Drawing as a research tool: what does it add?

Horne M^{1,2}, Masley S³, Allison-Love J⁴

1 School of Healthcare, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK;

2 Bradford Institute for Health Research, Bradford, West Yorkshire, UK.

3 Airedale NHS Trust, West Yorkshire, UK.

4 Honorary Research Associate, Bradford University, West Yorkshire

The team



Samantha Masley



Janet Love

Background

- Visual methods increasingly used in healthcare research
 - Understand patient's experience of health
 - Patients experiences of healthcare
 - Student nurses perceptions of patient groups
- Drawing has an advantage over other visual methods
 - potential to offer a way of communicating other than speech
 - Encourages collaborative meaning-making
 - offers an opportunity to access material which may be suppressed and repressed by the conscious mind (Edgar, 1999: 207)
 - Offers a way of exploring both multiplicity and complexity of human experience

To:

- (i) outline and debate the use of drawing, as a visual imagery method, within the research process
- (ii) provide a critical reflection of the use of drawing in the research process

Case study

Case Study

- Exploratory, qualitative study with a purposive sample of palliative healthcare professionals (n=16) from one hospice in West Yorkshire, England (February-May 2016)
- Used drawing to enrich the narrative account during data collection through semi-structured interviews
 - Adopted an integrated approach providing some structure with a semi structured interview schedule

- To explore the process of drawing to help facilitate the exploration, communication and our understanding of how healthcare staff emotionally resource their roles within a Hospice setting

Methodological discussion

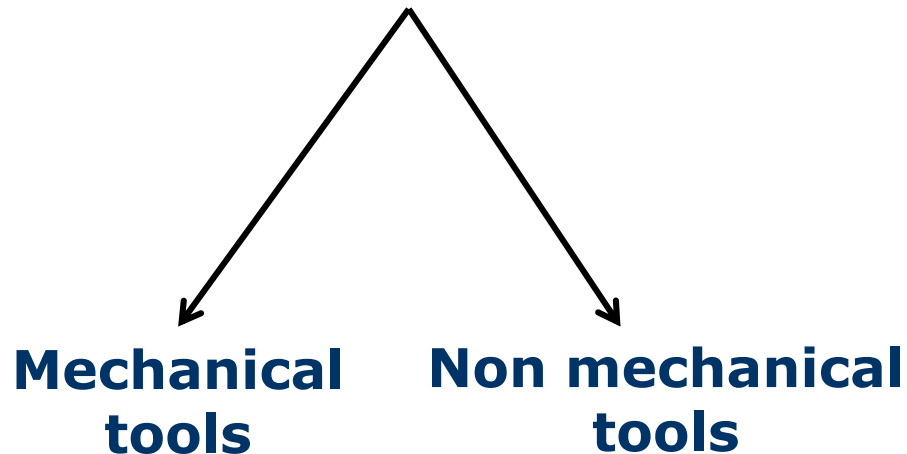
Visual research traditions

Category	Subject	Media	Setting	Intension
Archival data	None	Films, photographs, art, advertisements	Thematic	Visual supports the research activity
Visual ethnography	Observed overtly or covertly	Films, video or photographs taken	Research setting	Visual supports the research activity
Visual as prompt	Shown visual data, such as photographs	Films, photographs, drawings	Not specific	Visual chosen to direct discussion
Visual elicitation		Photographs, postcards, posters, pictures, video	Not specific	Visual directs the research activity
Self-driven visual elicitation		Photographs, video	Research setting or thematic	Visual directs the research activity
Picture elicitation (or external driven visual elicitation)	Draws a picture	Drawings, paintings	Not specific	Visual supports the research activity
Video diaries	Records reflective accounts	Video	Research setting	Visual directs or supports the research activity

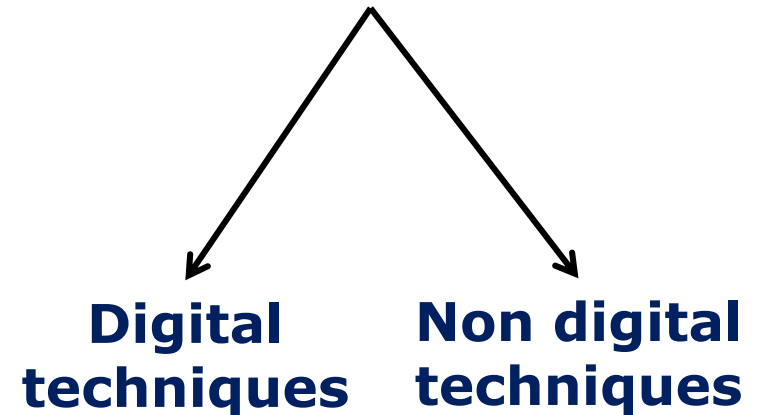
The use of visual research methods

Visual research methods

Strategies



Participatory research interventions



Practicalities of undertaking drawing as a data collection tool

- (i) participant preparation
- (ii) informed consent
- (iii) confidentiality
- (iv) dynamics

(i) Participant preparation

- Aesthetics
 - concerns around the production of a 'good' picture
 - size of paper
- Invitation needs to reassure participants that the focus is on the content of their drawing and not the quality
 - Recruiting email: *"I Can't Draw – Will This Affect Taking Part? You don't need to be Leonardo de Vinci to take part! If you can doodle - you can take part!!"*.
- Reassurance and re-framing
 - Repeat reassurance in participant information sheet, consent form & when drawing activity commences
 - Rapport building stage of the Interview Schedule to reassure
 - Drawing Protocol: four strategies to help lower the participants expectation of their own work and help re-frame down what is considered as 'good' for the project

(ii) informed consent

- clearly explaining the study purpose and reassurance about the purpose of the drawing
- what is expected of the participant – simply line drawings
- the amount of time likely to be required
- participation voluntary, as is drawing
- can withdraw, not draw, without negative repercussions

(iii) Confidentiality

- Applies to both written and image based data
 - ground rules about respecting confidentiality in order to create a safe space for the production of any personal and/or revealing images
 - anonymous titles allocated to prevent identification of participants
- Drawing method might increase participation disclosure, this may in turn open up the risk that the data can be located and people identified (Matthews 2012)

(iv) Dynamics

- Participatory approach
 - shift power imbalance in the researcher-participant relationship
 - establish rapport; engage with researcher prior to drawing
- Drawing tool
 - Lead pencil
- Type and size of paper
 - Participant comfort

Data analysis: A thorny issue

- Images need to be contextualised by the narrative account
- People may read the same image in different ways
 - discussion of the image with the participant during the interview
 - important to understand how the drawings were generated, the conversation that occurred around them and what context brought them into being (Woodhouse 2012)

What does drawing add?

Data collection

- Participatory research approach relies on researcher-participant collaboration
 - shift power imbalance in the researcher-participant relationship

'this creative method is intrinsically more enjoyable than ticking boxes and gives more control to the subject'' (Participant 3)

- Use of an integrated approach (verbal and image) offers a way of exploring multiplicity & complexity in human experience (Guillemin 2004)

'I found the interview process very therapeutic and it gave me space to clearly understand the mechanisms/processes that I utilise to relieve stress at work and to cope with the everyday ups and downs of palliative care and managing people' (Participant 1)

- Making a drawing is contingent on a process of reflection & finding a way to express this pictorially

'I enjoyed the process - doing something a bit different opens up new ways of exploring things/thoughts/feelings. To begin with it felt a little awkward - as it's not a process that I was used to but when you start the drawings start to flow!!' (Participant 2)

The narrative account

- Portrays individual emotions relatively effortlessly
 - captured the underlying emotional issues present (Vince 1995)

'It made me realise that stresses are often relieved by simple things and since the interview I am more conscious of the things I do to relieve stress...' (Participant 1)

- Use of an integrated approach encouraged collaborative meaning-making
 - allowed the drawer to give voice to what the drawing was intended to convey
- Drawings functioned 'as a catalyst, helping [participants] to articulate feelings that had been implicit and were hard to define' (Zuboff 1988:141)

'To be helped to think something through has its own value, quite apart from the research benefits' (Participant 3)

Data analysis

- Provided contextual meaning to transcripts and enhanced the process of data analysis
 - drawings appeared to create a path toward participant feelings and emotions
- The cognitive process required to draw lead to a more succinct presentation of the key elements of participants' experiences
- Richer data at an individual and collective level
- Able to make comparisons across the participants' views of managing stress, accessing psychological support
 - Allowed a more rounded knowledge about managing stress and accessing psychological support

Validity

- Drawings produced by participant without given structure from the researcher assists against researcher bias
 - Lack of structure and direction by the researcher may mean that drawing produced may not relate to the research focus and be of little use
- Using participant produced drawings is more likely to accurately represent participant experiences
 - Reliable and trustworthy (Kearney & Hyle 2004)
 - participant becomes so engrossed in doing a good job that what is actually being depicted is not the reality; a possible threat to validity and rigour (Matthews 2012)
- To promote validity and reliability:
 - participant discussed the meaning of the drawing through the semi structured interview
 - the three researchers undertook data analysis of transcripts and images individually before sharing the findings amongst themselves

Acknowledgments

Participants

- A big thank you to all the who took part in this study

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Thank you for listening

M.Horne@leedsd.ac.uk