Education Research in African Contexts

Traditions and New Beginnings for Knowledge and Impact

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CHAPTER 11

A focus on drawing as method: Insights from a novice participatory visual methodologies researcher

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Introduction

> *I want to understand the world from your point of view. I want to know what you know in the way you know it. I want to understand the meaning of your experience, to walk in your shoes, to feel things as you feel them, to explain things as you explain them.* (Spradley, 2016, p. 34)

The above classic statement by Spradley describes the essence of my study as a qualitative researcher. It depicts the relationship I wished to have with my participants, being sensitive to understand the world from their eyes. This desire as well as the study objectives, led me to employ drawing as method, to generate data with girls who had seen, heard, or experienced GBV. This then enabled me to conceptualise and understand the GBV experiences of the girls from their lens. The methodology of my study is the focus of this chapter. I will share my general research process and experience using drawing as method, the challenges I encountered as a novice participatory visual methods (PVM) researcher, as well as my fears and successes.

Violence against schoolgirls is a daily reality. Unfortunately, most literature is mainly focused on GBV among adult females (Morof et al., 2014; Mutinta, 2022), yet the vice can be traced in the early years of female lives. My study thus sought to explore the forms of GBV secondary schoolgirls experience in informal settlements and to find out from them the ways in which secondary schools can improve their support systems for secondary schoolgirls who experience GBV. GBV is part of the hard realities of living in an informal settlement. The United Nations (2006) reports it as one of the most serious human rights violations, with more than 30% of females worldwide experiencing GBV. Vulnerability to GBV in informal settlements is increased when one is younger, as is the case with secondary schoolgirls, with statistics indicating that they have the highest recorded number of cases of GBV (Mahlangu et al., 2014). Both globally and locally in Kenya, numerous policies to mitigate GBV are in place, yet the vice remains on the increase. Such policies include the Constitution of Kenya (2010), the Children's Act (2001); the Sexual Offence Act (2006); the Sexual Offences Regulations (2008). Although research on GBV is vast,

and much of the literature is mainly focused on GBV among adult females (Crooks et al., 2019), the research around GBV and girls is on the increase. This qualitative research, using a girl-friendly approach to explore the problem and possible solutions, could further contribute to understanding GBV in the lives of girls. In that way, immediate intervention measures could be put in place to deal with this vice. And who better to provide what is needed, than the schoolgirls themselves?

As such, the study set out to explore secondary schoolgirls' experiences of GBV in informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to explore the forms of GBV experienced by girls in secondary schools and to find out from them how support systems for secondary schoolgirls who experience GBV might be improved. The following research questions were formulated:

- What forms of GBV did secondary schoolgirls experience in informal settlements?
- How could secondary schools improve their support systems for secondary schoolgirls who experience GBV in informal settlements?

This chapter is derived from a previous study (Mworia, 2023), with a focus on how drawing as method was used to generate data with the girls on such a sensitive topic, ensuring that it led to "most good and least harm" to them (Mitchell et al., 2011).

Methodology

Kumar (2011, p. 33) posits that "it is the purpose for which a research activity is undertaken that should determine the mode of enquiry, hence the paradigm". The study, as guided by its objectives, was located within the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivist approaches have the intent of understanding the world of human experience while suggesting that reality is socially constructed (Van der Walt, 2020). The interpretive researcher relies on the participants' views of the situation being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) and attempts to interpret social reality through the subjective viewpoints of the participants within the context where the reality is situated. Further, this paradigm's ontological perspective is based on the notion that multiple realities exist. This study, therefore, recognised the numerous and varied participants' realities. Therefore, the interpretivist paradigm was used as the basis of this study. My focus as a researcher was on describing the experiences of participants, assuming multiple meanings rather than a single 'truth', and holding onto the fact that reality is subjective and can differ based on the perspectives of different individuals. The choice of the interpretivist paradigm led to the generation of rich, in-depth data as it is based on personal contributions with consideration of different constructs. Furthermore, the interpretivist paradigm enabled me, as a researcher, to treat each girl's experience as unique considering her given circumstances as well as the individual girl involved, abstaining from generalisation as a given in the positivist paradigm.

The study embraced a phenomenological research design. Neubauer et al. (2019) described phenomenology as a form of qualitative research that focuses on the study of an individual's lived experiences within the world. The goal of this study was to describe the meaning of the girls' experiences, understanding it in terms of both what was experienced and how it was experienced. Therefore, phenomenology was a powerful well-suited research design in this study as it sought to describe the GBV experiences among the girls, thus creating a platform for them to air their concerns, fears, and/or unmet needs.

Sampling and participants

The study was conducted in two selected public secondary schools in informal settlements in Nairobi County, Kenya. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of schools. This study targeted the largest and centrally located secondary schools as they potentially had a higher chance of having more girls who have seen, heard of, or experienced GBV. Two schools were selected. Snowball sampling was used in the selection of individual girls who served as 'seeds', which means that one participant is recruited who in turn recruits another, and the cycle continues. Snowball refers to a technique in which existing participants are asked to suggest more participants (Taherdoost, 2016). The target population was all the secondary schoolgirls who had seen, heard of, or experienced GBV and were studying in selected schools in informal settlements.

This technique enabled me to identify girls from the general school population who had seen, heard of or experienced GBV and could share their experiences and thoughts with ample depth and clarity. Once I identified one girl in each school, with the help of the guidance and counselling teacher, the girl was requested to help locate other girls who had also experienced GBV. Factors such as availability and willingness to participate, ability to recall and relate real-life experiences as well as the capacity to communicate were considered. It was important in this study because it enabled me to arrive at information-rich cases for an in-depth study. Fourteen girls from each of the two schools were selected to participate in the study. Thus, twenty-eight girls in total were selected. Their ages ranged from 13 to 18 years. This sample size was arrived at after data saturation was reached. Saturation is reached based on the data that had been collected and analysed up to a given point in time, indicating further data collection and/or analysis was unnecessary (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Saunders et al., 2018) on the basis of the data that had been collected or analysed hitherto. However, there appears to be uncertainty as to how saturation should be conceptualised, and inconsistencies in its use. In this chapter, we look to clarify the nature, purposes and uses of saturation, and in doing so add to theoretical debate on the role of saturation across different methodologies. We identify four distinct approaches to saturation, which differ in terms of the extent to which an inductive or a deductive logic is adopted, and the relative emphasis on data collection, data

analysis, and theorizing. We explore the purposes saturation might serve in relation to these different approaches, and the implications for how and when saturation will be sought. In examining these issues, we highlight the uncertain logic underlying saturation—as essentially a predictive statement about the unobserved based on the observed, a judgement that, we argue, results in equivocation, and may in part explain the confusion surrounding its use. We conclude that saturation should be operationalized in a way that is consistent with the research question(s).

Method

The study used a PVM drawing to produce data with the participants. Over the years, PVM has gained popularity among researchers and practitioners. PVM is used as an umbrella term, capturing a wide range of methods including, but not limited to photovoice, digital storytelling, participatory video, and drawing (Mitchell, 2008). The purpose of using these methods was to help bring the ideas, and voices of marginalised groups to the public and to try to concentrate the priorities of the research closer to the needs of those that it is envisioned to benefit (Hergenrather et al., 2009). They have a common aim of enabling ordinary people to be active contributors in decisions that affect their lives, rather than be mere objects of research (Coyne & Carter, 2018), from inception to implementation and beyond.

Engagement of children and young people requires the use of creative, participatory methods, tools and involvement strategies to reveal their competencies. This chapter shares knowledge about creative participatory techniques that can enable and promote children's ways of expressing their views and experiences. The chapter provides guidance on appropriate techniques that reduce the power differential in the adult-child relationship and which optimise children's abilities to participate in research. This chapter is targeted at researchers, academics, and practitioners who need guidance on what tools are available, how the tools can be used, advantages and challenges, and how best to involve children in all stages of a research project. It will provide several examples of how children can have an active participatory role in research. There is increasing interest in involving children as co-researchers but little guidance on how this can be done.

This chapter addresses these issues by providing practical examples from leading researchers and academics, utilising participatory visual methodologies. These methods use creative techniques to ensure that people are not only listened to but genuinely heard, with their input shaping the outcomes (Dockery, 2020). The chapter also explores the crucial question of why participatory visual methodologies should be used at all—what sets them apart from conventional research, who benefits from participating in the research process, and who holds the power? It's not about offering a toolkit or a set of techniques that guarantee quick or easy solutions for effective outcomes, nor is it an automatic alternative to conventional research approaches. In fact it may be inappropriate in certain contexts. Supporting or enabling participation

in its fullest sense is a political act, establishing partnerships between researchers and participants where ownership, empowerment, and accountability are shared throughout the research process. Participatory visual methodologies can play a key role in fostering community activism both at the individual and collective levels (Dockery, 2020). The use of both word- and image-based research methods provides a way to explore the multiplicity and complexity that underpins social research focused on human experience (Guillemin, 2004).

In this study drawing as a method was employed. Brailas (2020) posits that participant-produced drawings provide access to non-verbal meanings and facilitate participants sharing their feelings, thoughts, and experiences which are not easily communicated otherwise. Drawing as method was an ethical methodology as it enabled the girls who found it difficult to speak about their GBV experiences to share them in a non-threatening way. Drawing as method has two phases, draw and tell. The first session involves the participants drawing an image of the phenomenon at hand while the second session involves them elaborating on their drawings. In this case, drawings can serve as icebreakers and effective prompts to catalyse verbal communication (Ellis et al., 2011)

Drawing as method has been used in various types of research the world over. It has been used in Russia, to study social representations of intelligence (Räty et al., 2012). It has been used with women in the United States of America, to explore women's perspectives on why people might decline HIV testing (Mays et al., 2011). It has been used in rural north-west Uganda to explore the challenges girls face with respect to unequal educational opportunities (Jones, 2019). Further, it has also been used with girls to discuss their safety and security in slums in and around Nairobi, Kenya (Chege et al., 2014).

In this study, I first formulated a drawing prompt. This was a simple guide informing the participants of the phenomenon at hand and what I expected of them as they drew. It included phrases such as "the quality of the drawing is not important, rather the meaning of the same". I also asked them to choose a pseudonym, and requested the participants not to include any identifiers on the drawing paper. On the data generation day, the girls were invited to complete drawings on blank paper, using pencils and colouring crayons, that symbolized how they see GBV and to explain in writing what they wished to communicate via these drawings. Here, I provided a prompt such as, "Draw how you see GBV and how it has affected you". During the drawing sessions, each girl was given at least 15 minutes to draw and write a caption individually. This was done separately for each girl, in a private space.

The second session of the drawing was the tell session, where girls were requested to verbally explain or give further information on their drawings to the researcher, and what they symbolized. They were then asked to talk about their drawings individually with the researcher. Thereafter, the girls shared their drawings with each other, in a group setting. This session took around four hours cumulatively.

Here, I encouraged the girls to verbally describe their drawings by using phrases such as "tell me about it" and asking further clarification and probing questions. The drawings and captions were later digitized by scanning and the girls' explanations were recorded using an audio recorder and then transcribed. All oral data were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim afterward since this protected against bias and provided a permanent record of what was and was not said. Sensitive issues were always approached with care to minimize distress, while allowing the girls to tell their stories.

Data presentation

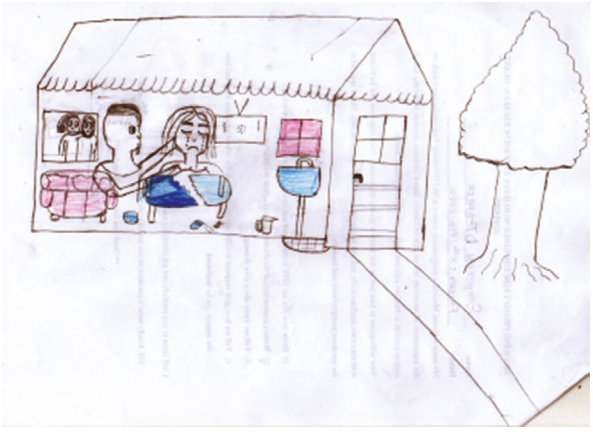
In this study, a set of 28 drawings were submitted. They were on A4 white paper, made with coloured pencils with pseudonyms written on them. At the back, the girls wrote a caption of the drawing they had made. I then digitized them by scanning and labelled them using the girls' selected pseudonyms. It is important to note that since the participants' first language was Kiswahili, most of them chose to write in it because it allowed them to express themselves fully. For the girls who wrote in Kiswahili, I retyped the caption in Kiswahili, translated it to English, and finally gave a summary of the captions as well as the tell session.

Of the 28 drawings the girls made, three are offered below, one for each form sampled. In some cases, the convergence of multiple forms of abuse directed at individual girls can be observed:

Figure 1: *Olive's Drawing and Caption (Mworia, 2023, p. 36)*

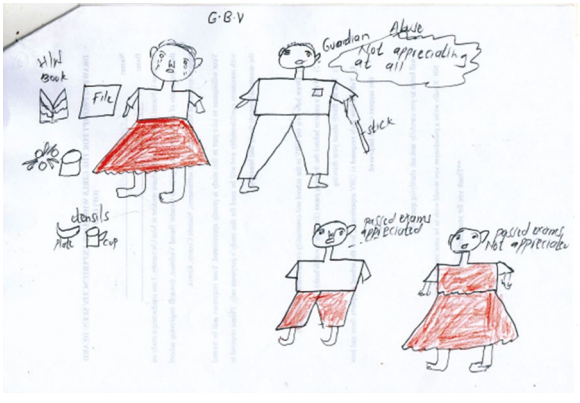
"This man is this girl's stepfather. The man started advancing toward her eldest daughter, touching her inappropriately and having sex with her. He threatened that he would beat or stab her".

Figure 2: *Shamizah's Drawing and Caption (Mworia, 2023, p. 109)*



"This girl is about to join secondary school, but her guardians want her to get married. They organized for an old rich man to marry her. She tried to resist but they overpowered her and she got married forcefully".

Figure 3: *Ceane Clara's Drawing and Caption (Mworia, 2023, p. 120)*



"A girl coming home with exams and she passed but she is not appreciated at all. Coming home from school, finding a lot of work waiting for the girl. Accusation and being beaten every time. The boy passing exams and being appreciated at school and loved but the girl passing exams and not being appreciated at all simply because you are a girl".

In Figure 1 Olive drew a bedroom with a bed in their home. Probably the mother and stepfather's bedroom, where the stepfather made advances to her, revealing that physical and sexual violence are often intertwined.

Olive's explanation translated from Kiswahili:

> *"This father is this girl's stepfather. I mean that the last born in that family is born of this man. So, the mother was living with this man as her husband. The girl was the first born followed by two boys. The mother respected this man and did not know what was happening. So, the girl decided to report to her grandmother, as she was living close by. The grandmother advised her to move in with her as she planned on questioning the mother. When the mother heard the case, she denied it and said that her husband cannot do such a thing. When the mother finally discovered the truth, she chased away the man and apologized to her daughter. The daughter forgave her mother and she returned home."*

While the drawing was simply of a room with a double bed in the house, the drawing enabled her to tell the story the way she constructed it. The drawing depicts sexual abuse.

In Figure 2 Shamizah drew a girl in agony as she is faced with forced marriage. Her guardians are forcing her to marry a rich, old man. This was evidence of psychological abuse, as Shamizah shared that she felt and saw that she was being treated as a commodity for 'sale'.

Shamizah's explanation translated from Kiswahili:

> *"This girl lives with her guardians because her parents died a long time ago. She is about to join secondary school, but her guardians want her to get married. They believe that a girl is useless, even if she completes her studies. Further, they wished to get money from the dowry. They thus organized for an old rich man to marry her. As much as she tried to resist, they overpowered her and she got married forcefully."*

This drawing revealed that forced marriage is an issue that faces schoolgirls. Globally, it is estimated that 82 million girls between the ages of 10–17 years will be married off before their eighteenth birthday, before they are able to consent (Save the Children Alliance, 2005). This is an unfolding disaster that we must act now to bring to an end. Drawing as method, provided a channel for Shamizah to share her experiences in means that would not further traumatize her. This is consistent with Guillemin and Westall (2008), who posit that visual methods can facilitate the communication of painful and difficult experiences in a non-threatening way.

In Figure 3 Ceane Clara drew a brother and sister who were unequally treated by their parents. The girl was side-lined and abused both verbally and physically, while the boy was praised outright.

Ceane Clara's explanation translated from Kiswahili:

> *"A girl coming home with exams and she passed but she is not appreciated at all. Coming home from school, finding a lot of work waiting for the girl. Accusation and being beaten every time. The boy passing exams and being appreciated at school and loved but the girl passing exams and not being appreciated at all simply because you are a girl."*

The drawing depicted a patriarchal society where the girl's effort is not rewarded by her guardian, while the boy is praised and encouraged for the same effort input. Further, it portrays the physical and verbal abuse the girl undergoes. Drawing as method allowed Ceane Clara to share her experience through a non-threatening approach.

Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis refers to the process of description, classification, and interconnection of phenomena with the researcher's concepts, with a general aim of developing an explanation of the phenomenon under study (Graue, 2015). This study was qualitative in nature and thus yielded mainly unstructured text-based data from the explanation of the drawings, other field notes, pictorial captions, and audio recordings. From these primary sources, it is worth reiterating the argument by Taylor and Ussher (2001) that themes do not just sit waiting to be discovered, they do not simply appear, but must be actively sought out.

In this study, I did not analyse the drawings, but only what the girls wrote and said about their drawings. This is because I did not want to make up my own meanings of the drawings. This is consistent with Rech (2013), who posits that drawing as a research method includes analysis by both the researcher and the participant. In this way, the research becomes collaborative and the analysis cannot take place without the participant.

Data generation and analysis were done concomitantly, allowing for the investigation of emerging themes and issues. Immediately after data had been collected, data transcription commenced. Transcription can be described as "the process of reproducing spoken words, such as recorded data from an interview, and converting it into written form so the data can be analysed" (McGrath et al., 2019, p. 8). Data were then analysed immediately, to guide me on what further data needed to be improved or generated to satisfy the study objectives.

The schoolgirls drew, wrote a caption, and explained their drawings and these explanations served as a first layer of analysis. This study, then, employed thematic analysis as a second layer of analysis to tease out these themes from the dataset. Thematic analysis refers to a method of identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns and themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

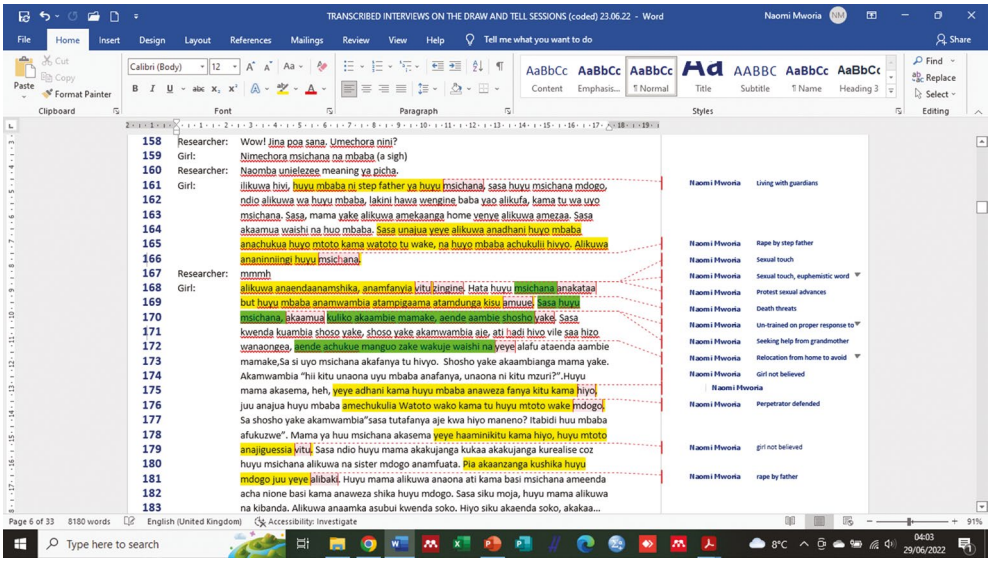
Data were coded and organized into categories and themes. Coding refers to the identification of issues, differences, and similarities that are discovered in the participants' narratives as interpreted by the researcher (Sutton & Austin, 2015). In this study, this involved analysing the data and identifying themes and topics which represent gender-relevant themes and presenting them in narratives showing excerpts from participants, as guided by the objectives set.

The three seminal coding steps by Strauss and Corbin (1990, 2014) – open, axial, and selective coding; combined with the six steps by Braun and Clarke (2006) were used to analyse text data in this study.

Phase 1: Data familiarization: I began by examining the drawings and transcribing draw-and-tell sessions. This helped me get acquainted with the data. Then, I analysed the raw text line by line to identify relevant concepts related to gender-based violence (GBV) experienced by the schoolgirls.

Phase 2: Initial code generation: I generated initial codes from the data, noting interesting segments and potential patterns. Using MS Word, I linked each code to specific text portions and color-coded them based on research questions.

Figure 4: *Image of Initial Code Generation*



Phase 3: Theme search: I sorted codes into potential themes, establishing relationships between them visually and hierarchically.

Phase 4: Theme review: Themes were refined to ensure clarity and distinction, with additional data checked for emerging categories. Themes were consolidated or eliminated until data saturation was reached.

Phase 5: Theme definition: Final themes were defined, capturing the essence of the data within them. Appropriate labels were given to each theme.

Phase 6: Analysis report production: I crafted a thematic analysis report, presenting a coherent account of the data story within and across themes. The narrative was guided by research questions, supported by evidence from data extracts, and continually refined throughout the analysis process.

Ethical considerations

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), research ethics is a codification of scientific morality in practice. Researching GBV against schoolgirls is similar to researching any other sensitive topic. Therefore, it was key that the research was conducted ethically from beginning to end. The ethical considerations that were observed in the study are elaborated below:

Before embarking on the fieldwork, I navigated the ethical landscape. This involved securing research approval from the university, obtaining clearance from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), and seeking authorization from the respective school principals. Prioritizing the welfare and autonomy of participants, I procured informed consent from parents, school principals, and assent from the girls themselves. Each participant was thoroughly briefed on the research purpose, methods, potential consequences, and associated risks. They were empowered to make voluntary decisions regarding their participation, free from coercion or deception.

Throughout the research process, utmost care was taken to safeguard the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants. Identifiers were meticulously removed, and pseudonyms were employed to shield identities. Sensitive language was conscientiously utilized during data collection, and only participants' perspectives were recorded to ensure the integrity and credibility of the research findings.

Ensuring participant safety remained paramount at every stage. Participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any point, and their comfort with audio recording was acknowledged, with withdrawal options provided if discomfort arose. For participants under the age of 18, parental and school written consent was sought.

By initially focusing on broader topics to avoid re-traumatization, participants' emotional welfare was safeguarded. Counselling support was arranged for those in need, emphasising proactive measures to address any potential distress.

Methodologically, drawing upon participatory visual methods offered a delicate balance between information generation and participant protection. This approach minimized risk while facilitating authentic documentation of experiences. Throughout the research journey, visual ethics and participant anonymity remained steadfast priorities, ensuring the integrity and ethical conduct of the study.

Findings: Fears, successes, and challenges

In this section I only offer a summary of the findings (see Mworia, 2023). These were as follows.

Fears on conducting research using drawing as method

I experienced several fears when I selected drawing as method for my research. First, I feared that my participants would be uncomfortable drawing their experiences. This was especially for those who believed they did not have a drawing talent or those who lacked self-confidence in their ability to draw. However, I was able to overcome this fear by reassuring the girls that the quality of their drawings was not paramount (Mitchell et al., 2011). Further, a few months before the onset of data generation, I attended a research school centred on research methodologies. Here, I tried out drawing as a method of data generation. This enabled me to get the skill and confidence to use drawing as method and further, use it as a means of expression. Consequently, this was very beneficial during data generation with my participants, as I could guide them on the process of drawing.

Second, I was puzzled by the prospect of participants drawing something abstract. I wondered how they would make the thoughts they had tangible and visible on paper. This fear was eased as I delved more into literature. Mitchell et al. (2017) posit that while older participants may feel daunted by the idea of drawing, it is in the process of drawing that their thoughts on the phenomenon might become clarified. I then realized that in the drawing process, the participants would gradually get a clearer mental picture of the topic at hand. Truly, this was confirmed when I went into the field. Even those participants who struggled to draw at first, in the process, were able to make clear drawings and captions.

Successes in using drawing as method

When I was headed into the field for data generation, one question lingered on my mind, 'With such a sensitive topic, would the girls open up to me?' As much as I was prepared in all ways possible, I still had this fear. By the end of my data generation process, I knew better! Drawing as method, true to its word, had repositioned ethics to doing least harm and doing most good (Theron, 2012). The girls did not seem (re-)traumatized by sharing their experiences. Instead, it created a moment for them to share their feelings and suggestions on creation of better support systems for girls who experience GBV in school. Some girls found the method very playful and really enjoyed the entire process of sharing their experiences.

Another success I experienced was drawing as method allowing me to engage with participants who found it hard to verbalize their experiences and thoughts. Mitchell et al. (2011), emphasise this by pointing to Weber's argument that: "artistic images can help us access those elusive hard-to-put-into-words aspects of knowledge that might otherwise remain hidden or ignored" (Weber, 2008, p. 44). The drawings revealed experiences and explanations that were often not explicitly spoken about before. An example of this is the sexual abuse by stepfathers that some girls shared. It seemingly became easier for participants to explain their experiences – seen, heard

or experienced – and to remember tiny details, when they visualized them. The method also allowed some girls to share painful memories by drawing, which they found to be a better option than speech. They could choose what to communicate via drawing and what they wished to share verbally during the tell session.

Challenges encountered using drawing as method and suggested ways to overcome them

The main challenge I experienced was that different girls had different reactions to drawing as method. While some expressed joy at the thought of drawing, others displayed dissatisfaction. Those who were used to drawing saw it as an opportunity to feel more comfortable than simply talking. On the other hand, some felt uncomfortable, finding it unusual. Some were unwilling to produce a drawing, while others said they did not know what to draw.

To deal with this challenge, I suggest that the researcher emphasise to the participants from the very beginning that the quality of their drawings is not important. What is important is the message it portrays, the content, and how drawing enables talking about it. This will encourage participants to draw as directed, no matter their abilities. Also, the researcher can allow the participant time to think through what is to be drawn. However, despite the researcher's effort, some participants may still be hesitant to draw (Horstman et al., 2008), thus a need for an alternative plan. A good plan may be to sit with them and also make a drawing on the subject matter at hand, and also tell them about your drawing. Another alternative could be for the participant to find a picture from a magazine or from the internet, then write a caption, and talk about it.

Discussion

The study findings, for research question one, revealed that the girls experienced physical, sexual, verbal, and psychological abuse. Physical abuse would occur alone or intertwined with sexual abuse. Psychological abuse encapsulated rejection and being treated as commodities. The girls were also verbally abused, taking the form of harsh words and gender-discriminative speech. The results of this study align with Nyamanhindi (2015) who asserts that schoolgirls experience different forms of GBV. Perpetrators included teachers, relatives, fellow students, and gangs in the community.

The findings, for research question two, revealed that girls offered several suggestions on ways in which support could be improved for them. They shared that the school could introduce clear reporting strategies by putting up clear mechanisms to report. They could also provide safe places for girls to report, as well as teach them how to report. The findings also revealed that the girls hoped for a whole school approach where both boys and girls could be trained on what GBV is and how it can be prevented. They also thought that teachers could be trained on how to respond

to cases of GBV. These findings are congruent with Parkes et al. (2017) who point out the need for using a multi-dimensional approach in tackling GBV issues, such as innovative teaching and learning as well as curriculum modification. The study concluded that girls experienced varied forms of abuse, which most of the time were neither reported nor even noticed, thus urgent intervention is needed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of considering both the benefits and challenges of using drawing as a research method, particularly when exploring sensitive topics like GBV. While drawing facilitates communication and empowers participants, researchers must be mindful of individual preferences and provide alternative avenues for expression. By acknowledging these nuances, researchers can enhance the effectiveness of their studies while ensuring participant comfort and ethical integrity.

Pink notes that "there is more to human experience than can be captured in words" (2013, p. 11). This sentiment is affirmed in terms of research by Weber (2008, p. 44) who states that "the use of visual images is not a luxury or add-on to scholarship, but in many cases, essential". Participatory visual methodologies combine the strength of spoken word and drawing (Guillemin, 2004). Using drawings helped me to capture some of the non-verbal aspect of human experience and provided me with a platform for the discussion of an otherwise difficult topic. As such, I encourage emerging researchers to try this research method when encountering difficult cultural and social issues.

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