

"Doing" participatory research

Dr Nicole Brown

@ncjbrown

www.nicole-brown.co.uk

office@nicole-brown.co.uk



Overview and aims

- Based on:

Brown, N. (2021). Scope and Continuum of Participatory Research. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*. [DOI: 10.1080/1743727X.2021.1902980](https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2021.1902980).

- Introduction to participatory research and arts-based methods
- Fallacies and their consequences
- Provocation as an opportunity for open discussion

Underpinning of participatory research

- questions of hierarchy, power and location of knowledge
- recognises the expertise of research participants
- seeks to engage individuals through handing over responsibility within the research process
- questions of whose research it is and what the purpose of research is
- participatory research is considered as political and activist

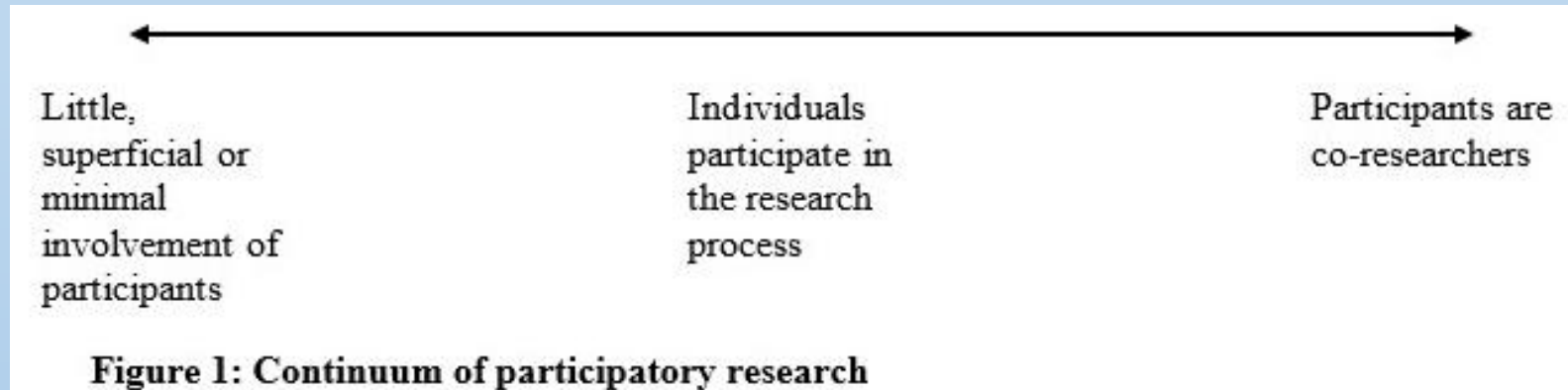
Definition of participatory research

3 criteria according to Tandon (1988):

- 1.) have a role in setting the agenda of inquiry
- 2.) take part in the data collection and analysis
- 3.) have control over the use of outcome and the whole process

The practice of participatory research

It's a continuum!



distinguish between engagement, involvement and participation

expert participants (patients in health research or consumers in market research)

participation as equal partners

Commonly used methods

- elicitation approaches
 - narratives
 - vignettes
 - visual materials and representations
 - photo-elicitation
- artistic workshops
- diary methods
 - timelines
 - photographs or other visual materials
 - drawing, sketching
 - narrative approaches

Fallacies and implications

- employment of arts-based methods for data collection or dissemination does not automatically translate into a participatory research design
- current understanding of community-based participatory action research is not the only potential for participatory methods, and indeed should not be
- realistically most participatory research designs are situated between the two extremes of the continuum

Creative and arts-based methods

- definitions vary, but largely seen as drawing on artistic or playful forms of expression
- arts-based approaches are used for their powers of expression, evocation and illumination
- emphasis on radical, politically grounded social justice



minimising hierarchy
reducing power-differential
calling for action

Provocation!

We should **not** aim for participatory research.

- the issue of art-based approaches within participatory research
- participatory research should be more than transcending the power hierarchy
- handing over control comes with responsibility

References and further reading

BERA blog: Action research: Research into action.

<https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog-series/action-research-research-into-action>

Brown, N. (2021). Scope and Continuum of Participatory Research. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 45(2), 200-211. [DOI: 10.1080/1743727X.2021.1902980](https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2021.1902980).

Tandon, R. (1988). Social transformation and participatory research. *Convergence*, 21(2), 5.

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