



FotoFeedback: Assessing Convention Attendees' Perceptions of their AAHE Experiences through Photovoice/Photo Elicitation

124th AAHPERD National Convention & Exposition, Tampa, FL, March 31-April 4, 2009

Amy Versnik Nowak, PhD,

Assistant Professor of Health Education, University of Minnesota Duluth
aversnik@d.umn.edu

Ladona Tornabene, PhD, CHES,

Associate Professor of Health Education, University of Minnesota Duluth
ltornabe@d.umn.edu

Lisa Vogelsang, PhD,

Adjunct Faculty, College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN
photobirdsong@msn.com

FotoFeedback is an emerging photo-based evaluation methodology developed by the co-authors of this article. The FotoFeedback methodology is founded on the concepts of photovoice and photo elicitation. Photovoice is a participatory action research method that gives at-risk populations a voice to express their personal realities through photographs (Wang, 2006). It involves the process of photo elicitation, which is a reflective discussion of each photo resulting in rich qualitative data (Harper, 2002).

The purpose of this session is to use the FotoFeedback methodology as a tool for generating feedback for AAHE regarding what attendees like best about AAHE sessions/events and what they would like to see improved upon, all within the context of AAHPERD's National Convention. This method will help ensure that AAHE efforts are consistent with what attendees view as being important within the National AAHPERD Convention experience.

Application of FotoFeedback specific to AAHPERD Convention

FotoFeedback will be used as a method to enable AAHE attendees to define for themselves and others, including convention planners, what is worth remembering about their convention experience and what AAHE needs to change. FotoFeedback participants were trained in the FotoFeedback methodology (including the history of photovoice and photo elicitation), ethical considerations in photography, and the technical aspects of photography and camera operation (Wang, 1999; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001).

Photography in Health Promotion

The use of photography to promote health began in the mid-1800s and has steadily increased, especially in the past 50 years (Figure 1) (Tornabene, Versnik Nowak, & Vogelsang, 2008; Versnik Nowak, Tornabene, & Vogelsang, 2007). The photovoice methodology was created in the early 1990s with three goals in mind (Wang & Burris, 1994; Wang & Burris, 1997):

1. Give a voice to community members.
2. Promote dialogue.
3. Engage policymakers.

The overall aim of photovoice is to promote self-development, advocacy, and a better standard of living for community members (PhotoVoice, 2006). The FotoFeedback methodology applies these concepts as an evaluative tool to provide rich feedback and advocate for improvement within professional settings.

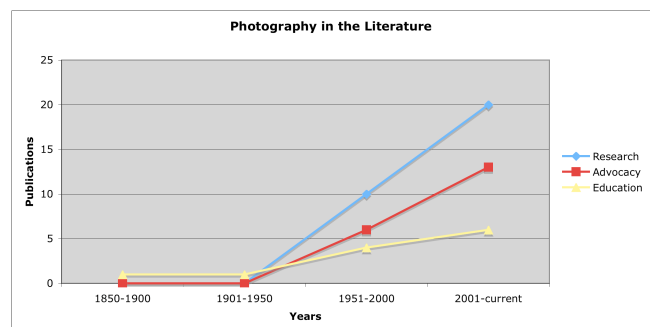


Figure 1. Increased use of photography-based methodologies is reflected in the health and social science literature. (Tornabene, Versnik Nowak, & Vogelsang, 2008; Versnik Nowak, Tornabene, & Vogelsang, 2007)

Ethics in Photography

As in other forms of data collection, ethical considerations are important. Maintenance of high ethical standards is required throughout the FotoFeedback process, so all participants are trained in ethics involved in photo-based research. The following information on ethics in photography is taken from the PhotoShare website (2006) and can be used as guidelines for photographing people. “Five general ethical principles in developing policies for best practices in development photography:

- *Autonomy*
 - In what way can I show respect for a person's right to decline or consent to photography? How do I handle informed consent?
- *Non-Maleficence (Do No Harm)*
 - Am I creating and using photos in a manner that will do no harm to persons appearing in photos?
- *Beneficence (Do Good)*
 - What is my intention or purpose for taking this photo? How can I use a photo to promote a good cause while ensuring that I do no harm to individuals in photos?
- *Fidelity*
 - Am I using photos in a context that fairly represents the real situation, subject identity, or physical location of the image? What steps am I taking to properly credit the photographer?
- *Justice*
 - Am I photographing people and communities with the same respect I would show to neighbors and strangers in my home country?”

Camera Operation And Getting The Best Shot

Professional-level photography is not mandatory for participants, but some camera training is required as part of the FotoFeedback methodology. The camera is a tool, that when used in the manner intended by the photographer, can render images that transcend words. Knowledge of camera operation is essential and knowledge of the technical aspects of photography empowers one to truly let the photo be one's voice.

Camera operation involves:

- *White Balance* color temperature to match shooting conditions such as daylight, indoor lighting, etc.
- *ISO* sensitivity of the sensor to light
- *Image Format & Resolution* RAW, JPEG, TIFF, & number of megapixels
- *Focus* rendering chosen subject sharp
- *Aperture* size of diaphragm of lens and how much light it allows; also controls depth of field
- *Shutter Speed* length of time shutter is open; creates sharpness or blur
- *Exposure* lighting of subject and scene that is neither too bright nor too dark
- *Depth of Field* amount of depth in photo that is in focus; controlled by aperture

Composition involves:

- *Rule of Thirds* imaginary grid of scene divided into the thirds where subject is placed at the intersection of lines
- *Placement in frame* placement of subject for different purposes, i.e. close-up or distal shot
- *Using natural frames for subjects* using arches, trees, and other items in scene to frame subject
- *Being aware of backgrounds* Because a photograph is not three-dimensional, it is important to be aware of trees and other background objects regarding subject placement so that branches do not appear to be growing out of ears, etc.

Results of the AAHE FotoFeedback Project

Photos taken by FotoFeedback participants will be gathered in electronic format. A photo elicitation process will be used to gather rich qualitative data. Photos and recommendations will be published in print and/or digital format for AAHE representatives to consider in future convention planning.

References

- Baker, T. A., & Wang, C. C. (2006). Photovoice: Use of a participatory action research method to explore the chronic pain experience in older adults. *Qualitative Health Research*, 16(10), 1405-1413. doi:10.1177/1049732306294118
- Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies*, 17(1), 13-26. doi: 10.1080/14725860220137345
- Information & Knowledge for Optimal Health (INFO) Project. (2009). *Development photography ethics*. Retrieved March 1, 2009, from Photo Share Info Website: <http://www.photoshare.org/phototips/developethics.php>
- PhotoVoice. (2006). *PhotoVoice methodology*. Retrieved March 1, 2009, from PhotoVoice Website: <http://www.photovoice.org/html/whoarewe/methodology/>
- Tornabene, L., Versnik Nowak, A. L., & Vogelsang, L. (2007). *Photography & Health: Past, Present and Future*. Poster session presented at the 19th Annual IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion and Health Education, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, June 14, 2007.
- Versnik Nowak, A. L., Tornabene, L., & Vogelsang, L. (2008). *Photography! An innovative health promotion and health education tool*. Oral session presented at the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance National Convention and Exposition, Fort Worth, Texas, April 2008.
- Wang, C. C. (1999). Photovoice: A participatory action research strategy applied to women's health. *Journal of Women's Health*, 8(2), 185-192.
- Wang, C. C., & Burris, M. A. (. (1994). Empowerment through photo novella: Portraits of participation. *Health Education Quarterly*, 21(2), 171-186.
- Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education & Behavior*, 24(3), 369-387.
- Wang, C. C., & Redwood-Jones, Y. A. (2001). Photovoice ethics: Perspectives from Flint Photovoice. *Health Education & Behavior*, 28(5), 560-572.

About the Authors



Amy L. Versnik Nowak, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Health Education at the University of Minnesota Duluth. Her research focus encompasses alternative teaching strategies and emerging technologies in Health Education. She has developed numerous web-based courses that utilize unique approaches in blogging and photo-based coursework.

She has presented her photographic research internationally and nationally. She is a co-creator of an emerging research methodology called FotoFeedback.

Contact Dr. Versnik Nowak: aversnik@d.umn.edu



Ladona Tornabene, PhD, CHES, is an Associate Professor of Health Education at the University of Minnesota Duluth as well as a motivational speaker at the international level. She coordinates student internships and has developed a photography-based fund-raising methodology to support students. Her research areas encompass health promotion through photography and outdoor experiences. She has presented her photographic research internationally and nationally. She is a co-creator of an emerging research methodology called FotoFeedback.

Contact Dr. Tornabene: ltornabe@d.umn.edu



Lisa Vogelsang, PhD, teaches Psychology and American Sign Language at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN. Her research area is in Health Psychology with an emphasis in stress management. She is also a part-time professional photographer and has presented her photographic research internationally. She is a co-creator of an emerging research methodology called FotoFeedback.

Contact Dr. Vogelsang: photobirdsong@msn.com