

Enhancing Educational Narratives: The Power of Testimonio and Music Elicitation

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Abstract

This research brief explores the use of testimonio and music elicitation as innovative and inclusive methods in education research, particularly for providing voice and context to systemically excluded populations. By examining the key principles, benefits, and challenges of these methods, this brief highlights their potential for capturing more nuanced perspectives, fostering emotional connections, and challenging traditional power dynamics in academia.

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This research brief aims to illustrate the significance of testimonio and music elicitation in educational research and facilitate their integration into future studies.

Issue

Conventional research methodologies that pertain to narrative analysis has the potential to inadequately capture the true essence of the educational experiences of those from systemically excluded communities, resulting in an incomplete comprehension (Smith, 2021). However, alternate techniques such as testimonio and music elicitation provide a distinctive lens that promotes inclusivity, encourages emotional engagement and instills feelings of empowerment among participants who may feel left out by traditional approaches (Beverley, 2022; Chase, 2008; Del Alba Acevedo et al., 2001; Dos Santos & Wagner, 2018). By recognizing these voices previously disregarded through conventional methods and providing them with a platform to express themselves in a nuanced and fun manner, researchers can gain deeper insights into the experiences (Gabrielsson & Lindström, 2010; Levell, 2019; Smith, 2021).

Research Findings

Testimonio

Testimonio is a Chicana/Latina narrative technique that serves as a means for systemically excluded individuals to share their stories and experiences (Beverley, 2022; Rodriguez-Campo, 2021). Where testimonio differs from traditional research narratives is its emphasis on inviting participants to become active collaborators in the research design and data collection. In this way, testimonio becomes a vehicle for validation of the knowledge and

experiences of Black and Brown communities and empowers the researcher and the participant to co-construct realities and embrace healing (Rodriguez-Campo, 2021).

Music Elicitation

The use of music to extract memories, emotions, and personal experiences from research participants to advance comprehension of their experiences is known as "music elicitation" (Dos Santos & Wagner, 2018; Levell, 2019). By incorporating music into the data collection process, this technique enables researchers and participants to overcome language barriers and cultural disparities (Dos Santos & Wagner, 2018). Consequently, it facilitates a more nuanced understanding of participant experience while forging profound connections between both parties (Levell, 2019).

Combined Benefits

By combining the benefits of testimonio and music elicitation in educational research, systemically excluded communities can experience a more enhanced and open engagement process (Beverley, 2022; Gabrielsson & Lindström, 2010). The synergistic approach promotes the capturing of not only the cognitive experiences of the participant but the emotional ones as well. This holistic approach to educational research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of systemically excluded populations, leading to more inclusive and equitable educational practices.

Discussion

Integrating testimonio and music in educational research can enhance inclusivity and emotional engagement and challenge Western power dynamics. This approach promotes collaborative research processes and amplifies marginalized voices within education to support decolonization efforts. Further studies should explore its application for equitable academic

research practices across excluded populations. Future research should address potential limitations with improvement strategies.

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