

Navigating the Archipelago of Veteran Research: Broadening Knowledge Horizons with Diverse Data Collection Techniques



INTRODUCTION

The following is an overview of three qualitative research methods that have significant untapped data collection potential for scholars in Veteran Studies with the potential to uncover individual and communal stories as well as the transformative impact of Veteran experience across the life span.

Awareness of these innovative approaches create opportunities to design and develop more computer-mediated research methods and practices with Veteran Studies.



Individual



Communal



Transformative



Veteran Centered



BriGette McCoy Army Veteran

Georgia State University

Instructional Technologies Ph.D. student
MBA Certificate in Entrepreneurial Innovation
MS in Instructional Design

Research Interests:

Higher Ed; instructional, educational and virtual technology uses and practices informally and formally.

Belonging experiences; including institutional and interpersonal moral injury and biases in higher education technology, spaces and systems.

Explicitly focused on the often overlooked asset-based experiences of the underrepresented including Veterans and non traditional Graduate Students.

Research Lenses:

Critical, Black Cyber feminist, Intersectionality, Gerontology

Research Theory Exploration:

Andragogy, Heutagogy and Cybergogy



Diversified Perspectives

Informing Cultural Heritage

Diversified quantitative and qualitative research methods are essential for a nuanced understanding of Veteran experiences.

Veteran experiences are not monolithic; understanding them requires deep, more nuanced, and intersectionally focused research.

Answering research questions utilizing methods that include a variety of life experiences throughout a Veteran's lifespan, including the transformational stages of military transition and attending school, are more likely to bring in more diverse perspectives and connect knowledge that leads to broader impacts through collaboration and empowering discussions of diverse participants.



Computer Mediated Participatory Collection Practices



Utilizing digital technology, digital repositories and online platforms, to include social media, discussion forums, and digital storytelling websites, can also be used for researching the experiences of veteran.

Digital platforms provide a convenient and accessible way for veterans of diverse ages and backgrounds to have access to sharing and storing their experiences.



Mobile Device



Computer



Tablet



Digital Camera

Methods

Collage



Investigating complex themes or experiences individually in a focus group or classroom setting. Using a digital platform for uploading and sharing can create more interactivity. This approach not only facilitates individual and group discussions but also enhances the exploration process of identity.

Photo Voice



Photovoice is used for a variety of research exploring one or many complex themes or experiences through the creation of digital photographs. Individually and shared in a focus group with use of digital platform for uploading photos and written discussion fostering community engagement highlighting areas for advocacy.

Testimony



Testimony from the context of witness, subject matter expert, giving evidence to a court, Hearing Committee, government official which is recorded. Primary research of the transcripts and video if available, of the experience is analyzed.

Ethical Considerations

PhotoVoice and Collage Informing Consent

Participants involved in photovoice and collage activities are required to sign consent forms. These forms must provide clear instructions on the use of tools for creating their works and detail the arrangement of data derived from these creations.

It is essential for all participants to have a clear understanding of the ownership of the digital works they generate, including where these works will be stored, the duration of their storage, and the terms governing their use.

This includes discussions on the language used in consent forms and permissions for the potential use of the works in research, exhibitions, or more permanent collections beyond the scope of the initial project.

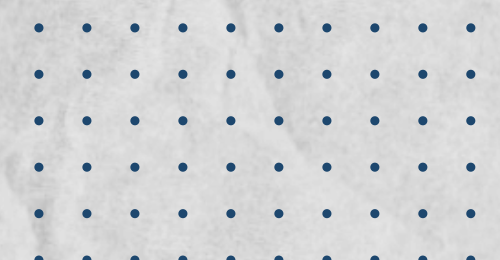


Collage

Collages are created using either paper, then a digital picture is taken, or a "born digital" collage is uploaded to a platform to increase interactivity. Small focus groups meeting online or in person based on the research design and the participants. Spoken or written insights or experiences are included from the participants, and themes are identified.



Photo Voice



Experiences are captured through the medium of pictures during a specific time or event. They can capture the mood and aspects of belonging, identity and access which include social cultural experiences, challenges in the learning process, interactions with professors, or the practical applications of what is learned.



Testimony

In qualitative and quantitative research and within discourse analysis, testimony provides a basis for examining knowledge. Epistemologically the ways of veterans “knowing” come from first hand experience. These may include subject matter experts presentations, buddy letters, statements in support of claims, witness statements and governmental documents and Congressional testimony.

Much of our experiences include documents which we assert that the statements we make are true. Veterans as a specific area of study testify to go enter service, swear in to become a certain rank and give statements that testify to their experiences. These all host layers of data to interpret and analyze.



Testimony



Special Collections Archives

Primary sources include congressional testimony, first person narratives, autobiographical books and student veteran research. They can be found in open source repositories, Library of Congress, local family history libraries and Universities.



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BriGette McCoy

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