Participatory Theatre and Walking as Social Research Methods

A Toolkit

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Introduction

The 'Participatory Arts and Social Action in Research' (2016-2017) (PASAR) project explores how participatory theatre and walking methods help to understand the ways in which migrant families, some of whom with limited English language knowledge, construct their sense of belonging and social participation as a citizenship practice. It is not within the scope of the toolkit to report back in detail on this research project, but rather we use the toolkit to provide examples and give a detailed idea of how these methods can be used for research.

The PASAR project originated out of the need for the U.K. social science community to gain a better understanding of how participatory action approaches can engage marginalised groups in research that co-produces knowledge .

Funded by the National Centre for Research Methods/Economic and Social Research Council, the PASAR project (http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar) explores how walking methods and participatory theatre creates a space for exploring, sharing and documenting processes of belonging and place-making that are crucial to understanding and enacting citizenship.

Participatory Action Research, based on the principles of inclusion, valuing all voices and action-oriented interventions (O'Neill and Webster 2005) allows for engaging marginalised groups in research as a citizenship practice.

We are, in the U.K., experiencing a widening of inequalities. This includes material inequalities, but also of inequalities of social recognition and access to decision making. It is

in this context that participatory action research (PAR) is particularly needed to more effectively engage, recognise and include marginalised groups in the research process (Luff et al. 2015).

The benefits of a PAR approach include contesting existing ways of knowing, producing new knowledge *with* marginalised groups, and connecting to new publics, such as academics, policy makers and practitioners. PAR serves to raise awareness, challenge stereotypes and produce better knowledge and understanding and contribute to developing action, practice and policy for social justice (O'Neill and Webster 2005; O'Neill 2017; Erel at el 2017; Reynolds et al 2017; Kaptani 2018). Moreover, using participatory arts methods in research enables participants to express themselves through creative means, beyond language. This contributes to developing action, practice and policy for social justice.

1.1. Aims

This toolkit has two aims:

- to provide a quick introduction to researchers on how to use participatory theatre and walking methods for social research.

- to share findings from the research project to provide illustrations and examples.

> *'It is so important that researchers, policymakers and practitioners hear the voices of marginalised people, and that we build researchers' capacities to work with methods that enable their participation in social change. The PASAR project has advanced a methodological model involving creative participatory theatre and walking methods that enables the exploration, sharing and documentation of the experiences of people who are marginalised within society. The resultant toolkit will be of great value to researchers and practitioners.'*
> Rosalind Edwards Professor of Sociology, Social Sciences Director of Research and Enterprise, Co-director, ESRC National Centre for Research Methods

1.2. The Research Team and Project Partners

The research team brought different experiences and interests to the project.

- Umut Erel, the Principal Investigator is particularly interested in how migrant women's mothering work can be seen as a citizenship practice. This research interest includes making embodied forms of knowledge visible and validating these knowledges, as well as recognising the political effects of migrant women's care and

culture work. As part of this, she has undertaken research with Tracey Reynolds and Erene Kaptani using participatory theatre methods to explore the care and cultural work of migrant mothers as an intervention into citizenship.

- Erene Kaptani is the research fellow on the project. Her arts practice was utilised in this project, based on her expertise in participatory arts as research method, public engagement and dissemination in social research with Nira Yuval-Davis (2008), Umut Erel (2014) and Tracey Reynolds (2015). Her arts practice is informed by her anthropological research background. She is a member of 'Playback South Theatre' Company and devises performances in 'Studio Upstairs' arts community, and has produced, co-written and performed in 'Suspended lives', a play based on social research practice.

- Maggie O'Neill, a co-investigator has a long history of doing participatory research on asylum, migration and gender using biographical and arts based methods (visual and performative) in collaboration with artists and communities. Her concept of 'ethno-mimesis' articulates the intersection of ethnographic, and arts based (walking) research. Her recently funded Leverhulme Trust fellowship enabled her to advance research on walking as a biographical method to explore *borders, risk and belonging;* and reflect on the impact of the collaborative research findings (www.walkingborders.com).

- Tracey Reynolds, a co-investigator has many years' experiences of researching Black and minority ethnic families and communities. She is particularly interested in the social practices, and social resources used by these groups in thinking about and formulating expressions of ethnic and cultural identities. Research includes studies with children, young people, mothers/fathers and older people, working with a range of third-sector/community organisations to investigate the policy and practice impact of research findings on these groups. She has undertaken previous studies with Umut Erel and Erene Kaptani using participatory theatre methods.

While each of us brought a range of different perspectives, experiences and interests, we all shared a commitment to participatory and arts based methods that create the possibilities for collaborative research and interventions into both doing and advancing social justice.

The research team collaborated with our partners: Counterpoints Arts, Marcia Chandra, a film maker and anthropologist, two NGO's: Praxis and Renaisi; the Runnymede Trust, Playback South Theatre Company and freelance theatre practitioner, Nelly Alfandari .

We were also supported by an advisory group[1].

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[1] Prof. Rosalind Edwards, NCRM, University of Southampton; Rayah Feldman, Maternity Action; Don Flynn, Former Director Migrants' Rights Network; Prof. Celia Lury, Warwick University; Prof. Parvati Nair, United Nations University Barcelona; Prof. Ann Phoenix, Institute of Education; Prof. Nirmal Puwar, Goldsmiths College; Dr. Susie Weller, University of Southampton, Prof. Elisabetta Zontini, Nottingham University.

1.3. Participation, Arts and Social Action in Research – PASAR Project

The PASAR project used participatory arts and participatory action research to generate new knowledge and insights into the social exclusion encountered by migrant mothers, girls and families with no recourse to public funds. The element of collaboration between research, arts and participants was central to this research as academics and an arts practitioner worked closely together with the participants. Erene Kaptani, the research fellow, our main artistic collaborator, brought the theatre based arts and research together in combination with Maggie O'Neill's participatory arts research practice, specifically walking methods.

The PASAR project created a model for bringing together practitioners, policy makers and marginalised groups to engage with each other through creative methods. It innovated by developing training for social researchers in participatory methods, specifically using walking stories and theatre.

There are two empirical strands to the project:

Strand 1) working with migrant parents' and young people on intergenerational communication,

*Strand 2) working with migrant families subject to the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' in order to g*enerate engagement between researchers, participants, policymakers and practitioners on this policy issue.

2. How we conducted the Research: a step-by-step guide

2.1. Partnerships & Collaboration

One important aspect of participatory arts and participatory action research is that it involves collaborations across different fields. In this project we had a range of partners, and each partner had a different role, which evolved during the project. Working across different sectors of arts, research and participants/groups/NGOs is very productive because the relationships can generate more nuanced and multi-layered forms of knowledge as different partners bring their own expertise and reflective lenses.

Collaborative working can also generate creative tensions because of the different disciplines, formats and practices. When partnerships are involved, researchers should expect and plan for a more complex negotiation of the aims of the project and formats of delivery that are on-going throughout the project. Such collaborations are important as they offer opportunities for reflection, learning and are a rich source of insight.

The following table provides a sense of the partnership, purpose, what we did together and our learning from the collaborations.

Partner and Timing of collaboration	Purpose	Output	Our Learning
Renaisi: First contact at proposal writing stage Main collaboration during Strand 1	Help with recruiting research participants, Feedback on relevance of research question for participants and practice, Help with finding rooms, arranging crèche provision, collaboration with schools	Workshops with a group of migrant mothers Workshops with a group of girls from migrant families	Time, funding and work pressures may make it difficult to collaborate for the full term of the project, be prepared to work with partners more intensely during specific project phases
Praxis First contact in Year 1 Main collaboration during Strand 2	As with Renaisi, above, but also: Provided ongoing advice and practical support to research participants in acute crises on e.g. legal issues, homelessness Research Team presented at Praxis' conference Praxis presented at the Policy Day Collaborated on a 'Case Study' on BME community organizations and academic collaborations	Workshops for Mothers with No Recourse to Public Funds	Working with participants in crisis situations necessitates collaboration with an organization able to provide practical support to enable regular and full participation. Praxis' guidance on issues such as timing or compensation of participants was essential
Runnymede Trust: Grant writing stage Main collaboration during Strand 2	Collaboratively plan and organize the Policy Day on migrant families affected by the No Recourse to Public Funds policy and the House of Commons event Co-produce a Briefing Pack on the Uses and Challenges of Participatory Arts Methods for Policy Research, Engagement and Dissemination	Workshop for practitioners and policy makers House of Commons Event Briefing Pack	Awareness of different terminology, demands and aims of Third Sector and academic research organizations to ensure effective cross-fertilising
Counterpoints Arts: Grant writing stage Start of project Main collaboration in strand 3	Reflection on working across social research and arts Identifying dissemination opportunities to arts audiences	Learning Lab 'What does "Participation" mean for research and arts?'	Awareness of different terminology, and timelines in arts and academic research

2.2. Collaborations with Freelance Consultants

We also had collaborations of a slightly different nature with consultants such as Playback South Theatre Company, Nelly Alfandari a drama teacher/arts practitioner and the film maker Marcia Chandra. Unlike the partnerships, these collaborations were driven by the needs of the research and took the form of consultancies. When working with freelance artists and practitioners as consultants, it is important to factor in time for reflection and ensure consultants have the opportunity to take part in preparation and de-briefing. This should be part of their paid work rather than expecting consultants to volunteer their time.

2.3. How to set up the fieldwork

In this section we provide some guidance on the timings, tasks and issues to consider when setting up the fieldwork. We present this as a timeline to acknowledge that this is a long process which starts long before the actual fieldwork begins and continues after the main fieldwork phase is over. The below is set out as a list of tasks, however, we would emphasise that it is important to seek, maximise and create opportunities for participants and partner organisations to be involved in a meaningful way in these decisions and tasks.

Timing	Tasks and Issues to Consider
Grant writing stage	- approach advisory board members with a range of skills. - approach partners for planning of research/write parts of the bid together. - don't be shy to discuss realistic timing and costing with your partners, bearing in mind partners from other sectors may not be familiar with academic time, dissemination and other requirements. Therefore try to be explicit but also flexible.
Starting the project	- Congratulations, you received the funding! - advisory board meeting – solicit input into fieldwork plans (e.g. recruitment of participants, organizations, locations) and research questions. - Training - skills development of the research team (goo.gl/mqmb37). - contact partner organizations for recruitment of participants, arrange research location, crèche, other practicalities. - consider and plan the extent and ways in which the project is participatory. - Finalising the research tools/gaining full ethical approval.
Fieldwork Stage	- keep transparent communication open with all involved about the research aims, ethical issues and options for participation or withdrawal. - check back regularly with participants that they feel informed, sharing how they can shape the course of the fieldwork. - regularly facilitate collective reflection with team and feedback to participants. - schedule time for mutual debriefing and/or supervisions with your 'supervisor' or external consultant important to 'decompress' and reflect together. - ongoing communication with project partners: be prepared to change your plans, and accept that partners will shape aspects of the project.
Analysis and Learning Lab	- Analysis can be undertaken by individual team members and then collated and discussed with whole group or conducted collectively. - Whichever option you choose, it is always useful to undertake some reflection/analysis as a group. - workshop to share and/or feedback preliminary analysis with participants and partner organisations, giving opportunities for contributing. - In this project we held a Learning Lab organized by Counterpoints Arts to reflect with two artists, Jane Arnfield and Natasha Davis, as well as Aine O'Brien, Nelli Stavropoulou and Marcia Chandra from Counterpoints Arts. We invited women from the migrant mothers groups' and advisory group members to join us. This was very productive.

Dissemination	- Collaborate with partner organizations to identify dissemination opportunities.
	- Budget for and facilitate research participants' attendance of events.
	- Facilitate showcasing participants' creative work.
	- Acknowledge that much of the dissemination, e.g. publications, will take place after the end of the project funding, plan for this with project team
	- Discuss with research team and participants how best to deliver/show the work within conference presentations and academic writing in order to:
	  • ensure that participants' work and voices are present.
	  • avoid a tokenistic or voyeuristic appropriation of participants' experiences, views and work.
	  • acknowledge the participatory process and range of voices and views, conflicts and dialogues in the project.

2.4. Our Research: What we did and how

Participatory Action Research is driven by participants and our participatory approach involved working with NGOs and three groups using participatory arts; and we took our cue from participants' needs and experiences. Participants may not know each other but on the other hand they may (if you are collaborating with an organisation and the group is already formed, or know each other from their connections to the organisation).

In Strand One, we held weekly participatory theatre and walking workshops with the group of mothers and in parallel with a group of Year 8 girls. For the final session both groups joined together to exchange and share their work.

In the course of the research process we realised this was desired and also that it would facilitate migrant girls and mothers to share an intergenerational dialogue. We often think of participatory and creative methods as enabling dialogue and exchange between asymmetrical groups, such as service providers and service users or policy makers and those affected by policy. However this *Intergenerational Workshop* generated new insights for both groups, beyond well 'rehearsed' ideas about generational groups.

In Strand 2, we used the same methods to work with the NRPF group, who were in situations of crisis and needed a lot of time and support in order to begin to share their stories, reflect on the stories, as well as express them in theatre form. Many of the participants were experiencing acute crises and so we decided to take more time in working with this group.

The mothers wanted to share their experiences with policy makers and practitioners and so we organised a one day policy workshop with Runnymede Trust to facilitate the group of mothers to engage with policy makers and practitioners. This enabled discussions across research, practice and policy about the role and purpose of innovative methods for engaging with policy as well as the limitations of such engagement.

We continued working with participants to devise an arts /theatre performance for the projects' final conference. We undertook further workshops where participants from both mothers' groups created artwork to showcase at the conference.

3. The Methods: Participatory Theatre and Walking

The participatory theatre and walking methods we use in the project built upon Erene Kaptani's Participatory Performance Practice: Participatory Theatre, Physical theatre and psychosocial arts based exercises (2008, 2016, 2017) and Maggie O'Neill's research practice of walking as a participatory, arts based and biographical method (2008, O'Neill and Hubbard 2010, O'Neill and Perivolaris 2017). The research focus emerged from the previous work of the research team on migrant mothers (http://www.open.ac.uk/socialsciences/migrant-mothers/index.php) migration and citizenship (Erel and Reynolds 2014; Erel, Reynolds, Kaptani 2017; O'Neill 2017, Reynolds 2005), participatory approaches to women, asylum, migration and community (O'Neill 2010,

Kaptani 2017, Reynolds 2002) and participatory theatre approaches with young people (Reynolds and Kaptani 2016).

The participatory, performative methods we used in this project are an innovative combination of Playback, Image, Forum and Legislative Theatre, Physical Theatre exercises, visualisation, mapping and walking. We also conducted more orthodox qualitative interviews and focus groups towards the end of each of the research phases with the participants.

The research team share a commitment to PAR and PA, the importance of sharing and facilitating space for the women and girl's stories to be told and shared and the importance of creativity in our research for social change.

The combination of participatory theatre and walking stories enabled us to:

- Engage with migrant women, girls and families.
- Better understand the crucial issues affecting them.
- Make a difference and impact upon practice and policy through the co-production of knowledge around policy issues, notably no recourse to public funds policy (NRPF).

This section briefly explains the methods we used and shares film clips, showing the process in action as well as the knowledge and learning shared.

3.1. Playback Theatre

Playback theatre was, conceived by Jonathan Fox (1986), and developed by Jo Salas in the 1970s (1993). Its influences were the US American experimental theatre movement, storytelling of indigenous cultures, and psychodrama. Playback was part of a movement that distrusted grand narratives, instead valuing ordinary lives and personal experiences. Local and personal stories are shared and seen 'on stage' and thereby given validity. Playback theatre begins when a group of four trained actors introduce themselves by sharing a personal experience with the participants, first verbally narrating it, then acting it out theatrically. A conductor then invites stories from the audience, when a participant volunteers their own story they can then watch their own experience played back to them by the actors.

We started our workshops with two sessions of Playback Theatre, as the method opens up a space for stories to be told, where emotions can be expressed though the narratives and the enactments as well as through the reflection with the conductor [2]and teller on the enactment of the story. It also prepared the ground for devising theatre based on participants' lived experiences and social issues (Kaptani et al, 2018, Forthcoming).

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[2] *The conductor in Playback Theatre is the person facilitating the session, our case an experienced theatre practitioner and researcher.*

Why is it useful?

Playback offers an innovative way to start social research as the actors[3] and researchers share their stories first with the mothers, offering reciprocity of shared stories to the mothers. When the actors take the risk of sharing and then theatrically improvising a personal story on the spot, this inspires the rest of the group to do so themselves, especially in the later sessions. Playback can validate participants' experiences as it creates dialogue and collective reflection between participants as conductor and actors theatrically interpret and 'give back' the stories they heard from the participants.

Examples:

1) Clip – Playback: Good Morning!

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/playback-theatre

A participant shares her experience of the kind of sociality she experiences in her neighbourhood compared with her experience in Africa. Here, in a busy city people ignore her, or respond minimally to her greeting. Issues of race, belonging, culture and conviviality are raised here.

2) Clip – Playback: Moving Around with an Autistic Son

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/playback-theatre

A participant shares her experiences of homelessness as a consequence of being affected by the No Recourse to Public Funds policy. Her autistic son is suffering from the frequent moves and the lack of space as the family have to a share a room in friends' houses. As her son is autistic, some of their hosts do not understand his behaviour and reprimand the mother for not bringing him up to be more polite.

3.2. Theatre of the Oppressed

The Brazilian director and activist Augusto Boal developed Forum Theatre as part of the *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979) based on the principles of collective empowerment and emancipation outlined by Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). This theatre form and participatory ethics is 'motivated by a vision for what could be, and the possibilities of addressing asymmetries of power, privilege, and knowledge production' (Freire 2001:6).

3.2.1. Image Theatre

Image theatre is an effective technique that can be used in social research. Participants create shapes or sculptures with their bodies to express a feeling, a scene or an issue. Using their bodies to make images to represent concepts, thoughts, feelings or social issues,

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[3] *In the Playback Theatre sessions a group of four actors and a musician joined us to play back the participants' stories, and they also volunteered their own stories.*

without words in the initial stages. A participant can also use other members of the group to 'sculpt' images, or represent a theme or issue to be investigated. Drawing on emotional and affective processes of memories, Image Theatre allows participants to reflect about the concepts and narratives evoked by the images (Kaptani and Davis, 2008).

3.2.2. Forum Theatre

In Forum Theatre, participants share stories of conflicts, dilemmas or problems. The group then decide on one story which they will perform as a skit, a short theatrical scene. The group then shows this skit to other participants who are invited to intervene by taking the place of the protagonist and suggesting better strategies for changing the course of action. This opens up space for reflection on both personal experiences, but also on wider social structures and processes.

3.2.3. Legislative theatre

Legislative Theatre takes these activities into other social settings to enact social, legal or policy changes. This enables the theatre to be seen by different publics and to connect the problems facing different groups with each other and policy or law makers. Legislative Theatre aims to enable participants to participate more fully in policy processes than simply being consulted.

In our research we took theatre, that had been produced with Mothers with No Recourse to Public funds, to a policy event with invitees from policy and practice in the areas of migration, families and arts and to an event at the House of Commons that we co-organised with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Migration, sponsored by Kate Green, MP and Chair of the group and supported by Baroness Lister of Burtersett. The aim was to share the theatre and research with think tanks, lawyers, politicians, migrant organisations, social workers and Members of Parliament. The mothers with NRPF also took their performance to other events with voluntary and statutory service and other community groups.

Why is it useful?

Image Theatre's corporeal 'installations' can provide a focus for participants to think through, address and analyse personal experiences, social issues and social relationships. The Forum Theatre technique gives participants the opportunity to try out different forms of social action, allowing participants and researchers to reflect together on structural power relations and social processes, but also the opportunities and limitations of individual and collective action. Legislative Theatre can bring together participants with policy makers and practitioners, allowing them to use the participatory theatre techniques as a way to engage with policy makers and practitioners. Legislative Theatre therefore is particularly useful for engagement and social action.

Examples:

1) Clip - Process: Morphing from 'Friendly' to 'Scary' Neighbourhoods

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/image-theatre

The girls' group developed images of what they termed 'friendly' and 'scary hoods'. In this exercise we develop the image work further, by asking them to morph from the image of the 'friendly' neighbourhood to the image of the 'scary' neighbourhood. This exercise helps to reflect on the different ways in which the body is used to represent 'friendly' and 'scary' public spaces. At the end of the clip you can hear a reflection prompted by Image Theatre on the research topics of place-making and belonging.

2) Clip - Forum Theatre: Asking Permission for a Sleepover

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/image-theatre

This clip shows a scene in the family: The older daughter asks the mother for permission for a sleepover with her friends and is allowed to go. When the younger daughter asks the mother to allow her to go to a sleepover with her friends, she refuses, arguing that the younger daughter is not yet responsible enough. The younger daughter than asks the father for permission for the sleepover, however the father just refers her back to the mother. When another participant steps in, to replace the younger daughter as protagonist, she asks the mother for permission for the sleepover, but convinces her by doing her chores (cleaning) and homework first. While the mother does not allow her to go for a sleepover, she does give her permission to go out to her friend's house for a short while – so, this is, as we discussed with the group afterwards at least a partial success for the protagonist.

3) Clip - Forum Theatre: Social Workers Interacting and Performing in Workshops

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/forum-theatre

This clip shows the experience of a family with No Recourse to Public funds enter the social services office and how they experience the receptionist, as well as the social worker as gate keepers. The scene shows how the mother experienced this situation as characterised by lack of respect and recognition and humiliation. We invited two social workers to take part

in the workshops to give the mothers and the social workers an opportunity to exchange their knowledge and learning. This was a new situation for the participants, many of whom had not had an opportunity to share their experiences and the way this made them feel with social service professionals before. This is an example of how we employed the principle of Legislative Theatre to bring the people experiencing a particular policy together with practitioners and professionals.

3.2.4. Walking as a Participatory, Performative and Mobile Method

There is a tradition of walking in ethnographic and anthropological research and in sociological research with communities (Ingold and Lee 2006, Edensor 2010, Clark and Emmel 2010, Pink 2008) but until recently not in performative, biographical and participatory research (O'Neill and Roberts 2018, O'Neill 2015, Heddon and Turner 2012).O'Neill & Hubbard (2010) argue that walking is an embodied research practice and process that is relational, discursive and reflective. Importantly, it is also sensory and multi-modal in that multiple modalities of experience can be shared. Such methods constitute what Back and Puwar (2012:6) term live methods, "creative, public and novel modes of doing imaginative and critical sociological research".

Our use of walking in this project is as an arts based method along with theatre based methods. We invited migrant mothers and girls to map their everyday routes and we walked with them, following their maps either in pairs (Mothers with no recourse to public funds) or collectively (migrant mothers and migrant girls). The step by step process is as follows:
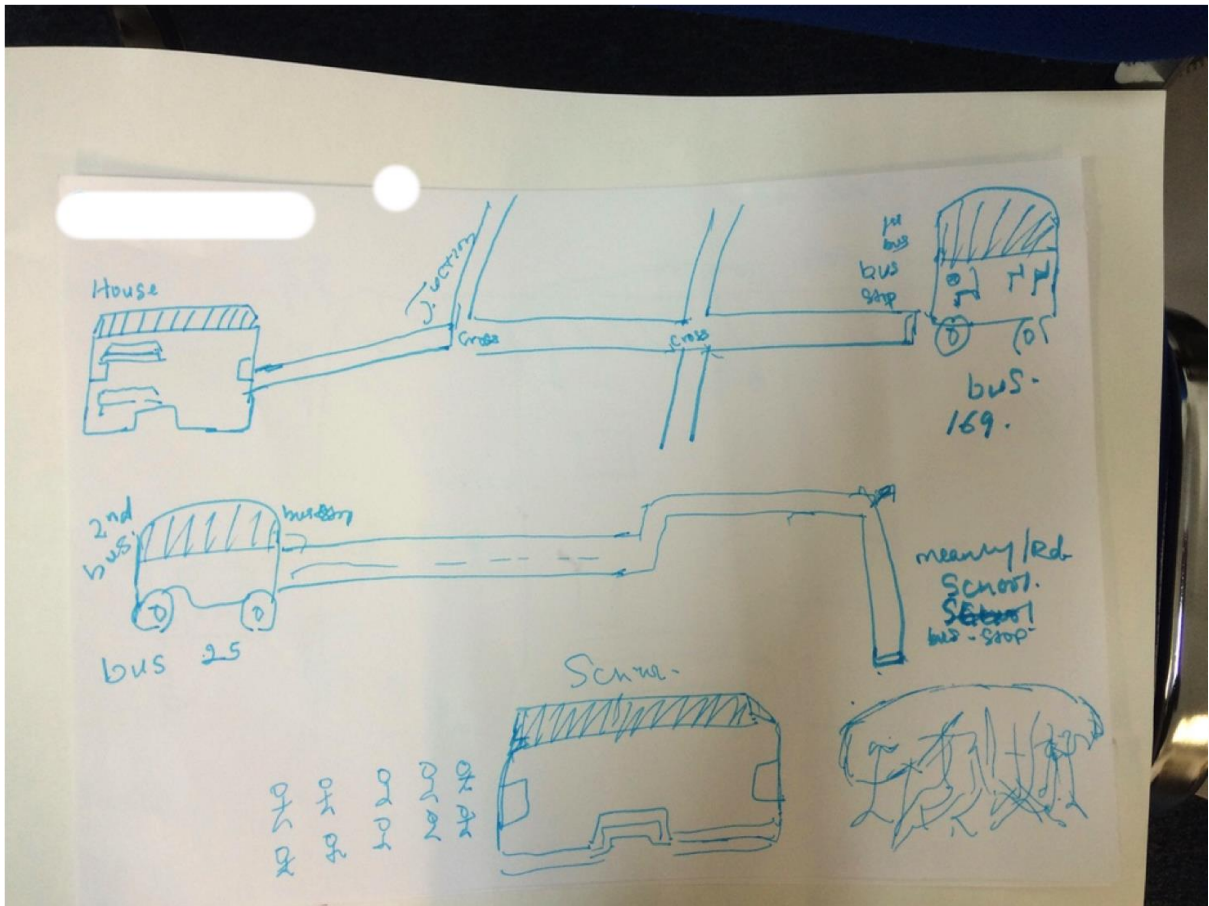
1) Erene engaged everyone in visualization exercises where we were asked to visualise and reflect emotionally and through the senses on our everyday routes, for example to work, school, to places where we sought and gained support , i.e. welfare services.

2) Maggie asked everyone to draw a walk they liked to take, a favourite walk, maybe from a place they call home to a place that is special to them, marking the landmarks along the way that are important to them, for whatever reason, good or bad.

3) After we walked in pairs describing our walks to each other in the workshop space we shared our maps with the group, describing the places and spaces on the maps.

4) Together, we then agreed a schedule for the walks, and the routes that we would take. The maps were used to plan the walks.

5) We walked in groups with the girls and mothers and we walked in two's with the mothers with no recourse to public funds – research team member and mother. Film Maker Marcia Chandra filmed every theatre workshop and one group walk with the girls, one group walk with the Mothers and two walks with the NRPF mothers.

6) Finally we discussed the walks in the workshops, curated the photographs and maps; and created scenes and integrated the walks into the theatre forms and final

performance – image theatre, playback and forum.

Walking –
Sense of peace & quiet
like walking because its
free + can exercise – most of
us can't afford the gym
Can clear my mind/+ plan
for the day – week
walk to run for the bus

I walk to take my children
to the library

Walk to school with son + just
chat about school, instead of
taking bus; find out about
each other more.

Clear clutter from mind
Good for body –
If feeling emotionally down it

Images of maps

We discussed any reflections and stories that had emerged during the walks, sparked by memories of being in place or attachments to place; and why they were important.

The walks took us out of the workshop space and into the streets and neighbourhoods and we connected in relational and embodied and sensory ways with the women and girls everyday lives in these neighbourhood spaces.

Walking enabled a shared viewpoint and also empathic, embodied learning. In this way we moved "beyond the notion of walking as a method discussed by ethnographers and anthropologists, that help us understand how space and place is made and used, towards walking as a deeply engaged way of 'attuning' to a life" (O'Neill et al. 2015) as lived by the

mothers and girls, and this helped us to access the way citizenship is enacted, and performed (O'Neill 2017, Erel, Reynolds, Kaptani 2017).

The walks and reflecting on the walks using theatre forms helped us to better understand the groups' experiences of living in London as girls, migrant mothers and mothers with no recourse to public funds.

Why is it useful?

Walking with another focuses attention on the sensory, dimensions of lived experience, and the relationship between the visual and other senses. For example, in the study, during the walks with the young girls, they shared and reflected on the ways that they use public space and at the same time attuned to those spaces in new ways that enhanced their learning about the areas they lived in and went to school and each other. Walking enables 'attunement' in ways that is different and harder to attain in a standard interview. All of this facilitates richer data and the potential for in depth, reflexive, embodied, sensory analysis.

Examples:

1) Clip: Walking with Mothers: Arsenal Stadium

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/walking-methods

This is part of a walk with a group of mothers, where they show the places that are meaningful to them. Here, issues of the effects of gentrification, gendered use of places, feeling safe and unsafe are raised alongside fear of racism and violence/humiliation.

2) Clip**:** Walking Methods: Girls Reflecting on Place

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/walking-methods

This shows the reflections prompted by the walks on the meaning of place and the girls' heightened sense of awareness of places.

3.2.5. Combining the methods: Participatory theatre and walking maps

We used a combination of theatre and walking practices in order to create space for multi-sensory and multi-spatial practices where participants can explore through different mediums and practices different aspects of their identities and lives. Every practice brings up different aspects of lived realities and ways of seeing, reflecting on and analysing these experiences.

Why is it useful?

The combination of theatre exercises and walking maps breaks away from the hegemonic gaze at migrant, racialised, Muslim and Black mothers. **These methods allow participants**

to explore and share their experiences outside of these hegemonic parameters which often reproduce them as 'drama', 'victim' or pathological (Kaptani et al, forthcoming 2018) or through the 'bureaucratisation' of their lived experiences (Jeffers, 2012).

The Combination of methods takes an embodied view back to their everyday understanding of their neighbourhoods, public and statutory spaces and interactions (Kaptani 2016). The integration of performative, mobile and live methods supported the emergence of rich research data that are visual, performative and dialogical.

Examples:

1) Clip: Integrating Methods: From Walking To Images to Final Scenes

   http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/intergrating-methods

   In this clip, a participant shares a photograph of a Social Services office which is important to her and which was included in her walk with the researcher. She then describes the place through theatrical methods in the theatre workshop and finally we used this scene in the short skit we showed at the policy day.

2) Clip: Integrating Methods: From Walking to Soundscapes

   http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/intergrating-methods

   In this clip, places we visited on the walks, such as the nature reserve, are brought to life again in the theatre workshop space through soundscapes.

Practical and Ethical Considerations

Underpinned by the principles of PAR - inclusion, participation, valuing all voices and action oriented intervention (O'Neill and Webster 2005) ethical considerations were rigorous, reflexive, a process rather than an event and at the centre of the research. [*See the ethical guidance in section 7 of the toolkit for more information.*]

4 How to analyse data generated through participatory theatre?

4.1. Recording the Data

To **systematically record the data**, we suggest it is important to have **all sessions video recorded**.

Fieldnotes on each session should include the **substantive research issues, methodological observations, and note methodological issues and challenges, conflicts and problems, including personal reflections.** These field notes will help in the analysis of the key themes and in choosing and accessing the videos of the sessions or times in each session you want to focus on in your analysis, as it can be very time and labour intensive to watch all video recordings.

4.2. Analysis

The methods of participatory theatre and participatory walking methods are open to analysis using different epistemological and analytic frameworks. We do not advocate one particular analytical framework and instead broadly suggest that analytical approaches suited to ethnography can be used to analyse data from participatory theatre and walking methods. Approaches such as grounded theory, discourse analysis, conversational analysis, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, or even Content Analysis can be used to understand the data produced by these methods. Our own approach has foregrounded a thematic analysis of the data generated, as we briefly sketch out below. The following scene was shown at the Intergenerational Day, where we brought a group of migrant mothers and a group of girls from migrant families together.

Clip: Intergenerational Workshop: Embarrassment Scene

http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/pasar/videos/intergenerational-day

This scene is based on one of the mothers' stories about growing up in London. Nabila related that she is very tolerant of her own children because as a young girl she herself had been 'wild', going to parties, coming home late and wearing fashionable – rather than traditional – clothes. Although Nabila's mother worried, she allowed Nabila to go out late with her friends. Nabila's older brother, however, felt embarrassed by her clothes and – despite their mother's tolerance - tried to talk her out of her friendship with this peer group. Nabila shared in her story that she felt that it was her mother's trust in her that allowed her to be confident in her choices. This confidence in her own choices meant that she decided later on to focus on education and marriage. These decisions placated her brother and in turn gave him the confidence to give his own daughters more freedom during their teenage years. In the video, you can see the scene being played out at the Intergenerational Workshop.

We can analyse this scene along the following themes:

1) *The story: what issues are shared? how are they shared?*

2) *The intertext: how do the issues shared in the story relate to other stories about young women from migrant families?*

3) *Group dynamics within the mother's group: how did the scene develop in the mother's group, how did other women contribute different themes, different aspects, challenge or add to Nabila's story?*

4) *Group dynamics during the Intergenerational Workshop: How did the girls see the story, how did they react? What kind of exchanges did the scene give way to?*

There are of course other possible foci and aspects an analysis might address depending on researchers' interests.

5. Usefulness and Challenges of Participatory Theatre and Walking Methods

Usefulness

- The methods can **facilitate and develop community capacity and engagement** as well as reinforce the principles underpinning PAR (inclusion, participation, valuing all voices and action oriented interventions) and importantly, social justice.

- A **different experience of knowledge production** is taking place where research participants are given the time, space and resources to evolve with their subjugated knowledges the research process and findings as well as making meaning of their own experiences.

- Due to the highly reflexive and actively engaging processes, these methods **can make visible difficult experiences and processes of marginalization, discrimination, individual and institutional exclusionary practice**s, which are difficult to verbalise in more discursive methods, especially for participants with limited English language skills or cultural capital to engage with academic researchers

- These methods can be used as **stand alone methods or with other more orthodox methods**, e.g. interviews and focus groups.

- Offer a **more inclusive, community-driven, grass-roots and 'bottom up'** approach to research and co-producing knowledge.

- A **range of potential outputs** are possible, including 'affective' and impact driven engagement and dissemination of findings. We have delivered conference papers, written papers, produced policy briefings, training events, interactive performances with academic and general audiences and a conference, this toolkit as well as a policy dialogue event. These are all routes to impact and produce impact in and of themselves.

Challenges

- The need for **extra time to do the relational work** necessary, to take care of participants and each other in the team, especially when working with emotive and sensitive issues.

- A consideration and team reflection on **working across boundaries**, relationships, power, language, trust and ethics are important.

- PAR can sometimes be a **financially costly process**, taking into account staff costs of conducting research, the need to bring in a trained arts specialist to work with participants, and the wish to financially reimburse participants for their time attending sessions.

- Balancing the demands of *arts, research* and *group processes:*

- balance the wish to create a presentable piece of creative work with the aims of the participatory action research.

- when working with groups, there are important considerations on how to build the group, ensure that each participant has an opportunity to participate and share their views even if these might conflict with those of other participants.

- There is no template for balancing the elements of group processes, arts and participatory research but it does require the team to be open, transparent, facilitate sharing of ideas, reflection and communication.

- **Ethical issues** and challenges need to be thought through very carefully, for example:

  - **Power relations** – there is a danger of assuming that all actors hold equal status in co-production of knowledge, as power differentials between researcher and researched may be disguised.

  - **Time and Labour** –it is important to build in the time, sometimes months, needed to connect with participants, potential partners and build the trust, skills and community enthusiasm for collaborative projects. There are also associated costs of emotional labour that go into much of this work, which is oftentimes disguised or not documented in the design and write up of research.

  - **Managing expectations** - researchers, policymakers, and practitioners using PAR approaches to engage marginalised communities need to tread a careful path between generating sufficient interest for participation, valuing the contribution of participants and not raising false hopes.

  - Clarity over the **ethics and principles** underpinning the research are needed alongside ensuring the practical resources are available to undertake the research and negotiate aims and outcomes among research team members, partner organisations and participants' needs. [See section 7 of this Toolkit]

6. Routes to Impact and Dissemination

It is useful to think of impact on a range of levels, acknowledging that impact cannot always be explicitly measured. It may be short term, medium or long term and it is not always easy to trace the impact of a research project as many social factors are involved in creating social, institutional and individual change. When planning impact activities, it can be useful to consider different ways of making the work relevant to a range of audiences. In our case, we emphasised issues such as methods, research as citizenship practice, racialized migrant families, the relation between research and arts. This flexible approach can help to find many different routes to impact and dissemination. It is important to think about ways of creating impact from the start, building it in, but also to remain open to other initiatives that can help disseminate the findings of the work.

This project has achieved impact in the following ways:

Participants:	Policy and Practice:	General Public/Other Users:
New knowledge and reflections: including practical knowledge, but also shared critical knowledge.	Two social workers participated in two theatre workshops with migrant mothers affected by NRPF to engage with each other in a creative, non-pressured setting. This technique can usefully be integrated into **Professional Development** in a range of areas, such as social work, public health or education.	Numerous **presentations to arts, community, third sector organizations** (e.g. the Migration Museum Project, Extra-City's Citizenship Festival, Antwerp)
The workshops were important as places for **community building**, countering the social isolation.	**One day workshop** co-organized with the Runnymede for **practitioners, policy makers and activists.**	Counterpoints Arts organized a Learning Lab, with artists Jane Arnfield and Natasha Davis on the meanings of 'participation'.
New skills and capacity building: e.g. theatre, camera, presentation, communication, group work; developing and building transferable skills e.g. for education, employment, civic engagement.	Event at **House of Commons** with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Migration, showing a short play on the effects of No Recourse to Public Funds Policy.	Arts performances in conferences and various events, e.g. Migrants Matter.

It was good that this project goes to places and people see it (Participant NRPF group)

We had an exchange. When I told them we need to have some training and not waste our lives while we are waiting for immigration decision and the person from [NGO] agreed and the [Politician] backed it up. (Participant NRPF group about discussion at the Policy Day)

It is good to know that these stories are real. They need to see what is happening and not stigmatising us. So they take action and do something about it. (Participant NRPF group about the Policy Day)

The [theatre] exercise of making the soup and put the ingredients in from our experiences was good to make the audience active and for you, the group, to show your expertise in modelling the exercise to the 'experts'. (Attendee at the Policy Day)

It was important to do things practically, we got to know each other and supported each other – joining the group was really helpful (Participant, NRPF group)

Expressing, sharing and acting out the stories we share was powerful (Participant, Intergenerational Mothers Group)

After being part of this project I have felt much more confident to negotiate a care plan for my son with social services and school. (Participant NRPF group)

After this project I felt confident on the legal skills I have and I made suggestions to my solicitor and it had worked out so I now I got my status. (Participant, NRPF group)

7. Ethics process, practice and guidance

In participatory research ethical review is a guide, a practice and a process that continues throughout the lifecycle of the project.

The main additional issue to consider (beyond the ethics required for qualitative research) when situating rigorous ethics at the centre of your participatory action and participatory arts research is that in PAR/PA ethics is conducted as a *process,* rather than an event that takes place at the start of the research leading to ethics approval – indeed ethics is a reflexive process that runs through the entire research from start to finish based upon clear, transparent communication, mutual recognition and fostering democratic forms of learning and participation.

A report by National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement & the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action at Durham University (2012) outlines the key general ethical principles for conducting community-based participatory research as follows:

- research relationships should be based upon mutual respect;
- equality and inclusion are central to participatory research along with democratic participation;
- the research facilitates active learning;
- seeks to make a difference;
- facilitates collective action and personal integrity and closely monitors the potential for risk and harm.

The Centre for Social Justice and Community Action (2014) also produced a helpful guide to working ethically using participatory theatre. There are a number of resources to guide

researchers to conduct research ethically in addition to the NCCPE/CSJCA toolkit and University Ethics Guidance/Protocols. For example:

a) The ESRC Ethics framework ESRC:

http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/

and for researchers not based in a University the Social Research Association has very helpful guidance.

b) SRA: http://the-sra.org.uk/research-ethics/ethics-guidelines/

The British Sociological Association: British Sociological Association (BSA) (2002) *Statement of Ethical Practice*.

c) www.britsoc.co.uk/about/equality/statement-of-ethical-practice.aspx

Some helpful questions for you to consider when preparing your ethics approval documentation *and during the life cycle of the research*.

- What do you, the research team and the participants understand by informed consent?
- Do people want to be anonymous? Consider how the research team might negotiate different responses to this question
- How will data be stored, where will it be stored and who will have access to it?
- What are the risks and potential harms caused by the research?
- What are the benefits and how can these be maximised in the research design, process, practice and dissemination?
- What are the power differentials in the research team and how might you work with these to facilitate the space for mutual recognition, respect and trust whilst also guiding the project to completion?
- How might you foster equality and inclusion in practice?
- Working with partners and copyright? Who owns the data?

Resources produced by the NCRM specifically in relation to visual and creative methods are also very helpful.

1. The National Centre for Research Methods developed a very helpful review of the ethics involved in visual research written by Rose Wiles, John Prosser, Anna Bagnoli, Andrew Clark, Katherine Davies, Sally Holland and Emma Renold *Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research*:

http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/421/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-011.pdf

2. The NCRM has a very helpful series of three video casts by Dr Helen Kara of on the theories, principles and practice of research ethics.

https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/video/#

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