



W o r k i n g G r o u p

OBJECTIVES

This working group aims to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and problem-solving among YPAR practitioners. Through regular meetings, we will achieve the following objectives:

- Identify opportunities for collaboration
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning
- Stay informed on the latest YPAR research
- Provide open forum to present specific challenges
- Plan for further resource development

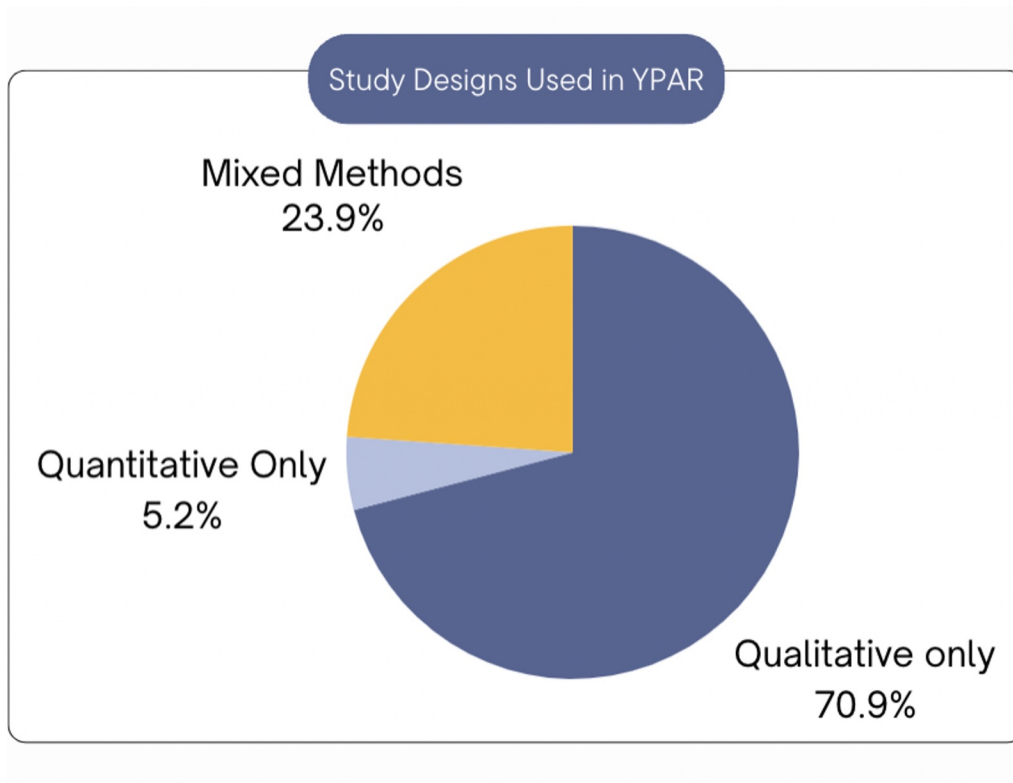
YPAR Methodology

Shared June 2024

HIGHLIGHT REEL

The aim of the YPAR Highlight Reels are to keep our working group informed regarding trending topics and areas of focus in recent YPAR research. Our hope is that these spark discussions and reflections on the implications of new research for YPAR practice.

Why we need to expand our methodology?



*“Given that youth operate not only as individuals but also as part of several interdependent, multilevel systems, efforts to understand and improve social conditions for marginalized young people must not only gather directly measurable information about those systems via **quantitative data**, but also consider more deeply the ways in which youth experience these systems via **qualitative data**.”*

Nemoyer et al., 2021

Combining Strengths of MM and YPAR

* **Transformative Mixed Methods**- methodological orientation to legitimize, illuminate, and prioritize perspectives from *marginalized youth* that may be undervalued, decontextualized, and oversimplified in traditional quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.

Table 1. Philosophical and methodological alignments of YPAR, RP and transformative mixed methods.

	Youth participatory action research (YPAR)	Restorative practices (RP)	Transformative mixed methods
Historical Realism Ontological Assumptions (nature of reality)	Interrupts traditional hierarchies, elevates marginalized voices, draws upon multiple ways of knowing	No single reality is valued at the cost of another	Realities are not independent of social beings, but shaped by society and validated by power and privilege. Language is not constitutive, but descriptive
Axiological Assumptions (nature of ethics)	Student voice and perspective is paramount and given priority	Interconnected individuality and honouring humanity	Advancement of social justice and human rights and culturally response research
Social Constructionist Epistemological Assumptions (relationships between researcher and researched)	Active collaboration between researcher, community and youth through all steps in research process. Youth are positioned as lead investigators and their voices are elevated	Co-construction of meaning, norms and expectations	Knowledge is socially constructed and influenced by power relations within society
Methodological assumptions (approach to inquiry)	Application of varied methodological approaches of qualitative and quantitative research to YPAR cycle of: problem identification, data collection, analysis, dissemination and action/advocacy.	Not an explicit methodological framework but importance of understanding experiences of youth and adults in RP activities (qualitative) and how school wide RP impacts outcomes, especially for marginalized youth (quantitative)	Includes qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis strategies within the confines of a singular line of inquiry that are designed to appropriately consider equity, social justice and addresses power. Qualitative data, often enacted first, can support dialogue between researcher and community.



Transformative Mixed Methods

- Empowers youth researchers with a more comprehensive understanding of research methodologies.
- Generates stronger evidence base with triangulation of multiple sources or methods to inform policy and practice changes.
- Provides more holistic and nuanced understanding across multiple ecological levels (e.g., from individual-level qualitative to community-level quantitative)
- Broadens potential impact and reach by collecting multiple forms of data for targeted messaging to different stakeholders.

Challenges traditional research paradigms and advocates for social change

Seeks to empower historically marginalized communities.

Increases research rigor and transparency

Generates knowledge for actionable change



Youth Participatory Action Research

- Centers youth perspective and voice to avoid adult-centric biases
- Enhances authenticity and increases ownership by youth directly affected by the issue in research design data collection, analysis and/or interpretation.
- Provides more holistic and nuanced understanding of stakeholder perceptions, as well as social characteristics and structural conditions.
- Broadens potential impact and reach by ensuring findings are relevant to and actionable for intended audience.

Moving Beyond Surveys and Interviews...

Important Considerations:

- Age-appropriate methods
- Scaffolding and differentiated training
- Peer learning and support
- Utilize technology and online resources



EXAMPLE:

A group of high school students (ages 15-18) are conducting a YPAR project on youth mental health awareness in their school.



Scaffolding for Observation:

- **Start with the basics**
 - a. Have group discussion to identify aspects of mental health at school students can capture through observation.
 - b. Discuss difference between seeing vs. observing, emphasizing details & critical thinking.
- **Include Real-World Examples**
 - a. Use relatable contexts like people-watching at a mall, observing classroom dynamics, or noticing interactions in a hallway or lunchroom.
- **Design training with interactive exercises**
 - a. E.g., Play "I Spy" with a focus on describing objects and their characteristics
- **Vary Complexity of Data Collection Tools**
 - a. Start with simple checklists where youth mark observed events (e.g., student raises hand).
 - b. Gradually progress to note-taking w/ prompts to capture details like time, behaviors, , and nonverbal cues

Scaffolding for Social Network Analysis

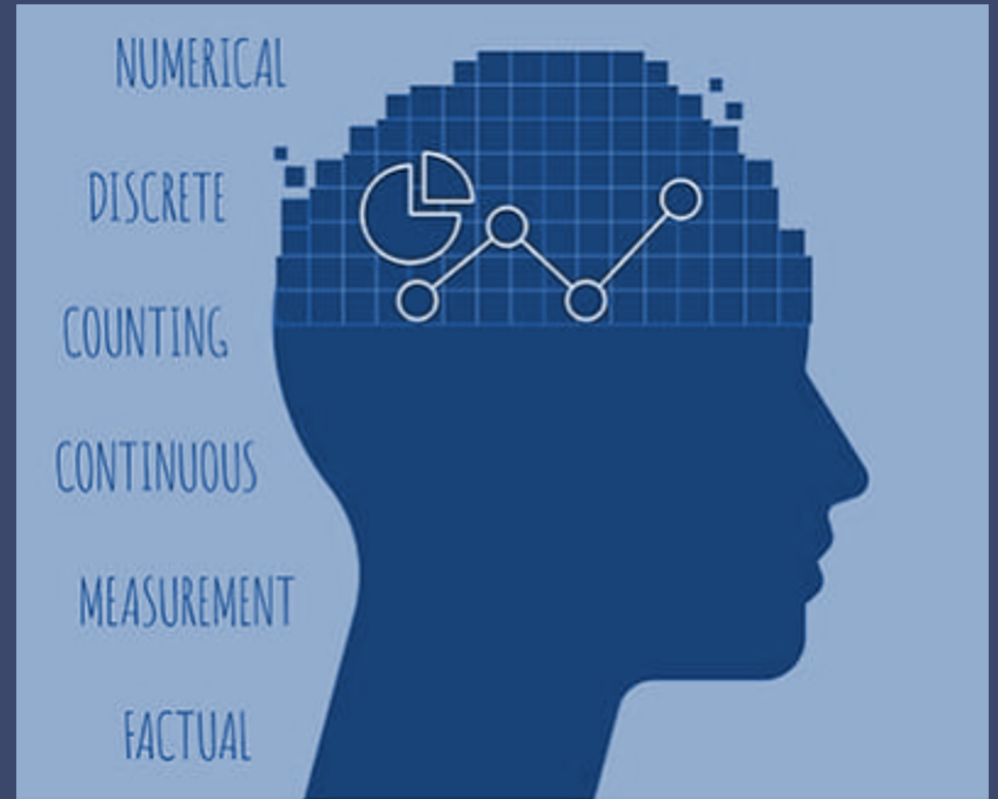
- **Start with the basics**
 - a. Have students create a personal network map identifying individuals they talk to about mental health (friends, teachers, counselors).
 - a. Ask youth to denote the strength and nature of these connections (close friend, trusted adult).
- **Include Real-World Examples**
 - a. Use relatable examples, like friendship groups or sports teams and explain how connections influence information flow and decision-making.
- **Design training with interactive exercises**
 - a. E.g., Create simulations to identify common supports (e.g., guidance counselors, social workers, student support groups).
- **Vary Complexity of Data Collection Tools**
 - a. Begin with simple visualizations like network maps, showing connections between students, teachers, counselors, etc.,

Expanding Methodological Toolbox: Designs & Methods

Methods

- *Surveys and Interviews*
- **Social Network Analysis**
- **Ripple Effect Mapping**
- **Arts-Based Methods**

Selecting **QUANTITATIVE** Methods



Arts-Based Methods

- typically a mode of formal qualitative inquiry that uses artistic processes in order to understand and articulate the subjectivity of human experience
- can be used at different research stages, including data collection, interpretation, analysis, & sharing findings.
- needs to be explicit about what is being investigated and process must be clearly documented
- **Ex. Photovoice:** Participants take photographs that capture their experiences with the issue being researched. These photos are then used for group discussions and presentations, allowing youth to share their perspectives through visuals.

Quasi-Statistics

- **What are quasi-statistics?**
 - simple counts to make statements such as “some,” “usually,” and “most” more precise
- **Why include quasi-statistics?**
 - facilitates pattern recognition
 - supports ability to make comparisons
 - strengthens arguments
 - verifies interpretations with statistical interpretations
- **How to include quasi-statistics?**
 - Begin by *coding* data
 - Group codes into categories, themes, or patterns.
 - Generate quantifiable information by counting the frequency of each code, theme, or category.

Selecting QUANTITATIVE Methods

Photovoice uses photographic documentation of participants' everyday lives as a tool to record and to reflect their needs, explore the reasons, emotions and experiences underlying chosen images, promote dialogue, encourage action, and inform policy.

What is Shown here?

What is really Happening here?

How does this relate to Our (your) lives?

Why are things this way?

How could this image Educate people?

What should be Done about this?

1. What do you See here?

2. What is really Happening here?

3. How does this relate to Our lives?

4. Why does this condition Exist?

5. What can we Do about it?

Appendix B: Photo Description Worksheet

Describe your photo.

Why did you take this picture?

How does this photo convey the meaning of your experience as a female youth growing up in foster care?

Figure 1: Pieces of me. P4 stated, "pieces of me were chipped away each time I moved to another home."



Figure 2: Cracked and broken. P10 stated, "I felt cracked and broken back then."



Table 2

Perceptions of How Others See Them

Codes	Frequencies (<i>f</i>)
Foster care	16
Broken	11
Unwanted	5
Lost	5
Not worthy	4
Confused	3
Labels	2
New Kid	1
Not pretty enough	1
Person of color	1

Selecting QUANTITATIVE Methods

Social Network Analysis (SNA)

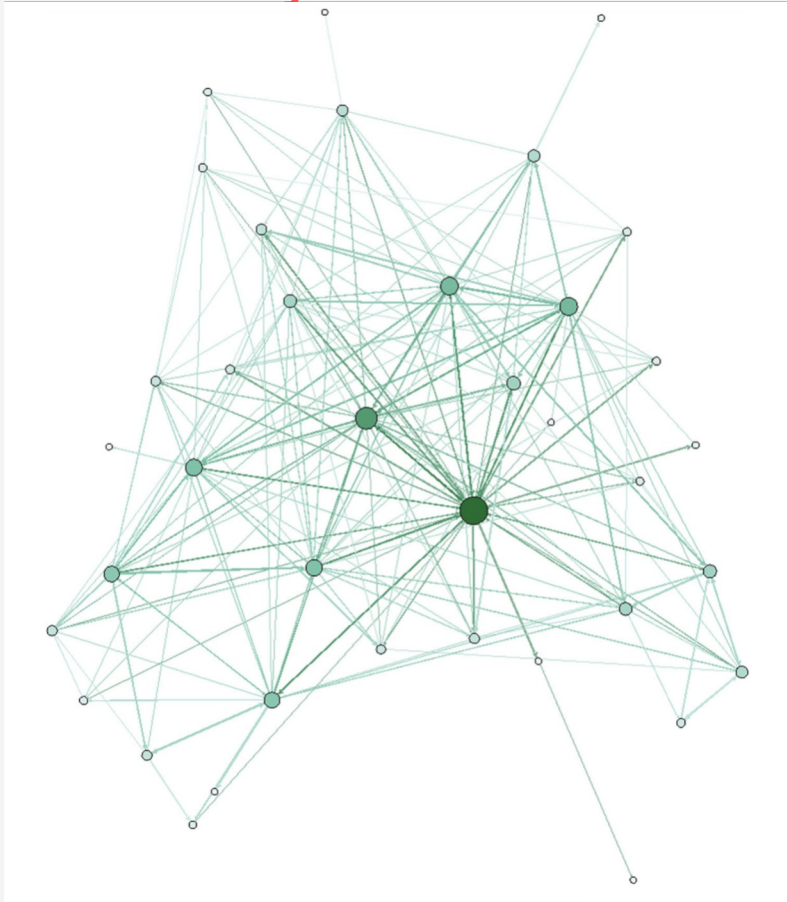
- **Social network analysis** is a research method that quantifies the connections between people/groups in a social network
- **Understanding power dynamics**, especially in youth-adult relationship, when it comes to decision-making and participation in YPAR
- **Visual** how information flows within a community
- **Advantages for Action Research:** Enriches understanding of the *social dynamics* within a research topic and change over time and used as a tool for informing future intervention strategies

SNA Steps

- **Identify actors** (people within the network), the power of individual actors, and the influence and reciprocity between different actors
- **Collect data** via a network survey or conduct interviews
 - Possible questions: Who do you seek information about (your topic of interest)? How close do you feel to this person? How frequently do you talk to this person?
- **Constructing the SNA map** (e.g., Gephi)
- **Analyzing the social network map**
 - Density of map, size of nodes, color of lines, direction of arrow

Selecting QUANTITATIVE Methods

Social Network Analysis



Example Project:

The project had two goals: (1) to understand the current state of communication among organizations addressing concerns of Black students and (2) to support BSA in using this information to form stronger university-level partnerships aimed at fostering social action and racial justice.

Method	Description	Advantages	Example
Social Network Analysis	Examines relationships and connections within a group.	Enriches understanding of the social dynamics within a research topic.	A group of high school students (ages 16-18) are concerned about the feeling of isolation among new students in their school. They decide to conduct a YPAR project to understand how new students integrate into the existing social network.

Selecting QUANTITATIVE Methods



Selecting **QUALITATIVE** Methods

Photovoice

- **Monitoring or evaluation tool:** To research changes resulting from an intervention
- **Needs assessment or context analysis tool:** To get insights into the current situation or to provide input in program/intervention development
- **Research tool:** To answer a research question which may or may not be directly linked to a program/intervention
- **Advocacy tool:** To provide input for a focussed advocacy topic
- **Awareness and empowerment tool:** To have participants gain insight into their own situation and that of their peers, share this with others, and realise their ability to act on this.

Photovoice Training

- First participants learn to understand the basics of photography and photos (visual literacy) by watching, discussing and using the camera.
- Second, they start identifying the link between the Photovoice methodology and the research question through individual reflection.
- Third, they answer the research question by taking pictures, starting the individual selection process a
- Finally, participants categorize the pictures, making the group's final selection, and finalise the narratives. Last but certainly not least, the participants get the opportunity to create awareness with the results by organizing an exhibition for stakeholders

Selecting QUALITATIVE Methods



“Symbolizes my growth from the projects to a gated community”

Selecting **QUALITATIVE** Methods

Ripple Effects Mapping

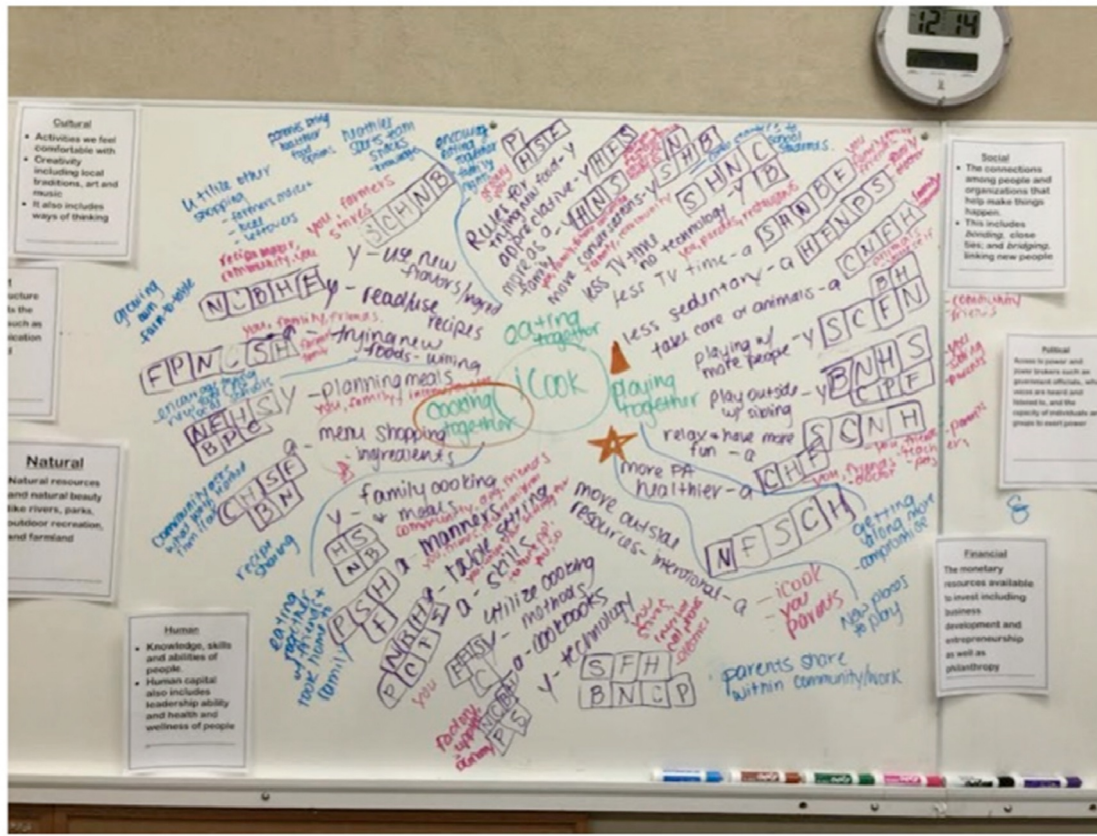
- **Ripple effect mapping is** an evaluative tool that engages stakeholders in reflection, growth, and celebration (WSU)
- **A participatory approach** where stakeholders have opportunities to influence the process. For example, “who is invited to the session, how and to whom participants are paired for peer-to-peer interviews, and what themes are prioritized from the data”
- **Advantages for Action Research:** Visualize the *impact* of YPAR research teams, research-community partnerships, etc.

Ripple Effects Mapping Steps

- **Appreciative inquiry interviews**
 - With a partner, participating youth and/or adults share experiences from the partnerships
 - **Sample questions:** What is a highlight, achievement, or success you had based on your involvement? What did this achievement lead to? What new or deepened connections with others (individuals, community organizations, etc.) have you made as a result of these efforts? What did these connections lead to? What unexpected things have happened as a result of your involvement in these efforts?
- **Mapping process**
 - Using Mind Mapping software or chart paper to make connections across experiences
- **Qualitative analysis**
 - Deductive or inductive coding process

Selecting QUALITATIVE Methods

Ripple Effects Mapping



Selecting QUALITATIVE Methods