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AMAZWI ETHU: SPEAKING BACK - A PHOTOVOICE STUDY OF ADOLESCENT RISK AND RESILIENCE

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ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

Previous longitudinal study
- The Well-being of South African Children: Household, Community and Policy Influences

About Vulindlela community
The aim of the present study
- The aim of present study was to develop a deeper understanding of the beliefs and aspirations young South Africans hold about their place in the world and how these constructs influence their health behaviours and risk assessments
- Adoption of a qualitative Photovoice methodology

Why this approach?
Participatory
It is bottom up
It acknowledges the participant by giving it VOICE
It is empowering
How we did it?

PHOTOVOICE

• Participants were trained on Photovoice
• Disposable cameras given to older adolescents (15-18 years old)
• Given prompts e.g. (please take no more 3 photos of things that make you happy or excited, describe who you are, challenges faced by woman/man in your community)
• Discussed pictures in a group setting

FOCUS GROUP

• FGDs with:
  • 12-14 year olds
  • 15-16 year olds
  • 17-18 year olds
• FGD covered questions on community, families, substance abuse and sex, amongst others
What did we find?
FINDINGS

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO

SUBSTANCE USE

RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS
‘Here, I was trying to show a picture of peer pressure; that young people my age don’t just start smoking and doing drugs, but friends influence them because they want to fit in ... You cannot fit in with them if you do not smoke!’ (Focus group (FG) 3, male, 17 - 18).
'What I heard is that girls, like women, use it for sexual activities ... they say it makes boys... You see when they have sex you become [aroused] and that... The sister I was sitting with told me that, you see. But she told me not to [tell other people]. She said like with your partner, what can I say? He says you 'They insert it here [pointing towards the vagina': Focus group (FG) 3, male, 17 - 18).
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO
IMPLICATIONS

• Using participatory/emancipatory approaches give adolescents opportunities to voice their concerns in their own right, rather than researchers ‘coming in’ and making assumptions on what is important or not.

• Visual methodologies give voice to adolescents and allow for alternative ways of capturing and disseminating the concerns of adolescents, as they see and experience them.

• Different to other studies, we focused on both the ‘positives’ and challenges in the community.
  • In relation to the challenges, the findings are not new however it offers new insights into the experiences of youth in semi-rural communities which are often neglected in the literature.
    • This information is imperative for the adaptation or development of interventions that are culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate.
  • Future steps:
FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

• How can we encourage the positives in order to address the challenges?

• How can we use the challenges to develop or adapt interventions to address them?
NGIYABONGA!!
SO ... DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR ME?