

PHOTOTHERAPY AS A THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUE FOR AN ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT IN MALAYSIA CASE STUDY: MYANMAR REFUGEES, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This research employs the benefit of Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) as part of a therapeutic technique of sharing experience for Myanmar Refugees in Malaysia. This ongoing process might be utilised in different ways from time to time. The research featured a random audience of Myanmar Refugees, aged 7 to 55 years old. Each participant was asked to pick one from 200 random images that reflected their background, ethnicity, visual experience preferences and interest. From one random image, participants were asked to talk about the visual chosen. This study used only ONE (1) PhotoTherapy technique, which is the Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI). The study aims to see if the PEI PhotoTherapy can become part of the therapeutic process. The methodology adopted for this study was based on qualitative interviews. In the discussion of the result, this research has developed an appropriate framework. From these observations, the research found that PhotoTherapy evokes the communication process by indirectly encouraging people to open up and talk while describing the visual. The result from this research aims to provide data for any related agency, art therapy guidelines and a method for determining individual emotional states.

Keywords: *Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) Technique, PhotoTherapy, Refugees, Visual Study, Alternative Mental Health Treatment*

1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) is traditionally valued for complementing some of the limits of verbally asking questions of participants. The advantages of introducing photographs as part of interviews are: (a) to facilitate rapport, (b) to trigger participants' memories, and (c) to facilitate the articulation of ideas (Miller 2015)¹. Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) is a well-known alternative treatment therapeutic technique in photography research, which can also be used to obtain the result through the interview process. The study found that the Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) techniques can transcribe information, feelings, and memories that are inspired by the photograph's form of representation (Miller, 2015; Harper, 2002)². Regarding the technique, it can be anything related to visual such as a video, print photograph, digital slide, animation, short story video or any type of visual representation of images (Bignante, 2010)³. In addition, in this study, photo elicitation also helps to define participants' experience, thoughts and feeling of photos, and can help jog participants' memories, especially with tacit knowledge (Hatten, Forin, & Adams, 2013)³. Furthermore, the study seeks to assess if the Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) technique can affect the conscious mind and mental state of Myanmar Refugees in Malaysia. According to the United Nation Refugees Agency, as at January 2019, 142,370 Myanmar Refugees had been registered with UNCHR and an estimated 30,000–40,000 more remain unregistered (UNHCR, 2019)⁴. The number included 84,030 Rohingyas, 25,700 Chins, 9,770 Myanmar Muslims, 4,000 Rakhines and Arakanese refugees. From the report published in 2017 (UNHCR, 2017)⁵, it was confirmed that most of Refugees arrived by boat in Thailand after

undertaking dangerous journeys across the Andaman Sea prior to being smuggled or trafficked into Malaysia. The report also shows that Myanmar Refugees struggle to live due to the economic situation in Malaysia.

Other studies have found that, after three decades of living in Malaysia, Myanmar refugees are still not able to work legally, and do not have access to free healthcare and education (Letchamanan 2013)⁶. Based on these issues, Malaysia has become part of the United Nations (UN) - Sustainable Development Goals, with the main key objective being to end poverty and reduce inequality in 15 years. This raises an issue of where do we stand on this matter? Does a commitment to ensure human sustainability means that ‘no one is left behind’ apply to refugees in Malaysia too?

2. OBJECTIVE (S) OF THE STUDY

This study is focused on two (2) objectives. Firstly, the research process aims to assess whether the usage of PhotoTherapy can form part of an alternative treatment technique for Myanmar Refugees. The second objective is to determine what kind of visual preferences can be applied to certain groups of Myanmar refugees as part of the therapy technique.

3. METHODOLOGY (S) OF THE STUDY

The research used a qualitative approach for data collection. The qualitative method involved observations, case studies, and interviews. The location for the conducting of this study was the Myanmar Refugees Centre, Kuala Lumpur. Twelve respondents participated in the session. They were aged between seven and fifty five years old, both female and male from multiple region, race and ethnicity. In association with this research, an interview was conducted after the visual selection session. In the visuals, 200 random images were present, which referred to the experience, culture, nature, background and other exhibits of interest to humans. From those images, respondent were asked to talk about the pictures. After the session, the researcher transcribed the information into transcript data using the available software - Atlas TI.

The following figure (1) indicates the detailed design framework that was applied to the research process, which is further explained in the following sections of this work:

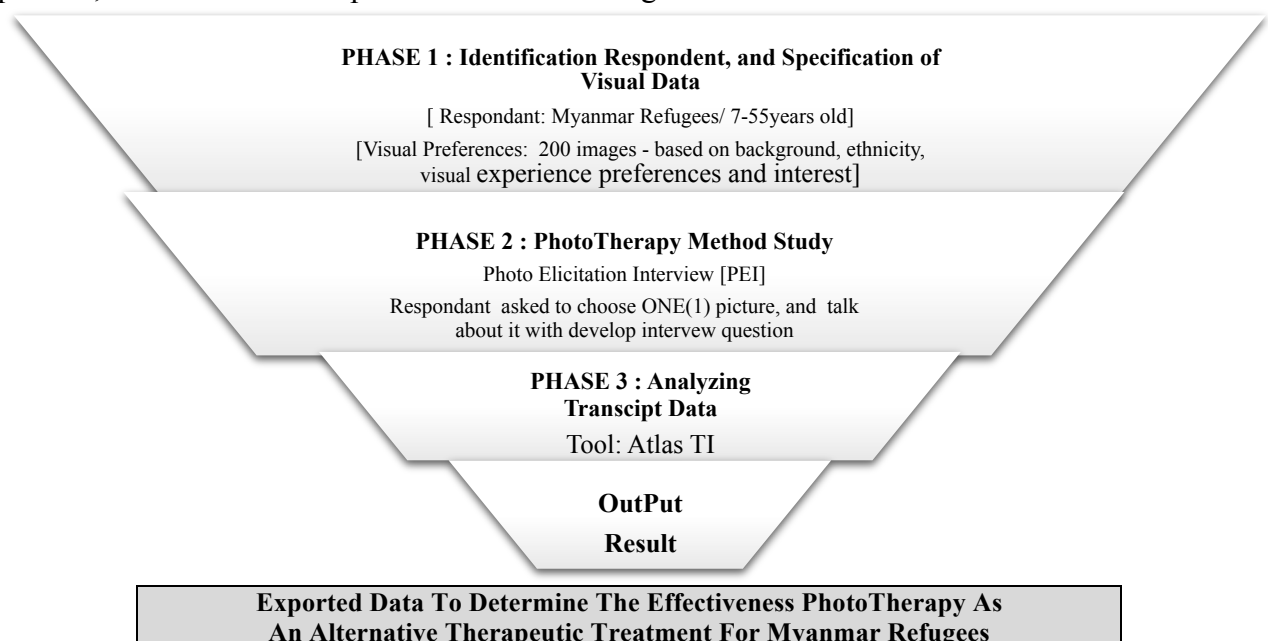


Figure 1: Framework Structure of research process, Analysis and Results.

Phase 1: Identification Respondent, and Specification of Visual Data

Respondents randomly chose one of the 200 printed images (photographs) that was most directly related to their background, ethnicity and visual experiences, or that was related to their preferences or interests. 12 male and female respondents, from age 7 to 54 participated in the study.


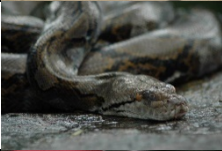

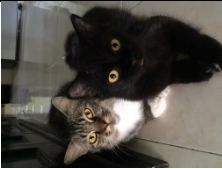


Phase 2: PhotoTherapy Method Study

The Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) technique, using photograph, formed part of the interview. From the one random image chosen, the interviewer asked the participant the reason why he or she selected the photo.

Phase 3: Analysing Transcript Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI).

The interview results were compiled into a table (1) and analysed using Atlas TI software as a measurement tool to analyse the interview data.

Details as follow:

No	Participant Details	Ethnicity	Visual/ Picture	Images	One to One interview [Information Data]
1	Female [20+ yrs old]	Chin	Beach		I want to live nearby a beach, I want to feel free. I eat grass from the jungle and can't sleep at night because I'm too scared. Army kills my brother.
2	Female [15-16 yrs old]	Chin	Snake		I scared of snake because of the poison. My father kill snake and we ate. So much fun
3	Female [20+ yrs old]	Rohingya	Bags		I want to go to London, have nice life, nice handbags so I can carry my baby.
4	Male [8 yrs old]	Rohingya	Cat		They're cute and I use to have cute cats
5	Male [54 yrs old]	Chin	Building/ House		I want home, love and peaceful life
6	Male [30 yrs old]	Chin	Guitar		So I can play some music but we try not to be happy. If we happy, there always bad things happen.

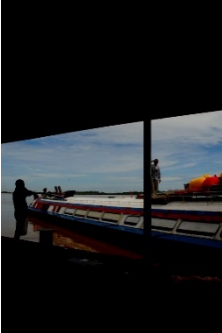



7	Female [17 yrs old]	Rohingya	Midin/ Vegetable		I like this photograph. Reminding me the situation how much we need “women tampon” I just need some clothes. So, I made some. Right now, we just wash and dry same pad, and recycle.
8	Male [17 yrs old]	Rohingya	Malay Bride		Funny dress and make me laugh
9	Male [35 yrs old]	Chin	Boat		So I can go fishing, and have good food to eat
10	Female [30+ yrs old]	Chin	Building		Beautiful, very nice colour, nice building, near the market
11	Female [7 yrs old]	Chin	Woman wearing Hijab		I saw this video in town, woman with towel on the head
12	Female [14 yrs old]	Chin	Coke		Good food and expensive food. I want to work and buy them a lot

Table 1: Interview Details

Phase 4: Result output

The results from the transparency data using Atlas TI appeared to attract hidden information for certain interview processes. Ang, Embi and Md Yunus (2016)⁹ concluded that the usage of Atlas TI forms a compass to develop honest information for research study. The transparencies of the data indirectly build trust in the form of giving, receiving and transcribing the data (Iris, Bonnie, and Patricia 2016)¹⁰.

4. FINDINGS

According to the data analysis, the result showed the frequency information and the variable of basic needs, made up of 13 words, which are mentioned at least 8 times (see figure 2). These are in addition to the mention of other words such as belongingness {6-0} and psychologic needs {4-

0}, Self-fulfilment need {4-0}, Safety and Security {1-0}, to ensure the acquiring to a code co-occurrence pattern.

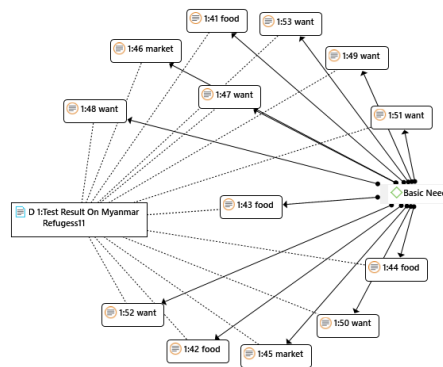


Figure 2: Diagram of Ratio Domination Choice of Words from Transcript Data

The code data shows the Word “I” had been mentioned 23 times which represents 6.37% out of the ratio of 34.7% in Total. Self-belongingness to the indication ratio of female shows a focus on psychologic needs, whereas male choices were more directed towards basic needs. The results of the cloud analysis of the data are presented below (Figure 3):



Figure 3: Cloud Image of Interview Transcript Result

From a visual point of view, the cloud interpreted the value of psychology to self as the roots to the interview response. The frequency of word choices was dominated by the word “I”, which was mentioned 23 times from the participants. This was followed by ethnicity and value of need, represented by such word as “build”, food, happy, eat and good in the same way were mentioned between 8-12 times.

4. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, the research found that PhotoTherapy is deeply focused on the basic need of living while talking about the pictures. The data concluded using a standard deviation, which has a specific variable of Median. The median shows the average number 1:4, which is detailed in figure 2. In addition, from the observation, the interviewer found that on average, the participants chose images related to their hobbies, age, and living life. The study utilised the Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI) as part of the process therefore enhances the indirect message as important information to the organisation and therapists involved with supporting these refugees. Thus, it will provide and improve the Mental Health assessment as an alternative treatment for Myanmar refugees. Equally, it might help participants to overcome the trauma they have experienced.

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