



TASA The Australian
Sociological Association

TITLE: Using participatory visual methods with young African migrant women: a discussion of the benefits and challenges of this method

Author/s: *Ms Laura Gobey*

Affiliation/s: PhD Candidate, Deakin University

Over the last two decades the use of visual methods in sociological research has grown significantly. These methods include photography, film, drawings as well as engaging with pre-existing audio-visual materials, to name a few. While a significant proportion of visual methods are conducted by the researcher, participatory visual methods such as photo-elicitation and photo-voice often involve the collaboration between the researcher and their participants. There are many benefits for sociologists adopting these methods, particularly around the empowerment of participants. I will highlight the benefits of these methods alongside some of the challenges they produce, predominantly around recruitment and participant involvement. This discussion will be based off the initial fieldwork stages of my PhD which looks at the lives and aspirations of young African migrant women in Melbourne. My study involves my participants keeping online photographic diaries followed by in-depth interviews informed by the images generated by the participants. This paper argues that participatory visual methods are of a particular interest to gender scholars as many of the aims of these methods align with goals of gender research.