

YOUTH-CENTERED PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH: CREATING SPACES OF RESISTANCE AND ACTION WITH MUSLIM NEWCOMER YOUNG WOMEN

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NATURE OF THE GROUP

- ◉ 9 Newcomer Muslim young women
- ◉ Ages 14 to 26
- ◉ Migrated from conflict zones (Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia) within past 3 years
- ◉ Weekly meetings from March to June 2013

RESEARCH METHODS

Art based approaches were used:

- ◉ **Identity Map** explored: Gender, Religion, Age, 'I am...', Violence/Safety, and Health.
- ◉ **Visual Representation of System Belonging** (using concentric circles to represent the various groups that each participant feels she belongs to).
- ◉ **Picture drawing** of the themes/ feelings discussed and evoked during the process of discussing the response to structural violence.
- ◉ **Photovoice** was the main method used to create final products by the group exploring and representing participants' experiences of structural violence in their lives.

PHOTOVOICE

- Cameras provided to each participant
- Identified themes from group discussions:
 - Freedom / Oppression
 - Safety / Violence
 - Rejection / Isolation
- Take photos from everyday life to reflect these themes
- Write brief stories about their own photos (English, Arabic, or Farsi)

PHOTO QUESTIONS/REFLECTION

Question to Photographer During Presentation to Group:

- Describe the photo.
- Why did you take this photo?
- What's the story you want to tell with this photo?
- What do you hope others will take away from seeing this photo?

Question to others:

When you look at this picture and hear this person talk about her story, feelings, intentions related to the picture, what ideas come to you about acceptance/judgment, safety/health?

PHOTOVOICES TELL A STORY

Experiences of
safety and
vulnerability



PHOTOVOICES TELL A STORY

Experiences of
safety and
vulnerability

Discover Place



PHOTOVOICES TELL A STORY

Experiences of
safety and
vulnerability

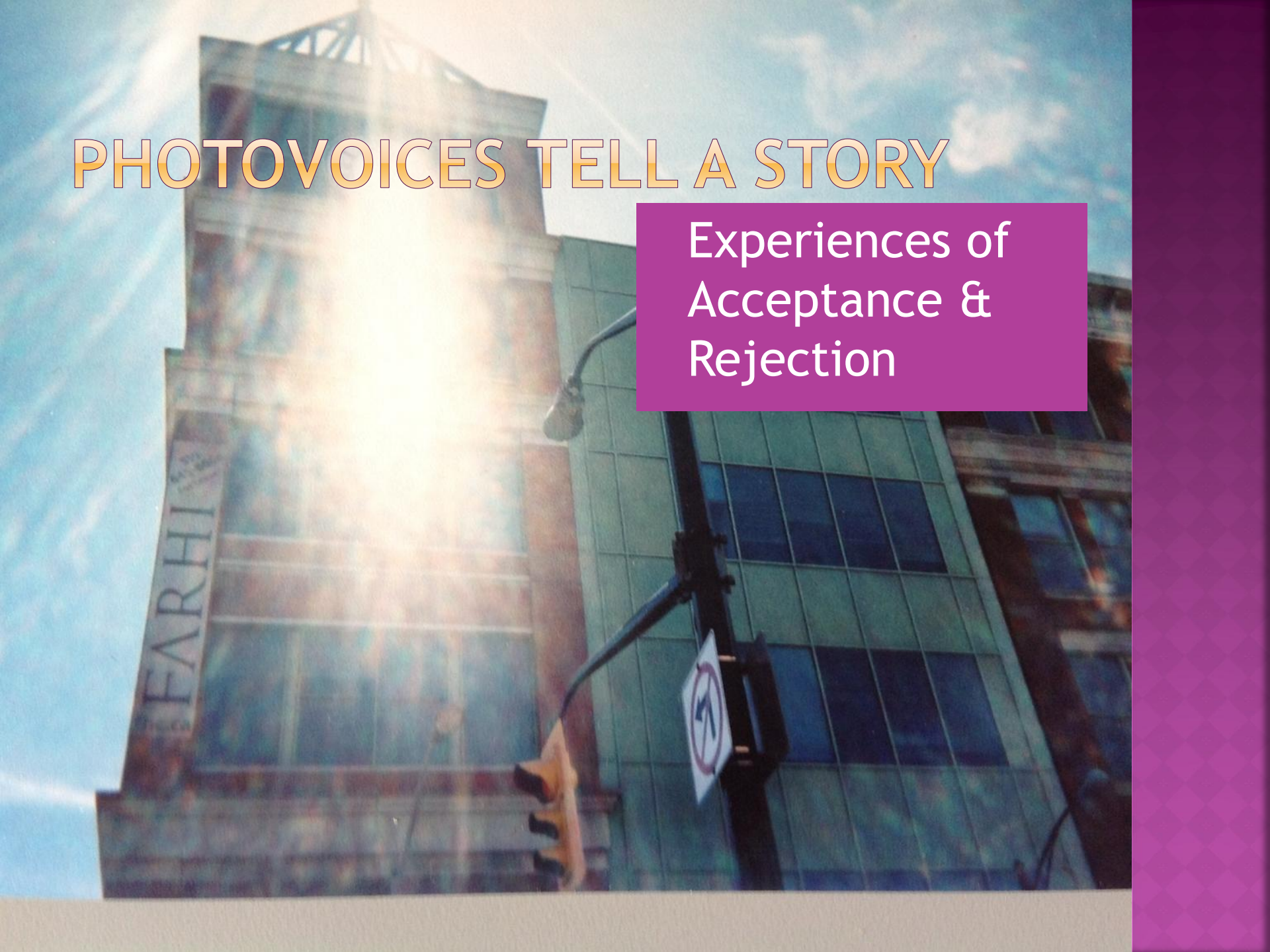


PHOTOVOICES TELL A STORY

Experiences of
Acceptance &
Rejection



PHOTOVOICES TELL A STORY



Experiences of
Acceptance &
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PHOTOVOICES TELL A STORY

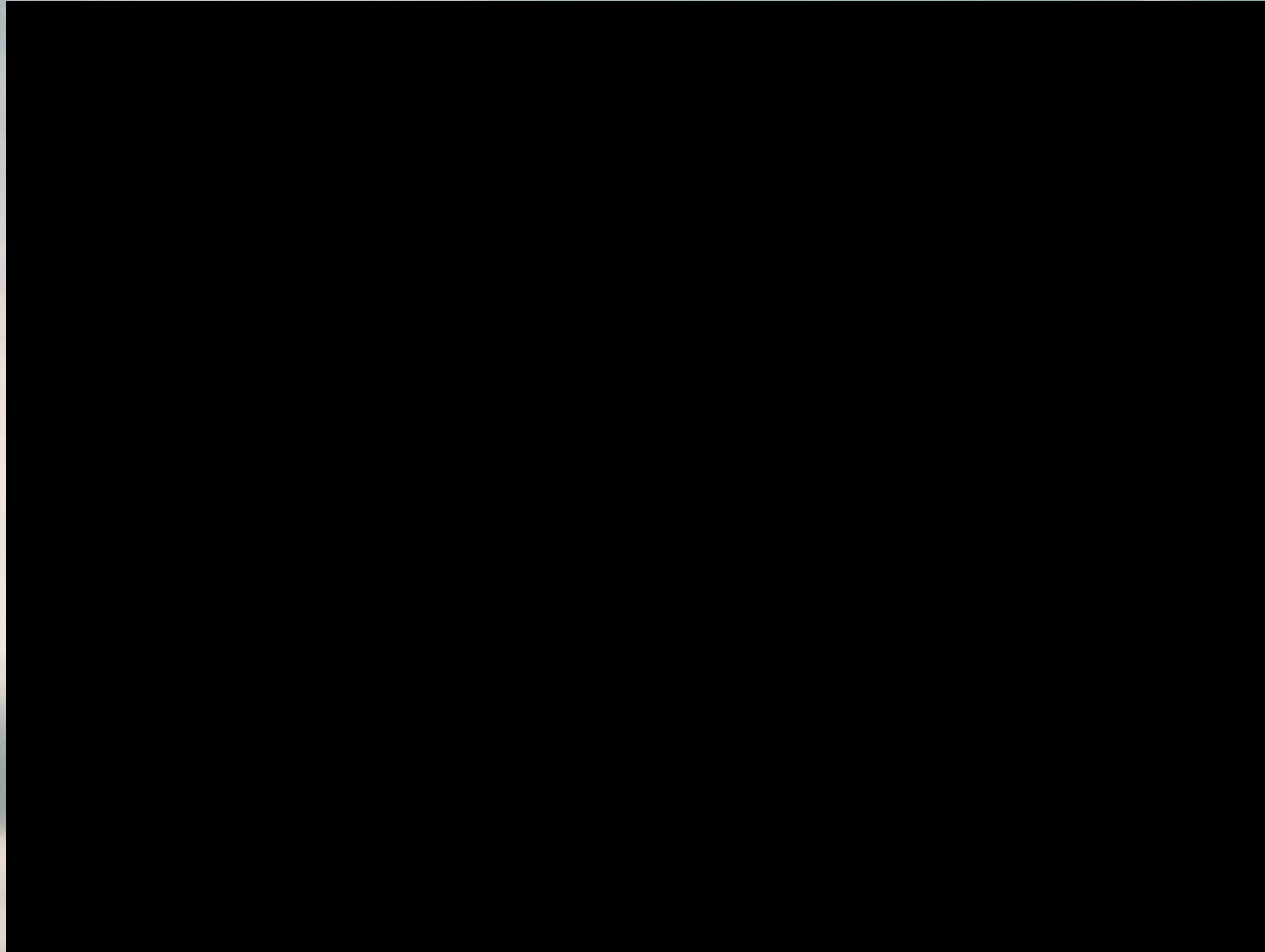
A photograph of a wooden fence with a purple text box overlaid on the right side. The fence is made of horizontal wooden planks and is set against a background of green grass and trees. The text box contains the title and subtitle of the project.

Experiences of
Acceptance &
Rejection

INTERACTING WITH SYSTEMS

A photograph of a multi-story brick building with balconies, viewed from a low angle. The text "INTERACTING WITH SYSTEMS" is overlaid in a stylized, orange-outlined font. A purple vertical bar with a diamond pattern is on the right side.

PHOTO VOICE MOVIE



KEY LEARNING

- Identified sources of oppression at various levels, effects of these, and barriers to action.
- Support for action comes from using own voice, getting support from others, recognising sources of judgement in own community and exclusion in broader community, and knowing about available resources.

KEY LEARNING (CONT.)

○ Health:

- Safety associated with living away from war and conflict
- Healthy relationships important
- Value being able to act for self and make own decisions

○ Inclusion:

- Complex struggle that includes -
- One's own identity within ethnic/cultural group, and
- Acceptance of self as different after migration and integration

KEY LEARNING (CONT.)

○ Policy Implications:

- Schools and adult education centres: Support and encouragement from teachers and staff.
- Substandard housing: Be aware of social isolation. Make it easier to address housing problems.

KEY LEARNING (CONT.)

- Policy Implications (cont.):
 - Settlement agencies: Clearly identify rights and responsibilities of new Canadians.
 - Employment: Acknowledge competing priorities/demands of language, education, employment, transportation and youth.
 - Institutional response (Ontario Works, etc.): Importance of respectful and supportive interactions.