

Module 4: Participatory Narrative Inquiry (PNI)



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01.

INTRODUCTION

This section gives the theoretical background to what participatory narrative inquiry (PNI) is, as well as using participatory narrative inquiry in the workplace.



Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Identify listening and negotiating methods used in participatory narrative techniques.
- ✓ Ability to demonstrate the use of personal experiences for enhancing employee engagement, improving team dynamics, and promoting organisational learning.
- ✓ Demonstrate how to use participatory narrative inquiry to understand workplace issues such as diversity and inclusion.
- ✓ Ability to apply learning from participatory narrative to an organisational context and use it to promote a positive company culture.
- ✓ Develop strategies for integrating narrative inquiry into the workplace

Introduction

Participatory

When people work with their **own** stories

Narrative

To explore values, beliefs, feelings and perspectives

Inquiry

Somebody always finds out something useful about something

- **Participatory narrative inquiry** is a way for people to work together and collect personal stories to understand complicated situations and make better decisions.
- This approach focuses on exploring the values, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives of individuals by hearing and analysing their real-life experiences.
- PNI aims to promote social change by empowering individuals and communities to tell their own stories and contribute to solutions.



What is PNI?

- The "P" in PNI stands for “**participatory**”, which emphasises the active involvement of participants in the research process.
- The "N" in PNI stands for “**narrative**”, which refers to the personal stories and experiences that are at the heart of this approach.
- The "I" in PNI stands for “**inquiry**”, which refers to the systematic process of asking questions, gathering data, and analysing the results.

Types of PNI



Collaborative narrative inquiry



Digital storytelling



Ethnodrama



Participatory action research



Oral history



Autobiographical & autoethnographic inquiry

Personal Experience & PNI

- Personal experiences enhance employee engagement, team dynamics, and organisational learning.
- Sharing personal stories increases empathy, collaboration, and innovation.
- Personal stories make abstract concepts more tangible and relatable.



Benefits of PNI

- Participatory narrative inquiry promotes a positive company culture.
- Personal stories can align employee behaviour with organisational goals.
- Involving employees in generating knowledge promotes ownership, leading to increased engagement, collaboration, and innovation.

Using PNI in the Workplace

Empowering Individuals
Participatory Narrative Inquiry (PNI) empowers individuals and groups to share their stories and experiences to generate knowledge about workplace issues.

Sense of Ownership
PNI helps employees develop a sense of ownership over their work and collaborate with others to create positive change.

Strategies to Integrate
Strategies to integrate PNI into ongoing workplace processes include incorporating storytelling into performance evaluations, using personal stories for team-building activities, and creating forums for sharing experiences.

Culture of Learning
Embedding narrative inquiry into existing processes promotes a culture of learning, continuous improvement, and helps ensure insights gained through storytelling are translated into action.

Team Benefits
PNI promotes employee engagement, improves team dynamics, and addresses workplace issues by developing listening and negotiating skills, applying learning to promote positive company culture, and leveraging the power of storytelling.

Addressing Workplace Issues

- ❑ Participatory narrative inquiry can address workplace issues like diversity, change, and engagement.
- ❑ Employees can gain insight, identify patterns, and develop strategies by sharing stories and engaging in dialogue.
- ❑ Participatory narrative inquiry promotes ownership and agency over workplace issues by involving employees in generating knowledge and insight.



02.

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Story telling
- ✓ Listening and inquiry in participatory narrative technique
- ✓ Reflective listening
- ✓ Using participatory narrative inquiry to understand and address workplace issues



Activity 1: Charting Your Path Through Tough Decisions

The goal of this exercise is to help participants identify and map out the key elements of a story

Charting Your Path Through Tough Decisions

Prompt:

***‘Tell a story about a time
when you faced a difficult
decision’***



Activity 1 Instructions

Step 1

Discuss and map out the key elements of your story including the setting, characters, conflict and resolution

Step 2

Present back to the wider group and discuss the process



Activity 2: Narrative Ninjas

Take part in a roleplay to discuss the importance of listening and inquiry in participatory narrative techniques

Narrative Ninjas!

- **Key terms:**
 - **Active listening** involves fully focusing on the speaker, paying close attention to their verbal and nonverbal cues, and trying to understand their message.
 - **Reflective questioning** involves asking questions that encourage the speaker to reflect on their experiences and feelings, and to explore their perspectives more deeply.
 - **Paraphrasing** involves restating the speaker's message in your own words to show that you understand their perspective.



Activity 2 Instructions

Step 1

Split into pairs and discuss a personal experience or story related to your workplace.

Step 2

Use one of the listening methods to engage in a conversation and explore the story in more depth using these questions:

What was the most challenging part of the situation you experienced?

Can you tell me more about how you felt during that experience?

What were the main factors that contributed to the outcome?



Activity 3: Breaking Down Barriers

The aim of this activity is to use a case study to explore communication breakdown and creating an inclusive workplace.

Using Narrative Inquiry for Workplace Inclusion

Samantha is a manager of a marketing team. One of her team members, Jacques, has been underperforming and missing deadlines. Samantha has tried to talk to Jacques about his performance, but he always gets defensive and is unresponsive. She notices that Jacques has been isolating himself from the team, and his communication with other team members has become strained.

Samantha thinks that Jacques might be facing some barriers due to his migrant background. She wants to use narrative inquiry to understand his perspective and experiences, and to create a more inclusive workplace environment for everyone on the team.



Activity 3 Instructions

*In groups of 4 discuss how you feel
Samantha should handle this conversation
and the types of questions she should ask
Jacques.*

Here are some possible questions that Samantha could ask Jacques:

- Can you tell me more about what's been going on with your work lately?
- What are some of the factors that may be contributing to the communication breakdown with your team members?
- Have you experienced any instances of bias or discrimination that may have impacted your work or relationships with team members?
- How do you feel about the team's current culture and inclusivity? Are there any changes or improvements you would suggest?



Activity 4: Sharing Our Own Experiences

The aim of this activity is to encourage participants to share their stories and experiences and to practice what they have learned about PNI by asking reflective questions and putting it into practice.

Question Time!

Prompt:

How has your cultural background influenced your identity?



Activity 4 Instructions

Step 1

Answer the question: “How has your cultural background influenced your identity’

Step 2


Take turns to share your personal stories. Participants are encouraged to ask open ended questions to encourage the person telling the story.

03.


REFLECTION



What Did We Learn?



What personal experiences or stories can you share to contribute to the PNI process in your workplace, and how might these experiences help to promote positive change?



How can you enhance your listening and negotiating skills to actively participate in PNI, and how might these skills benefit you and your team in addressing workplace issues?

04. CONCLUSION

What do we now know?

- ✓ PNI involves using personal stories to make sense of complex situations for better decision-making.
- ✓ PNI emphasises active participant involvement and focuses on their narratives.
- ✓ PNI empowers individuals and groups in the workplace to generate knowledge about workplace issues.
- ✓ Strategies for integrating narrative inquiry can be used to inform team-building and share personal experiences.
- ✓ Storytelling creates positive change, promoting engagement, improving dynamics, addressing issues, and building a positive culture.

THANK YOU





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