

10th International Conference on Transport Survey Methods

## Qualitative methods for investigating transport and mobility issues among commonly socially excluded populations: a case study of co-investigation with older people in rural Tanzania

Gina Porter<sup>a,\*</sup>, Amleset Tewodros<sup>b</sup>, Flavian Bifandimu<sup>b</sup>, Amanda Heslop<sup>c</sup>, Mark Gorman<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Department of Anthropology, Durham University, UK*

<sup>b</sup>*HelpAge International, Tanzania*

<sup>c</sup>*HelpAge International, UK*

---

### Abstract

Qualitative research on transport and mobilities in development contexts is relatively sparse. Following a preliminary discussion of qualitative approaches developed by the first author when researching transport-related issues with commonly excluded populations (women, children, people resident away from the paved road, older people) in rural sub-Saharan Africa, a detailed case study is presented of the methodology employed in an investigation into the transport and mobility problems experienced by older people. This study, which focuses on older people's physical access to health and other services in rural Tanzania, was conducted in collaboration with older people from the Kibaha District of Pwani region. The study is one of the first to explore older people's mobility and associated access to services in Africa and the first to use a co-investigation approach in this context.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of International Steering Committee for Transport Survey Conferences ISCTSC

*Keywords:* qualitative methods; excluded populations; elderly

---

---

\* Corresponding author. Corresponding author. *E-mail address:* [r.e.porter@durham.ac.uk](mailto:r.e.porter@durham.ac.uk)

## 1. Introduction

Although interest in the potential of qualitative research to aid investigation of transport and mobilities issues in development contexts is growing, in sub-Saharan Africa the application of qualitative research methodologies is still relatively sparse. This paper commences with a brief discussion of some qualitative approaches developed by the first author when researching transport-related issues with commonly excluded populations in rural sub-Saharan Africa: action research, mobile interviews and co-investigation involving in-depth research with community members trained as peer researchers. Each of these approaches has some relevance for the ensuing discussion.

A detailed case study is then presented of a mixed-methods investigation into the transport and mobility problems experienced by older people in accessing health and other services in 10 villages in rural Tanzania, conducted in collaboration with older people from the region. This study – one of the first to explore older people's mobility and access to services in Africa - was designed to incorporate three strands, in which co-investigation occupies the first phase, establishing the key issues for further investigation and analysis in two subsequent study components. The second and third components, led by an academic researcher, involved qualitative studies (mostly check-list interviews<sup>†</sup>) with older people and a wider group of key informants, and then a survey questionnaire directed solely to older people. Detailed findings on transport issues from the three research strands are reported in Porter, et al. (2013) and are thus not presented in this paper.

The focus of the paper is on the research process in the most innovative of the three components in this study, the older people peer research. We describe how 12 older people from one rural community in Kibaha district, Tanzania, were trained in some basic participatory research methods, tried out a number of these methods, and gathered initial information about the transport and mobility issues faced by older residents, and how we were able to use this information to build key research questions for the main (qualitative and survey) research phases. Details of the recruitment and training process are presented. We also show how the older people's feedback on methods and questions during the training week fed into the design of the subsequent research in the ten study settlements. The concluding section of the paper reflects briefly on the potential of community co-investigation (in conjunction with an array of other research methods) to contribute to building understanding of (and sounder responses to) transport- and mobility-related social exclusion.

## 2. Background: transport, social exclusion and participatory research in sub-Saharan Africa

Qualitative research on transport and mobilities in development contexts is still relatively sparse, especially in rural sub-Saharan Africa. Although some groups (notably women, children and the elderly) have long experienced particularly severe mobility constraints, with significant implications for their access to health, education, livelihood, there has been a tendency to view them as welfare objects rather than decision makers whose views should count in consultations about the location of new roads or the provision of transport services. A much stronger voice is needed for these groups (Porter, 2008; 2010; Turner et al., 2014).

The first author of this paper has led a number of methodological experiments aimed at improving knowledge of mobility constraints among commonly excluded populations in sub-Saharan Africa. Three methods - action research, mobile ethnographies and co-investigation - are discussed below, with a brief outline to show the context in which they were applied. The methods are introduced here because they illustrate the potential of qualitative

---

<sup>†</sup> Check-list interviews are in-depth loosely structured interviews conducted with the aid of a short pre-prepared guide list of key topics. The list is utilised flexibly by the interviewer to aid free-flowing discussion and enable pursuit of any potentially promising new themes, while ensuring coverage of key pre-defined areas of interest. Thus, question order may be altered, depending on the flow of discussion, and additional queries inserted, depending on emerging information. A final review of the check-list towards the end of the interview will ensure the pre-defined key areas of interest have been covered.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1106802>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1106802>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)