

Engaging Communities in Communication:

Using the PEER method for design of
evidence-based social marketing and
communications programmes



Kirstan Hawkins, Joanne Hemmings, and Ben Rolfe

The PEER Method

Participatory ethnographic evaluation and research (PEER)

is

an innovative method for design of evidence-based social marketing and communications programmes

which

engages with the target community and produces actionable results within weeks



What makes PEER different?

- PEER is conducted by members of the target community
- Peer researchers carry out conversational interviews among others in their social network



How is PEER used?

- Peer researchers produce data in the form of stories and narratives which are used to develop messages and campaigns
- These data are produced over a period of 4 weeks



How are data analysed?

- We work in partnership with social marketing agencies such as Population Services International (PSI).
- Their local staff are involved in the whole process including study design, supervision of data collection, and interpretation.
- Following data collection, the PEER narratives are coded into key themes
- PEER narratives are presented to marketers through an interactive workshop



How are data used by marketers?

- In our partnership with PSI, PEER narratives have been used for concept development
- Peer researchers present data in the form of short dramas, stories and collages,
- Marketers interact directly with the peer researchers as they present the narratives



How are data used by marketers?

- Narratives are developed into a person profile of the target group
- The person profile, forms the basis for identifying beliefs to change and reinforce, and for developing the marketing strategy and positioning statement



Using PEER for formative research

PSI Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago used PEER for formative research for the design of a communications campaign targeting young women engaged in transactional sex

- The PEER data revealed that within the target population sexual relationships and financial benefits are intimately linked.
- Young women in the target group manage and maintain **concurrent** relationships.
- The driving force behind concurrency is consumerism and style, referred to in the PEER narratives and as '*the look*'.



Person profile: PSI Caribbean Trinidad and Tobago

PEER and concept development carried out by PSI Caribbean produced the following person profile:

Excerpt from person profile: young women engaged in risk behaviour with multiple concurrent partners

Jewel is 19 years old. Maintaining the 'look' is essential Jewel and gives her status among her peers. "The look" means wearing the latest style: clothes must be tight, sexy, and branded, not fake. Looking good also means being well groomed – fresh hairstyles (weaves) and painted nails – and being seen in nice, fast cars. Money is essential for maintaining the look and comes from having sex with several men at the same time (concurrency). Having several partners is essential. Jewel has a personal man who makes her feel like she is "number one" (more important than anyone else) by giving her time, attention, and money. Having outside partners keeps the money flowing and provides other benefits, like sexual satisfaction, attention, fun, and excitement.

Using PEER for evidence-based campaigns: Dominican Republic

Formative PEER research was carried out by PSI Dominican Republic among migrant Haitian communities. Data showed:

- The research revealed significant differences between stated norms of behaviour for men and women, and actual behaviour. While in survey data men and women reported a norm of having only one partner, PEER data revealed that having multiple partners is common behaviour for men and women
- Men are caught between two conflicting norms – *hombre serio* (respectable man who has one partner), and ‘tiger’ or *chulo* who has multiple partners and is attractive to women
- All men and women state that in reality *hombre serio* do not exist (it is an ideal). Women are attracted to *chulos*, and are not attracted to men who do not have multiple partners
- Women do not trust men who use condoms because condoms are associated with infection. Women perceive that a man will only use a condom because he either thinks he is infected or he thinks his partner is infected



Evidence-based marketing

- Men want to present themselves as *hombre serio* to other men
- *Hombre serio* do not use condoms because they only have one partner
- Men want to be *chulo* to women
- *Chulo* do not use condoms because women do not like condoms. Condoms = infection
- Women find *chulo* attractive, they are not attracted to *hombre serio*
- These data were used to build a campaign that signifies that *hombre serio* **and** *chulo* use condoms and that condoms = attraction



Examples of where PEER has been used for social marketing campaigns:

With Population Services International in:

- Mozambique, Nigeria, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago: design of behaviour change communications (BCC) for young women engaged in transactional sex
- India: BCC for truckers and auto-rickshaw drivers
- Haiti: condom social marketing with sex-workers
- Rwanda: design of BCC intervention for prisoners; social marketing for sex-workers; design of BCC and reproductive health awareness campaign for young people



Where to go for more information on PEER

PEER Unit at Options Consultancy Services Ltd

Contact:

Dr Kirstan Hawkins

Dr Jo Hemmings

Dr Neil Price

Mr Ben Rolfe

peer@options.co.uk





www.peer-method.com

peer@options.co.uk