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Interactive Performance and Focus Groups with Adolescents: The Power of Play

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Abstract

Conducting focus groups with adolescents can be challenging given their developmental needs, particularly with sensitive topics. These challenges include intense need for peer approval, declining social trust, short attention span, and reliance on concrete operations thinking. In this article we describe an adaptation of interactive performance as an alternative to traditional focus group method. We used this method in a study of discrimination experienced by Muslims (ages 13-17) and of peer pressure to engage in sexual behavior experienced by Hispanic girls (ages 10-14). Recommendations for use of this method include using an interdisciplinary team, planning for large amounts of disclosure towards the end of the focus group, and considering the fit of this method to the study topic.

Keywords

interactive performance; focus groups; adolescent development

Interactive Performance and Focus Groups with Adolescents: Having Fun with Research

Focus groups are a commonly used approach for obtaining the perspectives of a particular group of individuals (Côté-Arsenault & Morrison-Beedy, 2005), but they are a challenge to use with adolescents (Colucci, 2007). Many topics related to health disparities are sensitive (e.g., teen pregnancy, obesity, substance use, discrimination, victimization, mental illness), and talking about them is particularly difficult for adolescents.

The purpose of this paper is to describe an adaptation of interactive performance as an alternative approach to traditional focus groups. This alternative approach involves the use of an interdisciplinary team of researchers and specially trained actors who engage the audience to understand the audience's perspective. We first review the challenges associated with traditional focus groups involving adolescents and how these challenges can be intensified when the focus group topic is sensitive. We then describe interactive

performance and how we adapted it for research purposes. We conclude by featuring two studies of adolescents that illustrate the use of interactive performance as an alternative approach to traditional focus groups.

Adolescence and the Challenge of Traditional Focus Groups

Adolescence is characterized by an intense need for peer approval (Elkind, 2001), a declining social trust (Flanagan & Stout, 2010), a short attention span (Pacheco-Unguetti, Acosta, Callejas, & Lupiáñez, 2010), and reliance on concrete operations thinking (Elkind, 2001). Developmental variability in these characteristics is unrelated to chronological age and often unrelated to the more visible signs of physical development (Klimstra, Hale, Raaijmakers, Branje, & Meeus, 2009). These characteristics and their variability pose considerable challenges for traditional focus groups.

Both an intense need for peer approval and declining social trust affect the quality and quantity of information that adolescents are willing to share in a traditional focus group. The intense need for peer approval emerges dramatically and intensely in early adolescence as a consequence of a newly acquired ability to create ideas about what other people are thinking (Elkind, 2001). This need generates discomfort with having to answer direct questions (Koro-Ljungberg, Bussing, & Cornwell, 2010), uneasiness disclosing personal information in social situations (Colucci, 2007), and the potential for focus group participants to share only socially desirable responses (Horner, 2000).

A decline in social trust occurs as adolescents gain cognitive maturity (Flanagan & Stout, 2010), thereby creating uneasiness with disclosing personal information in later adolescence. Thus, as adolescents cognitively mature, the cause of their discomfort with disclosing personal information can shift from the presence of peers to that of the facilitator. Meanwhile, variability in cognitive maturation ensures that facilitators will be confronted with a group of participants varying as to the source of their discomfort with self-disclosure, even if the group composition is relatively homogeneous with respect to age.

The short attention span in adolescence creates restlessness and the opportunity for participant attention to drift (Colucci, 2007; Gur et al., 2012). The anxiety that can arise due to concerns about peer evaluation and feelings of social distrust further contributes to problems of attention (Pacheco-Unguetti et al., 2010; Spada, Georgiou, & Wells, 2010) by creating difficulty in focusing and in formulating thoughtful responses (Wenzel & Holt, 2003).

A final challenge adolescents bring to the traditional focus group is a continued reliance on concrete operations thinking. Even some adults continue to rely on this type of thinking because the use of formal operations depends on practice and does not generalize from one domain to another (Elkind, 2001). Concrete-operations thinking produces rule-based responses that may sound socially desirable because adolescent participants respond with the rule they believe is applicable to a particular behavior. The type of thinking rather than concern about peer approval drives the response. Concrete-operations thinking makes it difficult for adolescents to discuss hypothetical situations, reflect upon multiple factors that shape their behavior, and generalize from one example to another (Elkind, 2001).

Topic sensitivity exacerbates the developmental challenges adolescents pose to traditional focus groups. Sensitive topics are more likely to elicit concern about peer approval and anxiety because they create pressure to make socially desirable responses (Davis, Couper, Janz, Caldwell, & Resnicow, 2010). This effect appears stronger for groups of adolescents at risk for health disparities, such as immigrant and minority youth (Fan et al., 2006). Sensitive topics also increase the propensity to use concrete operations thinking because these topics

are typically stigmatizing or taboo and hence not commonly discussed, thereby decreasing opportunities for practice (Gudelunas, 2005; Levine, 2002). Consequently, there is a delay or even failure to develop formal operations thinking in these domains (Elkind, 2001). The need for an alternative approach to traditional focus groups is thus heightened for researchers seeking to understand the adolescent perspective on sensitive topics.

Interactive Performance and Adapting It for Research Purposes

Interactive performance is part of a tradition of improvisational and activist theater developed to empower audience members by giving them control over their theatrical experiences (Blatner, 2007). Audience members are redefined as *spect-actors*, thereby making them both observers and participants able to bring their thoughts, perspectives, and experiences to the unfolding drama.

We adapted one interactive performance approach—the Wirth (1994) approach—for research purposes. Wirth’s approach was chosen because of its focus on story development and redefinition of actors as *inter-actors* responsible for creating a safe environment for exploring developing stories. Both the focus on story development and creating a safe environment for exploration are consonant with the goal of using focus groups to study the adolescent perspective. Two things distinguish Wirth’s approach from traditional focus groups or the story-telling techniques recommended for focus group research with children, such as reading or acting out scripts or vignettes (Colucci, 2007). First, the Wirth approach is a lighthearted approach with a focus on *play* as in to “play a character” and have fun, which makes the approach non-threatening and potentially useful for exploring sensitive topics. Second, the interplay between inter-actors and spect-actors during the story-building phase puts spec-actors in control of creating their own story.

Our adaptation of Wirth’s (1994) approach for research purposes included creating an interdisciplinary research team, obtaining informed consent, and adding introduction and debriefing phases to Wirth’s two original phases: the warm-up phase and the story-building phase. The story-building phase is the primary data production phase, although valuable data may also emerge during a debriefing phase. Thus, in our adaptation of Wirth’s approach to interactive performance, the story-building phase was shaped to generate information pertinent to understanding the particular adolescent perspective under investigation.

The interdisciplinary research team is comprised of inter-actors and researchers, which allows the interactive performance approach to be informed by both the researchers’ and inter-actors’ expertise. All members of the team, including the inter-actors, are trained in the conduct of research with human subjects. The lead inter-actor chooses the warm-up activities and directs the group through its various phases. The lead researcher obtains informed consent and assent before participation begins. During the story-building phase, the lead researcher’s role can vary from asking questions for clarification or elaboration to playing a character in the evolving story. The lead researcher’s questions are similar to what are used in a traditional focus group, but here these questions are used to supplement the information generated by interactive performance.

The introduction phase includes describing the purpose of the research, explaining interactive performance, and specifying the rules for the group, including those related to human subjects concerns. These rules are the same as those used in any focus group, including (a) one person talks at a time; (b) participation is voluntary; (c) it is okay to disagree; (d) it is important to be respectful (no making fun or putting others down); and (e) it is important to keep what is said in the focus group confidential.

Interactive performance provides a medium for acting out the rules presented during the introduction phase, including those pertaining to human-subjects procedures. For example, after the need for confidentiality is explained, two inter-actors can act out what to do if a parent or best friend pressures a participant to disclose what was said in the group. Both wrong and right ways to respond can be demonstrated, providing a clear example to participants of how to handle such situations. The illustration of interactive performance and how it is operationalized in the course of explaining how to protect confidentiality also provides an opportunity to define interactive performance again for any participants whose attention may have been drifting earlier.

Interactive performance also serves as an ideal medium for addressing issues of coercion, a potential problem all researchers face when working with adolescents and children. The inter-actors set the tone for the group by sitting on the floor, putting themselves at the same or lower height than participants to make it clear that the inter-actors are not taking an authority role. Similar to acting out how to maintain confidentiality, the inter-actors can also act out how to refuse to participate, thereby modeling for participants how to follow through on the lead researcher's statement that they do not have to answer questions or do things they do not want to do.

The warm-up phase is intended to create a climate of play and engage participants through the use of theater exercises. These exercises consist of gross motor activities that reduce anxiety, create a sense of group, and ease spect-actors into active participation. For example, one such exercise—"Whoosh, Bang, and Pow" (Wilson, 2007)—involves passing a large imaginary ball around a group of participants and facilitators standing in a circle, and shouting out *Whoosh*, *Bang*, or *Pow*, according to the way they use their arms move the imaginary ball. Participants begin by using their arms to make an underarm pass to the person next to them (*Whoosh*). Once this move is mastered, participants are taught to block the imaginary ball by raising their forearms together in front of their chest, and changing the direction the imaginary ball is moving by sending it back to the person who *Whooshed* it to them (*Bang*). Once participants are able to *Whoosh* and *Bang*, they are shown how to use a basketball chess pass to send the imaginary ball across the circle to another player (*Pow*). The faster the "ball" moves, the more likely the change in pattern, and the more risk for "mistakes", which makes the game more fun.

Other exercises used in the warm-up phase decrease anxiety and build group cohesion as they prepare participants to transition into the story-building phase. These exercises incorporate the sharing of personal, but low-risk information (e.g., favorite ice cream). For example, in the "Circle Game," participants and facilitators stand in a circle, with one person in the middle. The person in the middle says something about him- or herself and everyone who has that same characteristic must find a new place to stand. Similar to "Musical Chairs," the spaces in the circle are limited, so someone always ends up in the middle. Group cohesion is built because participants tend to disclose characteristics in common with group members as a way to generate the most movement and hence opportunity to escape the middle. This game also generates gross motor activity because participants must move quickly to avoid ending up in the middle.

The story-building phase, the primary data production phase, begins after the warm-up activities. The inter-actors initiate this phase by asking spect-actors for information and acting out what the spect-actors are describing, much like what would occur in a professional improvisation theater show (e.g., Chicago's Second City). What is different is that the inter-actors seek feedback ("Did I get it right?" "Is this how it looks?") as they are improvising to fill in missing information in the course of acting out the scene. In this way they serve as the spect-actors' human puppets, putting the spect-actors in control of driving

the evolving story. Spect-actor involvement in the story-building phase increases over the course of the group. Initially spect-actors correct, direct, begin to play with, and at times take over from the inter-actors. Eventually, spect-actors initiate and act out the evolving story, with inter-actors joining them only as needed.

The inter-actors' psychological skills and knowledge of story structure (Wirth 1994; Wirth, Norris, Mapes, Ingraham, & Moshell, 2011) facilitate spect-actors' increasing engagement in story building. These skills and knowledge enable the inter-actors to reduce anxiety, craft an interpersonal environment in which it feels safe to participate, and create a high level of engagement. For example, an inter-actor may choose to decrease tension by playing the clown, eliciting a laugh by intentionally getting an aspect of the scene "wrong" (e.g., miming dancing the waltz when the scene involves being at a school dance). Similarly, they may elicit participation by over- or under-exaggerating a body posture or expression to provoke a verbal comment, or assigning a participant a role that does not require any disclosure but involves her/him in the action (e.g., "Will you play the DJ spinning the records?").

The lead researcher leads the debriefing phase at the end of the group. This phase capitalizes on the engagement and comfort level built in the earlier phases of the group and is used to build on and clarify data generated in the story building phase. Participants continue to be cast in the authoritative role through the use of questions soliciting advice about running "groups like these" and for studying the topic being investigated.

Our adaptation of Wirth's approach surmounts the developmental challenges adolescents present in three ways. First, the physicality of the approach and its playful quality allay anxiety and help manage short attention spans. Second, both concerns about peer evaluation and social distrust of facilitators are avoided because participants are not expected to reveal personal perspectives. Instead, the story evolves at the group level with adolescents playing another character or directing an adult as to how to play a character. No participant has to feel exposed because the group works together to act out observations of their world. Finally, the use of concrete-operations thinking does not limit the quality of the data because participants are engaged to show rather than talk about how things happen. This engagement provides a mechanism for getting beyond simple, rule-based responses about complex, abstract phenomena. Having adolescents act out rather than talk about abstract or potentially sensitive topics allows them to illustrate aspects of their life that they may not have the ability to communicate with words. This verbal and physical acting out of an evolving story also provides the concrete operations thinker with a means for exploring hypothetical situations. In summary, the use of this approach works with a broad cross-section of adolescents, irrespective of their cognitive development, solving the quintessential problem for focus group research involving adolescents, namely, their inherent developmental variability.

Interactive Performance Focus Groups with Adolescents: Two Examples

The examples described next concern the study of Muslim adolescents' experience of discrimination and Hispanic adolescent girls' experience of peer pressure related to sexual behavior. Both focus on sensitive topics. Data were captured with videotape and field notes. Table 1 provides additional procedural details for each study. The lead researchers in each of these studies were two different, PhD-prepared researchers who had considerable expertise with their respective study populations and study topics. The same lead inter-actor was used in both studies. He was a skilled director and creator of interactive performance experiences with more than 20 years of experience conducting interactive performance workshops and training, as well as performance skill-related workshops for various professional

performance organizations (e.g., Cirque du Soleil, Blue Man Group, Ringling Brothers Clown College). The remaining inter-actors differed for the two studies but they all had specialized training in interactive performance (three 3-credit semester courses or the equivalent or more in workshop training) and 4 or more years of experience acting in the theater and performing improvisation.

Institutional Review Board approval, parental consent, and child assent was obtained for all research activities in the two studies we feature here. In addition to training in the conduct of research involving human subjects (e.g., Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative [CITI] training), the inter-actors were trained by the lead researcher on the study topic, including the cultural context for the topic. This training was a brief overview that lasted approximately 1 hour.

The Discrimination Study

In the Discrimination Study we sought to understand the experience of discrimination from the perspective of Muslim American adolescents by obtaining in-depth descriptions of the prejudice and discrimination they encounter in their daily lives. This topic is a challenge because the current anti-Muslim climate makes adolescents sensitive to outsiders (Aroian, 2012), and Muslim Americans are likely to be distrustful of researchers seeking to understand their perspective (Aroian, Katz, & Kulwicki, 2006). Discussing personal incidents of discrimination can also generate personal shame and distress. In short, the topic poses many of the data collection challenges that were previously described.

The interactive performance experience was highly effective in overcoming these data collection challenges in the two same gender focus groups (all boys, all girls) conducted in this study. The Circle Game played during the warm-up created an atmosphere of play. Prior to the warm up exercises, the boys appeared confident but reserved: They strutted into the room, smiling and making eye contact with the lead researcher and inter-actors, but not initiating any conversation. In contrast, the girls entered the room hesitantly, avoiding eye contact and conversation with the lead researcher and inter-actors. By the end of the warm-up, participants' affect in the two groups was no longer reserved: Both boys and girls exhibited smiles and hearty laughter, and initiated conversation, despite the increasingly personal level of disclosure.

After the warm-up activity, the lead inter-actor began the story-building phase by modeling the activity. He and the other inter-actor re-enacted an experience that the lead inter-actor had when he was a child, traveling on a train in Mexico with his mother and younger siblings. The lead inter-actor did not speak Spanish, and a train attendant had come for the family's tickets in his mother's temporary absence from the train car. This attendant (played by the other inter-actor) became increasingly insistent when the tickets were not forthcoming, and the lead inter-actor became increasingly distressed.

Next, the lead inter-actor asked participants to volunteer incidents that happened to them recently and asked for details to help shape the scene performance once it commenced. For example, a participant in the focus group of boys volunteered an incident in which he hit another car while parallel parking shortly after he received his driving license. The inter-actors prompted him for details ("Anybody with you?") and accompanying feelings ("Was your face like this after it happened or like this?"), and began acting out the incident. Eventually, the participant took the lead inter-actor's place in the scene to show him more details about the incident.

Then, the lead researcher moved the interactive performance focus towards the topic by reviewing the purpose of the study and asking for volunteers to provide and direct

performances about when “someone assumed negative things about you or other Muslims or treated you badly or unfairly because you are a Muslim.” Nine of the 14 participants readily volunteered and some volunteered more than once; one girl and four boys remained silent, but were highly engaged observers (watching more active peers closely, laughing with the group, facial expressions shifting in accord with the scene and others’ comments).

Various incidents of discrimination were enacted and discussed (Aroian, 2012). The boys primarily introduced incidents that involved discrimination at school, including incidents perpetrated by teachers and students who were aware or unaware of their Muslim identity. The girls primarily introduced being harassed by strangers in public places based on physical markers of ethnic identity, such as wearing the hijab or traditional head scarves. Discussion ensued either spontaneously or in response to the lead researcher’s interjection of questions seeking clarification or elaboration, particularly elaboration of feelings. Neither boys nor girls elaborated a great deal about feelings without the lead researcher’s questions, although the girls were somewhat more forthcoming. Meanwhile, the laughter and joking that began during the warm-up exercises continued throughout the focus group. For example, a number of discrimination incidents had occurred at school, perpetrated by teachers who taught American history. This fact became the topic of humor. One participant enthusiastically stated, “I’ve got one [example] that is not an American history teacher,” eliciting a big laugh when he introduced the incident as involving a teacher who taught American government instead of history.

After a number of incidents were performed, participants in both sex groups initiated a shift from interactive performance to pure discussion. This shift from performance to pure discussion was not preplanned; rather the shift likely resulted because of the participants’ increasing engagement with the topic and comfort with verbal disclosure. Even participants who did not volunteer incidents for interactive performance participated in these discussions.

Once the discussion began to wind down, the lead researcher introduced debriefing questions aimed at clarifying her impressions of emotional themes and common attributes of discrimination experiences. During debriefing, participants spontaneously offered that the group was fun. They stated that they wanted to participate again and would recommend participating to their friends.

Peer Pressure to Engage in Sexual Behavior Study

The interactive performance groups described in this study were part of preliminary research used to develop a computer game for early adolescent Hispanic girls (ages 10 to 14) to build peer resistance skills that can be used to delay initiation of intercourse (Norris, Hughes, Hecht, Peragallo, & Nickerson, under review). Interactive performance was used to elicit content for the computer game, creating a canvas upon which the girls could paint a picture of what they experience in their world. Unlike the first study in which interactive performance was used to elicit descriptions of others’ behavior towards participants, the emphasis here was on capturing the location, content, and non-verbal and verbal components of everyday discussions in which sexual behavior is referred to or discussed. The locations of these everyday discussions were later used to generate scenes for the computer game. Critical classic middle school characteristics, such as non-verbal iconic gestures (e.g., a hair flip), terms, and phrases (e.g., “he’s a player”) were eventually used to create computer-simulated avatars in the skill-building game.

Interactive performance was also chosen because sex is a particularly sensitive topic for Hispanic girls. The Hispanic cultural value, *marianismo*, fosters the belief that girls who talk about sex are likely to lack self-respect and virtue (Faulkner, 2003). Talking about sex,

particularly with strangers, is also at odds with the cultural values of *respeto* and *familismo*, because such talk is viewed as disrespectful to the girl and her family (Castillo, Pérez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010). Interactive performance facilitated participation by allowing girls to act out observations of their world rather than talk about personal experiences on a taboo topic.

After the warm-up, the story-building phase of the group began by asking participants to generate locations where teens like to go. Then inter-actors posed to illustrate how people might look in a photograph taken in this location (i.e., a snapshot) and asked participants for feedback. The inter-actors intentionally made mistakes to promote participant engagement. For example, when a skating rink location was suggested, the lead inter-actor posed as if he was wearing ice skates. This elicited a big laugh as these focus groups were conducted in Central Florida where skating typically means roller skating; participants showed him with hands and gestures the right kind of skates (i.e., roller skates) and how someone would look wearing them.

Scenarios were then constructed for different locations with participant involvement progressing from *puppeting* inter-actors to interacting with the inter-actors as a character. For example, a scenario was developed for the location of school gym bleachers. The inter-actors responded to the participants' casting directions, taking on the role of a middle school girl (played by a male lead inter-actor) and boy (played by a female inter-actor) hanging out in the bleachers. Participants laughed and enjoyed being able to cast a male adult in the role of the girl. The inter-actors improvised and asked questions to elicit directions from the participants on how to, for example, sit, talk, and physically interact. Soon participants began suggesting things to say, directing inter-actors to work with specific participants (e.g., "pull her hair"), and talking with inter-actors as if they, the participants, were also characters in the same gym.

As participants began to lead story development, the inter-actors supported them. For example, when participants began exploring events occurring in the school cafeteria (a scene in which the whole group became involved playing a role of a student in the cafeteria), the female inter-actor joined participants engaging in typical lunchroom conversation. Together, they talked about other people in the lunchroom, discussed weekend plans with each other, and talked about boys and various other topics. Periodically, the lead inter-actor and a young female research assistant would act out what was being said about people in the lunchroom, bringing the characters to life and then having these characters interact with the group talking together during lunch. During this scenario, some participants chose to act like themselves, while others took on the roles of different students, even choosing to play a boy. The lead researcher also participated and played a girl as a way to probe for participant knowledge of pregnancies occurring at the school.

Approximately one-third of the way through the story-building phase in each focus group, participants no longer appeared anxious or uncomfortable. Instead, they moved their chairs forward, leaned forward and/or increased their verbalization, often getting up from their chairs to show the inter-actors how to, for example, sit, move, or talk, or to play a character themselves.

During the debriefing phase, large amounts of sensitive information were disclosed; it was as if interactive performance had enabled participants to feel comfortable disclosing more sensitive information. For example, the girls expressed longing to have a boyfriend, and discussed dares to do certain sexual and non-sexual activities or behaviors consistent with early sexual involvement (e.g., kissing, making out in hallways). As in the previous study, participants in both focus groups spontaneously offered that the group was fun. They also

told their parents and staff at the afterschool program they attended how much fun the group was, creating a positive buzz about the research project at the school. Almost a year later, they continued to ask the lead researcher if they could do one of “those groups” again.

Discussion

The dramatic developmental changes in adolescence in combination with individual differences in the timing of these changes create challenges for the researcher using traditional focus groups to understand the adolescent’s perspective on health and health-related phenomena. These challenges are intensified when the topic of research is sensitive. As demonstrated in both studies, our adaptation of Wirth’s (1994) approach to interactive performance put adolescents at ease and provided a means to accommodate variability in cognitive development. We observed these effects in two ethnic groups and with two highly sensitive topics. We theorize that the inter-actors helped participants feel validated and involved by imitating their vision of everyday life. This in turn encouraged participants to be more active in the focus group.

Our enthusiasm about adapting Wirth’s interactive performance approach to focus groups must be tempered in two respects. First, our leader inter-actor was both highly skilled and the creator of the approach we adapted. Second, our involvement with this approach is limited only to the two studies featured here. Nevertheless, our experiences suggest good reason to explore the potential utility of this approach for research involving adolescent populations.

We have four recommendations for those interested in experimenting with this new methodological technique. First, we recommend using an interdisciplinary team. Our sense is that both disciplinary perspectives (nursing, theater) and skills sets were critical to the success of the focus groups described here. The novelty of the interactive performance experience for the lead researcher necessitated discussion during focus group pre-planning about what role the lead researcher would play in the focus group to ensure s/he could be an active team member. This is also the ideal time to explore what specific issues pertaining to the protection of human subjects might be helpful to communicate through interactive performance.

Second, we recommend using inter-actors rather than actors. Both types of theater professionals typically have some understanding of story structure, but inter-actors have a unique skill set that enables them to engage non-actors in an acting experience. This skill set is essential for engaging focus group participants in disclosing personal information about target phenomena and their vicarious or direct experiences of them.

Third, we recommend planning for large amounts of disclosure towards the end of the group after participants have been primed by the interactive performance approach to disclose more sensitive information. The debriefing phase is a natural place for facilitating this disclosure because its placement at the end of the group capitalizes on the comfort level built earlier in the more active group phases.

Fourth, we recommend considering the fit of this approach to the study topic. For example, consistent with data and theory regarding adolescent male expression of personal feelings (Fivush & Buckner, 2003; McLean, Breen, & Fournier, 2010), the boys in the discrimination focus group needed more prodding than the girls to elaborate on their feelings. This suggests that this adaptation may be useful for identifying discrimination incidents, but less so for identifying the personal feelings associated with them. This would be consistent with the decreased focus on personal feelings that makes this approach so useful for adolescents.

The advantages of the playful participation that we experienced cannot be underestimated. Despite the sensitive nature of the topics, spontaneous reports from our adolescent participants suggest that the use of interactive performance made a lasting, positive impression.

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Table 1

Procedural Information for the Two Examples.

	Discrimination	Peer Pressure to Engage in Sexual Behavior
Sample:	(<i>n</i> = 14)	(<i>n</i> = 15)
Age	13-17 years old	10-14 years old
Ethnicity	Muslim Americans	Hispanic Americans
Gender	Boys = 71% Girls = 29%	Girls = 100%
Facilitators:	(<i>n</i> = 3) Female Lead Researcher Male Lead Inter-actor Male Inter-actor	(<i>n</i> = 4) Female Lead Researcher Male Lead Inter-actor Female Inter-actor Female Research Assistant ^a
Groups:	(<i>n</i> = 2)	(<i>n</i> = 2)
Same gender	Yes	Yes
Length	3 hours	80-95 minutes
Data Sources:		
Fixed camera	Yes	Yes
Moving Camera with Videographer	No	Yes
Field notes	Yes	Yes
Post focus group meeting notes	No	Yes

^aThe research assistant had considerable work experience with the topic and study population, and limited acting experience.