

Participant Information Sheet

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Project Title

Exploring Plurisexual Young Adults' Experiences of Dis/connection with Community: A Photovoice Study

AUTEC Reference number: 25/55

Ko wai au? Who am I?

Kia ora, I'm Abbey Busch (she/her). My ancestors are from England, Germany, France and Italy. I am 25 and was born and raised in Tāmaki Mākaurau, Auckland, the rohe of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei. I am currently completing my Master of Health Science in Psychology. This research will contribute to my completion of this degree.

I have worked within the youth development sector for over three years and care deeply about the wellbeing of young people and young adults - as a young adult myself. I also identify as bisexual. I find hearing and amplifying queer voices and stories incredibly important and meaningful; and I am passionate about improving systems of care for rainbow people and communities.

Thank you so much for expressing interest in participating in this research.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will explore plurisexual young adults' experiences of connection (and/or disconnection) with community. The term 'plurisexual' is used to refer to people who experience attraction to more than one gender. Plurisexual identities may include, but are not limited to, bisexual, pansexual, fluid, omnisexual, and takatāpui identities (that involve attraction to more than one gender).

I am interested in exploring experiences of connection (and/or disconnection) with community. 'Community' in this study refers to any group of people with a shared interest, purpose, social tie, and/or characteristics, and it can include your experience of both rainbow/queer communities, and/or communities that are not rainbow/queer focused or specific.

'Connection with community,' is used to refer to one's experience of *feeling* a sense of connection, belonging, and/or closeness with a group of people. This can also include experiences of activities that contribute to or give rise to a feeling or sense of connection with a group of people. I am also interested in hearing if people have experienced difficulties/challenges in feeling a sense of connection with communities, and/or if people have experienced a sense of *disconnection* with communities. This is to say, I welcome diverse experiences of connection and/or disconnection with communities. I use the term 'dis/connection,' when discussing the research aim and in the research title, as this term intends to show openness to experiences of both connection and disconnection.

This is a **photovoice** study which involves participants taking photographs that relate to the research focus, and then discussing their photos with the researcher. This method (photovoice) intends to provide participants with greater autonomy to direct conversation about their experiences through the photos they take. This also intends to incorporate creativity and diverse forms of self-expression into the research process.

From such research, pathways for experiencing connection with community and barriers to experiencing community connection may be highlighted. This research also intends to celebrate the strengths and resilience of plurisexual young adults. This research will contribute to my completion of the Master of Health Science in Psychology at AUT; and the findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

This study was advertised at AUT campuses, and through online rainbow community pages and forums. Potential participants expressed their interest to me by contacting me via email.

Participants must identify as plurisexual or as experiencing attraction to more than one gender, be aged 21 to 29 years old, live in Aotearoa New Zealand currently, be able to participate in an exploratory interview in English, and have access to a portable device they can take photos on.

Please note that friends and students of the research supervisors, Elizabeth Du Preez and Paula Collens, are not able to participate in this research due to this being a conflict of interest.

People who are currently under the care of Community Mental Health teams, or who have experienced psychiatric hospitalisation in the past six months, are also unable to participate in this research. This is due to the limitations of the research team to provide appropriate support, given the scope and resourcing of this research project.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Should you wish to participate in this research, you must return a signed consent form or provide oral consent during the online photovoice training. The consent form will be sent to you via email by me. Once you have returned a signed consent form, I will take this as your acceptance of this invitation to participate.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study up until your data begins being analysed. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once data analysis begins, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

Participants will engage in an online photovoice training (up to 1 hour long) with me. This training will occur on a one to one basis (one participant engaging in a training with myself, the researcher). In this training, we will discuss the photovoice method, what is required of participants to engage in photovoice, and safe photo taking practices. At the beginning of the training, there will be time for myself and the participant to get to know one another through self-introductions. I will also repeat key information about the project and the participants' rights, and the participant can ask any questions they may have.

Participants will then have seven days to take three to five photographs that represent their experiences of dis/connection with community. Participants will take photos using their own device (e.g., mobile phone). Participants will email their chosen photographs to me prior to engaging in an interview with me. Participants will indicate which (if any) photographs they consent to being displayed in the final research outputs (in my thesis and in academic publications and presentations). I will provide a separate 'Consent to photo display and ownership form and agreement' that participants will sign and return to consent to their photos (if any) being displayed in research outputs. Photographs that include identifiable people cannot be displayed in research outputs, though these can be discussed within interviews.

Once the photos have been taken and emailed to me, participants will engage in an interview with me. Interviews may take 30 minutes – one hour and 30 minutes. Interviews can be held online (on Zoom or Teams), or in person at AUT's North, City, or South campuses (participants can choose what campus is convenient for them). At the beginning of interviews, I will repeat key information about the project and the participants' rights, and the participant can ask any questions they may have. Interviews will involve a predetermined set of questions, as well as ad-hoc, follow-up questions. The content of the interview will focus on the participants' photographs, what they mean to the participant, and what the photographs tell us about the participant's experiences of dis/connection with community. I will ask questions regarding participants' demographics (e.g., age, what region you are currently living in, preferred sexuality term, gender identity, ethnicity, ability/disability) at the end of the interview. This is to ensure the participant group is made up of a diverse group of plurisexual young adults and to identify what groups of peoples or communities are not represented in the participant group. Participants have the right to not answer any questions asked of them, including questions about demographic characteristics.

The interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed (written out verbatim) by me. Participants can either choose their own pseudonym or choose to be assigned one by me, and any identifiable information about the participant or anyone they may talk about during their interview will be removed. Transcripts will be sent to participants and participants will have up to seven days to respond with any changes they may wish to make to their transcript. If after seven days there is no response, the transcript will be used as is.

I will then analyse the transcripts. This will involve exploring similarities and differences in participants' experiences and summarising key themes that have arisen across participants' transcripts. Once I have analysed the transcripts, I will write up a results section which captures the findings and includes de-identified quotes from participants' transcripts and photographs that participants have consented to displaying in the final research outputs. The findings will also be woven into a discussion section of my thesis that explores the findings in relation to existing literature.

Once the research project is complete and has received a final grade, I will provide a two-page summary of the research to participants who indicate on their consent form that they wish to receive this summary. The research may be used for academic presentations and publications in the future.

What are the discomforts and risks?

It is hoped participants have a positive experience during their interviews. However, conversation about any personal experience can bring up challenging feelings and emotions.

Taking photos can present risks to one's physical, emotional, social, and spiritual safety, and to one's and others' privacy. For example if participants take photos in dangerous or risky environments; if members of the public respond or react to participants' taking photos in a way that is upsetting, uncomfortable, or harmful to the participants; and if participants take photographs of themselves, of other people, and of identifiable locations risking the privacy of those involved in the photo.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

AUT Student Counselling

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz or call 921 9292.
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>

Other Support Services

Additionally, or alternatively, participants may choose to access these free or low-cost support services to navigate anything that may have arisen for them during their involvement in the research:

[OutLine](#)

Free call on 0800 OUTLINE (688 54363) from 6pm-9pm. Other services are detailed on OutLine's website: <https://outline.org.nz>

[Youthline](#)

24/7 free call on 0800 376 633, free text on 234. Other services are detailed on Youthline's website: <https://www.youthline.co.nz>

[1737](#)

24/7 free call or text on 1737.

For a list of helplines visit: <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines>

For information on local support services visit family services directory at: <https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory/>

Safe Photo Taking Practices

Participants will be trained on safe photo taking practices during the photovoice training. Participants will be strongly encouraged not to take photos of people and identifiable locations. Explicit consent will be sought from participants for the display of any of their images within final research outputs. Photographs of identifiable people cannot be displayed in the research outputs but can be discussed within interviews. Participants must seek explicit consent from anyone they may choose to photograph using a third party consent form provided by myself. Participants must only seek photograph people who have the capacity to consent and who are 16 years old and older. If an image makes a location identifiable, these details may be blurred or blacked out in the image if possible.

What are the benefits?

It is hoped participants enjoy the research process. Participants will be provided a token of thanks to acknowledge their time and contributions. This research also hopes to positively contribute to existing literature regarding plurisexual young adults' experiences of community, should this research go to publication. This research will also benefit me by contributing to my completion of a Master of Health Science in Psychology.

How will my privacy be protected?

Participants' interview transcripts, audio recordings, photographs, and consent forms, will be stored securely on AUT's OneDrive in a folder that is only accessible to myself and my supervisors (Elizabeth Du Preez, and Paula Collens). Participants will be given or will choose pseudonyms, and any information that could be used to identify

them or anyone they may discuss within their interview will be removed from their transcripts. Therefore, any quotes that are used in the findings of the research will not contain any identifiable information.

Participants are strongly encouraged not to take photos of people or identifiable locations. However, I respect participants' autonomy in representing their experiences in the ways they wish to represent their experiences. Photographs will only be used in the research findings if participants and anyone else within the photo provide explicit informed consent for the photograph taken and to be displayed. Identifiable location information (such as street addresses or school names/logos) will be blurred or blacked out in any such photos. If participants choose to a) take photographs of themselves or others and/or identifiable locations, and b) consent to having these photographs displayed in the final research outputs, they could be identified by the thesis examiners and members of the public if this research is presented publicly or goes to publication.

All research data (e.g., transcripts, audio recordings, photographs) will be destroyed six years after the research has concluded as per AUT's data management guidelines. Should a participant wish to withdraw from the research and wish that their data is not used in the research, all their personal information and data will be destroyed immediately upon their withdrawal.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

Participation in this research will cost participants three to four hours of their time, depending on photovoice training and interview length, and depending on how much time a participant spends taking photos. If participants are travelling to an in-person interview location, travel costs (e.g., petrol or public transport fares and travel time) will be involved.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Participants have three weeks (21 days) from the date they receive this information sheet to consider this invitation to participate. If I haven't heard back from a participant after one week, I will send a follow-up email. They will then have two weeks to consider from the date the follow-up email is sent.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Once the research is complete and has received a final examination grade, I will email a two-page summary of the findings to participants who have indicated they wish to receive this material on their consent form.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Primary Supervisor, Elizabeth Du Preez, elizabeth.dupreez@aut.ac.nz , (+09) 921 9999 ext 7692.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, ethics@aut.ac.nz , (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Abbey Busch, gsg1108@autuni.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Primary Supervisor, Elizabeth Du Preez, elizabeth.dupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext 7692.

Secondary Supervisor, Paula Collens, paula.collens@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext 5780.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 9th April 2025, AUTEK Reference number 25/55.