

Invitation to take part in a research study on the experiences of survivor-researchers working on GBV

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Dear GBV researcher

My name is Viktoría Beran and I am a postgraduate student at the University of Sussex, studying an MA in Gender, Violence and Conflict. For my final thesis, I am researching the positionality and experiences of ‘survivor-researchers’ who work in contexts of gender-based violence (GBV). As part of this project, I am hoping to conduct virtual interviews with GBV researchers who live and work in different contexts globally.

I am inviting anyone to take part based on their professional experience as a GBV researcher, as well as their personal experience of being a survivor of GBV, which are extremely valuable for my analysis of survivor-researcher positionality. Your status as a survivor is based on self-identification, meaning that if you self-identify as a survivor of any type of GBV, you are invited to take part in the interviews. I want to stress that I will not ask any participants to disclose any information about their previous personal experiences of GBV at any stage during the research process.

Background to the project

I am undertaking this research project for my master’s dissertation. My thesis seeks to explore how the particular positionality of the survivor-researcher affects the research process and knowledge production in a number of ways. This includes considering the potential risks/harms and benefits/advantages of acknowledging survivor-researchers' positionality throughout the research process (acknowledging survivor status during interviews with research participants; in their writing). I will also be analysing the ethical implications and power dynamics at play when disclosing previous experiences of GBV as a researcher throughout the research process. In order to centre the voices and position of survivor-researchers, I want to consider the perspectives of a diverse range of people who are researching various forms of GBV in different contexts around the world and have themselves experienced any form of GBV in the past.

My MA convenor and supervisor for this research project is Dr Lyndsay McLean (lcm22@sussex.ac.uk). The project has ethical approval from Social Sciences & Arts Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committee (SSARTS C-REC) at the University of Sussex, no ER/VB224/1.

Interviews will be about 30 to 45 minutes long, and due to the uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, will be conducted online through either Zoom or MS Teams (depending on your preference). During this informal interview, I will ask you about your research background and motivations, your personal experiences of conducting research, how you deal with difficult situations and emotions during your research, and how your specific

position as a survivor-researcher affects your work. Again, I want to make clear that you will not be asked to discuss any personal experiences of GBV.

If you are willing to be participate in this project and take part in an interview, please contact me at vb224@sussex.ac.uk. You will be sent a participant information form with further information as well as a consent form, and we will arrange a date for the interview that is most suitable for you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and do not hesitate to get in touch if any further questions arise!