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Exploring Liming and Ole Talk as a Culturally Relevant Methodology for Researching With Caribbean People

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Abstract

This article explores the necessity of developing a qualitative research methodology grounded in Caribbean peoples' worldviews and interactions. It presents the epistemology and ontology of liming and ole talk to show their natural employment in qualitative research settings. *Liming* offers an opportunity for social engagement and provides a culturally relevant purpose, environment, and space in which ole talk can take place. *Ole talk* is presented as a uniquely Caribbean way of engaging with one another in small or large groups. The potential of liming and ole talk to create new ways to research and share knowledge is discussed. Through a brief analysis of two limes, this article proposes liming and ole talk as an authentic research methodology for researching Caribbean peoples and their contexts.

Keywords

liming, ole talk, research methodology, Caribbean, qualitative research

What Is Already Known?

Research into Caribbean research methodologies reveals a significant gap in the region on culturally specific ways of conducting research. Caribbean social issues, as with many other global issues, are often researched using traditional Western philosophies and methodologies, and insufficient attention has been given to developing local ways of researching and understanding social concerns pertinent to the Caribbean. Increasingly, indigenous societies have criticized the use of Western approaches, recognizing their unsuitability in accurately assessing the unique culture, identity, and social systems that make these societies distinct from other, particularly Western, societies. Encouraged by global movements among indigenous researchers in Oceania and Africa, the authors recognize the need for developing culturally relevant research methodologies that are acknowledged and utilizedby Caribbean and international academia.

What This Paper Adds?

This article hopes to affirm Caribbean ways of knowing by developing a research methodology that takes into account the contexts and histories of the region and is appropriate to Caribbean peoples. Liming and ole talk, generally regarded in Trinidad and Tobago as a way to communicate and socialize, can extend beyond being a form of socialization to frame how research can be designed and how data can be shared, collected, and analyzed. This article argues that liming and ole talk, and similar practices throughout the Caribbean, have the potential to develop as culturally relevant methodologies for use within Caribbean environments.

Introduction

The contribution of liming and ole talk to the literature on current and emerging indigenous methodologies is proposed as calls are made for the confirmation and acceptance of culturally relevant research methodologies in the Caribbean. This

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article explores the possibility of developing a qualitative research methodology grounded in Caribbean peoples' worldviews and interactions. The historical and contemporary contexts surrounding these worldviews and interactions are significant to illustrating the ability of liming and ole talk as a methodology for use in research settings involving Caribbean peoples and contexts.

Within the Caribbean, liming is a familiar occurrence across a variety of cultural settings including a celebration, a wake after a death has occurred, a religious occasion, or any formal or informal function where persons gather to ole talk. Maharajh and Ali (2006, p. 4) define liming as a scheduled or nonscheduled event where a group of people (friends, family, and acquaintances) take time to "'hang out' . . . . It is an activity geared toward relaxation and stress relief through the means of talking, eating, drinking or just doing nothing." A space is usually created for the limers (persons who lime) to speak freely as they recount their experiences of an event, debate political matters, or simply renew old acquaintances. The meeting place is where language gives voice to their many stories as they simultaneously eat and drink as, within the Caribbean, it is inconceivable to "bus a lime" (get together) without the presence of food. This space can be equated to that of the Caribbean "yard"—the crucible of Caribbean culture—and considered to be the "melting pot" where viewpoints are constructed and reconstructed within a familiar setting and among familiar faces (Nakhid-Chatoor, 2017).

The ongoing process of ole talk, with its questions and answers and constant queries by the limers on the words and actions of one another, forms an integral part of understanding the unfolding lives and perspectives of each other. Ole talk involves the sensemaking that can occur as a result of being able to understand the experiences of others (Stroebe & Schut, 2001). It is seen as creating new opportunities to explore historical practices (Cudjoe, 1997). However, despite its history and established practice, the use of ole talk has not been cited or considered as an investigative tool in qualitative research, either to assess its relevance with Caribbean people or as a means of analysis. There is significance in defining the Caribbean experience and voice as opposed to using constructs framed by dominant Western thought and our exploration of liming and ole talk is timely and crucial. In recent decades, academics have called for indigenous research methodologies to reflect their cultural systems with the aim of deconstructing and reclaiming indigenous knowledge ('Otunuku, 2011). Smith's (1999) critique of the domination of traditional Western paradigms of research and knowledge supports indigenous research that has a critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations, and values that inform Western and Eurocentric research practices.

In this article, the literature on the meanings of liming and ole talk is presented as well as the arguments for developing and using local and indigenous research methodologies. The article also offers a comparison of liming and ole talk with indigenous as well as traditional Western qualitative research methodologies. Current research using liming and ole talk as methodology and research method is discussed as well as the practicalities and limitations. The article concludes by proposing that a Caribbean research methodology can offer an authentic and appropriate way to conduct research among Caribbean peoples and enable their ways of knowing and being.

Exploring and Positing Indigenous and Local Research Methodologies

Inherent in the proposed methodology of liming and ole talk is the construction of regionally relevant theoretical frameworks that are germane to Caribbean sociohistoric realities (Arneaud & Albada, 2013) such as the theory of plantation economy (Best & Levitt, 2009) as well as Caribbean interpretations of race, class, and ethnicity. Within these frameworks lie an "historical understanding of the conditions that founded the Caribbean region, the sine qua non from which empirical works would follow" (Best, 2001, p. 344).

The Caribbean diaspora is populated by peoples whose ancestors have experienced colonialism, slavery, and indentureship. Their ways of knowing and sharing knowledge necessitate an understanding of the cultural medley and of the language which,

> while Britannic in essence, is thoroughly marinated in First Peoples' raw defiance, the elusive Spanish gold, French assaults steeped with Indian Taalkadhii; a History rich from the Negre Jardin, the bus'-head blood of the Baˆtonye, seasoned by the colorful expletives of the Jamettes, and finally sautéed over the fires of the retaliatory Cannes Bruˆles by the vicissitudes of aristocracy. (Mendes, 2014, p. 2)

Caribbean reality, therefore, is influenced by languages, cultures, peoples, and environments that lend themselves to forming a uniquely indigenous perspective. To the extent that this article uses the term *Caribbean research methodologies*, we are thus aware of the complexities of calling for a Caribbean research methodology or claiming an indigenous Caribbean approach to research given the variety of resident histories of the Caribbean region. As such, we refer to Chilisa (2012, p. 13) who argues that methodologies are indigenous when researchers study their "ways of seeing reality; ways of knowing, and their value systems which are informed by their indigenous knowledge systems and shaped by the struggle to resist and survive the assault on their culture." The term indigenous suggests a focus on "a cultural group's ways of perceiving reality, ways of knowing, and the value systems that inform research processes" (Chilisa, 2012, p. 13).

Indigenous Paradigms Versus Western Approaches to Research

Essential differences between an indigenous paradigm and existing dominant, mainstream paradigms have been noted by Wilson (2001). Within an indigenous paradigm, there is the belief that knowledge is shared and relational with all, not just

the research participants. Relationships are seen as important as we have obligations to others through our own roles in the relationship. In contrast, a Western-dominated paradigm sees knowledge as something to be gained and that belongs to and is the property of an individual. Decolonizing research methodologies, claims Wilson, is about decolonizing their underlying beliefs and not simply renaming dominant methods or framing them within an indigenous framework.

Wilson identifies two contemporary research methods which, by their nature, fit within an indigenous paradigm—focus group discussions which he sees as having a relationship with others through storytelling, and participatory action research which purports to improve the lives of the people with whom one researches. Simonds and Christopher (2013) also note that there is some congruence between western theories and methods and indigenous approaches to research. However, they warn that when decolonizing research, the process of doing so must emanate from a source that respects and gives priority to indigenous knowledge and methods. Chilisa (2012, p. 49) questions her own complicity in reproducing Western knowledge and concepts but acknowledges that we must begin to contest the colonization of indigenous ways of researching and knowledge:

> the resistance is a challenge to Western-educated indigenous researchers, demanding that they begin to interrogate their multiple identities as colonizers participating in the Othering of their people using Western research methodologies, and as peripheral Others marginalized by the global network of first-world research elites and by global markets that continue to define and determine knowledge discourses on the basis of global market prices. It is in this context that a relational ethical framework in indigenous research is essential.

A major challenge is having indigenous methods accepted by Western academia (Simonds & Christopher, 2013). Academic institutions need to reexamine the way that research methodologies are taught to enable students to identify and appreciate cultural ways that would lend themselves to a more accurate and truthful sharing of knowledge. Research students are advised to exert caution when examining the values and assumptions that underlie western approaches as they can devalue indigenous or local ways of knowing (Simonds & Christopher, 2013).

Postcolonial Indigenous Research Paradigms

Postcolonial indigenous research paradigms are informed by relational ontologies and epistemologies. Talanoa and African Oral Tradition of Storytelling have been selected as indigenous research methodologies that are relational and have contested existing frameworks of research, thus allowing for an appropriate comparison with liming and ole talk.

Talanoa

Talanoa has been developed as a research methodology for use in Pacific contexts. It is a commonly understood term and practice in most Pacific island nations including Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Niue, Hawaii, the Cook Islands, and Tonga, though it is carried out in ways unique to the different Pacific Islands. Talanoa is used to describe the conversations in which people are engaged. It allows group conversations to develop over a considerable period of time during which the focus is based on the interests of the participants (Halapua, 2000; Vaioleti, 2003). The nature, degree, direction, place, and time of a Talanoa are determined by the participants themselves and their immediate surroundings and worldviews. Context is an important component of Talanoa and although there is no set agenda in the Talanoa process, the purpose is understood by those involved (Prescott, 2008).

Talanoa is a dynamic interaction of storytelling, debating, reflecting, gossiping, joking, and the sharing of families" genealogies, food, and other necessities. The traditional process of Talanoa provides an opportunity to reach a greater understanding of Pasifika (Pacific) issues in a manner that embraces the cultural values embedded in Pacific Island communication (Prescott, 2008). Talanoa is seen as any form of communication aimed at reaching understanding toward the building or enhancing of relationships. Two common criticisms of Talanoa, however, are the length of time it takes over several sessions to cover the research agenda and the possible deviation of the Talanoa from the researcher's agenda, deadlines, and priorities (Robinson & Robinson, 2005). Like liming, the process of Talanoa is without a defined time frame and could conclude without the time to think through solutions and make decisions.

The Talanoa methodology has been applied in a number of research studies involving Pacific peoples (Latu, 2009; Manu'atu & Kepa, 2006; 'Otunuku, 2011; Prescott, 2008). Its acceptance as a valid research methodology by Pacific and international academics and researchers has enhanced the quality of research by and about Pacific peoples and been a catalyst in the development of other research methodologies relevant and specific to the Pacific region.

African Oral Tradition of Storytelling

The African Oral Tradition of Storytelling is a research approach steeped in the African oral tradition where stories are told in a particular way, putting the focus on some aspects of the story and ignoring others in order to express passion or build an argument (Mnyandu, 1997). The oral methodology lays emphasis on both the content of the story and the form of its telling (Adelowo, Smythe, & Nakhid, 2016). Storytelling is a method of recording and expressing feelings, attitudes, and responses from one's lived experiences and environment (Gbadegesin, 1984). A communal participatory experience is a characteristic of African storytelling whereby people congregate together, listen, and participate in accounts and stories of past deeds, beliefs, wisdom, counsel, morals, taboos, and myths (Waita, 2014).

African research methodologies and methods are as old as their ceremonies and nations (Adelowo, 2012). However, African ways of knowing have been invalidated and sidelined by

Western epistemologies with the aim of imposing an inferior relationship around the knowledge of African people and to delegitimize their world views (Waita, 2014; Elabor-Idemudia, 2002). Despite the ancient use of and frequent references by writers to the ways in which African oral tradition is used to engage, teach, learn, and embrace community, it had not been widely utilized or developed as a research methodology. In the last decade, however, a number of research studies have employed African oral storytelling, not only to collect data but to frame the design of their research with African migrant communities (Adelowo, 2012; Carter-Black, 2007; Tuwe, 2016). African oral tradition as a research methodology with storytelling as research method has the benefit of empowering African communities and suggesting solutions to challenges (McAdams, 1993).

In the African American oral tradition, storytelling is concerned primarily with "healing and nurturing" through communicating with our spiritual self and with each other, and for building community (Banks-Wallace, 2002, p. 412). Zeelen, Wijbenga, Vintges, and de Jong (2010) used storytelling as a medium of informal education in health clinics in rural areas of South Africa in an effort to reduce the stigma around HIV/AIDS. Storytelling in this project showed itself to be inexpensive and accessible and able to reach a group of noneducated persons in a nonthreatening environment of a health clinic. The results showed that the messages through the stories were clear and understood through the animations of the storyteller. Carter-Black (2007) used storytelling to teach cultural competence in the field of social work where social work practitioners recognize their self-efficacy and learn about themselves and others.

Evaluating Liming and Ole Talk as a Qualitative Research Methodology for Caribbean People

In developing a culturally relevant research methodology, we (as authors and researchers) sought an approach that would enable trustworthiness and authenticity while deconstructing the meanings behind the responses of those who share their knowledge with us in the spaces that are created. Liming and ole talk was observed as having the potential to provide honesty and credibility along with rigor, complexity, and depth in our inquiry into Caribbean processes and practices.

The authenticity of a methodology speaks to the impact of the research and its relevance to society's issues. Yardley's (2000) proposal of authenticity in research looks at sensitivity issues, commitment, impact, and transparency. This authenticity, along with the ontological and epistemological considerations, illustrates the potential of liming and ole talk to serve as a methodology capable of eliciting and understanding the realities and knowledges of Caribbean people.

Ontological Considerations

Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality, our beliefs about reality, and what we think is the truth. This philosophical stance embraces an emic or subjective approach to reality where the researcher must interact with participants in order to get at the truth. This is necessary if the researcher is to understand the context which has shaped the participant's experiences, and is seen in the understandings of the limers who give many interpretations and meanings to their social contexts. In the ole talk that takes place, these meanings center upon the nature of reality for them and what kind of "being" emerges as they engage with each other and allow their stories to be told. Multiple realities are described as they take part in the conversations and attempt to make sense of their experiences in familiar settings.

Epistemological Considerations

Social inquiry is based upon the principles of ontology and epistemology. Epistemology is concerned with the theory of knowledge, that is, how we know what we know. As researchers, we are aware that what we see and hear depend to a large extent upon our "prior interpretive frames, biographies and interests, as well as the research context" (Charmaz, 2005, p. 508). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Schwandt (2000), we do not come to our studies uninitiated, so that in any limes that occur, we are aware that our values can influence the research process.

As researchers, we approach each lime as any other social event, even though we will have questions which we hope the limers would address. As the limers construct knowledge, we reflect on the process which would lead them to make sense of the world around them. Liming and ole talk provide an opportunity for the limers to frame their questions and understandings of their experiences, and to understand rather than to solely explain these behaviors. Ole talk produces situated understandings grounded in specific episodes of their life—a bringing of the self into the field as limers voice their interpretations of topics and answer questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Liming and Ole Talk: Giving "Voice" and Gaining Understanding

Giving the "researched" a voice is important. Any qualitative methodology for Caribbean researchers must therefore attempt to do this, permitting others to hear what is said in exact words and giving "emotional immediacy" to the discussion (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Discussions should allow for reflexivity—the process of reflecting critically on the self and coming to know the self within the process of discourse with others. Reinharz (1997, p. 3) argues that we not only "bring the self to the field . . . (we) create the self in the field." Silverman (2006, p.108) suggests that "by analyzing how people talk to one another, one is directly gaining access to a cultural universe and its content of moral assumptions." Hastrup and Hervik (2003, p. 224) assert that "the ethnographic experience cannot be taken at face value but must be studied in its sensational depth." Among Caribbean peoples, this depth occurs in liming and ole talk and the researcher is able to observe and share the limers' knowledge in settings where historical and contemporary thoughts and experiences sustain and create relationships among the limers.

Table 1. Comparing the Features of Liming and Ole Talk With Talanoa, African Oral Tradition of Storytelling, Focus Groups, and Participatory Action Research.

Liming and Ole Talk	Talanoa	African Oral Tradition of Storytelling	Focus Groups	Participatory Action Research
A context to borrow and share knowledge and information	✓	✓	✓	✓
An environment conducive to different types of interactions, for example, conversations, arguments, debates, and vexations	✓ (partially)	✓ (partially)	X	✓
No facilitator or main speaker	X	X	X	X
Everyone is involved in the conversations	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skylark (humor/joke/play around)	✓	✓	X	✓
Researcher as one of the limers (contributing to and interacting and engaging in the lime and ole talk)	X	X (limited to the extent of soliciting and engaging the audience)	X	✓ (partially)
Conversations ongoing and never ending	✓	✓ Through myths and legends	X	X
Sweet or sour lime (sessions can be engaging or participants can show disinterest)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Liming session curtailed or extended by the participants	✓	✓ (partially)	X	✓
Authentic and natural engagement	✓	✓	X	✓ (partially)
Opportunity to change opinions or confirm points of view	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learn new information	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mamaguy (flatter)	X	✓	X	X
Show-off	X	✓	✓	X
Not focused on answering a specific set of questions	✓ (partially)	✓	X	X
Takes extended time	✓	✓	X	✓
Suggest further knowledge holders	✓	X	X (partially)	✓
Building relationships during the liming session	✓	✓	X	✓
Maintaining relationships after the liming sessions	X	X	X	X

Qualitative inquiries and research involve asking the "kinds of questions that focus on the why and how of human interactions and perspectives of those involved in social interaction" (Agee, 2009, p. 432). A fundamental assumption of qualitative research is that an understanding of the world can be gained through conversation and observation in natural settings rather than through experimental manipulation under artificial conditions (Anderson & Arsenault, 2001). Kvale (1996, p. 7) states that "if we genuinely want to hear, to understand an individual, we must provide a way for him/her to speak in a genuine voice." Within a Caribbean setting, the researcher seeks to elicit this genuine voice. Liming occurs in familiar spaces where persons feel comfortable and may talk at length about issues which affect them and where they construct and give meaning to their sociological and contextual realities. In this space, the "researcher" can be silent and forgotten, not even to interject when the discussions may veer away from the proposed focus of the research. A key requirement is for the researcher to immerse themselves into the culture or way of being of this particular setting. This results in a dual process of acceptance and belonging with the tools to understand the voice, colloquialisms, habits, and gestures of the group.

Comparison of Liming and Ole Talk With Western Approaches and Indigenous Practices

From the various limes we carried out to consider the potential of liming and ole talk as a research methodology, there were several characteristics identified in the sharing of knowledge that we compared with those indigenous and western research methods considered to be most similar to liming and ole talk—Talanoa, African Oral Tradition of Storytelling, focus groups, and participatory action research. This comparison, from the perspectives of the authors, is presented in Table 1.

From our analysis, Talanoa and African Oral Tradition of Storytelling more closely reflect the characteristics of liming and ole talk. The focus group, with its more structured format, appears to be less similar in the way that knowledge is shared. Two important differences between liming and ole talk and the compared methodologies and methods are that, with liming and ole talk, the researcher is one of the limers and holds a status or hierarchy no different from that of the other limers. However, they may be referred to when the ole talk needs to refocus on the research question. Second, relationships created during the limes carry on past the liming, and the ole talk can begin again when new limers are introduced to the conversations.

Liming and Ole Talk as Research Method: An Empirical Investigation

In developing liming and ole talk as a research methodology, the authors/researchers embarked on a research study with several Caribbean communities to share knowledge and to explore liming and ole talk in ways that were trustworthy, authentic, and credible (Bryman, 2016). We held a series of liming and ole talk sessions in countries with local and diasporic Caribbean populations. These countries included New Zealand,

Canada, the United States, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, and Jamaica. The ritual of the sessions mirrored a typical lime session—the consumption of food and drink and the open-ended length of the engagement—and with a desired goal in mind. The goal was to determine what the limers thought about liming as a way of sharing knowledge, both informally and for use in academic spaces. In organizing the limes, the researchers communicated with people they knew. The organizers of the limes called upon their own networks and contacts in the Caribbean diaspora who were likely to be people drawn from various Caribbean countries.

Research Space

The limes occurred in a variety of contexts and scenarios such as after a football game, with limers sitting in the boot (trunk) of cars in a car park (Toronto/Canada), in the living room around a table filled with food (Auckland/Aotearoa New Zealand), down by the river on a Sunday afternoon while a cook out was being held (Arima/Trinidad and Tobago), at a restaurant during a meet up of old school friends (Port of Spain/Trinidad and Tobago), in a coop apartment with a dissimilar group of invited guests (New York/USA), in the gallery (porch) of a home (Kingston/Jamaica), and during a dominoes game (Havana/Cuba).

Research Design

The design of the study was based on the way in which a lime usually takes place. Although no two limes are ever the same, there were a number of features that one comes to expect with a lime. These include food, alcohol, at least two people, the capacity to wander in and out of the conversations and to arrive and leave at a time convenient to the limer, to change the topic of the conversation, skylark, mamaguy, showoff, picong (tease), laugh, argue, debate, and to offer solutions. These behaviors needed no encouragement to take place.

Research Questions

To determine the potential and possibilities of liming and ole talk as a research methodology, there were questions we needed to ask. The two main questions around which the study revolved were:

- What does liming and ole talk mean to you?
- How do you see liming and ole talk as a way to share knowledge?

This focus did not mean that the limes we carried out differed from a lime that would occur outside the study because, in a lime, any number of topics can become the focus of the ole talk that takes place. As noted earlier, the Caribbean is a heterogeneous region due to the different colonial presences and migratory movements and, for this reason, we held limes in the Caribbean and in countries where there were Caribbean diasporic communities. For the study, the limers had to be at least vaguely familiar with the concept of liming and ole talk as it occurred for them in their country of origin.

The Research Unfolding

Although it is not the aim of this article to detail the limes or to present a full analysis of the results and findings, two limes are briefly described (deliberately in the first person)—Toronto and Kingston—as well as the researchers' reflection of what took place.

Toronto

Setting. This lime took place after a football match in early August between two teams made up of Caribbean males. The players congregated around the boot of their cars which contained drinks. Food was provided by the soccer team and laid out on a table in an area of the car park. The boot of the car served as seating for the limers. Partners of some of the players were also present. The limers numbered from 15 to 20 which made it difficult to manage the conversation and even more difficult to hear and record the different conversations taking place. As per ethics approval, and with the permission of the limers, I recorded what could be captured by the tape recorder and video camera. Ethics approval was also granted for the oral recording of consent as the researchers had argued that the signing of consent forms in a lime would be intrusive, awkward, and disrespectful of the limers' and researchers' trust.

The players, mainly Trinbagonians, ranged from 30 to 70 years of age with many having lived half of their lives in Toronto. There were two players who were born in Canada and the United States but were of Caribbean heritage. The players usually limed after each soccer game so this was a common event for them. After the food was served, my contact drew the limers' attention to the questions I wanted to ask. The contact had earlier informed the players that I would be liming with them that afternoon and had given them information about the research. Once the first question was asked, the ole talk began and continued even after I had left the venue much later with my contact. I had been at the lime for 4 hr during which time different people were the dominant speakers. At times, some persons spoke privately with me. These conversations made recording difficult and I made mental notes of the discussion which I later wrote down.

Reflections. The soccer limers, some of whom had come specially to participate in the research, were curious to know how a lime, which they saw as a natural, frequent, and taken-for-granted event, might be used in a manner other than what they had been used to. Liming for them was an occasion to relax, unwind, ole talk, build new relationships, and sustain old ones. When I asked about the Caribbean-centric composition of the limers, they were rather bemused. To them, liming could only be done with fellow Caribbean Islanders as the format and intent needed no explanation to other limers. Upon initial consideration of liming and ole talk as a research methodology or even as an academic space, the soccer limers were at first

adamant that it should not be taken in that direction so as not to ruin the enjoyment that came with a lime. This view was particularly strong among the two Caribbean Islanders who had been born and brought up in the United States and Canada. The seriousness of academia, they felt, would compromise and intrude on what a lime should be. However, a few of the limers said that the introduction of liming and ole talk into academia could reduce the academic hierarchy that they believe currently exists in the region. Subsequently, more of the limers reflected that if we, as Caribbean Islanders, did not develop and put forward liming and ole talk as a research methodology that could be used in research with Caribbean peoples, then it would be developed and claimed by others from "outside." After much discussion, there was general agreement with this view from the rest of the limers.

Kingston

Setting. This "lime" took place on the front verandah of a home. The "limers" were all Jamaicans and not all were familiar with the words "liming" and "ole talk" except for those who had Trinbagonian friends and colleagues. The limers ranged in ages from 24 to 40, were a mix of male and female, and some had brought their children with them. There was a distinct difference in the words used to describe a lime and who or what comprised and constituted a lime. There was a variety of phrases put forward to describe these interactions and engagement, for example, "hold a medz" (meditation), "have a par," and "go de road." Nonetheless, food and drink were available as were humor and teasing. Mosquitoes seemed to be only a minor inconvenience to the limers. The setting was in a circle and although there was much talking over each other, it was easier to record the discussions in a more enclosed space.

Reflections. The limers were very eager to address the research questions and to argue for the inclusion of the Jamaican versions of liming and ole talk in Caribbean research methodologies. The interactions and discussions increased in intensity especially when gender differences were pointed out in the distinctions between a male-only and a female-only lime in Jamaica. In a male-only lime, the men said it would be inconceivable for women to be present as the men would not be able to talk "freely." In a female-only lime, the women thought that the men would have difficulty following the flow of the conversation. Many of the opinions that were stated reflected the gendered constructions of masculinity and femininity that exist in Jamaican society and this was an observation that we noted for further investigation.

The Potential of Liming and Ole Talk as a Research Methodology

This article draws on two limes to discuss the potential of liming and ole talk to be a culturally relevant research methodology for Caribbean peoples and contexts. In the two limes, the research questions of how limers viewed the practices of liming and ole talk and whether liming and ole talk could be developed as a research methodology for use in Caribbean settings were discussed. The limers shared and debated with the researchers and each other the different ways they had come to know about liming and ole talk, the different terminologies they associated with similar practices, and what it might mean for these cultural practices if they were to be used in an academic space. The location, environment, and atmosphere of the limes seemed to stimulate debate and argument causing some to reflect, others to concede and still others to put forward new ideas for the other limers to consider. There was never the sense that the discussions had ended or that a consensus had been reached but, at times, there was agreement on what liming and ole talk was and that it was time to consider its use as a way to share knowledge beyond a recreational setting.

Although, as researchers, we attempted to focus the conversation on the research questions, there seemed to be many stories told that did not initially appear to be related to the topic. However, as the ole talk continued, these stories were shown to be the limers' own way of emphasizing and bringing life to their answers to the research questions. As with any conversation, there were those that spoke for longer periods than others, particularly those that held the rapt attention of the limers. Interestingly, however, those that were silent were noticed by the others and good naturedly cajoled into giving their perspectives. As researchers, we were infrequently referred to, particularly in the Jamaican lime where there were three of us. In the Toronto lime where there was only one researcher present, groups of ole talk took place seemingly on the topic that had been introduced by the organizer of the lime.

In consideration of liming and ole talk as a research methodology, there was not only the sharing of knowledge or the collection of data as we know it. There was also the framing of the research to acknowledge the relevant cultural practices and for the recognition of both traditional identities and contemporary thinking; the research design that allowed for the in-depth study and investigation of the research questions through two different case studies and settings; the research method that provided the space to share knowledge and to build on and maintain relationships; and the analysis by the limers themselves of the knowledge that was shared. In essence, it is through liming and ole talk that we acknowledge, respect, and value the knowledge holders.

Practicalities and Limitations of Liming and Ole Talk as a Research Methodology

Practicalities of Liming and Ole Talk

In researching liming and ole talk as a research methodology, there were two main aims. One, to answer the research questions. Two, to explore the potential for the sharing of knowledge in a culturally relevant manner. Given the open nature of limes, a number of practical concerns were considered including time, the potential to answer the research question, trust, the involvement and contribution of the researcher, consent, and the presence of alcohol.

Research ethics recommend that data collection occur within a specified time so as not to impose unduly on the participants' time. The limers were given a time that the lime would begin. This was ever only loosely adhered to except in those instances where the lime followed another event such as a football game or when another event was taking place, for example, the cookout by the river. In any case, limers came and went depending on their interest in the topic being discussed or if they had to leave to attend another event.

Answering the research questions occurred to a greater extent than the researchers had expected, though the answers were replete with stories and picong. From the ole talk, we were able to ascertain the limers' curiosity, perspectives, interest, opinions, and queries on liming and ole talk as a research methodology. The limers asked questions of each other and of the researchers who, though initially not seen as being one of the limers, soon became one as the arguments, teasing, and sharing of knowledge began. This inclusion also indicated the trust that the limers had in each other and in the researchers.

There was a noticeable difference in how the ole talk proceeded when the researchers held papers and pens in their hands. These sheets either had the research questions on them or were consent forms. The limers occasionally glanced at the documents as though expecting questions to be asked from them. It became clear to the researchers that the presence of the papers was not necessary as the limers could hold the ole talk without being overly guided by a set of questions. As consent was orally and visually recorded, the consent forms were not needed. On reflection, the papers were more of an assurance for the researchers than a necessity, and the liming and ole talk flowed more easily for the researchers and the limers once they were no longer an obstacle.

Alcohol was available at most of the limes but its consumption did not appear to have any impact on the ole talk that took place. It did seem, however, to prolong the length of the lime.

The Limitations of Liming and Ole Talk

The limitations of liming and ole talk as a research methodology focused on authenticity, timeliness, duration, obtaining consent, and maintaining focus. First, the natural occurrence of a lime is unlikely in a research study. The actual setting in which a lime is carried out for research purposes is most likely to be contrived. This runs counter to the natural and sometimes immediate setting in which a lime develops. However, ole talk in everyday settings may make it difficult for conversations to be recorded or heard, for example, a meeting on the street, in a rum shop, or a hairdresser's salon.

Second, time can be viewed as a limitation as many Caribbean nations do not appear to take much notice of time schedules. The timing for a lime may not be convenient for some limers who might decide later to drop by unannounced. The length of time that it may take for ole talk to be established around the topic or focused on the research question will be a challenge to a researcher with an agenda that is constrained by time.

Third, seemingly unfinished conversations might suggest that the research has not been concluded or reached a point where data saturation has been attained. Given that relationships are ongoing, it is accepted that knowledge will always be evolving and added to, and the knowledge that is gathered and shared during a lime is what was offered by the participants at that particular time. This does not invalidate their points of view or knowledge but instead provides a resource for further reference and a reason for further conversation.

Fourth, attempting to obtain written consent from those taking part in a lime is an intrusion that may reduce the amount and authenticity of the information provided by the limers. Verbal consent could be recorded at the commencement of or during the lime and, if necessary, written consent at the conclusion. This is largely because liming can progress from a couple of people to any number of persons as the ole talk continues.

Fifth, the digression from the original topic may be a consequence of the informality of liming and ole talk. This could be mitigated by the presence and active involvement of the researcher who forms part of the lime. Although it may be considered a potential bias to have the researcher involved, the engagement of the researcher in ole talk would assist in drawing the talk back to the desired topic and in meeting the research objectives. Alternatively, the researcher could collaborate with the main planner or organizer of the lime who could be given the task of keeping the talk "on track."

Conclusion

> Soon we must take a side or be lost in the rubble
> In a divided world that don't need islands no more;
> Are we doomed forever to be at somebody's mercy?
> Little keys can open up mighty doors.'
>
> (Song: *Rally Round the West Indies* by David Rudder, Calypsonian and Musician)

In considering a culturally relevant research approach in a region bereft of such, liming and ole talk is seen as the "little key" that can "open up mighty doors." This article argues that a Western colonialist ideology embedded in the research practices that take place in Caribbean societies results in maintaining hierarchies exclusive to elite groups of Caribbean Islanders. Although this ideology is seen as necessary for development, growth, and progress, it does little to address the indigenous and local realities that exist in the region. An epistemology that embodies and embraces a Caribbean culture and identity is necessary to challenge the impact of colonization and to effectively enhance the way we research with Caribbean peoples.

A qualitative research methodology, such as liming and ole talk offers, calls for us to examine the way that research is currently being undertaken in Caribbean societies. We are certain that questions have already been raised about the research methodologies used in the Caribbean. This exploration of

Caribbean research methodologies hopes to open up further questions that would promote an awareness of the academic and cultural discrimination that exists and thereby create an opportunity for change. Caribbean researchers must be involved in activities to transform research methodologies so that they draw upon the culture, environment, and realities of the Caribbean and its diaspora. Western epistemologies have traditionally been the reference against which other "less developed" and "developing" countries interpret their own practices and ways of behaving. However, as researchers in developing Caribbean countries, we must begin to develop our own frameworks of interpretations. Research methodologies conducted in the Caribbean should no longer be based solely on the legacy of a postcolonial era that continues to shape the lens through which Caribbean peoples view their world.

Smith (2007, p. 114) cautions that there are inherent challenges to the way that indigenous and local research is conducted when moving into an old domain with new methodologies. These "conservative forces that seek to disrupt any agenda of social justice . . . have little tolerance for public debate, have little patience for alternative views, and have no interest in qualitative richness or complexity." Within the Caribbean, however, it is essential that research reforms, makes a difference, and is relevant to the cultural needs of our most important resource—our people. The Spanish poet Antonio Marchado (n.d.) states that "the path is made by walking." Echoing similar sentiments, Freire (1970) offered that there is "no way to transformation; transformation is the way." Similarly, Kuokkanen (2000) urges indigenous people to refuse to remain apolitical about the dominance of Western research methodologies, paradigms, and ideologies.

Irish, Lundquist, and Nelsen (1993, p. 14) thoughtfully conclude that

> in looking at the emotions and experiences of people from other cultures, it may be easy to adopt an ethnocentric stance [as] we will never understand people whose language or culture is different from ours, if we [continue] to translate what they say into our own terms, and assume the transcendent reality of those terms.

The continued use of Western methodologies by Caribbean researchers to conduct research in Caribbean settings and with Caribbean peoples is questioned. Caribbean academics and researchers are crucial to developing research methodologies that draw from the lived experiences, histories, and worldviews of Caribbean peoples. The authors suggest that utilizing liming and ole talk, an embedded and known feature of Caribbean life as illustrated in various forms depending on the different Caribbean nations, could be a place to begin. Liming and ole talk is argued as a more appropriate methodological framework, not only for borrowing and sharing information but for how research specific to Caribbean contexts can be framed, designed, and carried out.

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