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# COLLABORATIVE VIDEOING - A REFLEXIVE ACCOUNT

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## ABSTRACT

In this paper, I present collaborative videoing exercise conducted during an ethnographic field research conducted at Sudarshan Layout, an urban slum in Bangalore, India. AC3 Members, a group of local youth of Sudarshan Layout were the participant-collaborators in the collaborative videoing exercise. In this paper, I discuss collaborative videoing within the discourse of collaboration and reflexivity from the domains of visual anthropology and design research. I argue that collaborative videoing is an informally structured approach which served as a boundary object during the research process. I reflect on how collaborative videoing, as boundary object, facilitated this research at Sudarshan Layout and assisted in collaboration, communication and cooperation between participant-collaborators and me.

**Keywords:** Video, Collaboration, Boundary Objects, Reflexivity

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on findings of an ethnographic field research conducted at Sudarshan Layout, an urban slum in Bangalore, India in February 2009. The field study was part of my master's thesis (title: Design Opportunities and Challenges in Indian Urban Slums- Community Communication and Mobile Phones). The thesis investigated the area of mobile-based community communication for marginalized communities belonging to Indian urban slums. The research question which this study addressed was: What are the design opportunities and challenges for mobile based community communication services for

residents of Indian urban slums? In this article, I exclusively discuss the collaborative videoing exercise, which assisted this design research project in various ways.

The methodological approach taken in this research is inspired by Ethnographic Action Research (EAR) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). EAR is the research approach to study impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) especially in the area related to poverty alleviation (Tacchi et al., 2003). PRA is a research methodology which advocates bottom-up research approaches with flexible and innovative mix of various methods and sensitivity for the local context (Kumar, 2007). Both EAR and PRA insists on use of participatory methods to engage participants as fellow researchers, and suggest adaptation of the research process according to challenges faced in the field. This participatory research was conducted in collaboration with members of Ambedkar Community Computing Centre (AC3), referred as AC3 Members, a group consisting of local youth of Sudarshan Layout. The research methods employed for this study were: participant-observation, field notes, group interviews, in-depth interviews, social map drawing exercises and self-documentation through camera exercises. 'Self-documentation' exercises involve the creative use of media, such as photography or videography, in the research process by allowing people to document themselves and their environment.

In this paper, I focus on collaborative videoing exercise conducted in collaboration with AC3 Members. I discuss collaborative videoing within the discourse of collaboration and reflexivity as originating from the domains of visual anthropology and design research. My main argument is that collaborative videoing is an informally structured

*\* This paper presents research done by the author when he was enrolled at Aalto University School of Art and Design, Finland for his master's studies.*

approach which served as a boundary object between AC3 Members and me. I reflect on how collaborative videoing, as boundary object, facilitated this design research and assisted in collaboration, communication and cooperation between AC3 Members and me. In this paper, I also refer to AC3 Members as 'participant-collaborators' instead of 'participants' for the purpose of clarity and to differentiate from the other participants in this research.

## VIDEO IN VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Since 1980s, with the development of cheaper, convenient and reliable video technology, visual anthropologist started exploring video for field research. It was only since late 1990s when the status of video moved beyond than that of a recording medium to a channel through which knowledge is produced (Pink, 2007).

Contemporary literature on video in visual anthropology argues for the themes of reflexivity and collaboration. The theme of reflexivity deals with the acknowledgement of the subjectivity of a researcher in visual representations and the knowledge production process (Banks, 2001; Rose, 2006; Pink, 2003, 2007; Buckingham, 2009). A reflexive approach argues that visual artefacts and the knowledge produced during any ethnographic fieldwork, by participants or researchers, is always constructed, and hence should not be considered as an objective documentation of reality. Rather than just focusing on the content of them, a reflexive approach aims to build a broad understanding that includes the social context of visual artefacts produced during any ethnographic fieldwork. The meaning of visual artefacts has to be understood not just in the context of content or 'internal narrative', but should deal with 'external narrative', i.e. the social context of the production of visual artefacts incorporating the discussion of intention, relationship, identity, subjectivity, materiality and understanding of perception of technology amongst the participants (Banks, 2001; Buckingham, 2009; Pink, 2003, 2007). Pink (2007) argues that 'ethnographicness' of any video is in context of use i.e. any video could be of ethnographic value if a

researcher considers it to be of an ethnographic interest.

'Collaboration' recognizes knowledge production from any fieldwork as a process of collaborative negotiation of meaning between the researcher and the participants. Pink (2003: 190) remarks: "Collaboration is important in any project involving people and images, both on ethical grounds and as a way of recognizing the intersubjectivity that underlines any social encounter." The theme of collaboration entails collaborative construction of meaning. Unlike the traditional methods where only the researchers handle artefact-producing devices such as cameras, a collaborative approach includes research methods that allow informants or participants to produce visual artefacts and representations of themselves. The collaborative aspect of visual artefact production makes the visual methods significant for participatory research (Buckingham, 2009).

Many visual ethnographers employ visual elicitation methods where participants are interviewed on the basis of visual artefacts, like videos and photographs, and are requested to reflect and interpret visuals for the researcher. It has been documented that participants express and convey their emotions and thoughts on visuals with much greater depth (Ulusoy & Frat, 2009). This enriches the research, firstly by helping the researcher to build a deeper understanding of the participant's social world, and secondly as described by Freidenberg (1998: 177): "The significance of visual ethnography as a stimulus in interviewing is that, rather than providing answers to direct questions, it generates questions and elicits a dialogue. This process helps the informant rather than the anthropologist, define the social context of the interview..."

The visual methods are also appreciated for providing access to knowledge that may have remained inaccessible to the researcher (Pink, 2007), and for balancing the power dynamic between the researcher and the researched (Gotschi et al., 2009).

## VIDEO IN DESIGN RESEARCH

Video is considered an important medium and tool in the field of design. Video is also discussed as an important tool in communicating the experiential knowledge (Löwgren 2011). Design research utilizing video has been discussed and explored for variety of approaches, attitudes and purposes. Ylirisku & Burr (2007) have discussed four major video traditions in design, each varying significantly from other in context of position and role of 'user' in the design process:

- Video in design ethnography: Considers 'user' as an 'informant' of interaction or use of a technology.
- Video for documentation of design activities and discussions in participatory design: Considers 'user' as 'participant' in creating design concepts, and finding design issues.
- Video in usability studies: Considers 'user' for behavioral observation in a controlled environment.
- Video in scenario based design approach: Considers a possible 'user' for an interaction in future with the product or services being designed.

Ylirisku & Burr (2007) and Raijmakers et. al (2006) argue a constructivist position for video in design i.e. an approach that embraces reflexivity and acknowledges the subjectivity of designer, researcher, 'user' in visual documentation and design knowledge creation. Raijmakers et. al (2006) have also argued for use of video in design research beyond than purely observational and recording approach. They argue for video in design research to enable the dialectic between the objective documentation and the representation rather than opposing it.

## CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

### *INDIA, URBAN SLUMS*

India, world's largest democracy, amounts to 17% of world population and includes one-third of world's poor (Rao, 2009). According to the last Census of

India (2001), India's overall population was 1027 million, out of which 285 million (27.8 %) lived in urban areas. This research is based on ethnographic field study conducted in Bangalore city. Bangalore is located in southern part of India and is the capital city of state of Karnataka. Bangalore has a population of over 6.5 million and is ranked fifth most populous city of India (Raman, 2008). It is widely accepted that 'slums' are difficult to define and there are multiple definitions and meanings co-existing (Sliwa, 2008). According to UN-HABITAT (2003):

"Slums are distinguished by poor quality of housing, poverty of inhabitants, the lack of public or private services and the poor integration of the inhabitants into the broader community and its opportunities."

Approximately 924 million people, 31.6% of the world's urban population, lives in slums. 67 million of the urban population of India lives below poverty line. This translates into people living on less than US\$ 2 per day (Rao, 2009). Urban Slums are marginalized and accommodate the most disadvantaged group of urban dwellers. Much of the labour force in cities of developing countries lives in slums (UN-HABITAT, 2003). Similarly, Sudarshan Layout fits the above mentioned UN-Habitat's description of 'slum'. This settlement is discussed in detail in the next section.

### *SUDARSHAN LAYOUT*

This research is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Sudarshan Layout, an urban slum in Bangalore, India. Sudarshan Layout is a residential area for the marginalized community of construction workers, domestic helps, labourers all belonging to scheduled castes (SC). As recognized by Indian constitution those listed under SC are the castes which need to be granted reservations in government policies in order to enable them to overcome their historical and contemporary deprivation. The local residents identify themselves as dalit, a self-designation for people belonging to lowest of the castes in Indian caste system. Dalits have suffered prolonged social discrimination due to their lower caste birth.

Sudarshan Layout is roughly a hundred meters in length and fifty meters in width. Approximately three hundred families live in over one hundred and fifteen houses, most of which are one-room tenements. Big corporate office buildings surround the area and a big sewer-line runs by one of its boundaries. The family income of inhabitants varies between Indian Rupees (INR) 1500-10000 (40-150 Euros) per month. The local population falls in the low income group category in the Indian context and residents define themselves as belonging to the category of below-poverty line (BPL). They get food and items of regular use at subsidized rates from government's ration shop. The nearest ration shop is 15-20 min. of walking distance from Sudarshan Layout.

The older residents of Sudarshan Layout migrated from rural areas of Karnataka and nearby states such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh over a period of thirty years to settle in Bangalore. This group consists of individuals who dropped out of school to work at a very early age, and many of them are illiterate. In contrast, the younger generation of Sudarshan Layout was born in Bangalore and many of them completed basic schooling. The local population of Sudarshan Layout communicates in multiple languages, including Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. The youth of Sudarshan Layout are comfortable with Hindi and English as well. The residents of Sudarshan Layout, as in the case of other urban slums in Bangalore, have been part of the labour force of the city, but have faced various types of social, economic and civic discrimination due to caste issues, poverty, lack of education and illiteracy, to name a few.

#### **AMBEDKAR COMMUNITY COMPUTING CENTER (AC3)**

The residents of Sudarshan Layout describe Ambedkar Community Computing Center (AC3) as an informal computer education centre for children of slums. AC3 is based in Sudarshan Layout and is a bottom-up initiative owned by the local community. AC3 was created and is sustained by the joint efforts of various groups of people. Some of the groups belong to Sudarshan Layout while others are from outside. The idea of AC3 was conceived during a meeting of local youth of Sudarshan Layout with



Figure 1. Street view of Sudarshan Layout



Figure 2. AC3 Members

Stree Jagurati Samiti (SJS), an NGO based in Bangalore, and Ambedkar Youth Association (AYA), a local youth association of Sudarshan Layout. The local youth aspired to computer education, and during the meeting they expressed these desires. AYA agreed to provide space to start a computer centre while SJS contacted Association for India's Development (AID) with a request for teachers. AID is a group of volunteers, primarily software professionals, working in the IT industry of Bangalore. A self-organized group of local youth, whom I refer as AC3 Members, volunteered to take the responsibility of the computer centre. Various other residents of Sudarshan Layout helped in building the necessary infrastructure and finally, AC3 was formally inaugurated on 6 July 2008.

The AC3 Members is the social group that participated in this research. At the time of this field research, all of the AC3 Members were in the age group of seventeen to nineteen and were studying in

schools, and they could communicate in English. The AC3 members are young and enthusiastic with regard to learning about technology. AC3 members learn computer skills from AID volunteers who visit AC3 five days a week. At the time of this research, the AC3 members were using donated laptops for basic computer functionalities like word processing, games, movie watching, image editing and digital drawing.

### PRESENCE OF CAMERA AND THE FIELDWORK

During the first meeting with AC3 Members, I was carrying a miniDV handheld video camera and a point-and-shoot digital photo camera. The presence of these cameras started a conversation between AC3 Members and me. The AC3 Members informed me that they have been discussing amongst themselves about the possibility of documenting and visually showcasing the work of AC3 and life in Sudarshan Layout to the world at large. They wished to present their views and daily struggle to the progressive section of Indian society which seems to have ignored their voices. They did not have access to any camera for such visual documentation. The AC3 Members expressed a keen interest in learning about and using the cameras. Therefore, I offered to teach them basic camera functionalities and shared the cameras with them. Subsequently, I held informal teaching sessions dealing with the operation of the miniDV video camera and point-and-shoot digital photo camera. Simultaneously, we discussed on the possibility of collaborative videoing to document various aspects of AC3 and Sudarshan Layout. This proved to be a considerable motivation for AC3 Members and they agreed to collaborate in the study. The cameras proved crucial in forming a bond with the AC3 Members, and facilitated in building a relationship of trust. Pink (2007) has also acknowledged the role that a camera could play in establishing a trusting relationship with research participants. This proved to be the start of this fieldwork and it provided me an opportunity to build a deeper understanding of the social world of AC3 Members and residents of Sudarshan Layout.

The Panasonic miniDV handheld camera was used for video documentation. The other equipments used were wireless microphone, shotgun microphone,

small tripod, monopod and steady-bag. The collaborative videoing was informally structured. AC3 Members decided upon which aspects of AC3 that needs to be documented, organized interviews of volunteers, local NGOs and other residents of Sudarshan Layout. Primarily, I handled the video camera while AC3 Members used the point-and-shoot digital photo camera, but on some occasions the AC3 Members played the role of videographer. Collaborative Videoing was used with AC3 Members in the following contexts:

- Recording interviews of AC3 Members, AID and SJS Volunteers, local community leader, parents of AC3 Members and other local residents of Sudarshan Layout.
- Documenting transect walks in Sudarshan Layout where AC3 Members showed me the spaces and infrastructure.
- Documenting visit to R.S. Colony, a nearby slum where an evening computer class was held.
- Documenting social map drawing exercises, focus group, group discussions etc.
- Documenting participant-collaborator's description and discussion on self-documentation camera exercise.
- Documenting aspects of AC3 like classes held for children, resources, activities, print articles on AC3, photos of various previous activities at AC3.
- Miscellaneous documentation of spaces, people and activities in Sudarshan Layout.

The collaborative videoing facilitated this research by providing me an opportunity to understand broad context of community communication that local residents engage in. All the above resulted in around fifteen hours of video material captured on miniDV tapes. It was decided that the material would be used for a short (around 8 mins) video on AC3 which could be uploaded on various online video sharing sites. A shorter and rough edit version of AC3 video (title: 'We Use GNU Linux') was produced in May 2009. The video is uploaded on Youtube and shared with AC3 Members and various people who participated in the video. The sharing was done to get the views of AC3 Members on the representations in the 'We Use GNU Linux'. By the time of writing of

this paper the longer version of 'We Use GNU Linux' is being edited.



Figure 3. AC3 Member as videographer.



Figure 4. Screenshot from 'We Use GNU Linux' video.

## COLLABORATIVE VIDEOING AS BOUNDARY OBJECT

In this section, I discuss certain dimensions of collaborative videoing following the discourse of reflectivity and collaboration. I utilize this discussion to argue for collaborative videoing as an informally structured approach which served as boundary object during the research process. The discussion and the argument also reflect on how collaborative videoing facilitated this research at Sudarshan Layout and assisted in collaboration, communication and cooperation between participant-collaborators and me.

Boundary object is a concept introduced by Susan L. Star and James R. Griesemer (1989: 393) as: "Boundary objects are objects that are plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of

the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common use, and become strongly structured in individual-site use. These objects may be abstract or concrete. They have different meanings in different social worlds, but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable as a means of translation. The creation and management of boundary objects is a key process in developing and maintaining coherence across intersecting social worlds."

Star (2010: 603) further explains boundary objects as "the stuff of action" and clarifies "an object is something people (or, in computer science, other objects and programs) act toward and with. Its materiality derives from action, not from a sense of prefabricated stuff or "thing"-ness. So, a theory may be a powerful object."

We (AC3 Members and me) came to share the goal and the idea of collaborative videoing the work of AC3 and life of Sudarshan Layout. We collaborated following this not so clearly defined, unstructured and vague idea. The collaborative videoing formed the 'action' we worked for and with. The collaborative videoing became a process of exploration based on and also requiring communication, cooperation, coordination and collaboration between me as a researcher ('outsider') and the AC3 Members ('insiders'). The collaborative videoing formed an interface between the social worlds of AC3 Members and me. Hence in this paper I argue that the collaborative videoing with the goal or the idea of documenting work of AC3 and life of Sudarshan Layout became the boundary object for AC3 Members and me to work with. The collaborative videoing as boundary object facilitated this research by providing means to build a broad understanding of local community communication which otherwise would not have been possible.

### *MULTIPLE INTERPRETATIONS AND MEANINGS*

Star (2010) defines "Interpretive flexibility" as the first component of boundary objects. Boundary objects facilitate multiple interpretations by various

collaborating team members belonging to different social worlds. The variation in how the boundary object is viewed or used arises in the context of use and interpretation in different social worlds. For instance, the shorter and rough edit version of AC3 video (title: 'We Use GNU Linux') have been used for variety of purposes by both AC3 Members and me. I had presented the video in an open-video session at an academic symposium in Helsinki, as work in progress for my master's thesis during end semester presentation, and discussed with couple of documentary filmmakers. Similarly, AC3 Members have used the video to present the work of AC3 to their friends, NGOs, Free Software Movement volunteers etc. At the time of writing of this paper, Free Software Foundation has decided to use the same video on their website to present work of AC3 and to use the video as per their needs, they have decided to transform the video to free format OGG, add subtitles in different language for global audience and add a background music. This clearly indicates:

- Collaborative videoing as boundary object provides the 'interpretive flexibility' to both AC3 Members and me.
- The interpretation and meaning generation of collaborative videoing is a dynamic process. Since the start of collaboration between AC3 Members and me, the purpose and meaning of collaborative videoing has evolved throughout the process and it still takes new meanings. The multiplicities of meanings are integral part of collaborative videoing as boundary object.
- The life span of collaborative video artefacts is much longer than usually anticipated by design research projects teams. Especially in this world of social media, the digital video artefacts are easily adapted, transformed, shared and stored in various file formats and locations.

#### ***COLLABORATION, TRUST AND SELF-ORGANIZATION***

Star (2010: 602) defines "the structure of informatics and work process needs and arrangement" as the second component of boundary objects. Boundary objects facilitate collaboration between different groups having "information and work requirements"

which are locally interpreted. The groups or individuals, belonging to different social worlds, work with boundary objects without having a clear consensus. As discussed earlier, we (AC3 members and me) came to share the goal and the idea of collaborative videoing the work of AC3 and life of Sudarshan Layout. We collaborated even though the goal was not very clear and we had not decided upon what constitutes work of AC3 and life of Sudarshan Layout. The collaborative videoing as a boundary object became a process of exploration which facilitated collaboration between us in number of ways. Some significant findings in this regard are:

#### **Collaborative Videoing and Trust**

Trust is one of the biggest hurdles I encountered during my field study in urban slums of Bangalore. For instance, during a field visit to a slum near Sudarshan Layout, some people perceived me as a 'Hindi-speaking' north Indian who does not speak Kannada (local language of Bangalore), while others considered me an 'outsider' belonging to privileged section of Indian society. During the transect walk in Sudarshan Layout, some elders from the locality refused to speak with me and warned AC3 Members that I may be a journalist in disguise. The issue of trust adversely affected the participation of local residents in this research. I realized that the issue of trust is related to the perception of my identity amongst the local people. In the anthropological tradition, it has been well established that a fieldwork consists of constant negotiation of identity between researcher and informants (Tsuda, 1998; Pink, 2007). These aspects are often ignored in the literature in design. Hence, I discuss the issue of trust and how collaborative videoing enhanced this research in this regard.

Collaborative videoing facilitated trust between the researcher ('outsider') and the local residents ('insiders'). The role of camera and collaborative videoing in establishing trust and forming a bond between AC3 Members and me has been mentioned earlier in this paper. Collaborative videoing also enhanced trust and facilitated participation of other local residents of Sudarshan Layout in this research:

- Many female local residents were reluctant to participate in the study or even speak with me (a

young adult and an 'outsider'). But due to collaboration and presence of AC3 Members many of them decided to participate in interviews and group discussions. They also reflected and shared their opinions.

- The video camera attracted many young adults and children especially when they saw AC3 Members handling and using the camera. AC3 Members introduced them to me and they willingly participated in the research. Many of the teenagers participated in the interviews because of the desire to be captured on video.
- Due to AC3 Members' invitation, local community leaders and some local elders participated in the interviews.
- Because of AC3 Members' collaboration with me some of the family members of AC3 Members participated in the interviews, invited me to see their homes and have food with them.

These social groups and various individuals from Sudarshan Layout participated in this research due to collaborative videoing with AC3 Members. These groups would have remained inaccessible to me otherwise and hence collaborative videoing assisted in making this design research more inclusive.

#### **Collaborative Videoing and Self-organization amongst participant-collaborators**

Participant-observation is one the key methods in traditional ethnographic fieldwork. The exclusive focus on 'observation' in traditional ethnography have been criticized for skewing the power relationship in favour of the researcher, who 'observes' the participants (Freidenberg, 1998). In caparison, collaborative videoing levels the power relationship (at least to a certain degree) between the researcher and participant-collaborators. In context of this fieldwork, AC3 Members took the ownership of the collaborative videoing. They were self-organized and they were strongly engaged in the research process. They decided upon what aspects of AC3 need to be documented, invited local residents, NGOs, other volunteers for interviews. In this way they have negotiated their representations in the video artefacts. They served multiple roles of

videographer, photographer, interviewer, and translator.

#### **COLLABORATIVE VIDEOING AS DIALECTIC**

The collaborative videoing with AC3 Members embody dialectic between the reality of their social worlds and the views, representations and notions as authored by AC3 Members and me. The collaborative videoing produced video artefacts which has design directions for the community communication services and also has elements of ethnographic significance. For instance, the video artefacts showcased significance of certain local spaces like small food shops or water taps in context of communication engaging certain residents groups of Sudarshan Layout. Raijmakers et. al (2006: 236) differentiate between 'design documentaries' and traditional documentaries: "...the distinction between traditional documentaries and design documentaries reflects differences in their intended uses rather than any strong notions about differences in appropriate approaches or techniques. Design documentaries are meant to inform and inspire design; documentaries are not necessarily intended to serve an external purpose apart from sometimes hoping to act as a catalyst for change in society." I find it incorrect to categorize the collaborative videoing either as an approach for 'design documentary' or 'design ethnography' or 'traditional documentary video'. The difference amongst these categories is in the context of use of the video material. Hence, I find collaborative videoing as an informally structured approach which lies in-between or overlaps these video categories.

#### **VIDEO ELICITATION AND CO-EDITING**

The significance and use of visual elicitation in visual anthropology have been discussed earlier in the paper. I define 'video elicitation' as a process where participant-collaborators reflect on the various aspects of representations and broad context of the visual artefacts. Video elicitation as a process is relevant for design as it assists design researcher to build a deeper understanding of social worlds of participant-collaborators. Digital technology has facilitated the elicitation process with the possibility of instant transfer to other devices, quick creation of



multiple copies and instant replays on camera LCD screens.

In case of this field research we viewed the video recordings on the LCD screen of the miniDV video camera. Three issues in this regard are:

- LCD screen of the video camera was not big enough for group viewing and we did not have any cable to connect the video camera to a television.
- Reviewing video recording by 'forward/rewinding' MiniDV tapes is not very convenient.
- Each MiniDV tape requires over twelve Gigabytes of memory space if 'captured' without compression. And as we did not have access to adequate amount of memory space for fifteen hours of video recordings we could not collaboratively edit the video.

I describe 'co-editing' as a process where participant-collaborators and the researcher collaboratively edit the video footage to create video artifacts. Co-editing is an important consideration for the framework of collaboration. Pink (2007) has raised concerns for projects where collaboratively produced video footage is edited without any involvement of the participants. In such cases, the researcher or the editor holds the power of representation and this dilutes the 'collaborative' aspects of the video artifact produced. Freidenberg (1998: 172) adds in this regard:

"Fieldwork should also involve the other in constructing and validating knowledge about her/himself as it is constructed by the fieldworker"

In case of this fieldwork practical and logistical issues hampered co-editing with participant-collaborators as I had to leave Bangalore soon after the fieldwork. But we interacted and shared views over the shorter and rough edit version of 'We Use GNU Linux'. A short visit to Bangalore is planned for more detailed discussion later this year.

## CONCLUSION

In this paper, I presented collaborative videoing exercise conducted during an ethnographic field research conducted at Sudarshan Layout, an urban slum in Bangalore, India. This participatory research

was conducted in collaboration with members of Ambedkar Community Computing Centre (AC3), referred as AC3 Members, a group consisting of local youth of Sudarshan Layout. The methodological approach taken in this research is inspired by Ethnographic Action Research (EAR) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).

In this paper, I exclusively focused on collaborative videoing exercise conducted in collaboration with AC3 Members. I discussed how cameras proved crucial in forming a bond with the AC3 Members and facilitated in building a relationship of trust. I described the dynamics of collaborative videoing with AC3 Members and discussed collaborative videoing within the discourse of collaboration and reflexivity as originating from the domains of visual anthropology and design research.

I argued that collaborative videoing is an informally structured approach which served as a boundary object between AC3 Members and me. I presented how collaborative videoing, as boundary object, provided 'interpretive flexibility' to both participant-collaborators i.e. AC3 Members and me. I discussed the how collaborative videoing supported in dealing with issues of trust and enhanced self-organization amongst the participant-collaborators facilitating participation of local residents in this research. I demonstrated how collaborative videoing, as boundary object, facilitated this research and assisted in collaboration, communication and cooperation between participant-collaborators and me.

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