

Listening as Method: Reframing Listening Circles as a Qualitative Approach in Business and Management Research

Flip Schutte

STADIO Higher Education, Cape Town, South Africa

flips@stadio.ac.za

Abstract: Business and management research increasingly engages with complex, context-dependent challenges that demand methods capable of capturing lived experience, tacit knowledge, and collective meaning-making. In community-embedded and emerging-economy contexts, conventional extractive approaches, such as surveys and structured interviews, often fail to yield the depth of insight required for organisational decision-making, strategy development, and curriculum innovation. This paper examines listening circles as an innovative qualitative data collection method for business and management research. Drawing on participatory and dialogic research traditions, listening circles extend focus group approaches by emphasising structured listening, narrative sharing, dialogic data generation and collective reflection. Rather than positioning participants as respondents to researcher-driven questions, this method creates conditions for participants to co-construct knowledge through shared experiences and dialogue. The paper offers a conceptual and methodological analysis of listening circles in research design, outlining key considerations including facilitation, sampling, ethical protocols, and data analysis. It also demonstrates how listening circles can be integrated into qualitative and mixed-methods research designs to support organisational learning, stakeholder engagement, and contextually responsive decision-making. By reframing listening circles as a rigorous qualitative method rather than a purely engagement-focused practice, this study contributes to ongoing debates about methodological innovation, reflexivity, and ethical research in business and management studies.

Keywords: Listening Circles; Qualitative Research Methods; Participatory Research; Business and Management Research; Dialogic Research

1. Introduction

Business and management research increasingly addresses complex organisational and societal challenges that demand research approaches capable of capturing lived experience, tacit knowledge, and contextual meaning-making (Maree, 2025). Organisations operate in environments marked by rapid change, uncertainty, and multiple stakeholder perspectives. Understanding these environments requires research methods that move beyond collecting surface-level opinions to provide deeper insight into how individuals and communities interpret their experiences.

Traditional research approaches in business and management studies have often relied on structured interviews, questionnaires, and survey-based methods. While these approaches can generate useful data, they often reflect an extractive model of research in which participants respond to researcher-defined questions, with limited opportunity to shape the direction of inquiry (Chapman, 2020). Such approaches may be insufficient when research aims to understand complex organisational processes, community engagement practices, leadership experiences, or institutional change processes. In these contexts, research participants possess situated knowledge that may not emerge through structured questioning alone.

Recent methodological discussions have emphasised the need for qualitative approaches that balance analytical rigour with contextual responsiveness and ethical engagement with participants. Participatory and dialogic approaches have increasingly been proposed to reduce power asymmetries between researchers and participants while generating richer, more meaningful data (Sven, Latham & Bateman, 2023). Listening-based approaches represent a promising development in this area. Listening circles build on traditions of participatory dialogue and group-based qualitative research, extending them through structured listening, narrative sharing, and collective reflection. Rather than positioning participants as respondents to researcher-driven questions, listening circles create conditions in which participants share experiences and perspectives that reveal contextual priorities and collective sense-making processes (Smallwood, Patterson & Kaufmann, 2024). As recent methodological discussions suggest, listening-based approaches may reduce power asymmetries, enhance trust, and generate analytically robust qualitative data while maintaining strong ethical integrity (Lepore, Hall & Tandon, 2024).

Listening-based data collection methods have become more prominent in recent methodological discussions. At a 2025 conference in Lusaka, Prof. George Openjuru, the vice-chancellor of Gulu University in Uganda, delivered a keynote speech on this approach. Since Gulu University brands itself as “for community transformation”, he spoke about community engagement and described how their medical researchers sat

under a tree in the community, listening to the narratives of the community's elders, who explained which plant or remedy to use for which illness. The scientists listened and took notes, then returned to their university laboratories to investigate what they had heard. Upon learning of their use of listening as a data-collection methodology, I reflected on its broader potential applications beyond community engagement. Even within the social sciences, it is occasionally essential, for specific studies, to refrain from posing questions that might influence participants to produce responses, and instead simply to listen and gather comprehensive data capable of guiding projects in unforeseen directions.

Despite their growing use in community engagement and participatory development contexts, listening circles have rarely been conceptualised as a rigorous qualitative data collection strategy in business and management research (Ardoin, Gould & Wojcik, 2022). They are often treated as engagement activities or consultation exercises rather than as structured research methods capable of generating analytically robust data through dialogue. This represents a missed opportunity for methodological innovation in business research.

In response to these methodological gaps, this paper introduces the concept of dialogic data generation to frame the epistemological contribution of listening circles to qualitative research. Dialogic data generation denotes the co-construction of qualitative data through structured listening, shared narrative exchange, and collective reflection among participants. This perspective positions listening circles not merely as a participatory technique but as a method for collaboratively producing knowledge in context-sensitive and ethically grounded ways.

The aim of this paper is to conceptualise listening circles as a rigorous qualitative data collection strategy for community-informed business and management research. It presents a methodological framework for designing and implementing listening circles and discusses their potential contributions to organisational research, strategy development, and curriculum innovation. By reframing listening circles as a research method rather than a purely engagement-oriented practice, the paper contributes to ongoing debates about methodological innovation, reflexivity, and ethical research practice in business and management studies. This paper thus positions listening circles not merely as a participatory technique but as a dialogic epistemological approach to qualitative inquiry in business and management research.

2. Qualitative Research in Business and Management

2.1 Traditional Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research has become an established approach in business and management studies, particularly in areas such as leadership, organisational culture, strategy development, and organisational change. Common qualitative methods include semi-structured interviews, focus groups, case studies, and ethnographic approaches (Maree, 2025). These methods enable researchers to explore meanings, perceptions, and experiences in ways that quantitative approaches cannot easily capture.

Semi-structured interviews remain among the most widely used qualitative data collection methods in business research (Quinlan, Babin, Carr et al., 2015). Interviews offer flexibility, allowing participants to elaborate on their experiences while still enabling the researcher to guide the conversation around specific themes. However, interviews remain largely researcher-driven interactions, with the researcher determining both the questions and the structure of the conversation.

Focus groups are another commonly used qualitative method. They enable interaction among participants and allow the researcher to observe how opinions and experiences are negotiated within a group setting. They are particularly useful for exploring shared experiences and collective perceptions. However, focus groups typically remain structured around predetermined questions and moderated discussion, which may limit the emergence of unexpected insights (Schutte & De Beer, 2025). Although these methods have proven valuable, they may be less effective for understanding collective sense-making, shared narratives, and contextual knowledge. In such contexts, methods that emphasise dialogue and listening rather than questioning may yield deeper insight.

2.2 Focus Groups and Listening Circles

Listening circles share some similarities with focus groups but differ in important respects. Both methods involve small groups of participants and rely on participant interactions as data sources (Smallwood et al., 2024). However, the underlying logic of the two approaches differs substantially. Listening circles offer a powerful alternative to focus groups in social sciences and business research by prioritising unstructured storytelling in a

non-judgemental space, allowing participants to share narratives at their own pace rather than responding to predefined questions.

In focus groups, discussion is typically structured around a set of research questions or topics introduced by the moderator. The moderator actively guides the conversation, ensuring that all topics are covered and that participants remain focused on the research objectives (Maree, 2025). Participants primarily respond to the moderator's questions and comments.

Listening circles, by contrast, are structured around the principles of dialogic listening and narrative sharing. Participants are encouraged to share experiences on their own terms, with minimal facilitator interruption or redirection (Ardoin et al., 2022). The facilitator's role is not to steer discussion towards predetermined answers but to create a structured environment in which participants can listen to one another and reflect collectively. Listening circles foster deeper, more authentic insights through open sharing, with participants building on each other's stories in a synergistic way, unlike the moderator-driven structure of focus groups, which can limit depth or encourage groupthink. This methodology excels when the goal is to capture lived experiences, emotions, and collective wisdom through dialogic data generation, without researcher-imposed framing. Table 1 illustrates key differences between focus groups and listening circles.

Table 1: Focus Groups vs Listening Circles

Feature	Focus groups	Listening circles
Structure	Question-driven	Dialogue-driven
Moderator role	Active direction	Facilitative listening
Participant role	Respondent	Co-constructors of knowledge
Knowledge produced	Opinions and attitudes	Narratives and lived experiences
Power relations	Researcher-centered	Balanced with a focus on participants
Data type	Thematic responses	Narrative accounts

Listening circles, therefore, represent a shift from researcher-centred data collection toward dialogic knowledge production (Smallwood et al., 2024).

3. Conceptualising Listening Circles

3.1 Origins and Development

Listening circles draw on a range of dialogic and participatory traditions. Similar practices appear in indigenous knowledge-sharing, knowledge development, and learning traditions (Reed, 2021), restorative justice processes (Aseron et al., 2013), and community dialogue initiatives (Lynn & Chase, 2022). These traditions emphasise respectful listening, equal participation, and collective reflection. Listening circles can also serve as mechanisms for including participants' voices in institutional decision-making. By providing structured opportunities for participants to share their experiences and perspectives, listening circles enable researchers and organisations to access experiential knowledge that is often excluded from traditional research methods.

In research contexts, listening circles are closely aligned with participatory and community-based research approaches that position participants as co-creators of knowledge rather than as passive respondents (Ardoin et al., 2022). Participatory research traditions emphasise collaboration, mutual learning, and the production of knowledge that is meaningful to both researchers and participants (Holmes, 2024).

Listening circles extend these traditions by applying structured listening protocols that prompt participants to share experiences, thereby revealing tacit knowledge and contextual insights. The focus on listening distinguishes listening circles from other group-based qualitative techniques and establishes them as a distinct method for generating qualitative data (Ardoin et al., 2022).

In the social sciences, listening circles are valuable for exploring community impacts, such as residents' narratives about how new developments affect social cohesion, cultural practices, or environmental health, highlighting unintended concerns that structured questions might overlook. They are also particularly suited to research on diversity, equity, and belonging, such as students' sense of inclusion, where participants collaboratively generate meaning through shared stories (Hanson, Polik & Cerna, 2017).

Business researchers can use listening circles to gather detailed accounts of client experiences, uncovering subtle pain points or unmet needs in customer journeys that quick feedback from focus groups often overlooks. For project sustainability, they allow stakeholders, such as end-users or affected communities, to voice long-term viability concerns, including ecological or social ripple effects, leading to more comprehensive evaluations (University of Wisconsin, 2015). Beyond data collection, participatory listening processes can enhance stakeholder engagement in organisational initiatives. When individuals are invited to share their perspectives through structured listening, they are more likely to develop a sense of ownership of the outcomes and to support subsequent initiatives emerging from the research process.

3.2 Core Principles of Listening Circles

Listening circles are characterised by several core principles that distinguish them from other qualitative research methods (Ardoin et al., 2022; Chiba, 2024; Smallwood et al., 2024; Sved et al., 2023), including:

3.2.1 Structured Listening

Listening circles are organised to provide structured opportunities for participants to speak and listen. Participants typically speak in turn, ensuring that all voices are heard and that dominant individuals do not monopolise the discussion. Structured listening fosters more balanced interaction and increases the likelihood that quieter participants will contribute.

3.2.2 Narrative Sharing

Participants are encouraged to share personal experiences rather than abstract opinions. Narrative accounts illustrate how individuals interpret their experiences and how meaning is constructed within organisational and community settings.

3.2.3 Collective Reflection

Listening circles emphasise reflection on shared experiences. Participants respond not only to the facilitator but also to each other, enabling collective sense-making.

3.2.4 Reduced Hierarchy

Listening circles aim to reduce hierarchical distinctions between participants and researchers. The facilitator adopts a listening role rather than an authoritative one, fostering a climate of trust and openness.

3.2.5 Ethical Reciprocity

Listening circles recognise participants as contributors to knowledge production rather than merely as data sources. Participants benefit from the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and to learn from others in the group.

3.2.6 Rigour and Trustworthiness

As with other qualitative research methods, maintaining rigour in listening circle research requires careful attention to methodological transparency and data analysis. Credibility can be strengthened through systematic documentation of discussions, verbatim transcription of narratives, and the use of thematic or narrative analysis. Reflexive practice is also vital, as researchers must remain mindful of their role in shaping the listening environment and interpreting the data.

4. Listening Circles as Research Design

4.1 Suitable Research Questions

Listening circles are particularly well suited to research questions that involve lived experience, organisational processes, and shared meaning-making (Sved et al., 2023). Examples include research on organisational culture, leadership experiences, organisational change, and stakeholder engagement.

It can be particularly valuable in research contexts where participants possess experiential knowledge that is difficult to capture through structured interviews or questionnaires. Primary data collection methods that

involve direct engagement with communities can uncover issues and perspectives often missing from secondary data sources. Directly involving participants in the research process enables researchers to identify locally relevant concerns and contextual dynamics that might otherwise go unnoticed. Listening-based approaches therefore complement existing data sources by filling knowledge gaps and revealing emerging themes within communities. For example, research into workplace transformation, professional identity, or community engagement may benefit from approaches that allow participants to express their experiences in their own words.

Listening circles serve not only as tools for gathering qualitative data but also as catalysts for collective reflection and action. In practice, they often prompt participants to collaboratively identify issues and develop both short- and long-term strategies to enhance organisational or institutional practices. In this way, listening circles bridge the traditional gap between data collection and organisational learning, enabling research processes to inform real-world change (Hanson, Polik & Cerna, 2017).

4.2 Sampling Strategies

Listening circle research typically uses purposive sampling to include participants with relevant experience or knowledge. Participants may be selected to represent stakeholder groups, organisational roles, or community perspectives. Maximum variation sampling may be particularly useful in listening circle research because it enables researchers to capture diverse perspectives within a single dialogic setting (Maree, 2025). Typical listening circles include between six and twelve participants, providing sufficient diversity while keeping interactions manageable.

4.3 Facilitation

Facilitation is central to listening circle research. The facilitator creates a respectful environment, minimises intervention in discussions, and ensures equal opportunities to speak by adhering to agreed protocols. Participants sit in a circle to promote equality and engagement (Smallwood et al., 2024). Structured speaking turns prevent dominance and include quieter members. Guidelines emphasise respect, confidentiality, and the suspension of judgement. The facilitator upholds these protocols and neutrality, avoids influencing the content, and supports open, reflective dialogue through broad prompts. This approach fosters organic narratives and shared understanding. Facilitation protocols may include speaking in turn, no interruptions, respectful listening, and confidentiality agreements. Clear facilitation protocols enhance both the ethical integrity and methodological consistency of listening circle research.

4.4 Data Recording and Documentation

For listening circles to serve as an effective qualitative data collection method, systematic procedures for recording and documenting discussions are crucial. While listening circles focus on narrative sharing and open dialogue, the information generated during these sessions must be captured in ways that facilitate careful analysis and interpretation. The most common method of documentation involves recording the listening circle audio, followed by a verbatim transcription of the discussion. Audio recording allows researchers to capture the richness of participants' narratives and ensures that important nuances, expressions, and interactions are preserved during the documentation process (Quinlan et al., 2015). In addition to recordings, researchers typically take field notes during or immediately after the listening circle to capture contextual observations such as group dynamics, emotional tone, or notable interactions among participants.

Reflective memos are also a vital part of the documentation process. After each listening circle session, the researcher or facilitator may write analytical reflections on emerging themes, methodological observations, and possible interpretations of the discussion. These memos support reflexive practice by helping researchers consider how their perspectives and facilitation style may influence data interpretation. Ethical considerations are vital to documentation. Participants must be informed that discussions will be recorded and kept confidential. Often, agreements prevent comments from being attributed to individuals outside the research, fostering a safe space for open sharing.

Once recorded and transcribed, narratives from listening circles can be analysed using established qualitative data analysis techniques, such as thematic analysis, narrative analysis, or grounded theory approaches (Maree, 2025). Through systematic coding and interpretation, researchers can identify recurring themes, patterns of

meaning, and collective insights emerging from participants' experiences. In this way, listening circles generate rich qualitative data that can be integrated into broader qualitative or mixed-methods research designs.

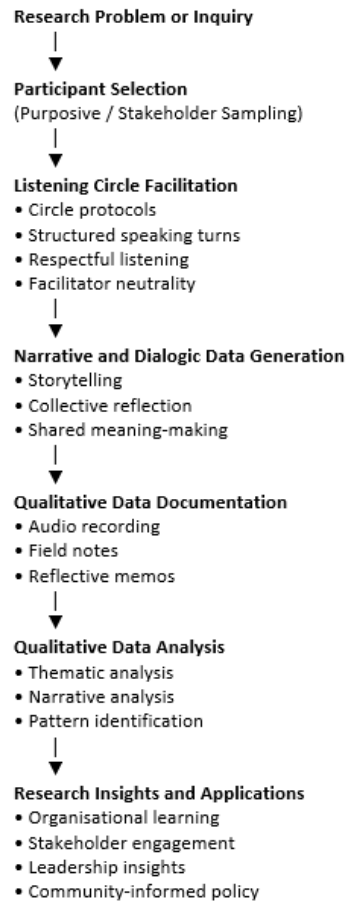


Figure 1: Listening Circles as a Dialogic Qualitative Data Generation Process

5. Applications of Listening Circles in Business and Social Science Research

Listening circles are a flexible qualitative research method applicable across organisational, managerial, and community contexts. They emphasise narrative sharing and dialogue, making them well suited to exploring lived experiences, collective meaning, and subtle dynamics that structured surveys might overlook. The following sections demonstrate how listening circles can enhance research in the business and social sciences.

5.1 Organisational Learning

Listening circles can be powerful tools for organisational learning, enabling employees, managers, or stakeholders to share experiences in a structured yet open environment. In many organisations, formal communication channels often restrict the expression of concerns, insights, or tacit knowledge. Listening circles provide an alternative space for participants to reflect collectively on organisational processes, workplace dynamics, and operational challenges. This method enables exploration of organisational culture, engagement, and experiences of change. They encourage sharing narratives rather than answering preset questions, helping identify patterns that influence behaviour. These insights inform decisions, leadership development, and organisational improvements.

5.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Listening circles enhance stakeholder engagement in research and decision-making, particularly in complex environments involving employees, clients, communities, and partners, thereby influencing sustainability and legitimacy. In business, they capture detailed customer or client experiences, revealing subtle issues or unmet needs that traditional feedback might overlook. They also inform sustainability and project assessments,

enabling stakeholders to share perspectives on long-term impact and viability, yielding deeper insights into social, economic, or environmental outcomes.

5.3 Leadership and Organisational Research

Leadership research often seeks to understand how individuals experience authority, influence, and organisational change. Listening circles offer a valuable method for exploring these dynamics, enabling participants to reflect collectively on leadership practices and organisational relationships. By sharing personal stories, participants can explain how leadership behaviours are perceived and experienced in organisations. Listening circles can be used to examine topics such as leadership identity, workplace trust, organisational change, and employee empowerment. Because participants respond not only to the facilitator but also to each other's experiences, this method can reveal collective patterns in how leadership is understood and enacted within specific organisational contexts.

5.4 Community-Informed Policy and Social Research

Listening circles are effective for research into community perspectives affected by policies or development projects. They allow residents, stakeholders, and community representatives to share stories about the impacts of policy on daily life. These circles can explore responses to urban development, infrastructure, or social interventions, highlighting issues such as social cohesion, environmental, or cultural impacts that structured methods might miss. They are also useful in diversity and inclusion studies, helping participants collaboratively build understanding of how practices influence experiences.

6. Discussion: Implications for Social Sciences and Business Research

The previous sections have conceptualised listening circles as a structured qualitative data collection method and described their design, facilitation, and potential applications in organisational and social science research. The discussion now examines the broader methodological implications of the approach for contemporary research practice.

6.1 Moving Beyond Extractive Research Approaches

Traditional social science research is often criticised for its extractive nature, in which researchers collect data without fostering mutual engagement. They usually control the process, set the questions, and interpret responses, viewing participants mainly as data sources. Listening circles challenge this by prioritising listening over question-driven data collection (Sved et al., 2023). They allow participants to share experiences freely, enabling narratives to emerge naturally and revealing insights that structured methods may miss. This shift fosters more dialogic research, transforming the process into a collaborative space for knowledge creation through interaction and reflection.

6.2 Dialogic Knowledge Production

Listening circles facilitate dialogic knowledge creation through interactions in which participants listen, respond, and reflect on shared experiences. This process enables building on each other's narratives, fostering collective insights beyond those from individual interviews. Recognising similarities or differences prompts deeper reflection, enriching the data. Methodologically, they align with interpretivist views that regard knowledge as socially constructed through interaction, thereby providing opportunities to observe the collective interpretation of reality (Lepore et al., 2024).

6.3 Surfacing Tacit and Experiential Knowledge

Listening circles effectively surface tacit knowledge or personal understandings embedded in experience that are difficult to articulate. Unlike direct questioning, they facilitate narrative sharing, revealing stories and reflections that expose assumptions about organisational processes, relationships, and culture. For researchers, especially in business and management, they offer a method for accessing complex, lived organisational experiences related to culture, leadership, or stakeholder engagement.

6.4 Reducing Researcher – Participant Hierarchies

Listening circles help reduce the researcher-participant hierarchy (Lepore et al., 2024). Unlike traditional interviews, where the researcher holds authority, this method creates a shared space in which participants engage with one another and the facilitator, who primarily ensures respectful listening rather than steering the conversation. This promotes a more equitable, ethical, and participatory research process, enabling participants to share their experiences openly.

6.5 Connections to Participatory and Reflexive Research Traditions

Listening circles' methodological traits align with participatory research, emphasising collaboration, dialogue, and shared knowledge. They actively involve participants, enhancing relevance and ethical practice. These circles also promote reflexivity, as researchers must continually consider their influence on dialogue and interpretation (Maree, 2025). Overall, they support social science efforts to balance rigorous analysis with ethical and contextual sensitivity.

6.6 Methodological Implications

Taken together, these qualities indicate that listening circles are more than an alternative qualitative data collection method. They offer a methodological approach that redefines the relationship between researcher, participant, and the production of knowledge. By emphasising listening, dialogue, and narrative sharing, listening circles broaden the methodological options available to researchers seeking to understand complex organisational and social phenomena. They facilitate the collection of rich qualitative data while promoting ethical engagement with participants and communities. Consequently, listening circles show particular promise for research settings where lived experience, collective sense-making, and stakeholder perspectives are vital to understanding the phenomenon under study.

7. Limitations

While listening circles offer a valuable method for capturing narrative and experiential data, several limitations should be acknowledged. As with other qualitative research methods, the effectiveness of this technique depends heavily on the quality of facilitation and the dynamics within the group.

One potential limitation concerns the influence of group dynamics. Because listening circles involve interaction among participants, dominant personalities may steer the discussion or shape others' responses, even when structured speaking protocols are in place. Participants may also moderate their contributions due to social desirability or concerns about how others in the group might interpret their comments. Careful facilitation and clear listening guidelines are therefore essential to ensure balanced participation.

A second limitation concerns the methodological demands of facilitation. Listening circles require facilitators skilled not only in qualitative research practices but also in managing dialogue, maintaining neutrality, and fostering a safe conversational environment. Inexperienced facilitation may inadvertently influence the discussion or restrict the depth of participants' reflection.

Another consideration is the analytical challenges associated with narrative data. Listening circles often generate large volumes of rich qualitative data, which require careful transcription, coding, and interpretation. The interpretive nature of qualitative analysis means that researchers must remain reflexive about their assumptions and analytical decisions when identifying themes and patterns in the data.

Finally, as with most qualitative research methods, findings from listening circles are context-dependent and may not be statistically generalisable. The aim of listening circles is not to produce universally applicable results but to gain deep insights into specific organisational, social, or community contexts. Therefore, researchers must clearly define the scope and transferability of their findings.

Recognising these limitations is important for situating listening circles appropriately within the broader landscape of qualitative research methods. When carefully designed and facilitated, listening circles remain a valuable means of generating meaningful insights into complex organisational and social phenomena.

8. Conclusion

This paper has examined listening circles as a qualitative data collection strategy for community-informed business and social science research. Drawing on participatory and dialogic research traditions, the paper conceptualised listening circles as a method that emphasises structured listening, narrative sharing, and collective reflection. Unlike traditional extractive research approaches, listening circles foster a research environment in which participants are encouraged to articulate their experiences in their own words, enabling the emergence of rich, contextually grounded insights.

The discussion showed that listening circles can contribute to various areas of current research practice. By facilitating dialogic knowledge production, they enable researchers to observe how participants collectively interpret organisational and social realities. The method is particularly useful for revealing tacit knowledge embedded in lived experience and for diminishing hierarchical distinctions between researchers and participants. These features align listening circles with broader movements in qualitative research towards participatory, reflexive, and ethically engaged practices.

The paper further emphasised the potential uses of listening circles in organisational learning, stakeholder engagement, leadership research, and community-informed policy development. In these settings, listening circles can serve not only as tools for gathering qualitative data but also as spaces for reflection that enhance organisational learning and strategic decision-making.

Although listening circles pose methodological challenges, such as the demands of facilitation and the interpretive aspects of qualitative analysis, they nonetheless offer a valuable addition to the methodological toolkit of business and social science researchers. As organisations and communities face increasingly complex challenges, research methods that emphasise listening, dialogue, and contextual understanding become ever more important.

By redefining listening circles as a rigorous qualitative research method rather than merely an engagement practice, this paper advances ongoing debates about methodological innovation in qualitative research. Future research could build on this conceptual foundation by applying listening circles in empirical studies across diverse organisational and community settings, further examining their potential to generate meaningful, socially responsive knowledge.

Listening circles mark a shift from extractive data collection to dialogic data generation, offering social science and business researchers a method for capturing the complexity, context, and lived experience that shape contemporary organisational and community realities.

Ethics Declaration

No ethical clearance was needed.

AI Declaration

Elicit.ai was used to source suitable journal articles, and ChatGPT was used to assist with brainstorming and the article's structure. Grammarly did the language editing.

References

- Ardoin, M.N., Gould, R.K., Wojcik, D. et al. (2022) Community listening sessions: an approach for facilitating collective reflection on environmental learning and behavior in everyday life. *Ecosystems and People*, 18(1), 469-477. doi:10.1080/263959.2022.2101531
- Aseron, J., Greymorning, S.N., Miller, A. et al. (2013) Cultural Safety Circles and Indigenous Peoples Perspectives: Inclusive Practices for Participation in Higher Education. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER)*, 6(4), 409-416. doi.org/10.19030/cier.v6i4.8109
- Chapman, M. (2020) Social anthropology and business studies: some considerations of method, in Gellner, D., and Hirsch, E. (2020) *Inside Organizations*. Routledge, London.
- Chiba, J. (2024) Exploring the synergies between intervention research and engaged research in South Africa. *African Journal of Higher Education Community Engagement*, 1(2), 75-98. doi:10.21504/ajhece.v1i2.2495
- Hanson, T., Polik, J and Cerna, R. (2017) Short-term impacts of student listening circles on student perceptions of school climate and of their own competencies. Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, WestEd.
- Holmes, T. (2024) Learning Circles, Underpinned by Dadirri. *Field Methods*, 36(3), 266-273. doi:10.1177/1525822X231176167

- Lepore, W., Hall, B.L. and Tandon, R. (2024) *Bridging Knowledge Cultures: Rebalancing Power in the Co-Construction of Knowledge*. Brill, Leiden.
- Lynn, V. and Chase, A.T. (2023) Circle Pedagogy in Criminal Justice Education at a PWI: A Student/Faculty Collaborative Autoethnography. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 34(4), 553–572. doi.org/10.1080/10511253.2022.2130382
- Maree, K. (ed.) (2025) *First steps in research*. Van Schaik, Cape Town.
- Reed, T. (2021) A critical review of the Native American Tradition of Circle Practices, in R. Throne (Ed.), *Indigenous Research of Land, Self, and Spirit* (pp. 132-152). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-3729-9.ch009>
- Schutte, F. and De Beer, E. (2025) Criteria for recognising frameworks as scholarly contributions in doctoral research. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 22(2), 24-47. doi:10.35683/jcm25-002.319
- Smallwood, S., Patterson, K., Kaufmann, K. et al. (2024) Toward a beloved community: facilitated group listening as a tool for community development and civic engagement. *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*, 16(2). doi:10.54656/ices.v16i2.513
- Sved, M., Latham, B., Bateman, L. et al. (2023) Hearing what matters: a case study of meaningful community engagement as a model to inform wellbeing initiatives. *Public Health Research & Practice*, 33(2): e: 3322316. doi:10.17061/phrp3322316
- Quinlan, C., Babib, B., Carr, J. et al. (2015) *Business Research Methods*. Cengage, Hampshire.
- University of Wisconsin (2015) Listening to the community's input: A guide to primary data collection.
- Van Eeden, E.S., Eloff, I. and Dippenaar, H. (eds.) (2022) *Community Engagement Research in South Africa*. Van Schaik, Cape Town.