

/ Global ideas against racism: From a journey of ideas to a digital future workshop

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Abstract

Within the framework of the project “Global ideas against racism,” we applied the method of the future workshop to anti-racism work. The method includes a three-step process of problem analysis, utopia development, and the concretization of an implementation plan. In particular, the work with utopias can be interpreted as progressive as it generates knowledge that is more detached from expectations and ordinary thought patterns. By applying it in our project, we have broken new ground in the field of anti-racism work while at the same time upscaled the method so that it works on a more global level. In addition, we recognized and critically reflected on the power relations that exist within academic knowledge production and have therefore subsequently handed the power over to the participants. The digital implementation brought the advantage of including a more extensive range of participants and better access facilitation. Going forward, we recommend a hybrid form for future applications, including on-site workshops. The method application in the field of anti-racism engagements proved to be particularly fruitful, resulting in four concrete implementation projects.

Keywords: Anti-Racism; Future Workshop; Participatory Approach; Global Perspectives; Digital Intervention

Globale Ideen gegen Rassismus: Von der Ideenreise zur digitalen Zukunftswerkstatt

Zusammenfassung

Im Rahmen des Projekts „Global ideas against racism“ haben wir die Methode der Zukunftswerkstatt in das Feld der Antirassismuserbeit übertragen. Die Methode umfasst einen dreistufigen Prozess der Problemanalyse, Utopie-Entwicklung und der Konkretisierung eines Umsetzungsplans. Zu den drei Innovationen dieses Projekts gehören die Anwendung dieser Methoden in einem neuen Arbeitsbereich, die globale Ausrichtung und der Ansatz einer egalitären, reflexiven Wissensproduktion. In dieser Forschung reflektieren wir kritisch die Machtverhältnisse in der akademischen Wissensproduktion über Rassismus und geben als Konsequenz die Deutungsmacht an die Teilnehmer*innen ab. Dabei geht es um die Zusammenstellung verschiedener Problemfelder innerhalb des Phänomens Rassismus, die nicht gegeneinander ausgespielt werden, sondern parallel zueinanderstehen. Dies kann als eine kollektive Strategie des Verständnisses der verschiedenen Formen von Rassismen interpretiert werden. Zusammenfassend erwies sich die Anwendung der Methode als besonders fruchtbar, vor allem in der hybriden Anwendung, die auch Workshops vor Ort einschließt.

Zusammenfassung: Antirassismus; Zukunftswerkstatt; Partizipation; Global; Digitale Intervention



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1. Introduction

This article presents findings from an interregional project consisting of a series of workshops in the field of participatory anti-racism work. The initial idea was to collect knowledge in an open-ended process starting first at one place before developing it further in other locations. Such a journey of ideas was intended to avoid a merely regional production of knowledge, precisely because racism is a global problem. By choosing this method, we followed our common understanding as a project team that we do not want to act as experts on anti-racist interventions, but rather create a space for the participants. In this space, we envisioned that participants be able to share their experiences of racism, express their opinions, and exchange their ideas for racial justice with people in other regions of the world. In other words, participants with experiences of racism and racial discrimination are experts in their own experiences as they know the impacts of racial injustice on individuals or communities and will therefore be better placed to share these experiences.

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, our original plan unfortunately could not be pursued, so we shifted the project to the digital realm where we tried as much as possible to attract a globally distributed audience. Over the course of a year, we held four workshops based on the concept of a “future workshop.” The series included an introductory workshop, a critique, a fantasy and an implementation phase. At the end of the four workshops, an action plan was formulated that included transformative elements for social change. As the project team, we prepared and followed up on the workshops, analyzed the empirical findings and critically reflected on the workshop process. Our role during the workshops was to moderate and facilitate the discussions, as well as structure the process based on the methods of the future workshop.

A special feature of this future workshop was that the participants were encouraged to discuss problems and utopias, while also proposing their views on potential solutions in their own words. This was also all written down by them in order for there to be a documentation of the results. This created a certain ownership for the participants in the knowledge production process, and also meant that this knowledge was neither changed nor censored by the project team. In this way, we pursued a participatory approach that critically incorporated our positionalities and entanglements with power relations in academia by enabling

a more egalitarian form of knowledge production. Furthermore, the fantasy phase in particular was a rather unusual component of a workshop, which first and foremost generated creative ideas and overcame impossibility constructs as well as constraints. With the focus on anti-racism work, we have also applied this method in a previously untested problem area.

In this project we understood racism to be a global phenomenon that is established in a relational context. In this relationship, processes of exploitation, devaluation, disadvantage, discrimination, exclusion, and violation occur based on the social construction of “race” (see for example Lentin 2008; Moody-Adams 2005; van Dijk 2021). Since definitions of racism are often the product of an academic categorization, in this project we wanted to return the power of definition to civil society actors who are not purely academic or institutionally organized. We therefore did not want to define it from a power perspective viewed from above. Through this approach, racism and its problematic contents could be analyzed by the workshop participants. Likewise, collective strategies for racial justice and social change should not be determined by us researchers, but rather the power of interpretation should again be placed in the hands of the participants. In doing so with this project, we pursued a bottom-up approach of knowledge production that recognized asymmetrical power relations and used our privileges to offer a space for this from a perspective of global solidarity. In short, we wanted to listen and initiate a shared learning and transformation process as well as to critically reflect on our own positionalities and entanglements in power relations within academia.

In the contemporary historical context of our project, two events in particular should be highlighted. First, due to the global pandemic of COVID-19, anti-Asian, anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-Muslim, and anti-Semitic racism have been cited as major drivers of an increased risk of structural racism in the Global North (Gover et al. 2020; Ho 2021; Lee/Johnstone 2021; Sabatello et al. 2021; Laurencin/Walker 2020). Racism is not a new phenomenon, but it has been intensified within this context. Second, worldwide outrage was widespread following the killing of George Floyd in the USA in May 2020. As a result, the Black Lives Matter movement organized large demonstrations in many places around the world and brought the issue of anti-racism more into the focus of social debate. Both historical events underline the ongoing need for anti-racist intervention.

In our project, the attribute *global* should not be understood merely as a buzzword, one which has been booming in academic engagements in recent decades. It is important for us to reflect global societal conditions regarding social inequalities, for example along the structural categories of class, ethnicity, gender, or race. At the same time, the chosen workshop format can never achieve a complete representation of global society, as this already starts when it is defined adequately. In a digital format in particular, a global project is subject to the limitations of impossible simultaneity due to different time zones. People coming together from different regions of the world can never participate at the same time. Nonetheless, we are concerned with raising awareness on multiple perspectives combined with geographic scope and attempt to do so via the best possible approximation. In addition to the global ideation, the project team composition is also at least an interregional one, as we are composed of researchers from German, Korean, and Japanese universities with different backgrounds in the disciplines of media studies, migration studies, pedagogy, and political sociology, and we know each other via a civil society exchange program that covers topics such as identity, migration, populism, or social change. Since 2012, the program has been held under the title “Exchange Program for Regional Integration in East Asia and Europe” (EPRIE), rotating in one of the two regions (EPRIE 2021). This program is organized by the Berlin-based non-governmental organization Korea Verband with support from the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Büro Japan. As alumni of this exchange program, we see ourselves as being in privileged positions in society, which we were keen to put to use here. We are not interested in framing singular understandings of those affected by multiple forms of racism as the “other” and wanting to “save” them, as highlighted by Russo (2018) as the “savior” complex. Experiences of racism are some of the everyday lived realities within much larger structural discrimination practices for three of our team members, while one is positioned as white in society.

This introduction closes with a brief overview while the remaining article is structured in four sections. Following the introduction, there is a description of the methodological approach, which is based on the future workshop method. Then the findings from the various workshops are presented in the results section. Finally, the participants, the method, and the results are discussed, and an outlook is illustrated.

2. Methodology

This project builds on the concept of the future workshop put forward by futurologist Robert Jungk (Jungk 1978; Jungk/Müllert 1981; Dator 1993). Jungk conceptualized a practical method to develop new ideas in complex problem areas and thus pursued a bottom-up approach to civil society participation in processes of social change. He described a five-stage model, of which we will focus on the reporting of the three elementary phases below (critique, fantasy, and implementation), since the other two are the preparation phase and the actual implementation of the ideas. In terms of content, the three main phases are of particular importance because this is where direct collaboration with the participants takes place (Troxler/Kuhnt 2007). Moreover, we added an introductory workshop to critically reflect on the method with the participants in advance. Through this form of workshop co-design, our approach can also be described as transdisciplinary. With open questions, we sought to find out the advantages and disadvantages of the method. We were also interested in particular strengths as well as in problematic or missing aspects. The participants confirmed the potential of the method, but also highlighted special considerations regarding the widest possible access as well as a safe setting in the digital realm. Furthermore, we inquired about possibilities, and how we could address and improve participation in our project. Finally, we asked about existing anti-racism projects that work in a similar or complementary way so that we could learn from them. A large number of projects came to light but none of them could be interpreted as the same as a future workshop. The implementation of the ideas is beyond the scope of this project, which we will discuss later in the report and present as an outlook for future projects. To sum up, our adopted version of the future workshop involves three phases: first eliciting the problematic situation, then inventing creative utopias, and finally designing a concrete implementation plan. Thematically, the use of this method is in the tradition of citizens’ initiatives, the environmental movement, and education for sustainable development (Apel 2004). Following previous work in the context of social change (Albers/Broux 1999; Alminde/Warming 2020), we transferred the method to the field of anti-racism work and integrated this into the three phases as follows. In all three phases we approached the participants with open-ended questions as a stimulus.

2.1 The three phases

During the critique phase we asked the workshop participants about their understanding of racism. The focus was on collecting their perspectives about the racist situations they currently perceive, which forms of racism they know, and what the consequences are of racism. Our interest was on both the societal and the individual level. In line with research ethics, we did not actively ask participants about their personal experiences with racism because we did not want to trigger them in any way. In the fantasy phase, the aim was to free oneself from constraints or impossibility constructs and, building on this, to stimulate a creative process of ideas. Participants were asked to think without any restraints about how society should look in the future with regard to racism. What interested us here was what their social utopias would look like in an anti-racist society.

Finally, the implementation phase served as a bridge between the first two phases—i.e., how do we get from critique to utopia? We focused on concrete practical steps, which were then formulated as an action plan. The central question was: Who does what, when, and how? These questions were addressed within four areas: objectives, actors, resources, and time frame. At the beginning of each workshop, the overall project, the results to date as well as the workshop rules were presented and discussed. It was pointed out that the organizers of the workshops did not pretend to be experts in this area, rather it was the participants who were the experts. The role of the project team was first and foremost to facilitate the workshop and outline the methods, such as the separation of the three phases so that the focus was either on problems, utopias, or implementations. Initially, a very broad start thematically was proposed so that the concretization of the contributions could increase over the course of a workshop. In each session, a high quantity of contributions was initially suggested, but this was later narrowed down as choices. Participants were allowed to take ideas from other participants, develop them further, combine them, and it was explicitly stated that there would be no intellectual property over ideas in this format. Attempts were made to break down all hierarchies, such as those based on social role attributions, through emphasis, and all participants were included as equals. If a few of the participants had an obvious predominance during discussions the room was proactively opened to those who had not yet said anything or had said only a little.

Criticism was only allowed at the factual level, and it was already understood in advance that no persons, especially those present, were to be criticized. All contributions were formulated by the participants themselves and transmitted to everyone else either in the Zoom chat function or via a Miro platform. The formation of clusters was also done by the participants themselves.

2.2 From a journey of ideas to a digital future workshop

Within this methodological section, the original journey of ideas will be briefly presented and connected with the global orientation of the project. The attribute *global* is intended to describe as comprehensive a geographical participant group as possible. The idea behind this is that knowledge, especially about racism, gains in quality when more world-regional perspectives are included. This is not an absolute assumption, but a tendency as some knowledge is locally centered. Above all, it is about a provincialization of Europe (Chakrabarty 2000), in which Eurocentric concepts are not recognized as universal. On the contrary, it is about questioning seemingly universal assumptions in their situatedness and including unheard voices. Before the shift to the digital, the project members worked out a list of partner universities at each of which a future workshop would have taken place. The idea was to take the results from one workshop to the next and integrate them there, so that knowledge from different regions of the world would build on each other. In order to maintain the global orientation online, the individual workshops were advertised worldwide. Using the Internet enables a thoroughly broad audience, but at the same time, structural inequalities such as access to an online platform or more generally, to electricity, are very unevenly distributed. This problem could have been countered with on-site workshops but might have resulted in a smaller number of participants, and due to the pandemic, implementation on-site was ultimately not possible anyway. The workshop series took place online from November 2020 to November 2021 using Zoom software. Each workshop lasted 90 minutes, in some cases slightly exceeding the time frame. Participation was free of charge, and we used various platforms to promote each event including email lists, websites, social media, announcements at our universities, and via civil society cooperation networks.

This qualitative social research is based on an intervention in the form of workshops so that a comparison can be made with our expectations prior to imple-

mentation. For this purpose, the expectations, such as limitations, are presented in this section, and are later compared with the actual conditions in the discussion section. The expectations include aspects of participation, the procedure, the shift to digital, the content of the debates, as well as the results. Regarding the number of participants, we did not specify an exact group size, but rather wanted to achieve a working atmosphere that would enable a discussion involving as many participants as possible. We also prepared the division into subgroups if this atmosphere could no longer be achieved in one group. In addition to a preferably global-geographical inclusion of perspectives, we also aimed at an egalitarian participant structure in other areas. The starting point for this were considerations along social power relations. For example, we intended a participation based on people with and without an academic background, people with and without experience of racism, as well as people of different genders.

Despite a predominantly changing group of participants, a high degree of differing perspectives remained constant. This was due to the participants having a wide variety of experiences of racism, for example, being read as African, Asian, or Latino. At the same time, about a quarter of the participants were read as white, so they reported no experiences of racism. About half of the participants already reported experiences from anti-racism work, so motivations such as the desire to exchange experiences, learn from each other, support, and network became apparent. The large number of strongly contrasting perspectives also arose because there was no selection procedure for participation, and ultimately everyone could register for the workshops. In addition, a sensitive use of inclusive language in terms of broad comprehensibility, but also in terms of creating “safer spaces” for people with experience of racism, was of particular importance. In our invitation text, we explicitly invited people with experience of racism, as we pursue a participatory and emancipatory approach in our project. Based on this, non-academic people were also invited in order to include a broader, more egalitarian field of participants in advance.

Although anti-racist work can be addressed in all age groups, with our workshop project we sought to address a younger target group. This includes, for example, young adults, students, young professionals, or people who are in their 20s or 30s. This age group was not explicitly advertised, but we nevertheless assumed a focus on it, with the field of work, the area of the digital, the workshop method, and our organizational

embedding leading us to this conclusion. We were aware that with an open call for participation, we could only cover a limited, more privileged group of participants. In addition, we expected a bias in terms of where we organizers are localized, so more participants from East Asia and Europe received our invitations and ultimately made up the bulk of participants. Since we did not collect data on socioeconomic conditions, we are not able to make robust statements on this. However, there was an expectation that this would be a more academic, middle-class milieu, as participants would need to contribute free time to this intervention, and they might already have a basic interest in such workshop formats.

Regarding the procedure, the long breaks of three to four months between the different workshop phases were already problematized during our introductory workshop. We decided on this period mainly for organizational as well as stress-related reasons. The latter point is based on our teaching experiences from the first digital semesters during the COVID-19 pandemic that the attention span and curiosity in the digital area is significantly lower. We decided that anti-racism work should not be squeezed into short time frames. This was especially important to us as we wanted to create a working environment that was as non-coercive as possible. The schedule is also discussed in the research literature, and the method is recommended as a weekend or a five-day workshop (Apel 2004: 5). However, it is worth noting that this refers to on-site seminars. With the shift to the digital, we are breaking new ground that has not yet been theoretically and empirically evaluated. Amid this shift on the one hand, a much more diverse group of participants and, on the other hand, a much higher drop-out and participant fluctuation between phases were expected.

Participant numbers were highest at the beginning of the series (N=42) and remained at a steady level thereafter (N=17, 25, 20). The voluntary nature of participation and the open application process resulted in a very high degree of inter-mixing: Throughout all events, only the project team and four participants attended. Three other participants took part in two workshops. With regard to digital implementation, we saw a phenomenon in our workshops that is discussed as “Zoom fatigue” in research literature (Bailenson 2021). This may explain the comparatively high number of participants at the beginning, as digital formats seemed new and interesting, while interest in them declined as the COVID-19 pandemic progressed.

We did not have any expectations with regard to the content of the discussions but were more concerned that people with misanthropic opinions would mingle with the field of participants or that the online workshops would be disrupted or hacked by such people. The entire project team was on high alert to this during all phases and ready to intervene immediately if such things occurred. In the case of extended periods of silence during the discussion part of the workshops, we had agreed that we, as moderators, could provide examples of ideas. However, quiet reflection periods were also explicitly possible and were not designed to be interrupted hastily.

With this method choice, a limitation had already been made and it was one which would also have an impact on the results. The future workshop is results-oriented and leads to an action plan in which the ideas are formulated more precisely and in a way that can be implemented. This limits the knowledge production process since there is little room for abstractness from the third phase onward. Complex problems are thus inevitably broken down into partial aspects. Thus, we expected a view of anti-racism in which individual themes are highlighted like spotlights. Since we worked on our assumption that all participants are experts in their own individual experiences, we created a knowledge production process that builds on itself and is therefore inherently valid. This is not about comparability, quantification, or hierarchization, but about knowledge that is to be recognized as equal to others in the field of anti-racism work.

From a methodological point of view, we took a specific path with this project since we are pursuing participatory knowledge production according to principles of empowering and solidarity-based action. Thus, we positioned ourselves in a critical social science by means of a bottom-up approach (von Unger 2014). Based on this, the analysis of the participants' workshop contributions is limited to the description of the contents instead of evaluations, relevance descriptions, or popularity attributions. Widely used analysis methods for workshops or forms of group communication are, for example, content analysis (Mayring 2000; 2007) or the documentary method (Bohnsack 2014), but we want to interpret neither a *modus operandi*, a motivational relevance, nor an objective meaning from the content. As a transparent and reflexive approach, we would however like to list the main questions that served us as an interpretive framework for the workshop series. On the level of content, we are interested

in the collection of different perspectives on the following questions: What problem situations exist in the field of racism? What visions are there with regard to the previously highlighted problems? Which means of implementation are needed to get from the problematic situations to the visions? Furthermore, at the action level, we are interested in questions that follow on from the above expectations for the workshops: Which characteristics of the participants have an influence on the workshop? How is the process to be evaluated and what improvements can be derived from it? What is the impact of the switch to digital? The questions regarding content are dealt with in the results section, the questions concerning action in the discussion. With the latter, we discuss recommendations for future workshop organizers.

3. Results

In this section, the results of the individual workshop phases are presented. The main result of the workshop series might be seen in the form of an action plan at the end of the last session, which would then conclude the knowledge production process. However, each individual phase already produced very elaborate results, and the presentation is intentionally reproduced in the wording used by the participants. For better readability, we have written the content in this article in continuous text without pseudonymized references. At the same time, we want to emphasize that these are the exact term choices of the participants, which we have adopted without paraphrasing. With the mere reproduction of content instead of contextualization or comparisons, we want to break with the power monopoly of academia. The content contributed by the participants stands for itself without requiring any further analysis. This approach can be irritating for academically educated people, but it is especially meant to emphasize the plurality of knowledge beyond academia. In doing so, we do not claim to have the best possible approach to the subject matter, but rather expand the spectrum to include civil society knowledge without assuming a position of supremacy over the validity of knowledge.

During the critique phase, an intensive discussion took place covering various problem areas within racism. Three topics were repeatedly brought up in the discussion, which we would say were the most discussed. First, an intermixture or ignorance toward knowledge about racism was debated. This involved the distinction between individual fear and structural

racism as well as the observation that different forms of racism are brought into competition with each other. This is due to different perceptions of racism, from which inherent problems result. For example, the phenomenon of reversed racism was discussed, in which anti-white racism is proclaimed as a counterstrategy to racist behavior. Different perceptions of racism can also emerge within partnerships and be exacerbated by language barriers. This opened up questions of translation and explanation about racism and behavioral insecurities regarding white allyship.

Second, the topic of fear was named recurrently as an underlying problem. This can take the form of (transgenerational) trauma, anger, or stress. On several occasions, it was emphasized how discrimination hurts and leaves a feeling of vulnerability and fragility. Third, directly following the preceding theme, the strategy of gaslighting was discussed. Since experiences of racism are not visible in most cases, this is used as a counterstrategy to deny what many BIPoC experience and feel. The experience of racism is subsequently disbelieved by members of the dominant society who are part of the racist structure or those from whom the racism originates. In this process, statements are made such as “that cannot be true” or “you have probably understood it incorrectly.” Processes of physical distancing can also result from this, so that those affected are also left alone spatially.

Several other aspects were also addressed, which are briefly named below. These include the intersections of different systems of oppression (gender was mentioned here as an example) and different descriptions of racism as questions of identity or ethnicity. In the political field, the dehumanization by politicians as well as a lack of political representation were named. On a more individual level, the participants spoke about the segregation of friends, permanent microaggressions as devaluation, the focus of action on those who have been discriminated against instead of those who discriminate, forms of solidarity and standing together, and differing privileges when speaking about racism. In addition, the absence of an embedding of historical knowledge about racism was problematized. Finally, the participants discussed the issue of white supremacy and white saviorism. The latter was discussed in terms of who is protecting whom and how to make anti-racism work safe. In doing so, the danger of group dynamics and toward non-white activists in the field was pointed out. In summary, several points of criticism were named and discussed. First and foremost

were the topics of knowledge gaps and the struggle for interpretation, individually experienced fear and vulnerability, as well as gaslighting as a denial of experience of racism.

In the second phase, utopias were at the center of the debate and were discussed in a no less varied manner. All topics were debated with equal frequency, which is why the following list should be understood as an equal arrangement. To begin with, more abstract aspects were addressed, which were described with the terms *respect*, *difference*, and *diversity*. Regarding respecting ideas, it was discussed that personal capacity should be cultivated to accept as well as respect things and people. An appreciation of difference is to be based on how people are and not how they should be. The concept of diversity should be understood here in the sense of including other dimensions such as differing talents, backgrounds, or languages. In this context, a change in the idea of diversity from a good-natured act or an optional action to an integral part of the working and living environment is to be achieved. Another utopia includes an active anti-racist policy. Mandatory diversity policies at the parliamentary level were mentioned as an example. The fantasy is that these are not just lip service within mainstream political and academic discourse, but actually implemented and lived policies of social equity. Another utopia in this field was the normality of interethnic marriages, which are proactively promoted by politics. In a similarly implemented way, the myth of reverse racism is said to have been broken down. Here it already becomes clear that some aspects from the critique phase gained their utopian content through a reversal and ultimate annulment. This is also evident in the field of education. Thus, the participants wished for an implemented and functioning anti-racism educational program, for example by teaching appropriate terminologies and definitions in the field of racism such as structural racism or white supremacy. It should also be mandatory to include in school textbooks historical events that can be empirically proven like slavery, colonialism, and legacies of the colonial past.

In addition, social justice issues were addressed, such as access to affordable housing, a basic income for all, or wealth redistribution extended through reparation payments. Ownership issues were also mentioned such as land restitution to indigenous populations. These aspects are part of systemic thinking, which were further thought about in the workshop and related to the abolition of passports and prisons. The latter in

particular was imagined as a system of local community protection. Finally, it was suggested that groups are composed without the inclusion of nationality attributions. In summary, the utopia phase yielded a spectrum of very abstract to very concrete fantasies of an anti-racist society. The plurality of ideas on the social, political, and educational levels is striking.

The third phase was a merging of the critique with the utopia. In this workshop all ideas were brought together, and a selection was made due to the abundance of aforementioned topics. Therefore, the decision was left to the participants to extract the most important points. In doing so, it was emphasized that the importance of the selected topics can be interpreted very differently, for example according to popularity, necessity, feasibility, or personal interest. From the critique phase, participants chose the topics of gaslighting and personal experience of discrimination in the form of fear, stress, and trauma. From the fantasy phase, the topics of respect and anti-racism measures in education as well as in politics were rated as most important.

After narrowing down these aspects, the participants focused on the ideas mentioned and discussed concrete steps for realization. This resulted in four case studies, which were written down in the action plan. First, a journalist training workshop was mentioned in the context of development cooperation. The goal formulation is that this training should be anti-racist oriented. In this case, the focus and responsibility lie on the privileged donors and organizers of the trainings. The content would be about a redesign of the training setting and a better exchange about teaching content. Examples were given of a participatory learning environment in the form of mutual listening instead of frontal teaching, content that is determined by the recipients and experienced through prior questioning. Furthermore, there should be a room arrangement in which everyone sits at eye level, a sensitization and conscious handling of privileges and institutionalized discrimination with a focus on racism and postcolonialism. For realization, it is also important to allow and address emotions, as well as give room for criticism, especially in dependency relationships, for example toward the financial sponsors. Contrary to the methodological time frame, no time limit was specified here, as this is often used as a legitimization for non-implementation. Neither time nor funding restrictions should be used to question feasibility.

The second case study addresses the topic of gaslighting with the goal of creating an exchange and

empowerment tool. The online platform was used to share experiences of gaslighting, networking, and acting together. This time, the target group was exactly the opposite of the previous example, as the focus was now explicitly on those who are affected by racism. An expansion of the actors is conceivable to include other minority groups who are also affected by gaslighting. In the discussion, a platform by and for minorities was discussed, for example especially for Black people, with the implementation happening online with regional adaptations. The idea initiator contextualized the project using Poland as an example, where she herself lives as a Black person in a white-dominated society. In addition, it was agreed that funds are to be raised as a resource to finance the project. A timetable was not set here, but this was mainly due to the tight time frame of the workshop.

In the third case study, the political field was addressed, and there was a specific call for an anti-discrimination law at the national level. The participants discussed regional differences, as in some countries such a law already exists and in some not. The target group thus includes those countries without such a law and more specifically their parliamentary congresses, but also the citizens and people with experience of discrimination, for example those with migration experience. The latter, in particular, should be involved in the legislative process, as policy should not be made about them, but with them. As an implementation resource, it was also mentioned that countries should be penalized for behaving in a racist manner in the same way that citizens of the country are. This would then require an overarching infrastructure, for example in the form of an independent control organization. In the workshop, this was discussed using Japan as a case study, but this also applies to the majority of countries. Again, due to the workshop limits, no further steps on discussing a time frame were taken.

With the fourth case study, a recurring theme was discussed regarding critical whiteness. In doing so, no direct reference was made to the previous selection, but nevertheless a common debate emerged from it. The discussion revolved around the question of what role white people should take in anti-racism work. With a view to acting in solidarity, the example was formulated that white people should promote awareness of anti-racism in white realms of society or rather among white people. This approach was not further concretized but should be further thought out, with the reference to and reading of the multitude of works critical of racism

(W. E. B. Du Bois and especially Battalora (2021) were mentioned) also being understood as an educational task for white people.

In summary, a selection of the previous topics was made in the implementation phase, focusing on the aspects of gaslighting, personal experiences of racism, respect, and anti-racism measures. Four case studies were then elaborated, which included an anti-racist journalist training session, an online platform concerning gaslighting, national anti-discrimination laws, and racism awareness among whites.

4. Discussion

In this last section, the findings of the workshops will be discussed from different perspectives. The social structure of the participants, the method, and the results will also be critically reflected on. With the unintended shift to the digital, we ultimately expanded the access opportunities to our format as well as applying this method in a new setting. This change will receive special attention in the following discussion. The number of participants was generally in the lower two-digit range. The opportunity to work in small groups was only used in the introductory workshop; in the three phases thereafter, the participants always worked together in one group. Overall, we were able to reach a broad spectrum. Although we did not conduct separate data collection on the participants' social and economic structures, some statements can be made from the introductory rounds and from the registrations. In the following section, we present some examples similar to case vignettes that describe our spectrum. For example, in our workshop a Japanese social worker debated with a French non-governmental organization employee. Also, a German-Mexican student debated with a Polish lecturer. But these country attributions are problematized in the context of anti-racist work regarding a global border regime based on the idea of states. Moreover, places of origin and present places of residence intermingle, as in the case of a South African diplomat who now lives and works on the Arabian Peninsula. His profession also shows differences of social status from the student mentioned before. Overall, the professional hierarchies were not recognizable in these conversations. Furthermore, the participants reflected on global interconnections, such as a Brazilian practitioner who now lives and works in Poland. For example, she is spatially very close to a Berlin master's student whose parents are from Asia. Hence, the geographic structure of the parti-

cipants represented multiple interdependent migration experiences. This diversity was stimulated by the shift to the digital and can be recommended as a positive aspect for future projects. However, we see a tendency toward overrepresentation from East Asia, Europe, and the USA. Here we simultaneously recognized the limitations of the digital, less from an infrastructural perspective and more from a privilege perspective concerning the dissemination of information. To improve this, we recommend additional on-site workshops and a region-specific promotion of the events.

As anticipated by the project team, most participants can be described as "young" people. Via the webcams, visibly older participants could be seen in a few cases, although there was no obligation to activate the cameras and as a result several participants were not seen. Thus, the perceptible age range tends to be in line with expectations. Although the statement is based on weak data, the aspect of age is of particular relevance. Going forward, a broader age range would be desirable, not only because racism affects all ages, but also because knowledge pools and thus approaches to solutions differ depending on age.

Academic knowledge was clearly evident in the group of participants, but it cannot be assessed conclusively how high the proportion of participants with an academic background was. However, the debates in the workshops on concepts such as gaslighting (Davis/Ernst 2019; Sweet 2019) or white supremacy (Gillborn 2006; Mills 2017) certainly demonstrate specific access to certain academic knowledge and concepts. Following the habitus concept (Bourdieu 1987), academic knowledge can have the effect of distinction and social closure. Introducing subject-specific concepts about which others do not have knowledge functions as a cultural code that is only understandable to members of a certain class. As the project team, we proactively worked against this in the planning as well as in the implementation of the workshops. Initially, the idea behind the local workshops was to reach the widest possible range of participants from different educational backgrounds. With the shift to the Internet, this became more difficult, but in cooperation with various civil society organizations, the application was pushed outside academic groups. During the workshops, technical terms were promptly explained by the facilitators or those who introduced a term were asked to explain it. Going forward, it is recommended that the workshops be held in different venues that are not predominantly attended by academics. Here, the aim is not to strengthen a dichotomy



between academically and non-academically socialized people, but to reduce the disadvantaging tendencies in the generation of knowledge. At the same time, there should be no blanket condemnation of academic people as always being advantaged. Academia can, for example, empower individuals and act as a method-guided voice for anti-racist work.

The above-mentioned limitations in the stratification of participants are problematic and should always be further improved upon with regard to the broader inclusion of different groups of society. Linked to the participant structure is the aspect of decision-making through majority voting. Since we handed over the power to define racism to the participants in this project, they could, for example, decide in favor of an interpretation that we as the project team find problematic. The point here was not to achieve a definition according to textbooks, but merely to ensure a framework that avoids a reproduction of discriminatory language and perception in the process. Moreover, it was not about jointly developing exact wording that can be presented textbook-like afterward. Rather, it was about compiling different problem areas within the phenomenon of racism that are not played off against each other, but rather stand parallel to each other. This can be interpreted as a collective strategy of understanding the different forms of racisms (for example BIPoC). This approach proved to be very fruitful, as the participants got into a flow of speech, drafted many ideas, and were not subjected to any censorship. No statement was classified by our project team as fundamentally problematic. This underlined a very high awareness of the problem and a high degree of sensitivity on the part of the participants.

Regarding the choice of methods, we recognize a limitation. Although a selection of a certain method is always a limitation in itself, in our case, two particular aspects have to be mentioned. First, the method itself is Eurocentric, i.e., it is based on regional assumptions of problem analysis, utopia development, and finally, problem solving. This approach can be criticized for complexity reduction and linear thinking. At the same time, there is scope for adaptation in implementation, which we tried to design accordingly. For example, in the implementation phase, we did not push the participants to deal exclusively with the previously chosen topics, but were open to new inputs, as shown in the fourth case study on critical whiteness. Second, the practical implementation of the future workshop is characterized by an ambivalent structural relationship

between opening and closing. For example, the specification phase already clearly encompasses the creative process, while almost anything can be said during the individual phases. Viewed from a negative point of view, this tends to lead to arbitrariness and supposedly less resilient results. In a positive interpretation, however, this underlines the egalitarian-participative approach, whose knowledge production gains in robustness since the results are not already strictly limited by specifications. In order to give the participants a stronger voice and to further expand the transdisciplinary character, we recommend for future projects that the participants also be involved in the formulation of articles such as these. This also means that financial and time resources for this must be included in the project planning.

Regarding the results, the time limitation due to the organizational framework of the workshops has to be mentioned. Except for the utopia phase, there was not enough time in the other sessions because the ideas could not be discussed adequately, and it was evident that the conversation could have flowed much further. Ultimately, participants could have contributed many more ideas. This was especially noticed during the last phase, as the project ideas that were written down in the action plan only symbolized initial approaches and were far from being sufficiently discussed. The following post by a participant in the chat at the end of the workshop is representative of this aspect: "I talked so much and I didn't have the time to finish my questions." One of the positive findings is that direct project implementation can be initiated by means of this workshop method. Within the framework of our project, however, we can only highlight the potentials, since a continuing organizational structure is now required, which we as individual researchers cannot provide. Nevertheless, we evaluate the intervention as positive, because the participants were encouraged in their ideas, the content was reflected on from different perspectives, and together we advanced a concretization of the plans.

From the rather reserved feedback in the fantasy phase, we conclude that it seems easier to criticize than to find solutions, especially if these solutions currently seem utopian. Working with fantasies is no ordinary task, especially when it comes to complex postcolonial structures of discrimination and social inequalities that are deeply embedded in institutions as well as people's ways of life. In our view, this makes it particularly difficult and at the same time understandable that participants cannot detach themselves from these constraints. In the digital setting, it is helpful that no participant is

required to use a camera. We assume that an on-site workshop would have been better than this one on the Internet. Especially when developing fantasies, a particularly trustworthy environment is needed, since the participants expose themselves to the others with unusual contributions. Therefore, we recommend that at least parts of the method should be held on-site.

Since we had not formulated any expectations regarding the content, no comparison can be made here. However, retrospectively it is striking that the topic of COVID-19 did not play any role in these workshops. While the media coverage permanently addressed this issue parallel to our workshop implementation and we were continuously confronted with it in many areas of life, there was no recourse on the part of the participants. Racist behavior was not discussed further in connection with the pandemic, but anti-racism work and personal experiences were dealt with independently of current events. This underscores the fundamental problematic nature of racism and that it is by no means a new phenomenon. The discussions in the workshops also show that in addition to the very dominant situation due to the global pandemic, there are other problematic situations that are very much in need of action, such as combating racism.

Contrary to our fears that the workshops could become the target of racist attacks, we did not experience any. Only an unexplained software shutdown during the last phase remains unresolved, but we assume it was a technical error. Furthermore, we did not want to use this method for conflict resolution within the group of participants, because we had a different intention (opening up a space for dialogue that could have an empowering effect). We would only have intervened in cases of discriminatory behavior within the group, which we could not detect in the workshops. If future organizers want to make a stronger reference to specific topics, this could be done through discussion stimuli. For example, in order to emphasize the transfer between processes in society as a whole and local levels of action, we recommend pointing out the connection to existing social movements. However, this should only be done more intensively in the third phase, so that there is no pre-influence and thus no restriction of the utopia development.

Although we noticed a high fluctuation of participants, we also want to venture a positive interpretation here. The great interest of the participants gives us hope and their commitment impresses us. Thus, new participants kept coming. Even if they had missed the

first phases, they saw opportunities to get involved in the knowledge production process. Furthermore, the chat function in particular was used to exchange sources. The participants shared many book and film recommendations with each other, as well as websites such as the platform <https://www.politifact.com/race-ethnicity/> that deconstructs racist hate speech and fake news. Thus, the shift to the digital realm can be considered a success, but ultimately it cannot be judged whether the danger of racist attacks, the fluctuation, or the exchange of sources would have been different in the analogue realm.

A repetition of the workshops is not currently being planned—and if then in a modified form. Above all, the original concept of a journey of ideas should, if possible, be integrated into a new edition. This means that a hybrid version of the workshop series with several on-site workshops should take place, so that actual personal encounters are made possible. For the networking of the participants, we have created an email list that can be used as a place for everyone to share and keep up to date. The email list serves to further develop previous workshop ideas, to discuss individual projects, and to exchange information, for example, about fundraising opportunities. In this way, the development of ideas does not remain purely hypothetical within the framework of the project but can be seen as a starting point for actual implementation.

With the focus on the global, there remains an ambiguity that cannot be conclusively resolved. In the variety of subtopics addressed by the participants, it becomes clear that the title of the workshop series “Global Ideas against Racism” cannot be understood as a singularity. It is a rather unspecific collective term that must be specified historically and contextually for each individual case. A reduction to a generally valid, consistent state of affairs over time should not be suggested by the workshop title. Here, in the future, additional reference in the title to perspectives from different world regions or to specific groups affected by racism at a particular time might suggest less universality. With this very openly designed workshop, the content remains not comprehensively illuminated. The various forms of racism were covered by way of examples, but this does not represent a reduction in relevance, because it creates access via personal references and fosters a network of people affected by different racisms. Ideas can be interpreted as global in two ways: first, globally in their orientation, and second, globally in their emergence. In our case, the content contributed tended to

remain at the regional level, and the workshops held here do not provide a representative picture of global social groups. This leads to two recommendations: future workshop organizers can work toward more globally-oriented approaches in their moderation and approach a more global participant base in their design by means of more extensive participant acquisition and greater involvement of organizations representative of those affected by racism.

In summary, this paper focused on the workshop project “Global Ideas against Racism.” The three innovations of this project include the application of method in a new field, the attempt to have a more global participant base, and egalitarian knowledge production. Due to the pandemic, a fourth new aspect has been added to this list of three. This fourth aspect lies in the shifted implementation of these ideas to the digital field. The large number of ideas generated and the potential for further development speak for a successful application. It became apparent that it is significantly more difficult to design utopias than to criticize problematic situations. In the end, four concrete case studies were developed in the areas of education, empowerment, politics, and awareness raising. In conclusion, the future workshop can be evaluated as a recommendable, application-oriented method whose implementation should be combined in hybrid form with on-site workshops in the future.

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