

Do's and Don'ts of CBPR: fact sheet (June 11th, 2009)

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PURPOSE: What was the purpose of the research? (調査の目的)	To develop an urban plan for South Los Angeles that serves existing residents—a "People's Plan". Official planning by the local government and University of Southern California is threatening the future of the community. The final plan will present resident's perspective and be given to City officials.	1. Identify all <i>health outreach</i> taking place to OEF /OIF veterans in Los Angeles 2. Define the "best practices" for outreach to OEF / OIF veterans	Develop the local community welfare planning, the community survey on the actual condition of employment, the settlement house (rinpo-kan) residents' survey, the human rights enlightenment promotion project.	To develop a social welfare plan for Seika town.
POPULATION: Who was the targeted population of the research? (調査対象)	Residents of the Figueroa Corridor area of South Los Angeles and City officials.	OEF / OIF veterans in need of mental health support	All residents in Shingu-city, especially poor elderly, single parent household, young unemployment who live in <i>dowa</i> district.	All residents in Seika town.
WHERE: Where (city/area) was the research taken place at? (調査が実施された自治体もしくは地域)	Vermont Avenue and Figueroa Avenue areas of South Los Angeles, California	Greater Los Angeles area	Shingu-city in Wakayama prefecture	Seika town in Kyoto prefecture.
WHEN: When was the research taken place? (調査が実施された期間)	Current project: July 2008 – July 2010. The People's Plan will begin in July 2009. The neighborhood groups have been active (as the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice (FCCEJ)) since 1998.	May 2009 – October 2009	From April 2007 to March 2009.	From April 2008 to March 2009.
FUNDING: Who funded the research? (調査の財源)	Private foundations who support non-profit community work	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (85% funding) Department of Veterans Affairs (15% funding)	90% by Shingu-city government. 10% by URP Research fund.	100% by Seika town government.

WHO: Who were the researcher(s) and who were the participant(s)? (調査を推進した人と参加した人)	<u>Researchers:</u> consultant, university students, urban planning professor all working with a strong relationship to the local residents <u>Participants:</u> community leaders, urban planning professionals, representatives from the community-based organizations, and local residents	<u>Researchers:</u> 1)Dr. Patrick Link (Robert Wood Johnson Fellow), 2) Casey MacGregor (UCLA graduate student), 3) OEF /OIF veteran Research Assistants. <u>Participants:</u> 1) Outreach Staff and Administrators, 2) Social Contacts of OEF / OIF veterans, 3) OEF / OIF veterans.	<u>Researchers:</u> the consultant, professor of URP, researcher, of URP, officer of Department of Human Services and Human rights enlightenment <u>Participants:</u> community worker, social workers and vocational guidance counselors, staff of settlement house (rinpo-kan), local residents.	<u>Researchers:</u> the consultant, head worker from the welfare department, university students. <u>Participants:</u> community leaders, social workers and representatives from the community-based organizations, and local residents
RESULTS: Any outcomes or products out of the research? (調査の結果)	Research plan, strengthening of the coalition member groups around making a "People's Plan"	1) Community planning conference 2) confirmatory surveys 3) quality improvement measures 4) program changes 5) academic papers 6) report to Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	Create opportunities to share encounters, learning processes and findings.	Completion of the plan, formation of action group, launching a community restaurant, etc.

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—DOROTHY N. GAMBLE AND MARIE WEIL

COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

ABSTRACT: Community-based participatory research in social work is a partnership approach to research that involves community members, organizational representatives, and researchers in all aspects of the research process. It is community-based in the sense that the process of social inquiry is informed by and responds to the experiences and needs of community partners. The partners contribute their expertise and share responsibilities and ownership to enhance understanding of issues or conditions and the social and cultural dynamics of the community, and to integrate the knowledge gained with action to improve the well-being

of community members. Various terms have been used to describe this research, including participatory research, empowerment research, action research, participatory action research, collaborative research, and feminist research. With its focus on knowledge, action, and empowerment, community-based participatory research provides contemporary social work a change-oriented, value-based model of knowledge development, a knowledge that comes from people and community.

KEY WORDS: community-based participatory research; participatory research; community building; diversity; knowledge and participation

Introduction

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is not new to social work. For over a century, social workers have endeavored to develop knowledge that can improve programs and communities and inform social policy. For example, research on the lives of poor immigrants was closely linked to community organization and social reform. Studies on the plight of orphan children on the streets of New York, of tenement dwellers, and of infants dying in foundling homes contained integrally woven components of assisting and advocating for clients, and for advocating social policy at the national level (Abbott, 1936; Breckinridge, 1931; Lathrop, 1905). Many decades later, the prevailing structure of professionalization and specialization has separated research from practice, policy reform, and social change, thereby limiting efforts of social work to address social problems comprehensively (Karger, 1983).

Recently, researchers have called for a more comprehensive and participatory approach to research and practice not only in social work but also in other fields such as public health, community psychology, and education (Fisher & Ball, 2003; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Although many of the principles and methods of CBPR are not yet represented in social work research literature, they represent a growing force within the field.

The fundamental characteristics of CBPR emphasize the participation, influence, and control of community members in the process of creating knowledge and change. In any CBPR project, doing research is not a goal in itself but only a means to achieve the interrelated goals for all participants: (a) fostering relationships and collaboration among diverse individuals, organizations, and groups; (b) creating settings for critical reflections that enable people from different backgrounds to see themselves in one another; (c) learning knowledge and skills relevant to the tasks

at hand; and (d) engaging in effective action that wins victories and builds self-sufficiency (Sohng, 1996; Stoeker, 1999). These principles represent a critical distinction from the term *community-based research*, that emphasizes conducting research in a community as a place or setting, in which community members have only limited involvement, if any, in what is primarily a researcher-driven enterprise. By comparison, CBPR involves conducting research that recognizes the community as a social and cultural entity with shared interests and concerns (Israel, 2000). The inclusion of the term *participatory* here more clearly aligns CBPR with its roots in *participatory research* movements (Brown, 1985; Fals-Borda, 1979; Gaventa, 1988; Hall, 1981; Lather, 1986; Maguire, 1987; Park, Brydon-Miller, Hall, & Jackson, 1993).

Key Principles of Community-Based Participatory Research

Community-based participatory research is a process rather than a specific methodology. Common themes are that the CBPR approach

1. *Recognizes community as a unit of collective and individual identity.* Membership in a family, friendship network, ethnic group, and geographic neighborhood, for example, are socially constructed dimensions of identity (Hatch, Moss, Saran, Presley-Cantrell, & Mallory, 1993; Steuart, 1993). Community is characterized by a sense of identification and emotional connection to other members, common symbols systems, shared values and norms, mutual influence, common interests, and commitment to meeting shared needs (Fellin, 1995; Israel, 2000; National Library of Medicine, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books>). CBPR attempts to identify and to work with existing communities, and to strengthen the sense of community through collective engagement.
2. *Builds on strengths and resources within the community.* CBPR seeks to identify and build on strengths, resources, and relationships that exist within communities of identity, and seeks to support or expand social structures and social processes that contribute to the ability of community members to work together to improve the lives of people (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, <http://www.ahrq.gov/about/cbpr>; DePoy, Hartman, & Haslett, 1999; Unger, 2004).
3. *Facilitates collaborative, reciprocal involvement of all partners in all phases of the research.* These partnerships focus on issues and concerns identified by community members, and create processes that enable all parties to participate and share influence in the research and associated change efforts

(Community-Campus Partnership for Health, <http://www.depts.washington.edu/ccph/comrba.html>).

4. *Integrates knowledge and action.* The lack of critical information, documentation, and evidence about how community power works places people at a disadvantage in their efforts to change their circumstances. The generation of this type of knowledge is central to strengthening the community's problem-solving capacity. However, the link between the knowledge creation and action must be explicit. That link is most strong when those who conduct the research take action themselves within their organizations or communities. The power to name the conditions of injustice, oppression, and domination must be accompanied by the power to act whereby research and action become fully integrated.
5. *Promotes a colearning and empowering process that attends to social inequalities.* CBPR is a colearning and empowering process that facilitates the reciprocal transfer of knowledge, skills, capacity, and power (Baldwin, 2001; Stoeker, 1999). This process involves giving explicit attention to the knowledge of community members, and an emphasis on sharing information, decision-making power, resources, and support among members of the partnership.
6. *Links to local capacity and infrastructure building.* There is always the danger that the openings for community participation will simply mirror the status quo, and serve to strengthen and reinforce more dominant voices. Filling such spaces "from below" requires local capacity-organizations that are empowered and aware, and who have the ability to use the participation to negotiate and sustain their involvement overtime (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001; Stoeker, 1999; International Institute for Sustainable Development, <http://www.iisd.org/cas/CASGuide/ParticipatoryApproach.htm>). Because sustainable change usually depends on the empowerment of people and organizations, the research activities should support the community infrastructure building and leadership.

The question inevitably arises as to which research method best serves CBPR. Community-based participatory research is not defined by the research techniques. It can employ the whole gamut of research tools and analytic techniques such as quantitative and qualitative methodologies, historical reconstruction, action research, among other research methods. It is therefore up to each team to select the best mix of methods to suit their chosen research site or topic.

Not every single method or technique to be used must be participatory; but the overall ethos of the research must be so, and the question of the ultimate ownership of knowledge is an important consideration.

Conclusion

The term *community-based participatory research* encompasses several virtues and vices. As with all methods, its merits vary with the research situation and the practitioner. At its best, the process can be liberating, empowering, and educative, a collegial relationship that brings local communities into the policy debate, validating their knowledge. At its worst, it can degenerate into a process of co-option of local communities into an external agenda, or an exploitative series of empty rituals imposing fresh burdens on the community's time and energy and service primarily to legitimize the credentials of the implementing agency as "grassroots oriented" (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). While participation must be integral to the research process, it must be understood and practiced as a genuine process. What is most important is that researchers, as socially and environmentally responsible persons, make ethical choices in the use of their tools. The ultimate test for CBPR is whether the research benefits the community and promotes socially just, culturally diverse community building.

CBPR has evolved through the 1990s and into the 21st century as it has been applied to various fields such as community development and service learning projects. Recently practitioners have moved away from the word "research" because of its extractive connotations and abstract meaning to many community members. New names are being used, such as "participatory action learning, and "participatory action development."

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FURTHER READING

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COMMUNITY BUILDING

ABSTRACT: This article will cover the history, theory, and empirical and practical knowledge of community building. Social networks and social ties contribute to informal social control, while neighborhood behavior is key to the development and maintenance of social cohesion. The author will provide a discussion of the relationships among these elements and their relationships to other community resources, such as civic participation and collective action. The author will discuss the empirical work regarding the effective ways to produce and promote community building in poor neighborhoods, as well as the practical knowledge that suggest its importance.

KEY WORDS: community building; social capital; social network; community development; community organization; settlement houses

Introduction

A growing number of community organizing and development professionals working to bring about fundamental and sustainable neighborhood improvement in targeted low-income areas see themselves as *community builders* (Anderson & Milligan, 2006). In social work practice, community building represents a strengths-based rather than a needs-based approach to community work (Saleebey, 2003). Community building is grounded in the feminist notion of "power to" and "power with" rather than the more masculine concept of "power over" frequently encountered in traditional community organizing (French, 1986).

Definitions

The multiplicity of community building definitions can be attributed to the heterogeneity of community building. Minkler (2005) defines community building as "an orientation to community that is strength based rather than need based and stresses the identification, nurturing and celebration of community assets" (p. 4). Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, and Vidal (2001) define community building as "actions to strengthen the capacity of communities to identify priorities and opportunities and to foster and sustain positive neighborhood change" (p. 1).

Some authors use the terms "community building," "community empowerment," "community capacity," and "community revitalization" interchangeably. Although the term "community building" has many different meanings, all revolve around the notion of tapping into the social infrastructure of the community as a key step in catalyzing collective action, building

collaborative relationships among key community members, and building community capacity. The collective action is intended to address common concerns of individuals who live within a geographical area, such as a neighborhood, or with a common interest. Perhaps community building has different meanings because the essence of it lies in conceptualizing and relating to community as an inclusive, complex, and dynamic system. Such an orientation to practice envisions community as a multidimensional system, involving people and organizations at all levels engaged in relationships with one another, which are manifested in both actions and consciousness. Community building seeks to engage with these multiple dimensions of community, recognizing the range of perspectives and relationships that exist and integrating diverse strategies and all its participants in order to operate as community (Anderson & Milligan, 2006; Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, Vidal, 2001).

The terms "comprehensive community building" and "place-based strategies" are associated with community building and refer to approaches to improve the well-being of people in a particular neighborhood or geographically defined area. The term community building is also used within the housing and community development fields to describe work on the nonphysical aspects of community development (for example, education, child care, family supports, among others), as compared with the physical aspects of development, such as building mixed income or affordable housing. Furthermore, the term is used by governments at the international level to describe the work of helping a community move toward a particular ideology, as in nation-building at the community level (Anderson & Milligan, 2006; Ewalt, Freeman & Poole, 2001).

Comprehensive community initiatives are most explicit about their reliance and intent to rebuild the social fabric of a particular community. Aspen Institute Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives offers a definition of comprehensive community initiatives that captures community building:

"Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) as neighborhood efforts that seek improved outcomes for individuals and families as well as improvements in neighborhood conditions by working comprehensively across social, economic, and physical sectors. Additionally CCIs operate on the principle that community building—that is, strengthening institutional capacity at the neighborhood (or community or reservation) level, enhancing social capital and personal networks, and developing leadership—is a necessary aspect of the process of transforming distressed neighborhoods" (see aspeninstitute.org).