Community-Based Participatory Research and Evaluation Approaches in Native American Communities

Citations and Abstracts

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National Indian Education Association

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Native communities are using, or wanting to use, community-based participatory research (CBPR) approaches for research and evaluation conducted within their communities. Interest in CBPR has evolved because Native communities have been the subject of many research and evaluation projects, often conducted by non-Natives. Unfortunately, “research with Native American communities has often benefited investigators and their academic communities more than the communities in which the research is conducted” (Lowe, Riggs, & Henson, 2011, p. 68). This is because Native communities have historically been excluded from research/evaluation processes, study findings have not been shared with the communities being studied, and little attempt has been made to help these communities learn from their participation or make informed decisions to improve their situation. In response to these challenges, tribes have established tribal research institutional review boards to approve and oversee research/evaluation conducted among their tribal members and CBPR has emerged as a preferred research/evaluation approach.

CBPR is the preferred approach for a variety of reasons. It “provides communities and researchers with opportunities to develop interventions that are effective as well as acceptable and culturally competent” (Horn, McCracken, Dino, & Brayboy, 2008, p. 44). It also offers benefits to Native communities, such as community engagement and empowerment, increased likelihood that findings will be trusted and recommendations implemented, increased capacity of Native communities to conduct their own research/evaluations (Wexler, 2011), tools and resources tailored to community needs, increased grant writing skills, new research and evaluation partnerships, and increased self-sufficiency (Horn, McCracken, Dino, & Brayboy, 2008). Successful CBPR approaches emphasize three main ideas: 1) co-learning among researchers and community collaborators and mutual transfer of expertise and insights; 2) shared decision making; and 3) mutual ownership of the processes and products (Viswanathan, Ammerman, Eng, et al., 2004). For these reasons, CBPR is an approach recommended by the National Indian Education Association, the National Congress of American Indians, the National Science Foundation, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Harvard University Native American Program, the Native American Center for Excellence, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, numerous tribal entities, and others throughout the health and education fields for research and evaluations conducted in Native/tribal settings.

Over the last decade, the use of CBPR in Native/tribal settings has increased substantially. For this reason, the National Indian Education Association has received numerous requests for recent (2002 to present) research, sample studies, and suggestions for Native educators and tribes wanting to use CBPR approaches in Native/tribal settings. As a preliminary response to these requests, this document presents a list of citations and unedited abstracts from health and education fields obtained from public sources and recommended by NIEA staff and partners. Over 25 citations are sorted alphabetically by the lead author’s last name. Abstracts and links to full-text are provided where available. A formal, exhaustive literature search was not conducted in the creation of this document and no attempt was made to develop a framework for conducting research or evaluations in a Native/tribal context using a CBPR approach based on these citations. NIEA staff hopes that users of this document find the citations helpful. We also hope it inspires future formal literature reviews and research on this topic. NIEA would be happy to provide guidance or assistance to anyone who is interested in conducting such a project.
CITATIONS


Abstract from preamble:
This guide is intended to introduce the reader to the Medicine Wheel, outlining its history and uses, and to show how the Medicine Wheel can be used as an evaluation framework. We know that this framework is not appropriate for every organization or every project, but we do hope that its use will enable some to break away from the traditional boxes, and to be able to capture the stories and qualitative results that are often overlooked.


Abstract from the author:
The purpose of this article is to share lessons learned from implementing community-based participatory research (CBPR) in Indian Country that may be generalizable to other medically underserved communities. CBPR is currently included in multiple grant announcements by the National Institute of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but information about this methodology vs traditional research methodology is often misleading. This article addresses some common mistakes made by academic research institutes by sharing what we have learned about how CBPR can be implemented in a respectful manner. The majority of tribal Nations prefer, if not mandate, that CBPR be used in most proposed studies involving their communities today.


Abstract from the authors:
This article describes the collective experience of a multidisciplinary network of researchers, practitioners, and program evaluators who support appropriate research and evaluation methods in working with Native peoples. Our experience underlines the critical importance of culture in understanding and conducting research with the diverse populations of American Indians and Alaska Natives, and documents the need for community-based, collaborative, participatory action research. We discuss the major findings of the first American Indian Research and Program Evaluation Methodology national symposium, and articulate a set of 20 guiding principles for conducting research and program evaluation.

Abstract of book from the publisher:
Written by distinguished experts in the field, this book shows how researchers, practitioners, and community partners can work together to establish and maintain equitable partnerships using a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach to increase knowledge and improve health and well-being of the communities involved. CBPR is a collaborative approach to research that draws on the full range of research designs, including case study, etiologic, longitudinal, experimental, and nonexperimental designs. CBPR data collection and analysis methods involve both quantitative and qualitative approaches. What distinguishes CBPR from other approaches to research is the active engagement of all partners in the process. This book provides a comprehensive and thorough presentation of CBPR study designs, specific data collection and analysis methods, and innovative partnership structures and process methods. This book informs students, practitioners, researchers, and community members about methods and applications needed to conduct CBPR in the widest range of research areas—including social determinants of health, health disparities, health promotion, community interventions, disease management, health services, and environmental health.


Abstract from the author:
The Messengers for Health on the Apsáalooke Reservation project uses a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach and lay health advisors (LHAs) to generate knowledge and awareness about cervical cancer prevention among community members in a culturally competent manner. Northern Plains Native Americans, of whom Apsáalooke women are a part, continue to be disproportionately affected by cervical cancer. This article examines quantitative and qualitative changes that occurred in the community since the inception of the Messengers for Health program. Paired sample t tests are used to evaluate the one-group pretest and posttest interviews of 83 Apsáalooke women in knowledge, comfort, and cancer awareness levels. Results reveal cervical cancer knowledge gains, gains in participants’ comfort discussing cancer issues, and gains in awareness of cervical cancer and the Messengers program. Field notes, meeting minutes, and community perceptions are used to qualitatively evaluate the effectiveness of the Messengers program. Practice implications are discussed.


Abstract from the author:
Although intervention research is vital to eliminating health disparities, many groups with health disparities have had negative research experiences, leading to an understandable distrust of researchers and the research process. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) approaches seek to reverse this pattern by building trust between community members and researchers. We highlight strategies for building and maintaining trust from an American Indian CBPR project and focus on 2 levels of trust building and maintaining: (1) between university and community partners and (2) between the initial project team and the larger community. This article was cowritten by community and academic partners; by offering the voices of community partners, it provides a novel and distinctive contribution to the CBPR literature.


Abstract from the author:
This article reports on the development of a culturally grounded method for measuring outcomes and demonstrating the effectiveness of culturally specific services for Native American youth. This method was developed out of a community-based participatory research project involving Native elders, families, youth, and community partners, as well as the board, staff, and management of an agency serving an urban American Indian community. Through a series of focus groups, community members defined success for Native youth. Responses were analyzed using the four quadrants of the Relational Worldview model (Cross, 1995), an indigenous way of understanding life from a concept of wholeness and balance as a framework. This article describes the use of focus groups in this context and the cultural adaptations necessary both in conducting the groups and in the analysis of the data. Focus group results and next steps in the development of a practice-based approach to demonstrating the effectiveness of culturally specific services are summarized. Findings illustrate the need to broaden definitions of success used to guide the development and evaluation of effective services beyond those Native youth gaining spiritual understanding and knowledge and skills in traditional cultural practices as essential elements of achieving community-defined outcomes.


Abstract from the author:
A community-based participatory approach requires that community members be involved in all phases of the research process. We describe three focus group studies with American Indians in Kansas and Missouri, using a newly developed method of conducting and analyzing focus groups with community input (72 focus groups, 519 participants). We conducted two needs assessment studies focused on barriers to breast and colorectal cancer screening and one study focused on Internet use for gathering health information. Community members and researchers collaborated to develop guides for the focus group moderators. Community organizations and our community advisory board conducted recruitment, and we trained and employed community members as
moderators, assistant moderators, and analysts. Our community partners also helped with dissemination of research findings to their constituents. The methodologic approach and data from these three studies will allow us to more appropriately address health disparities in the American Indian community, with full community support for our research.


Abstract from the author:
Culture is a cumulative body of learned and shared behavior, values, customs, and beliefs common to a particular group or society. In essence, culture makes us who we are. In doing project evaluation, it is also important to consider cultural context in which the project operates and be responsive to it. How can an evaluation be culturally responsive? An evaluation is culturally responsive if it fully takes into account the culture of the program that is being evaluated. In other words, the evaluation is based on an examination of impacts through lenses in which the culture of the participants is considered an important factor, thus rejecting the notion that assessments must be objective and culture free, if they are to be unbiased. Moreover, a culturally responsive evaluation attempts to fully describe and explain the context of the program or project being evaluated. Culturally responsive evaluators honor the cultural context in which an evaluation takes place by bringing needed, shared life experience and understandings to the evaluation tasks at hand.


Abstract from the author:
Community-based participatory research provides communities and researchers with opportunities to develop interventions that are effective as well as acceptable and culturally competent. The present project responds to the voices of the North Carolina American Indian (AI) community and the desire for their youth to recognize tobacco addiction and commercial cigarette smoking as debilitating to their health and future. Seven community-based participatory principles led to the AI adaptation of the Not On Tobacco teen-smoking cessation program and fostered sound research and meaningful results among an historically exploited population. Success was attributed to values-driven, community-based principles that (a) assured recognition of a community-driven need, (b) built on strengths of the tribes, (c) nurtured partnerships in all project phases, (d) integrated the community’s cultural knowledge, (e) produced mutually beneficial tools/products, (f) built capacity through co-learning and empowerment, (g) used an iterative process of development, and (h) shared findings/knowledge with all partners.

LaFrance, J. (2004). Culturally competent evaluation in Indian country. In M. Thompson-Robinson, R. Hopson, & S. SenGupta (Eds.), In search of cultural competence in evalu-

Abstract from the author:
Given the rich tapestry of tribal cultures in the United States, it is presumptuous to assume that any evaluator, whether an Alaskan Native or a member of an American Indian tribe (or a non-Indian), can understand the culture of every group. Rather than trying to master multiple cultural specificities, the goal of a competent evaluator, especially in Indian Country, should be to actively seek cultural grounding through the ongoing processes of appreciating the role of tribal sovereignty, seeking knowledge of the particular community, building relationships, and reflecting on methodological practices. This article is an opportunity for discourse and reflection on these many levels. It discusses the importance of understanding the implications of sovereignty when working in Indian Country, the significance of an emerging indigenous framework for evaluation, Indian self-determination in setting the research and evaluation agenda, and finally particular methodological approaches the author finds useful in her evaluation practice. For this discussion, the author uses the term "Indian Country" to describe the collection of tribal nations and Alaskan native communities that occupy a shared homeland and live in culturally bounded communities. The term "indigenous" refers to the first native residents of lands that have been taken over by outsider populations--specifically, Indian tribes and Alaskan Natives in North and South America, and the Pacific.


Abstract from a reviewer:


Abstract from the author:
The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), comprising 34 American Indian tribally controlled colleges and universities, has undertaken a comprehensive effort to develop an “Indigenous Framework for Evaluation” that synthesizes Indigenous ways of knowing and Western evaluation practice. To ground the framework, AIHEC engaged in an extensive consultation process including conducting a number of focus groups in major regions of the United States. Cultural experts, Indian educators, and evaluators shared their concerns regarding evaluation and described how evaluation fits within a cultural framework. This article summarizes the focus
group discussions and describes how the framework developed using the key principles of Indigenous ways of knowing and four core values common to tribal communities.


Abstract from the author:
This paper addresses two questions about the use of Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR) approaches with tribal communities. First, how do “gold standard” CBPR principles hold up when applied to Native American communities and what additional contextual information is necessary to understand and work with these principles in this setting? Second, what additional principles or recommendations are helpful for researchers interested in conducting research using a CBPR approach with tribal communities? We studied a variety of literature sources on CBPR and Native health research to answer these questions. We are unaware of any publications that contextualize CBPR principles for working with specific populations. This information has direct application for conducting research with tribal communities, and confirms the importance of using CBPR approaches in this setting.


Abstract adapted from the publication:
It is the job of evaluators to understand how a group of people perceive an intervention, communicate their views and act on the knowledge gained from the evaluation. Evaluators’ ability to do this enables them to gather quality data, make accurate conclusions and ensure that the evaluation findings are used appropriately. This process of information exchange, interpretation and application of knowledge are influenced by the cultures of the participants, including the evaluator. Because of this, cross-cultural competency is an essential component in evaluation and a necessary skill for evaluators to have.


Abstract adapted from the publication:
Designed as a companion piece to the The Importance of Culture in Evaluation, this is a guide for evaluators who are beginning to develop their capacity to work across cultures and provides more practical examples of how cross-cultural issues surface in evaluation, and how to address the issues. The report showcases four fictional situations that capture some of the ways in which cultural insensitivity and inappropriateness have emerged in evaluation. These situations are composites of the real-life experiences of evaluators, funders and community stakeholders with whom The Colorado Trust and the author have worked.

Abstract from the author:
This article traces the development of a research project with a Native American community. Four principles were used to guide the development of the “Community Partnership to Affect Cherokee Adolescent Substance Abuse” project using a community-based participatory research approach. The principles suggest that establishing trust is key when developing and conducting research with a Native American community.


Abstract from the author:
This paper discusses current practice of research with and by American Indian tribal governments in the United States. It begins with a brief overview of Community-Based Participatory Research and compares and contrasts its principles and methods with what this paper terms Tribally-Driven Participatory Research. The paper analyzes current challenges and offers concepts for continuing to improve the effectiveness of Tribally-Driven Participatory Research.

Medeek, W. W. (2004). Forests for the future: The view from Gitkxaala. Canadian Journal Of Native Education, 28, 8-14. Retrieved from PDF Download Free website: http://pdfdownloadfree.net/?pdfurl=1qeXpurpn6Wih-SUpOGum-qynh7Le6Mrn3NiQ2Ng6Nrd0oWv5Ora522fkMbR05S83tLcjNXo1OGIrNum1ObVx-HOh6oisJauisusrdvop5-vj83g4-af6fc5-mX09Tyler4Lv453ZxqP510Xk18_gleHS3NXipNXYzoer7w

Abstract from the introduction:
The history of the relationship between First Nations and outsiders has not always been a happy one. There are many stories of K’mshiha coming to our community, asking us to share our knowledge, and then leaving without returning anything to us. This presentation is about the way these relationships are changing. As Gitkxaala we are no longer interested in sitting back and watching our country being exploited by outsiders. Developing protocols of research, like the one described in this paper, is part of our declaration of sovereignty.


Abstract from the author:
This article is written from the vantage point of an Indigenous scholar located in a major research institution (UBC) about the process of negotiating and carrying out respectful research relationships with a First Nations community. The actual process of consultation, accommodation, and negotiation important in establishing and growing a respectful research relationship between the University of British Columbia and Gitxaala Nation (north coastal British Columbia), is de-
scribed. Ethical issues and procedures, methodological innovations, and considerations about Indigenous knowledge demonstrate transformative action for research.


Abstract from website:
Over the past three years through the financial support of the Administration for Native Americans, the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center and our partners, the First American Land-grant College and Organization Network (FALCON) and the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), have developed a curriculum and in-person training to equip tribal leaders, Native students, and other Native community members to understand and manage research and program evaluation. The curriculum was developed in response to requests from tribal leaders who wanted resources to make better decisions about the proposed research in their communities. It emphasizes the validity of Indigenous knowledge while highlighting the benefits of western research standards. The curriculum consists of five separate modules, which address the most critical research issues in Native communities. They include: Module 1: Foundations of Research: An Indigenous Perspective; Module 2: Managing The Designing And Planning Of Research; Module 3: Using Ethics As A Guide For Managing Research; Module 4: Conducting Research In Partnership With Others; and Module 5: Understanding Evaluation.


Abstract from the author:
The National Science Foundation (NSF) Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) sponsored a two-day workshop to discuss issues of culturally responsive educational evaluation as they pertain to Native Americans on April 25–26, 2002. This report includes four invited workshop papers, two reports from the session discussants and three breakout group reports.


Abstract from the author:
Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is an approach in which communities are treated as equal partners at all stages of a research project. This paper discusses the usefulness of CBPR for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities and presents several case studies of CBPR in tribal communities. CBPR prioritizes the community in research design: the community is involved in developing research questions and methods; collecting data; analyzing data; and writing publications and disseminating data. CBPR is not simply a research method—it is a philosophy about how research should be conducted so that community needs are prioritized. There is a spectrum of approaches in CBPR, and there is no one way to conduct CBPR projects. Similarly, the definition of “success” will vary by CBPR project and will depend on the local context of the community involved as well as the priorities of the research team. The variety of
approaches possible in CBPR projects is reflected in the case studies presented in this paper. The common link between diverse CBPR studies is their commitment to community needs and priorities. One outcome that follows from some CBPR projects is that communities and researchers work together to implement study results to improve community programs or services. There is a growing emphasis in research overall, not just among CBPR researchers, on the translation of research study findings into concrete strategies for improving practices, programs, and service provision.


Abstract from the author:
Cervical cancer mortality rates are among the highest in the United States for Northern Plains Native American women compared with white and other Native American women. The aims of Messengers for Health, a community-based participatory research project based on the Apsáalooke (Crow Indian) Reservation, are to decrease cervical cancer screening barriers, improve knowledge regarding screening and prevention, and increase the proportion of women receiving Pap tests. This paper presents results from a survey assessing women’s perceptions of the level of comfort and care received by health care providers in their most recent Pap test appointment. A survey assessing patient communication and satisfaction with their health care providers was conducted with a random sample of 101 Apsáalooke women. Qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized to analyze the survey data. Women reported both positive and negative experiences with their provider regarding their Pap test appointments. They noted positive experiences when trust was established and when the provider offered information, reassured or encouraged them, was personable, was familiar or consistent, maintained confidentiality, and was a woman. The women reported negative experiences when the examination was too short, when they did not have a consistent or female provider, and when they did not feel comfortable with the provider’s nonverbal communication. Continued work with both providers and patients is necessary to decrease communication barriers and increase satisfaction with Pap test appointments.


Abstract from the authors:
Certainly in the past and even in the present day, the term research for Indigenous people has been fraught with strong, negative, emotional associations; however, despite the many remaining challenges there is a shifting within the landscape of academia to recognize that research on Indigenous issues must cultivate respectful and reciprocal relationships with those communities. In this study, we demonstrate that to conduct research collaboratively based on elements of respect, relationship, relevance, and reciprocity, all collaborators must walk in two worlds to balance the needs of communities with the systemic realities of academia. To illustrate our point, we focus our story on one project that is currently underway between the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and Brock University. In our narrative we illustrate how the relationships that were fostered call into question commonly accepted university practices as well as engage community partners in understanding some of the limitations and possibilities in some of those practices. This article focuses on some tough issues; however, the collaborators in this project are in the process
of forging something new that may serve as one example of how such partnerships can be authentically created.


From the authors’ structured abstract:
Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a collaborative approach to research that combines methods of inquiry with community capacity-building strategies to bridge the gap between knowledge produced through research and what is practiced in communities to improve health. Interest is growing rapidly for academic institutions, health agencies, and communities to form research partnerships; few agreed-upon guidelines describe how to develop or evaluate CBPR proposals or what resources are required to promote successful collaborative research efforts. This systematic review consolidates literature on health-related CBPR and addresses key questions relating to defining CBPR, implementation, evidence of how efforts have resulted in intended outcomes, and criteria and processes for review of CBPR in grant proposals.


Abstract from the author:
The broad goals of the community-based participatory research (CBPR) include community engagement, capacity building, developing practical solutions for community concerns and knowledge building. This article describes the data generation and sharing process as it relates to the goals of CBPR and health promotion in an American Indian/Alaska Native communities. The project described herein, “Investigating Inupiaq Cultural Resilience: A Pilot Study,” achieved these goals in a tribal context by fostering intergenerational dialogue through data collection. The intergenerational exchange served to collect data for a community-based participatory study and provide an opportunity for communication between Elders, adults and youth. By providing an arena for intergenerational sharing, the format encouraged cross-age connections and in doing so, supported, in a broad sense, the transmission of cultural knowledge. The article describes the process and articulates the ways it supports the CBPR goals of engagement, practical relevance, knowledge generation and health promotion.


Amazon.com has a preview of the book available at http://www.amazon.com/Partnerships-Empowerment-Participatory-Community-based-Management/dp/184407563X#reader_184407563X. Of particular interest is the chapter, “Comparing Participatory Ecological Research in Two Contexts: An Immigrant Community and a Na-

Description from Amazon.com:
Participatory research has emerged as an approach to producing knowledge that is sufficiently grounded in local needs and realities to support community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), and it is often touted as crucial to the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources. This book analyzes the current state of the art of participatory research in CBNRM. Its chapters and case studies examine recent experiences in collaborative forest management, harvesting impacts on forest shrubs, watershed restoration in Native American communities, civic environmentalism in an urban neighborhood and other topics. Although the main geographic focus of the book is the United States, the issues raised are synthesized and discussed in the context of recent critiques of participatory research and CBNRM worldwide. The book’s purpose is to provide insights and lessons for academics and practitioners involved in CBNRM in many contexts. The issues it covers will be relevant to participatory research and CBNRM practitioners and students the world over.