

Interrogation, Negotiation, and Subversion of Power Differentials in Community-Based Participatory Research: A Scoping Review

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What Is the Problem?

- Participatory health promotion research and community-based initiatives are constrained by the prioritization of neoliberal and capitalist interests of educational, financial, and health care institutions.
- Limited research examines the extent to which scholars working in partnership with community stakeholders in community-based participatory research (CBPR) interrogate and redress power differentials within the collaboration.
- Uncontested power issues within CBPR collaborations can generate harm and undermine community participation and self-determination.

What Is the Purpose of this Study/Review?

- To examine the extent to which academic articles integrating a CBPR approach include critical examination of power differentials that emerge within the collaboration and how these issues were addressed between researchers and community partners.

What Are the Findings?

- Power issues that emerge in CBPR collaborations are influenced by larger structural arrangements, individual socialization, and social experiences that change over time.
- Researchers discussed personal biases and assumptions as common power differentials and engaged in critical reflexive practices to engage in conversations with community partners and change individual practices to promote equitable participation and power-sharing in the collaboration.

Who Should Care Most?

- Academic researchers working with community partners in CBPR collaborations.
- Community members and stakeholders working with researchers to leverage participatory approaches to research to strengthen their community-led initiatives to promote health and equity.

Recommendations for Action

- Include critical reflexive exercises, collective conversations, and power mapping activities for researchers and community partners to engage throughout the collaboration.
- Consider mobilizing stakeholders across research institutions and community-based organizations to engage in interpersonal and institutional changes that promote ethical relationality toward participatory and transformative science.