

Advancing Racial Equity Through Research & Community Engaged Methods

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Presenter Introductions



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Agenda

- Guidance for advancing racial equity in research and implications for community-engaged methods
- A community-based research partnership: Newark, NJ
- Equitable communication
- Q/A

Guidance for integrating racial equity and community engagement methods in research

Jenita Parekh & Kristine Andrews

What is equity in research?

Those most impacted by racial inequity are at the forefront of co-designing research, solutions, and policies that impact their lives

Guiding principles for integrating racial equity



1. Examine our backgrounds and biases.
2. Commit to digging deeper into the data.
3. Know our work has an impact on communities.
4. Engage communities as partners in research and credit their contribution.
5. Guard against the assumption that White is the normative or default position.

Principle 1: Examine our backgrounds and biases

Bias affects research and how you engage with community members

- the kinds of research questions you ask (or don't)
- who you collect (or don't collect) data from
- how you interpret data



Practical Tips:

- Schedule time for team self-reflection to assess bias
- Expand your definition of “key informants” (e.g., non-participants)

Principle 3: Your work has impact

- Researchers and funders play a role in ensuring research benefits communities
- What do communities want in return for their contribution?
- How are their solutions being prioritized? How might their solutions be different than yours?



Practical Tip:

Ask communities what they want and be open to ideas beyond financial incentives (e.g., capacity-building and research training opportunities)

Application throughout the research process



Landscape Assessment



Design



Data Collection



Data Analysis



Dissemination

Each research stage contains:

- A narrative
- Questions to ask yourself
- Toolkit

Design and Data Collection

This section will explore how to create research questions that incorporate a racial and ethnic perspective and how to design the research study; additionally, this section will discuss the value of diverse research teams, and the creation and testing of data collection instruments.

Develop equitable research questions

The goal of working toward equitable outcomes (outcomes for all children and families regardless of race/ethnicity) should guide researchers in developing their research questions. Questions should intentionally focus on advancing racial and ethnic equity and/or minimizing harmful effects for communities of color. While some research is investigator initiated, other research answers questions that are predetermined by the funder. In these cases, embedding racial and ethnic equity can be difficult when a funder determines the research questions, especially when the project's goal, scope and questions are unrelated to equity. However, even with funder-determined research questions, the researcher has some agency, and can propose widening or altering the question to insert a racial and ethnic equity perspective. For example, the researcher can ask: What are the intended equitable end conditions in the community and how will they be measured?

Questions to ask yourself

- Are the community's values represented in the research questions?
- Have the researchers identified how the answers to the research questions will benefit the community?
- Do the research questions account for the cultural and historical context of the community?

Each research stage contains:

- A narrative
- **Questions to ask yourself**
- Toolkit

Questions to ask yourself

- Are the community's values represented in the research questions?
- Have the researchers identified how the answers to the research questions will benefit the community?
- Do the research questions account for the cultural and historical context of the community?
- How much time will key stakeholders need to invest in your research project?
- How will you compensate key stakeholders for the time they have invested in your project?
- Do you have a diverse research team that can bring their perspectives into the entire construction of the entire research process?
- Has your research team been trained to listen intently and collect credible evidence?
- How will the you researcher address inherent power differentials and dynamics that arise in the research?

Each research stage contains:

- A narrative
- Questions to ask yourself
- **Toolkit**

Your Toolkit

- Develop research questions that reflect the community's values and perspectives.
- Create research questions that consider the community's context by examining how race, language, power, and privilege shape structural inequities.
- Engage community stakeholders to understand what type(s) of data the community trusts.
- Determine how the community likes to receive data and ensure the data accurately reflects their preferences. Create racially and ethnically diverse research teams and encourage them to incorporate multiple perspectives to be incorporated in the research.
- Train the research team to look for verbal and nonverbal cues, challenge personal assumptions and biases, look for verbal and nonverbal cues, and take note of behavioral or verbal nuances.
- Cognitively test instruments with your specific population.

Research Process:

Data Collection

Do you have a diverse research team?

- Race
- Gender
- Lived experience



Practical Tip: Hire consultants, if necessary.

Has your research team been trained to collect credible data?

- Challenge assumptions
- Behavioral and verbal nuance



Practical Tip: Carefully select and train data collectors

How will you address inherent power differentials?

- Be transparent
- Advocate for research participants' agency in how data is used and interpreted



Practical Tip: Openly discuss power dynamics

A community-based research partnership in Newark, NJ

Chrishana M. Lloyd

Research Process:

Data Collection



Landscape Assessment



Design



Data Collection



Data Analysis



Dissemination

Overview

- South Ward Promise Neighborhood (SWPN)
- Overview of the data collection process using community-based and racial equity lenses

South Ward Promise Neighborhood (SWPN)

- Federally-funded, 5-year, place-based initiative
- Predominantly African American community in the South Ward of Newark, NJ
- Collaboration between anchor organization and >25 organizations

South Ward Promise Neighborhood (SWPN)

Priorities:

- Recognize and respect community history
- Include community voice
- Be strengths-based and asset-focused
- Use a racial-equity framework

Year 1 : 2018 SWPN Community Survey

Randomized
**door-to door
survey**

Adults 18+
(participant
incentives)

12 surveyors
(paid and survey
completion incentives;
SWPN swag)

**6-week
survey window**
(1,500 mailers sent to
announce the effort)

**367 survey
responses**
collected

Conceptualizing the Community Surveyor Position

- Project consistency
- Community and individual capacity building
- Social and economic justice

Locating and Hiring Community Surveyors

- **Recruited via SWPN, school, and community networks**
 - Program participants (i.e., school parents)
 - People program participants knew
 - People program staff knew
- **Final Pool**
 - A team of 12 surveyors which included 2 team leads
 - SWPN program staff

Setting the Stage for Data Collection

Opportunities for connection and knowledge building:

- Introduction to the project (icebreakers and key questions)
- Human subjects and consent training (external research team)
- Technology training
- Piloted the fielding process
- Post fielding debriefs

Project Evolution

Ongoing conversations to:

- Develop safety protocols
- Agree on the project workload division and management structure
- Develop decision-making and conflict resolution processes (e.g., which decisions need team consensus)
- Assess the effectiveness of the surveying processes (e.g., equitable decision-making, power differentials)
- Attend to trust and relationship maintenance



Equitable Communication

Esther Gross

Research Process:

Dissemination



Landscape Assessment



Design



Data Collection



Data Analysis



Dissemination

An Interdependent Relationship

- Demonstrate respect
- Promote transparency
- Encourage deeper understanding



Three Guidelines for Equitable Research Communication

1

Say what you mean,
using person-
centered language

2

Do not center one
type of person as
the norm

3

Put data in context



1

Say what you mean, using person-centered* language

Call people what they want to be called

Engage and elevate the voices of community stakeholders

Be specific

Be clear on who is included and who is not

Avoid euphemism

E.g., diverse, vulnerable, underserved, marginalized

Don't label people with stigmatizing circumstances

If it is not an identity, do not use it as a label. If it is an identity, how would people refer to themselves?



- Diverse children
- Non-English speakers
- Low-income parents
- Marginalized, underserved, minority communities
- Children with special needs



- Black and Indigenous children
- Spanish speakers
- Parents who earn less than \$22,000/year
- Black, Indigenous, communities of color
- Disabled children or children with disabilities

3 Put data in context

- Presenting disparities data without context can be harmful
- Partner with communities to investigate systems-level explanations for differences
- People skim, so include context early and often



How could this finding be misinterpreted?



If we cannot provide context, could presenting this finding do harm?

Thank you!

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