Researcher’s Perspective: Indigenous approaches to Participatory Research

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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed are those of the presenters and may not necessarily reflect Montana State University.
“Valley of the Flowers”

“Valley of the Chokecherries”

“The Good Camp”

“Full of Berries”

“The Big Valley with the Mountains”
Researcher: Hi I’m Dr. Smith I’m here to conduct some research in your community

Community Woman: yeah?

Researcher: We’re studying diabetes

Community Woman: ummmm

Researcher: We’d like to ask you some questions. We received a grant to learn about diabetes in your community.

Community Woman: What are you going to do with this research?
You are the researcher. What would you say?

A. I need to get tenure and publish
B. I am going to share the information with tribal health, and work with tribal members to develop a diabetes prevention program.
C. I am interested in your tribe’s terrible diabetes epidemic
My Background: Indigenous Research Approaches

Tribal Member

Academic Researcher

Indigenous Research Approaches

CBPR Approaches

Guardians of the Living Water

Messengers for Health
Community-Based Participatory Research

“A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community and has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change . . .”

W.K. Kellogg Community Health Scholars Program
Challenge of Research/Community Relationships

Shared University/Community Control

University Control CBPR Community Control

Wallerstein et al.
Indigenous Approaches to Research

Methods for acquiring knowledge are as important as actual knowledge.

Principles of Indigenous methodology are incorporated throughout the research process.
Relevance

- Community Partners:
  - Identify health topic
- And work together to:
  - Design intervention approach
  - Plan evaluation
  - Implement program and evaluation
  - Propose dissemination plans
Risk of Exposure

Literacy Skills

Resources

Water Security
Protecting Our Water Sources
Relationships

Montana State University

Crow Agency

Public School
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Include</th>
<th>Include key community leaders</th>
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<tr>
<td>Provide</td>
<td>Provide direction and advice for all areas of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have</td>
<td>Have a variety of experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit</td>
<td>Benefit from shared Expertise</td>
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Near Peer Mentors
Engaging Youth

Challenge and Encourage
Interact with the Community
Integrate Indigenous knowledge and Culture
Maintaining Engagement

Trust is integral to the success of the partnership.

Trust is built between project partners and expanded throughout the community.

Recruitment and retention require a variety of communication strategies.

Children and Families often have multiple obligations.
Respect
Social and Political Contexts

- Appreciate Tribal sovereignty
- Acknowledge history of colonization
- Address stereotypes
- Recognize complex jurisdictional issues
Responsibility

- Make sure program is valuable to the community.
- Make sure that program is conducted in culturally centered manner.
- Make sure program is sustainable.
Representation
Reciprocity

Share back with the community.

Make sure the research benefits the community.
Centering Crow Cultural Values

- Integrate Western and Indigenous Ways of Knowing
- Respect storytellers and stories
- Develop new methods for analyzing data
Values

Gratitude

Only take what you need

Reciprocity: “Take care of the land and the land takes care of us” & “Giving back to community”

“Crow country is the most beautiful place on earth”

Generational Learning & Clan System

Resiliency
Crow Knowledge

Water is sacred element of creation story.

Water is powerful and takes care of us.

Observation: Knowing what the weather would be like depending on how plump the berry bushes were.
Practices

Feeding the River
Prayer
Sun Dance
Sweat Lodge
“Every story has an Indigenous perspective, an Apsáalooke side of story that is equally important.”

Mentors bring who they are into their research.
God, Creator, Universe—all encompassing, the backdrop to everything

Ullrich, J. S. (2019)
History

The story of Columbus's voyage to the New World is often told as an exploration of the unknown. But what many people don't know is that the Americas were not empty lands waiting to be discovered. Indigenous peoples had been living in the region for thousands of years, and they had their own cultures, languages, and ways of life.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, the Americas were home to a diverse range of peoples, each with their own unique languages, traditions, and technologies. The indigenous people of the Americas were skilled farmers and hunters, and they had developed complex societies that were based on cooperation and the sharing of resources.

The arrival of Europeans in the Americas had a profound impact on the indigenous peoples of the region. The introduction of new diseases, such as smallpox and influenza, led to devastating losses of life, and the forced displacement of peoples from their homelands through colonization and slavery.

Despite the challenges faced by indigenous peoples in the Americas, their cultures and traditions continue to thrive. Today, many indigenous communities are working to preserve their languages, customs, and ways of life, and to ensure that future generations will have access to the knowledge and wisdom of their ancestors.

In conclusion, the story of Columbus's voyage to the New World is a complex one that requires us to consider the perspectives of all those involved. By learning about the indigenous peoples of the Americas, we can better understand the history of the region, and work towards a more equitable future.
Parent Perspective:
“If the children can convince their families and their friends, and then they’ll convince the community and you know we all need to take initiative to help clean our water.”
Newsletter

Guardians of Living Water
Newsletter
Wednesday June 22, 2022

**News Bulletin**

- We learned about bacteria and how to test water for bacteria.
- We talked about filtering and testing water for different contaminants.
- We learned about well water. If you need to get your well tested you can call John Doyle at 608-3155.
- Ask about today’s stream assessment.

**What does it mean to be a Guardian?**

We observe our water sources and can tell if the river is healthy or not. We can think about reasons that our stream may not be that healthy and find ways to make them healthier.

**Reminders for Tomorrow**

- Remember to do the take-home activity on the next page!
- Tomorrow, we will be traveling to Two Leggings. Remember to wear closed-toe shoes and prepare to be outside. Reminder to parents: You are welcome to join us on this field trip if you would like.

**Back Yard Adventure**

Today, we spent time outside along the Little Bighorn River looking at the health of the river and taking water samples.

**Take Home Activity**

Below is a picture of the Little Bighorn River, where we visited today. Tell your family about the assessment we did there. What would you look for when completing a stream assessment? Was there pollution? Write your answers in the space below. We will talk about them tomorrow.

Write down your stream assessment notes here:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
Impact of Programs
Recommendations

Incorporating culture vs. Being culturally centered

Involving partners in all phases vs. community-driven

Adding community empowerment as intervention objective
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How Indigenized CBPR is like traditional research & how is it different?

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<tr>
<th>Goal of Research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source of Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of Researchian</td>
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<td>Role of Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship of researcher to Participants</td>
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<td>Value of Research</td>
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<td>Ownership of Data</td>
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<td>Means of Dissemination</td>
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(Strand K, et al. 2003)
Building Trust—Managing Expectations

- Requires attention to expectations and needs of each partner
- Benefits from long-term partnerships
- Respectful approaches can help overcome conflicting priorities
“You have the strength of the clan system of the Crows’ powerful culture that’s here, very powerful. You know it’s the love of our people as Apsáalooke, of Crow people....It’s so strong there are no words to describe how strong it is,”
Indigenous & Rural Health PhD Program
Creating a Culture of Wellness

Seek advice from respected community members

Build Supportive Relationships

Support Distance Learners
2022 First IRH Cohort
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Artwork by Susan Stewart (Apsáalooke)
References


