Community Engaged Participatory Action Research (CE-PAR) Guideline Recommendations

Drafted by CUST804 F20

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What is CE-PAR: Community Engaged Participatory Action Research?

CE-PAR is a process that prioritizes collaboration with a community throughout research that intends to create a positive impact for that community. CE-PAR starts with identifying "an issue or situation in need of change" (Kindon et al 2007, p.1). It is dynamic research that evolves through reciprocal relationships and remains flexible and open throughout the process: from identifying the research question to research (re)design to data collection to modes of dissemination. It also acknowledges an ongoing responsibility to communities and partnerships following the dissemination of findings. The power structures that underscore the research process should be distributed equitably and fluidly amongst community members and between the community and researcher(s) (as much as is achievable) in order to prioritize the needs of the community as defined *by* the community. It is in essence an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary methodology drawing on a range of humanities, social sciences, and research-creation methods/approaches. CE-PAR embraces non-traditional ways of knowledge production, expressions, and distribution methods. These approaches could include decolonial modes of inquiry and reciprocal knowledge production, that have traditionally been on the outside of many research practices. This opens up the coexistence of multiple approaches to CE-PAR.

We use the term 'engaged' to take account of the various dynamic ways that communities and researchers negotiate levels of initiation, responsibility, and control of the project. CE-PAR aspires to mutual flourishing among all partners and participants in an emancipatory framework, while also recognizing the fundamentally complex social structures at play. Its aspirational aims are to be based on community and interpersonal relationships that are "hope-full" (Kenway et al). It rejects competitive, individualistic, and dehumanizing academic and intellectual practices, as well as models of 'deserving' and 'respectability'. The CE-PAR process employs professional empathy, and fosters collective care and collaboration, while also encouraging a defiant research imagination that avoids "damaged-based frameworks" and supports "desire-based research" (Tuck, 2009). It asks us to be people first, and researchers second. Continued, sustained, and expansive relations shape participant and community engagement, which goes beyond the development of mainstream research designs and research objectives. This can be defined as "relational research" (CUST 804 F20) and aims to produce tangible outcomes designed by the community.

Action is a fundamental aspect of this research process. CE-PAR is praxis-oriented, creative, transformative, and healing; it aims to result in positive material change and emancipation. Action should include a change that positively impacts community participants as well as the wider community. It should involve continued, sustained, and expansive activism within and beyond the research work.

We recognize that CE-PAR demands complex ethical, logistical, personal, and financial resources that go beyond traditional researcher-driven approaches (see Recommendations and Resources on pages 2 & 3).

Principles:

- Equitability: Community plays a crucial role in defining the research question and scope of the project and retains critical decision-making power.
- Reflexivity: Maintain an ongoing reflexive and cyclical process that is aware of oppressive structures within which you function as an academic in an individual, systemic, and institutionalized context.
- Accessibility: The use of academic language should be minimized when possible. The final product is encouraged to be open-access and/or available to the public. It must be shared with the community.
- Reciprocity: The process should be mutually beneficial with the contributions of the researcher(s) and community being equally valued, recognized, and rooted in relationality.

Challenges and Warnings:

CE-PAR has many ethical, personal, and institutional challenges. However, it is a powerful research methodology that contributes to transformative social justice goals.

- Community Building: Resources must be available for community-building. Community support and capacity building for communities should be a priority.
- Feasibility: CE-PAR requires time and money. Be aware of institutional and administrative limits to ensure completion and look for collaborative and creative ways to challenge them.
- Wellness: CE-PAR can be emotionally and mentally challenging. Checking up on your own mental health and emotional wellbeing is a crucial part of maintaining healthy relationships with the community (see Resources on page 3).

Other recommendations:

Practitioners can use qualitative methods, quantitative methods, or a triangulation of both, but they are strongly encouraged to employ affective, critical, participatory, and creative

methodologies and theories that run counter to the traditional practices of academic inquiry. We also recognize that methodologies, methods, theories, and epistemologies are inextricably linked and therefore influence research outcomes.

CE-PAR projects may draw on a range of humanities, social science, and research-creation methods/approaches as appropriate to the scope and terms of the project defined in consultation with the community. The final product can be a conventional dissertation or thesis, a research creation project, or a combination of multiple ways of knowledge mobilization and research in the form of a portfolio. Similarly, the progress reports for CE-PAR practitioners might include: fieldnotes, early photovoice data, artistic creation, autoethnographic writing, essays in both academic and non-academic formats, cultural production, conference presentations, workshops, and community organization and/or cultural events. It is strongly encouraged that the outcome be shared with the community before the thesis or dissertation defense.

A CE-PAR project typically begins with a preliminary consultation phase in which the researcher(s) works with the community to define the terms and scope of the research project. Formal research ethics clearance is not usually required before this consultation process begins, but students are advised to seek the guidance of their supervisor or the Unit Research Ethics Board before the consultation phase to be aware of any ethical issues that they will be facing during this consultation process. This may include addressing community agencies and partners' own ethics procedures. As a general framework, the project proposal should report on the outcome of this consultation process and define the scope and terms of the proposed research that has been agreed to in consultation with the community.

Students undertaking the CE-PAR project option are encouraged to include a community representative as an additional member of their supervisory committee.

- Consider citing and using alternative knowledge keepers beyond or in the margins of academia.
- Cultural sensitivity training is strongly encouraged when appropriate
- Do no harm!
- Conflict resolution methods should be established with community participants and followed during the research action(s), when appropriate.
- Carefully consider how to choose the participants within the community for the research –I.e., avoiding coercion, considering power dynamics within the community, and the risks and implications of involvement.

Resources:

In recognition of the additional costs that CE-PAR projects frequently require to maintain communications with the community in question, or to conduct change-oriented

projects with communities, the program will make available a sum of money to be determined annually by the Director(s) to support such projects. Funds are allocated through a competitive application process. Travel expenses that are normally covered by the Graduate Dean's Doctoral Field Research Grant may not be covered in this way.

The Community Based Research Sub-Committee at Cultural Studies provides a network of support. Contact Faculty Co-Chair Dr. Ayca Tomac (ayca.tomac@queensu.ca) and/or Student Co-Chair Darren Zanussi (darren.zanussi@queensu.ca) to become involved.

The following resources can be useful in designing and pursuing a CEPAR project:

TCPS 2: CORE — Tutorial

Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2- 2014)

Indigenous Research Ethics

Indigenous Research at Queen's

Canadian Institute of Health Research

Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute

Queen's Office of Indigenous Initiatives Workshops and Trainings

Human Rights and Equity Office at Queen's

Wellness Services

Further Readings on CE-PAR:

Bradbury-Huang, H. (2015). The SAGE Handbook of Action Research. SAGE Publications.

Community-based participatory research : assessing the evidence. (2004). Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality US.

Graham, I., Logan, J., Harrison, M., Straus, S., Tetroe, J., Caswell, W., & Robinson, N. (2006). Lost in knowledge translation: Time for a map? The Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions, 26(1), 13–24. https://doi.org/10.1002/chp.47

Hacker, K. (2013). Community-based participatory research. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Hall, B. (2005). In from the cold?: Reflections on participatory research from 1970-2005. Convergence (Toronto), 38(1), 5–24.

Horowitz, C., Robinson, M., & Seifer, S. (2009). Community-Based Participatory Research From the Margin to the Mainstream Are Researchers Prepared? Circulation (New York, N.Y.), 119(19), 2633–2642. https://doi.org/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.107.729863

Kindon, S., Pain, R., & Kesby, M. (2007). Participatory Action Research approaches and methods : connecting people, participation and place . Routledge.

Reyes Cruz, M. (2008). What If I Just Cite Graciela? Working Toward Decolonizing Knowledge Through a Critical Ethnography. Qualitative Inquiry, 14(4), 651–658. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800408314346

Stoecker, R. (1999). Are Academics Irrelevant?: Roles for Scholars in Participatory Research. The American Behavioral Scientist (Beverly Hills), 42(5), 840–854. https://doi.org/10.1177/00027649921954561

Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities. Harvard Educational Review, 79(3), 409–428. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.79.3.n0016675661t3n15

Wallerstein, N., Duran, B., Oetzel, J., & Minkler, M. (2018). Community-based participatory research for health : advancing social and health equity (Third edition.). Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Brand.