

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

CBPR is an approach to conducting research rather than a research design or method. Many observers and researchers have offered sets of principles that help to define the approach, and, although no two sets are exactly alike, they have much in common. One commonality is their relatively elevated degree of erudition, which may make at least some of the principles relatively remote to community partners.

The NBLIC developed a set of principles that resonate well in the African-American community and, because they reflect familiar themes, are readily committed to memory. They are fewer in number than the principles listed in other compilations but nonetheless capture the important points. Since they emphasize trust and solidarity, they support the CBPR approach without necessarily specifying details.

Like other sets of CBPR principles, these seven do not represent an algorithm or recipe for conducting community-based research. Rather, these principles, and others, help define the approach that researchers and community partners take in designing and implementing research projects. They may be consulted as protocols are drawn up and, subsequently, they may be used as criteria against which a project may be measured to determine the extent to which it is truly community-based (or community-centered) and participatory (Braun, K. L., 2012).

This report describes how one set of principles – designed for application in the African-American community – was used in developing and implementing a CBPR project. A potential limitation of these principles is that they may only resonate well in the African-American community; they would likely not be as familiar to members of, for instance, Haitian, Afro Caribbean, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander or Native American communities. This report on efforts by NBLIC and EPICS staff to develop CBPR principles for the African American community will hopefully interest other communities and cultures that may wish to consider similarly norming CBPR principles to their own contexts and traditions. A similar community-based participatory process could be used to create similarly guiding principles that are tailored to specific cultural traditions.

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