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Building Trust and Conducting Research with Minoritized Communities

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Overview

The lack of diverse participants in our research can lead to issues of generalizability, inability to address social and health disparities, and perpetuation of stereotypes, among many other issues. For example, it became quite clear during COVID-19 in the United States, the inequities that existed in health care access and quality and disparities in health outcomes for minoritized communities. Such inequities and disparities are also found in research practice in many fields, including cognitive science. For example, research with Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) populations has been highlighted as problematic (Ceci, Kahan, & Braman, 2010; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010), yet the inclusion of diverse participants in research remains lacking.

Including diverse research participants is not easy. It is not just simply saying you will recruit more diverse participants, and then they arrive. Some barriers to including diverse research participants include: 1) the lack of trust between members of minoritized communities and research communities, 2) the knowledge and skill to work with minoritized communities that promotes positive interactions and benefits for all parties involved, and 3) the lack of diversity of researchers themselves (Meadon & Spurrett, 2010). The last point is beyond the scope of this Tutorial, but we encourage attendees to consider their role in building a more diverse research community moving forward.

This Tutorial will provide an opportunity for cognitive scientists to learn more about Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), a framework for conducting research that promotes trust and can be used to engage in research with minoritized communities. There will be two presentations by cognitive science researchers sharing their lived experiences in building trust and conducting research with minoritized communities. This will be followed up by a presentation focused on the role of our institutions in supporting research with diverse communities. Finally, there will be a general discussion period for attendees to ask questions, share their ideas, and discuss ways to address hurdles in achieving more inclusive research practices in their own works.

Community-Based Participatory Research: Applying a Public Health Framework to the Cognitive Sciences

Kae Savar, Graduate Student at the University at Buffalo, co-authored and presented by Dr. Nichol Castro, Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo.

Many are well aware of the metaphor that academia is an "ivory tower" for many reasons, including the perception that academics are not concerned with the "real world" resulting in niche research with limited societal impact. Potentially, one cause of this perception stems from a lack of inclusion of community stakeholders in the direction of research, leading to a major gap between what researchers think is important and what community members think is important. This gap in research priorities is exacerbated when researchers enter communities, particularly those communities with whom the researcher is not a member, without first building trust and establishing partnerships. For example, the growing call for more diverse participants cannot be accomplished without bringing in participants from diverse backgrounds. However, this is much simpler said than done, and if not done carefully can have detrimental impact.

This presentation will overview Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR; Viswanathan et al., 2004; Sandoval et al., 2011), a framework often used in public health. CBPR aims to bring researchers and stakeholders together as a way to ensure that research questions and practices are appropriate, successful, and impactful. Critically, one of the goals of CBPR is to have buy-in from stakeholders from the outset, rather than trying to shape already designed or conducted research to fit the community. The purpose of presenting CBPR in this Tutorial is to help cognitive scientists develop methods and practices that will, in the long run, broaden the scope of our research questions, lead to the inclusion of diverse research participants, and increase the generalizability of our research to society.

Developing Relationships with Community Partners

Dr. Eliana Colunga, Associate Professor at the University of Colorado Boulder

Community-engaged research involves working collaboratively with members of a community to address issues of interest to them. In doing this work, it is important

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to identify the stakeholders in the community and form relationships with members of the different groups to jointly develop a flexible agenda. It is also important to consider that the products of this work can take different forms beyond what is traditionally valued in academia. In this talk I will draw on nearly a decade of experience working with members of low income and immigrant communities to discuss best practices and lessons learned.

Longitudinal research with Black and Hispanic/Latinx autistic youth with language impairment: Lessons learned and pathways forward

Dr. Teresa Girolamo, Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Connecticut, will deliver this talk, co-authored by Dr. Samantha Ghali, Doctoral Student at the University of Kansas

Clinical research systematically excludes minoritized individuals. This talk discusses a community-based approach to engage minoritized youth with language impairment in research. Implementing a package of community-based strategies was effective in recruiting and retaining 14 minoritized participants with language impairment to research (Black: n = 10; multiracial: n = 1; Hispanic/Latinx: n = 6) over 6 years, including during COVID-19. Upon contacting potential participants, retention was near 100%. Efficiency improved, with a cumulative 78% and 10.85 hour decrease in time cost and 90% and $600 decrease in financial cost per participant. This presentation will overview key takeaways from these findings with respect to ongoing research with this community and building multidisciplinary, participatory methods.

Organizational strategies to engage diverse communities in research

Dr. Laurene Tumiel-Berhalter, Associate Professor and Director of Community Engagement for the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University at Buffalo

The city of Buffalo, NY is a diverse community with 50% of the population underrepresented minorities- a microcosm of the US demographic projected for the year 2050. This presentation will describe the University at Buffalo's Clinical and Translational Science Institute commitment to engaging this diverse community as participants and partners in research and will share strategies on how they have accomplished this, the integration of the principles of CBPR, and the role of their community partners.

Discussion

The Discussion portion of our Tutorial will be moderated by Dr. Natasha Tokowicz, Professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

Acknowledgments

This Tutorial is sponsored by the SPARK Society (sparksociety.org), a group of scholars seeking to *spark* change in Cognitive Science, with support from the Cognitive Science Conference Program Committee. The goal of the SPARK Society is to create networks and promote the professional development of historically excluded scholars of African American/Black, Latina/o/e/x American, and Native American heritage in the Cognitive Sciences.

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