Applying Mixed Methods in Community-Based Action Research: A Framework for Engaging Stakeholders with Health Care Systems

Nataliya V. Ivankova, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor
Health Services Administration, School of Health Professions
Acute, Chronic and Continuing Care, School of Nursing
The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Dr. Nataliya Ivankova holds a dual appointment as Associate Professor in the Department of Health Services Administration (School of Health Professions) and the Department of Acute, Chronic and Continuing Care (School of Nursing) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She is nationally and internationally recognized for her empirical and methodological work in qualitative and mixed methods research. She teaches graduate level courses in mixed methods and qualitative research, serves as a co-investigator on funded projects in social and health sciences, and mentors doctoral students and junior faculty. Her long-standing interest is in the applications of mixed methods in community-based participatory action research and translational research, which resulted in a recently published book Mixed Methods Applications in Action Research: From Methods to Community Action. Dr. Ivankova is a founding Co-editor with Vicki Plano Clark of Mixed Methods Research Series with Sage Publications; she serves as Associate Editor of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research and a Qualitative Research Editor of the American Journal of Health Behavior. She is a member of MMIRA Executive Committee and is a Chair of Marketing & Communication Committee.

ABSTRACT

This presentation advances a new mixed methods methodological framework for community-based action research (CBAR) as a means for promoting patient-centeredness and enhancing patient/stakeholder engagement with health care systems. CBAR has long been applied in health services research as a tool to engage patients and other stakeholders as co-researchers and to promote their critical involvement with the study outcomes. When combined with mixed methods, CBAR can assist stakeholders in developing better appreciation for a data-driven decision-making process by capitalizing on the advantages of integrating quantitative and qualitative methods.

Mixed methods research is well positioned to provide a rigorous methodological foundation for CBAR by combining qualitative stakeholder engagement methods with quantitative outcome-based oriented approaches to identify effective strategies for improvement of healthcare delivery systems. Developing, implementing and evaluating an intervention grounded in a systematic assessment of the problem from multiple stakeholder perspectives can provide strong support for developing evidence-based plans for improvement in the process of fostering a meaningful change.

This theoretical argument is grounded in the methodological literature about CBAR and mixed methods research, a critical analysis of over 50 published empirical CBAR studies in health services.
research that utilized mixed methods, and the author’s experiences with and reflections about conceptual and methodological connections between mixed methods and CBAR.

There are a number of common features between mixed methods and CBAR that make the integration of the two approaches possible and justifiable. A new mixed methods methodological framework for CBAR follows the action research methodological steps and captures the synergetic combination of the two approaches by integrating mixed methods into each step in the CBAR process. This framework is one illustration of using mixed methods to facilitate patient-centered research. It can provide a framework for developing patient/stakeholder engagement plans and facilitating the process of translation of the generated evidence into practice.

No handouts were provided for this presentation:

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