Pragmatic Action Research: Latino Elders and Formerly Incarcerated Women
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PROBLEM: Eliminating health disparities involving vulnerable populations is a major national priority. The challenge is how to include the vulnerable population in the research process to positively affect nursing practice. The authors examine how the model was put into action for two distinct programs of research.

EVIDENCE: Exemplar 1: Mexican American elders were vulnerable to under-using home care services. Exemplar 2: Formerly incarcerated women were vulnerable to not having comprehensive wrap-around services following incarceration.

STRATEGY: Strategies for pragmatic action research can be described by three characteristics: construction of arenas for dialogue, cogenerative research, and the use of multiple methods (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).

PRACTICE CHANGE: Exemplar 1: Latino elders required culturally appropriate approaches at locations in which one-on-one, personal communication was possible. Exemplar 2: The nurse researcher and chaplain met with emerging leaders of formerly incarcerated women to share and make decisions.

EVALUATION: Strategies related to engaged participation were expected to enhance participation, to obtain evidence that would empower populations and sustain solutions in nursing practice.

RESULTS: Exemplar 1: Latino elders and caregivers were integral to ensuring instruments in Spanish were conceptually/language equivalent, recruitment/retention process was culturally appropriate; and co-designing a telenovela to promote home care services use. Exemplar 2: Formerly incarcerated women were recognized as the experts on their community needs and co-created a future research conference. In both exemplars, empowerment did exist: individuals expressed that they were in control of their own lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS: To conduct action research, ideally the community identifies the problem earlier in the process than occurred in Exemplar 1, as it did in Exemplar 2.

LESSONS LEARNED: A continued assessment of capacity, willingness to participate, equalized power, and timing, is essential for validly gaining evidence for practice (Rappaport, 1987). In both exemplars, the full community and stakeholders helped plan, evaluate, and disseminate results to effect change.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


