The Influence of Community-Based Participatory Research Principles on the Likelihood of Participation in Health Research in American Indian Communities

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Abstract

OBJECTIVES: Advocates of community-based participatory research (CBPR) have emphasized the need for such efforts to be collaborative, and close partnerships with the communities of interest are strongly recommended in developing study designs. However, to date, no systematic, empiric inquiry has been made into whether CBPR principles might influence an individual’s decision to participate in research.

DESIGN, SETTING, and PARTICIPANTS: Using vignettes that described various types of research, we surveyed 1066 American Indian students from three tribal colleges/universities to ascertain the extent to which respondent age, gender, education, cultural affiliation, tribal status, and prior experience with research may interact with the implementation of critical CBPR principles to increase or decrease the likelihood of participating in health research.

RESULTS: Many factors significantly increased odds of participation and included the study’s being conducted by a tribal college/university or national organization, involving the community in study development, an American Indian’s leading the study, addressing serious health problems of concern to the community, bringing money into the community, providing new treatments or services, compensation, anonymity, and using the information to answer new questions. Decreased odds of participation were related to possible discrimination against one’s family, tribe, or racial group; lack of confidentiality; and possible physical harm.

CONCLUSIONS: Employing CBPR principles such as community involvement in all phases of the research, considering the potential benefits of the research, building on strengths and resources within the community and considering how results will be used is essential to conceptualizing, designing, and implementing successful health research in partnership with American Indians.