

Pragmatic Action Research with Vulnerable Populations: Mexican- American Elders, Formerly Incarcerated Women, and Additional Examples




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Objectives

- To describe the driving forces for pragmatic action research in today's healthcare system
- To delineate the participation action research (PAR) methodology, and
- To provide examples of PAR with Mexican American Elders, Formerly Incarcerated Women, and in Healthcare Systems, and Lessons Learned.



International Health Policy

WHO Reform October 2011

- Envisioning a world where
 - gaps in health outcomes are narrowed;
 - access to universal health care has expanded;
 - countries have resilient health systems, based on primary health care, which are able to meet the expectations and needs of their people, reach internationally agreed health goals, control noncommunicable diseases and cope with disease outbreaks and natural disasters.



National Health Policy and Strategies

- Healthy People 2020 reflects a vision of a society in which all people live long, healthy lives.
 - Increase quality and years of healthy life
 - Eliminate health disparities

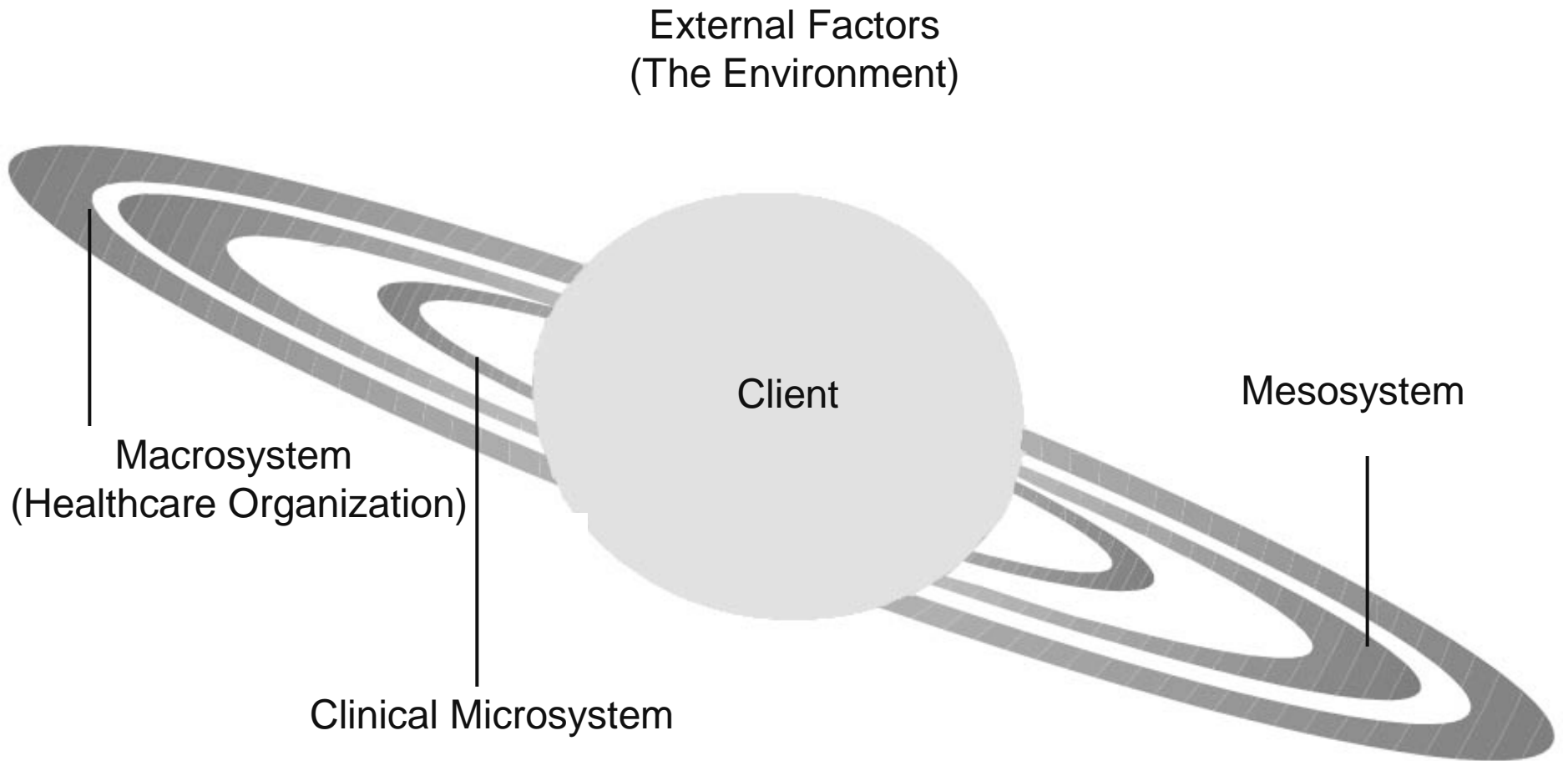


National Policy Recommendations

An Institute of Medicine Review

- IOM Series: Recommended Four Levels of Intervention in the Health Care Delivery System
 - External Factors
 - Health Care Organizations
 - Functioning of Small Units of Care Delivery
 - Experience of Patients

Systems Framework for Policy & Strategy





National Policy Recommendations: An Institute of Medicine Review

- IOM (2000). To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System.
 - Estimated that as many as 98,000 Americans dies each year while hospitalized as result of errors in their care, not as a result of their disease or illness
 - Identified as the 4th Level by IOM – policy, payment, regulation, accreditation, etc.



National Policy Recommendations: An Institute of Medicine Review

- IOM (2001). Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century.
 - The Functioning of Small Units of Care Delivery
 - The Clinical Microsystem
 - The Experience of Patients
 - Identified by IOM as the 3rd Level of Intervention

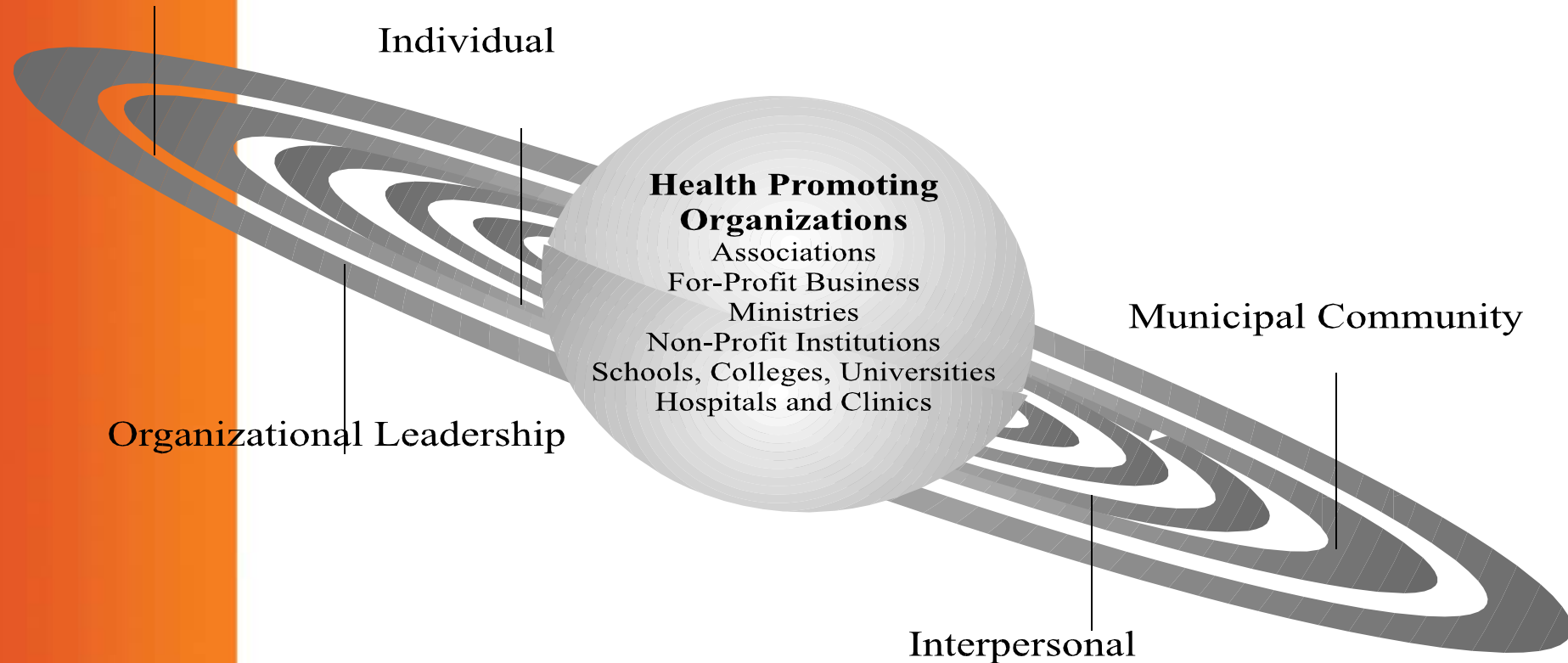


National Policy Recommendations: An Institute of Medicine Review

- In Every Clinical Microsystem
 - Six Aims for Outcomes
 - Safe
 - Effective
 - Patient-centered
 - Timely
 - Efficient
 - Equitable

Health Promoting Organizations Model: Intervention Levels Within an Ecological Framework

Public Policy



Source: Parsons ML. Health promoting organizations:
A systems model for advanced practice. Holistic
Nursing Practice. 1999;3(4); 80-89.



Health Promoting Organization

- A community that designs activities and programs
 - To increase control over and improve social and environmental living conditions
 - To enable individuals to increase control over and improve their health




Guiding Conceptual Framework

- Health Promoting Organization
 - Social Ecological Perspective
 - Holistic Health: Mind, body, & Spirit
 - Systems Theory and Participation



Participatory Research

- Definitions
 - “Action research is social research carried out by a team encompassing a professional action researcher and member of an organization or community seeking to improve their situation”. (Greenwood and Levin, 2007)
 - “Collaborative approach to inquiry that provides people with the means to take systematic action to resolve specific problems”. (Stringer, 2007)



Overview of Pragmatic Action Research: Latino Elders & Formerly Incarcerated Women

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The University of Arizona
- Mickey L. Parsons, PhD, MHA, RN, FAAN,
UT Health Science Center, San Antonio
- Carmen Warner Robbins, RN, MSN, MAT,
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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.



EVIDENCE: 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.



PRACTICE CHANGE: 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.



RESULTS: Exemplar 2

- Formerly incarcerated women were recognized as the experts on their community needs and co-created a future research conference.



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- ❑ In both exemplars, empowerment did exist: *individuals expressed that they were in control of their own lives.*
- ❑ In both exemplars, the full community and stakeholders helped:
 - plan,
 - evaluate, and
 - disseminate results to effect change.



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).



Welcome Home Ministries (WHM) More Specifics

- A community faith based program for women released from jail or prison
- Goals:
 - To fully develop WHM as a Health Promoting Organization
 - Interventions to support their successful transition to the community



Brief Overview: Majority of Incarcerated Women

- ◆ Nonviolent, drug or drug related offenses, two or fewer prior convictions
- ◆ Minority ethnic group
- ◆ 25-44 years of age
- ◆ Less than high school education
- ◆ Unemployed before offense
- ◆ Custody of children and their primary support

Incarceration Model

Born
Ethnic Minority
Child Abuse
Gang Involvement
Seeking Money & Acceptance
Association with Wrong Family
Feeling Helpless, Hopeless and Trapped



Poverty
Inadequate Education
Abandoned, Rejected
Drugs
Running from the Pain of Life
In a Cycle with no Backing Out or Exit



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Welcome Home Ministries




Health Determinants and Incarceration

- Low income
- Chronic abuse and neglect
- Unending cycle




Needs Identified by the Women: Literature & WHM

- Housing
- Drug
- Counseling
- Mental Health
- Financial Aid
- Alcohol
- Counseling
- Education
- Medical Care
- Family Support
- Specific Items
- Custody of Children
- Child Care
- Parenting Classes
- Religious Support
- Legal Help



Factors That Support Successful Transition to the Community: A Qualitative Study

- Sample size $n = 27$ WHM participants
- Released from jail/prison at least 6 months
- Semi-structured & open-ended questions
- Interviews taped & transcribed
- Data analyzed utilizing content analysis



Factors That Support Successful Transition to the Community

- Key Findings:
 - Belief in God (Higher Power) a source of strength and peace in their lives
 - Freedom from addiction and importance of rehabilitation
 - Role of support groups and their “sisters” in WHM
 - Nurse-Chaplain’s jail visit and support



Participatory Research

- Initial Process
 - Based upon Emery approach to open systems and whole systems design
 - Leadership Team & researcher planned the WHM retreat
 - Search Conference
 - Two and half day search process - Green Oak Ranch
 - History, current, and desired future of WHM
 - One year post follow-up conference for evaluation



Women's Participatory Process

- Future of WHM
 - Established 6 Priorities
 - Action Planning Teams
 - Learning
 - To Set Priorities
 - To Develop A Plan
 - To Make a Group Presentation



Women's Participatory Process

- Programs - Jail Visits & Follow-ups
- Transportation - Sponsored Rides
- Housing - Sponsored Housing
- Community Awareness - Presentations
- External Resources - Legal
- Fund Raising - Events



The Outcomes

- ◆ Programs - Jail Visits & Follow-ups
 - ◆ Protocol developed and implemented
 - ◆ 53 women (13 in custody, 10 in drug rehab, & 30 in the community following release) in follow-up
- ◆ Transportation - Sponsored Rides
 - ◆ 20 women had received transportation, breakfast, WHM personal care items and tote bag upon release from jail



The Outcomes

- ◆ Community Awareness
 - ◆ Brochure developed
 - ◆ Newsletter initiated
 - ◆ Slide presentation developed
 - ◆ 43 community presentations to community groups
 - ◆ 18 WHM participated



The Outcomes

- ◆ Fund Raising
 - ◆ Donations from community groups/businesses
 - ◆ Major fund raising event held
 - ◆ Awarded small grants



Conclusion & Lessons Learned

- Through Participatory Action Research Women Released from Jail Made
 - Addressed Real Life Problems
 - Constructed meanings in the inquiry process that led to social action
 - Achieved remarkable Group and Individual Level Accomplishments



Conclusion & Lessons Learned

- Credibility/Validity & Usefulness
 - “Credibility/Validity of the action research knowledge is measured according to whether actions that arise from it solve problems (workability) and increase participants’ control over their own situation” (Levin & Greenwood, 2001, p. 105)
 - Results Demonstrate the Usefulness of Action Research with Vulnerable Populations



Conclusion & Lessons Learned

- Participatory Processes Facilitated
 - Positive Connections
 - Empowerment
 - The Women’s Capacity of Build Healthy Productive Lives
 - As Evidenced by their Group and Individual Level Accomplishments

Welcome Home Ministries: Creating the Second Five Years Through PAR



National Policy Recommendations: An Institute of Medicine Review

- IOM (2004). Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses.
 - Focuses on the HCOs and their work environments and complements the two prior IOM reports with greater specificity and addressing staffing adequacy and worker fatigue.




National Policy Recommendations: An Institute of Medicine Review

- IOM (2004). Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses.
 - Creating/achieving effective communication between nurses and leadership
 - Creating/maintaining trust throughout the organization
 - Creating a culture of openness with regard to error reporting and prevention: Just Culture



National Policy Recommendations: An Institute of Medicine Review

- IOM (2004). Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses.
 - Involve staff in decision making pertaining to work design and work flow
 - Promotes inter-professional collaboration
 - Supports ongoing learning and the creation of a learning organization



Utilizing PAR to Create Positive Work Environments and Impact Quality Outcomes: A Change Strategy that Works

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Patricia A. Cornett, EdD, MN, RN

Example: One Unit's Participants



Shared History – At Work



Shared History – At Work



Present Status: Chuck, Keep, Create



Present Status: Chuck, Keep, Create



Desirable Future - Groups

Our Desirable Future

Priorities: Voting


Action Planning



Preliminary Reporting for Each Priority

Creating a Practice Council

The Road to Paradise



Institute of Medicine (IOM) and Healthy Workplace Intervention (HWI)

IOM

- Effective Communication
- Create Trust
- Create Culture of Openness
- Shared Decision Making
- Promotes Inter-Professional Collaboration
- Supports the Creation of a Learning Organization
- Priorities of Safe Practices
- Actively Manage Change Process

HWI

- Day & half staff and leadership conference
- Shared History
- Current Status
- Desired Future
- Set Priorities
- Action Planning
- Follow-up Unit Change Process

