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Georgia LEADS: Exploring a Statewide Leadership Engagement Effort

Lori Tiller and Erik C. Ness

Abstract

In this qualitative study, we focused on a two-way model of engagement, utilizing observational and individual interview data to examine community members' perceptions of their participation in a statewide initiative to increase leadership capacity at the community level. We review barriers to engagement recognized in the literature. Our study builds upon evolving definitions and models of community engagement, and furthers our understanding of community members' own perceptions of the definition and process involved in successful two-way community engagement. Our findings suggest three emergent themes for community participants: (1) trust, (2) relationships, and (3) priceless value of the engagement. Involving the community members in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the initiative was a unique approach to scaling up a statewide leadership development engagement effort, and the inclusive nature of this process enabled us to examine perceptions of engagement efforts in a single initiative across communities throughout the state of Georgia.

Keywords: two-way community engagement, leadership, Georgia, community engagement

Community engagement has faced extreme growth in scale and scope in many institutions over the past two decades. Although the concept has been supported for many years, the implementation still varies greatly between campus, local community, and statewide efforts. However, many of the studies in the engagement literature are confined to the perspectives of faculty and student participants. Few studies have examined community member perceptions or how community members perceive the concept and impacts of community engagement as they have experienced it. Another gap in the literature is a view of engagement from a statewide level and not a solely "town and gown" perspective.

Our research study evolved while examining a statewide university–community engagement initiative titled "Georgia LEADS." "LEADS" is not an acronym; capital letters are used to emphasize the concept of leadership embedded throughout the programming. This study utilized observational data and individual interviews with community members to understand their perspectives of the impact of community engagement through their participation in this statewide initiative. Community engagement in higher education ties the service mission of the university to both teaching and research in a meaningful way not only for students and university scholars, but also for community members and stakeholders. A first step in this process is reaching out to those community members and organizations that have played a role in institutional community engagement and asking for their feedback on the concept and process. Community engagement is increasingly important, as campuses are responsible to the communities in which they reside and to the students who are graduating and becoming members of their own communities. These students represent the next generation of engagement opportunities for higher education.

This study examines community perceptions within a statewide initiative to increase leadership capacity at the community level utilizing a two-way model of engagement. Georgia LEADS was a pilot initiative between the University of Georgia's J. W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development (Fanning) and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce to increase leadership capacity at both the county and regional level across the state of Georgia. Fanning works to increase leadership capacity in three areas of development: community leadership, nonprofit leadership, and youth leadership. Fanning focuses on individual leadership development and on two-way organizational and relational leadership development to expand the ability to interact with both campus and community leaders statewide. Thus, Fanning's efforts align with Weerts and Sandmann's (2008) two-way community engagement model, which includes the following suggestions: a centralized office, increased administrative support for promotion and tenure changes, intentional involvement of community members, and an ability to measure the success of engagement efforts. Georgia LEADS enables the community members to play as large a role in the design of the program as the research team. According to Hickey et al. (2015), true community engagement comes when the community takes ownership of the process. Community ownership was defined as taking an active and sustained role in the implementation process. A two-way model of engagement allows institutions of higher education to bring the community into the process as researchers and experts in their community with needs and priorities, not just subjects of a study aimed to improve their community.

This study on perceptions of Georgia LEADS community members was guided by two research questions. First, utilizing Weerts and Sandmann's (2008) two-way model of community engagement, how do community members experience the process of a statewide engagement initiative? Second, how do community members define and perceive the concept of community engagement?

Georgia LEADS Concept

The Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the J. W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development at the University of Georgia partnered to develop the Georgia LEADS initiative. Grounded in Fanning's mission to "strengthen communities and organizations through leadership development, training, and education" (J. W. Fanning Institute, n.d.) and the Georgia Chamber's focus on "competitiveness to attract new investment and create opportunity and prosperity for all Georgians" (para., 4). Georgia LEADS provided the seed resources for communities to grow their leadership development efforts. This partnership holds two underlying principles: (1) that leadership is important to the economic and social vitality of the state and (2) that communities that embrace leadership development have a competitive advantage in economic and community leadership development. The Georgia LEADS initiative did not presume to know the priorities of the community's leadership needs, but rather provided resources from the University to meet the community needs.

Leadership Development Planning and Implementation Process

Each pilot community engaged in a one-year leadership planning and design process facilitated by faculty from Fanning to assess, design, implement, and evaluate leadership programming. In this way, and to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach, leadership trainings and programming were tailored and adapted to individual, local leadership needs and priorities. To maximize participation by key leaders, each community selected to participate in Georgia LEADS was required to create a working group. In addition, each community designated a leadership program coordinator as a primary point of contact to coordinate interaction with Fanning. Given their important role in community leadership programming, as well as their ability to help identify local leadership needs and priorities, local chambers of commerce are the likely organizations to designate working groups and points of contact and were key to the Georgia LEADS process. Many communities operating youth and adult leadership programs do not have the necessary resources to engage the appropriate expertise to update their programming and sustain their efforts. The program design of Georgia LEADS encouraged growing, enhancing, and reinvigorating existing programming as well as developing new programming focused on underserved populations and age groups.

The LEADS process differed slightly from previous statewide efforts on leadership development because of the community focus and localized technical assistance from Fanning around community-identified leadership strategies. The community identified the priorities and then together with Fanning crafted the strategies and programs under those priorities. Each community worked through a three-meeting process to establish the top three leadership priorities to focus on for the length of their participation. Working groups consisted of between 10 and 30 community members and were designed to be representative of the community demographics for inclusion of a variety of races, ages, socioeconomic levels, and workforce areas. One Fanning faculty member was assigned as the principal investigator (PI) for the LEADS project, and the PI had a team of six additional faculty members and one staff member who supported the LEADS initiative as a whole. Each member of this team was trained to facilitate any of the communities and any of the working group meetings. At the conclusion of the Year 1 pilot effort, seven of the 10 initially identified communities began their implementation phase. This study examined those seven communities through the use of observational data obtained during the priority-setting phase and through interviews with key community members.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Creating an engaged two-way model of institutional involvement with the community can be a challenge for institutions of higher education (Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Sandmann, 2008; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). As the practice of community engagement increases, many researchers argue that institutions need to remain mindful of the capacity for community members and organizations to support this practice (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, 2002; Littlepage et al., 2012; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). For example, Trudeau and Kruse (2014) examined how daunting it is not only to create successful community engagement opportunities for students, but also to build trust and buy-in between the administration of the university and the community partners. Other studies have suggested that institutions remain mindful of thoughtfully preparing and supporting their faculty in the exploration and adoption of community engagement practices and activities (Antonio et al., 2000; Nyden, 2003; Wade & Demb, 2009). Community engagement is a signature sector of higher education, but very few studies examine how the community and research team work together for implementation efforts (Bernardo et al., 2014).

This literature review section first provides a brief history of community engagement and the shift from the traditional service delivery model to a two-way exchange of knowledge between the community member and university. Next, the section outlines the key actors involved in university–community engagement and the barriers and strengths that are part of the process. The section concludes with an overview of models used to discuss and evaluate community engagement, including the Weerts and Sandmann (2008) two-way engagement model that serves as the conceptual framework for our study.

History of Community Engagement

When did a definition of community engagement become necessary within higher education institutions? The Morrill Act of 1862 was an economic development plan that made land-grant institutions possible with a goal of increasing agricultural education and an outcome of stimulating the economy (Roper & Hirth, 2005). With the passing of this act began the conversation of higher education and public service. The Morrill Act was amended in 1890 to give a small amount of funding to each of the established land-grant institutions (initiating federal funding within the public higher education systems) and to establish additional land-grant institutions for African American students (Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Roper & Hirth, 2005). The Hatch Act of 1887 that created experiment station services, or one-way service delivery, came between the initial Morrill Act and the amendment. One-way delivery implies the institution creates and provides the research on the knowledge needed by communities of practice, in this case agriculture, to move the economy forward (Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Sandmann, 2008; Trudeau & Kruse, 2014; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). According to Fitzgerald et al. (2012), the Hatch Act served to bring research and agriculture together for the first time in support of growing the economy through a lens of higher education engagement. The next iteration of

engagement came with the passage of the Smith–Lever Act of 1914, which provided permanent funding for extension services at all land–grant institutions to distribute research results to the community (Roper & Hirth, 2005). Roper and Hirth (2005) suggested that each of these acts was brought about to address the changing function of higher education and how it relates to the surrounding community, thus initiating a community–engaged institution.

The one–way service delivery model remained consistent until the 1980s, when several new acts and initiatives emerged with a focus on economic renewal, service, and engagement. The first of those was the Bayh–Dole Act of 1980, which allowed for partnerships with higher education institutions around patents (Roper & Hirth, 2005). Campus Compact originated in 1985, focusing institutions on civic purposes in addition to economic prosperity and knowledge (Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Roper & Hirth, 2005). Finally, Boyer's (1990) Scholarship Reconsidered merged the ideas of service, extension, and outreach into the "scholarship of application," which is similar to two–way communication models and the holistic concept of engagement. Moreover, Boyer's (1990) concept of the engaged campus suggested that focusing on the idea of scholarship as purely research would not lead to a well–rounded and engaged faculty, students, or community. As this idea gained traction throughout the next two decades, definitions emerged and supplementary concepts were introduced to faculty, students, and community members in the application of scholarship outside the traditional models of academic teaching and research.

Defining Community Engagement

Although many scholars have expanded the definition of community engagement since Boyer first began writing on the topic, in the Carnegie Classification community engagement is described as

> collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good (paras. 1–2).

Additional definitions also articulate a shift from a service delivery model to a more reciprocal relationship (Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Roper & Hirth, 2005; Sandmann, 2008). Slaughter and Leslie (1997) maintained that this transition began with the Bayh–Dole Act, but others have reasoned that it was more of a shift toward sharing knowledge production with business and communities being framed in terms of service and sharing discoveries (Roper & Hirth, 2005; Sandmann 2008). A reciprocal relationship model of engagement enables knowledge created within institutions of higher education to diffuse to the broader community for utilization, in contrast to the one–way model, with its implications that all of the knowledge stays within the institution. Fitzgerald et al. (2012) reminded us that not all knowledge is found within the walls of an institution, and that community members have knowledge they can bring to the table as well. Fitzgerald et al. thus concluded that the exchange must include both or true engagement is not occurring.

Barriers to Community Engagement

The literature suggests common barriers that institutions experience when entering into two–way models of engagement with community members. This section highlights both the institutional and community barriers to engagement, then reports various models and theories of engagement.

Administrative Leadership. Creating an engaged institution that intentionally values and respects a two–way model of communication begins with administrative buy–in, according to Weerts and Sandmann (2010). Scholars agree that faculty, staff, and students are important to an engaged campus. Trudeau and Kruse (2014) contended that the ability to connect in meaningful engagement cannot rest solely on faculty and asserted that buy–in from administration is

critical as well. If the effort is not supported at all levels, a truly engaged institution is difficult to achieve (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Equally, Weerts and Sandmann (2010) suggested that the university administration express the value of engagement activities to the external stakeholders of the institution for promotion of an engaged campus environment. According to Trudeau and Kruse (2014), the governance structure outside the institution perceives these efforts supported by administration: This applies to local town and gown relationships, regional support initiatives, and statewide efforts. Furthermore, Fitzgerald et al. (2012) suggested that institutions and administrations also need to make engagement a central vehicle on outcomes for both the internal and external partners. One possible implication of these barriers, for example, is a need for administration to support changes to the promotion and tenure guidelines to reward active community engagement practices.

Faculty. Antonio et al. (2000) identified two significant barriers for faculty–community engagement: (1) promotion and tenure guidelines and (2) faculty training in community engagement practices. According to Antonio et al. (2000), research is historically the most valued component of promotion and tenure, making it difficult to encourage faculty to engage in civic development. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) discussed how even when engagement activities are rewarded at one institution, the guidelines across institutions are so different it remains difficult to work across campuses and fields. Traditionally service activities are located in the social sciences and less often in the hard sciences, but to create a uniquely engaged campus for all faculty and all disciplines the reward structure may need to shift from a research–only focus to one that also rewards authentic community engagement. Trudeau and Kruse (2014) examine the second faculty barrier as an unintended consequence of requiring faculty to participate in engagement activities without instruction on best practices. They argue that without training or administrative buy–in, faculty may require time–intensive professional development opportunities.

Institutional Structure. As administrative leaders and faculty work to shift their thinking in engagement activities, the literature suggests that several structural differences account for these changes. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) expounded upon the idea of a centralized versus a decentralized system of engaging with the community. They first suggested a centralized office as a one–stop shop for community members and organizations who want to connect with campus resources. However, they also pointed out that a decentralized engagement effort allows more flexibility as faculty, staff, and departments engage with the local community, although it is not as accessible for community members. Both have merits and are dependent on how the institution chooses to interact with the surrounding community. The Weerts and Sandmann (2008) study also suggested that the institution determines how engagement practices are assessed and evaluated for long– and short–term impact on the community. One method suggested by Nyden (2003) begins the assessment process with the creation of an institutional network of supportive faculty, staff, and students who are organized, have an ability to influence institutional practices, and are interested in institutionalizing community–based research and service. Examples of what may come out of this type of network include changes to institutional review board (IRB) practices for research purposes to more easily involve community members. Fitzgerald et al. (2012) supported the involvement of faculty governance, traditional outreach units, and professional development at all levels to support an understanding of the differences between outreach efforts and a truly engaged campus and proposed that these entities should work together to assess those efforts.

Community. The literature on barriers to engagement from the community perspective is sparse. Few studies have examined the perspective of the community member, and even fewer have considered community members as coinvestigators in the research or engagement process. Bringle and Hatcher (2002) used the term "labs for experimentation" to describe how community members are treated during the engagement process. Incidentally, the Bringle and Hatcher (2002) study indicated that community members are traditionally passive recipients of the engagement efforts. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) collected data from community members over several years on the members' perceived barriers to community engagement and suggested that community members were interested

in high quality relationships and that longer term engagements increase those efforts.

Community partners and organizations want high quality, mutually beneficial relationships with their local and state higher education institutions, according to Weerts and Sandmann (2008). According to Holland (1997), trust in a truly mutually beneficial relationship is a central issue within the literature for why engagement efforts succeed and why some may not gain traction in a community. Two-way community engagement is based on reciprocal relationships; absent trust in the beginning of those relationships, the community members and organizations may never be truly engaged (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, 2002; Littlepage et al., 2012; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). The literature suggests that community members may feel overprocessed, which means they feel more like the subjects of the research rather than equal participants respected for what they bring to the table (Littlepage et al., 2012; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Littlepage et al. (2012) recommended that institutions consider how the engagement relationship relates to the capacity of the organizations being served and that the students and faculty remain mindful of expectations and resources of the community members. Much of the literature looks at student outcomes from practicing engagement, but comparatively little attention is given to how engagement relationships influence community members in the long term. Thus, in an effort to fill this void, our study examines responses by community members around the concepts of trust, value of the engagement, and relationship between both sides of the engagement initiative.

Conceptual Framework for Community Engagement

Institutions, researchers, and practitioners continue to expand their knowledge and expertise in community engagement through the use of theories, studies, and conceptual models. Best practices are described throughout the literature, but how are those being applied as theories and models to measure the institutional engagement effort? The two-way model of engagement supported by Weerts and Sandmann (2008) suggests a centralized office, increased administrative support for promotion and tenure changes, intentional involvement of community members, and an ability to measure engagement efforts' success. Weerts and Sandmann (2008, 2010) and Sandmann (2008) described the two-way model of engagement through different conceptual frameworks. This study utilizes the two-way model as the conceptual framework for the Georgia LEADS initiative.

A select few additional studies that attempt to explore this two-way engagement concept offer some relevant literature ties for this study. For example, Bernardo et al. (2014) examined community engagement and the university–community partnership through a lens of leadership. Their study described engagement as spanning beyond boundaries of an academic unit, creating relational dynamics involving leadership from both university and community, and requiring a more socially and emotionally involved faculty community. Qualitative analysis by Bernardo et al. (2014) produced four conceptual themes for successful community engagement: (a) contextual conditions, (b) managerial roles for all partners, (c) attitude of all partners, and (d) spirituality. Although the study did not utilize engagement efforts by bringing community members to the table, it did expound on the best practice of meaningful roles and attitudes for all parties, including community members.

Bringle and Hatcher (2002) posit a four-stage method for engaging with community members in research and initiatives, encompassing (a) type of relationship and interest from community members, (b) implications for faculty academic practice, (c) development and maintenance of the relationship, and (d) assessment of need for dissolution of the relationship. These steps work best with a centralized office of engagement, which was discussed as a best practice in the 2008 study by Weerts and Sandmann.

Holland's (1997) model gives institutions an ability to evaluate their level and commitment of service on a Likert scale from low relevance to full integration. Institutions have a tendency to implement engagement and service in different levels of intentionality (Fitzgerald et al., 2012; Holland, 1997; Sandmann 2008). Holland's approach contributes a tool for institutions as they begin this process of engagement.

In consideration of the varying models of community engagement, the idea of two-way engagement, with the university

research and practice informing the community and the community member experience informing research and practice, best describes the Georgia LEADS process. Here, community members and UGA faculty members served as boundary spanners, "the bridge between an organization and its exchange partners" (Scott, 1992, p. 196). Weerts and Sandmann (2010) further explored the concept of boundary spanning in community engagement. They employed a qualitative multi-case study analysis that included six institutions, half land-grant and half urban institutions. The data were collected in three phases after completion of an initial document analysis and 80 interviews. Findings included four roles played within the engagement by the higher education boundary spanner: (a) community-based problem solver, (b) technical expert, (c) internal engagement advocate, and (d) engagement champion. Weerts and Sandmann (2010) noted that the roles are not static, may shift or adjust at any time, and work in concord across the different roles. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) suggested the need for additional research in testing this framework across additional research institutions, as well as reversing the concept to inquire how community members engage and span boundaries to higher education institutions. This second suggestion for future research prompted the current study, in which we inquired into and explored perceptions of community members in terms of higher education engagement efforts.

For our study, we chose to focus solely on the two-way model of communication, but through a statewide lens rather than local relationships. Fanning is housed within the University of Georgia (UGA) division of Public Service and Outreach. UGA is a land- and sea-grant institution with a public service mission. UGA is also classified by Carnegie as a very-high research university, which Weerts and Sandman (2010) contend are the most difficult to move from the one-way to the two-way model of engagement. However, Weerts and Sandmann (2008) argued that over the past several decades university-community engagement has shifted from a one-way model approach to a two-way approach. For this study, we used the two-way model of engagement as the conceptual framework to examine community engagement from the perspective of the community members who participated in the Georgia LEADS statewide pilot initiative.

Historically, research participants have passively taken part in community engagement processes with university partners, but as universities are experiencing increasing demands to show economic impact, it is more important than ever to bring the communities to the table as research and initiatives are designed. As mentioned earlier, Hickey et al. (2015) noted that communities will engage or not engage depending on how effectively the research meets their needs. Taking the framework of a two-way model of engagement where equal weight is given to the community members and to the university partners allows this study to delve deeper into perceptions of community members following a year-long engagement effort across the state.

The Weerts and Sandmann (2008, 2010) two-way engagement framework spans the change in community engagement levels, particularly for research institutions, that has occurred over the past 150 years. Institutions have moved from a one-way model to a more robust approach of bringing community ideas and influence back to the university following the university's sharing of knowledge. As discussed in the literature review, this two-way knowledge transfer represents a change in thinking from the traditional public service model employed by most institutions over the past century. Traditional models presuppose that the answers to the community challenges are known to the university (Bernardo et al., 2014; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010); however, the Sandmann and Weerts (2008) two-way model allows for mutual learning and can bring about systemic change within the community and within the institution. This two-way exchange was an important focus of the Georgia LEADS pilot initiative and thus the emphasis of the examination.

Methods

Our study focused on the perceptions of community members who were engaged in the Georgia LEADS statewide initiative. We crafted two research questions to focus this qualitative study; first, utilizing Weerts and Sandmann's (2008) two-way model of community engagement, how do community members experience the process of a statewide engagement initiative and second, how do community members define and perceive the concept of community engagement? Creswell (2009) defined a qualitative study as an inquiry process of

understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting details of respondents, and piloted within a natural setting. Due to the scarce literature available on the topic of community engagement from the community perspective, a qualitative design affords a perspective from inside the communities and people working on this initiative. Indeed, a recent dissertation by Adams (2013) framed the link between qualitative research and the two-way model of communication as research that "pursues what and how questions to get a deeper understanding of an observed phenomenon in a natural setting" (p.56).

The observational data was collected from five of the communities that participated in the pilot. We decided to utilize these five communities because each community was past the priority-setting stage of the Georgia LEADS process when the observations occurred. All permissions were granted from the Institutional Review Board for our study. We selected interview participants based on their positions as the leadership program coordinators for their respective communities. Because the Georgia LEADS initiative used geographical boundaries for the communities, this study followed those county lines as defining community and including all cities within those borders. These communities are situated throughout the state and cover both urban and rural areas.

We relied on two primary data sources for this study: observation data and interview data. The LEADS process began with the formation of a community working group and assignment of the leadership program coordinator. Each working group held three meetings before establishing their community priorities for the remainder of their Georgia LEADS initiative. A total of 15 meetings across the communities occurred from November 2014 through April 2015. The emergent themes from these observations built the basis for the semistructured interview process.

Interviews consisted of 17 semistructured open-ended questions. According to Merriam (2009), semistructured interview questions are often used when specific information is anticipated from the respondent, but overall the order and wording of the question does not need to be prescriptive. As described by Merriam, benefits of this type of process include more freedom

for the interviewee to express answers and ability for the interviewer to explore unanticipated perceptions. Our interview participants were located in six of the communities that reached the implementation phase of their priority setting during the Georgia LEADS process. One of the communities had two co-leadership program coordinators for a total of seven interviews. We organized the interview questions in four sections: (a) general knowledge and community-wide experience of the LEADS process, (b) personal role in the process, (c) community engagement definition and barrier questions, and (d) additional information. These sections were identified as most crucial to evaluating the effectiveness of the program, while also utilizing the subject matter expertise of these community members to gain knowledge from their perception of engagement efforts and barriers to the process. Each of these sections referenced a theme from the original observational data.

We collected participant observational data by taking notes during the meetings and by reviewing meeting materials, including agendas, flip charts, and faculty notes. Working groups consisted of 10 to 30 community members who were representative of the community demographics. In addition to the notes from the meetings, observational information was gathered from the facilitators and added into the meeting notes. All written information gathered from the 15 meetings was discussed by the Georgia LEADS faculty team and transcribed by the first author. Following the transcriptions, the notes were coded for emergent themes, which led to the next phase: interview data analysis.

Interviews were scheduled through an email introduction and lasted no more than 45 minutes. The interview length was established to accommodate the participants, who were all community members agreeing to participate during their off time. We conducted seven interviews, two of which were from the same community due to shared responsibility of the leadership program coordinator in that particular community. The first author conducted the interviews by phone and took detailed handwritten notes. Following the interview, the notes were transcribed and expanded upon the same day to maximize retained content and context. Rubin and Rubin (2012) discussed the benefits and costs of handwritten notes

versus recorded interviews and suggested that a level of familiarity and trust is established when not having a recorder. As community members had varying degrees of trust with the interviewer, handwritten notes provided the opportunity to build trust while also achieving the level of detail needed for the study.

The data analysis was pursued in two stages: initial observational data analysis and interview data analysis. The inductive approach to identifying emerging themes was utilized in both the observational and interview analysis (Merriam, 2009). Through emergent themes in the observational data, we gained an understanding of what topics might yield the most important additional information in the one-on-one interviews. We analyzed observational notes and meeting materials for emerging themes and to identify topics that we wanted to pursue through interviews. In the second phase of our analysis, we deductively coded interview data by organizing data elements into the aforementioned four areas within a cumulative spreadsheet. We then analyzed the data using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009) to identify additional emergent themes. The final round of axial coding (Strauss & Corbin,1998) produced three overarching themes: trust, relationships, and "priceless value."

As the first author of this article is a faculty member at Fanning and was one of the Georgia LEADS team members, we considered the possibility of positive bias toward the initiative and the outcomes. To counteract this possibility, we used three triangulation techniques (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014) first, working with multiple researchers (the second author is not affiliated with Fanning or Georgia LEADS); second, use of multiple data sources (observations and interview). Peer debriefing was the final technique, which was utilized (Merriam, 2009) by engaging research team members who participated in the observational data collection to review the study.

Findings

Through the observational data analysis the Georgia LEADS initiative learned what communities across the state see as their struggles as they endeavor to improve their leadership capacity to serve their community. They also learned that building a statewide engagement process while the process unfolds has its challenges. The Georgia LEADS team examined the outcomes of the initiative; however, prior to the present study, the team had not examined how the community members perceived those outcomes. Utilizing the observational data from the working group meetings to create the interview questions gave this study an added layer of trust with the community members during the request for interviews. The community members valued that their priority setting was coded across communities, and that through that process additional information was produced for their communities. The observational data analysis yielded four main themes: (1) the general process of the pilot program, (2) the involvement of the leadership program coordinator, (3) knowledge of community-university engagement, and (4) trust for and value of this type of engagement. The interview responses yielded three emergent themes: (1) trust, (2) relationships, and (3) priceless value of the engagement. Our findings are discussed in three parts based on the emergent themes of the interviews, with a direct quote from participant interviews framing each section.

"Community members must trust for meaningful work to be done"

Trust was the first theme to emerge from our study. Of the seven respondents, all perceived trust as the most important part of any engagement process. Although the literature depicts this as a barrier, each of these respondents felt that trust had been established long before the Georgia LEADS process began in their community. When asked how their particular community was chosen for the process, not everyone knew the exact reason or process, but they did know it was due to the success of their community leadership in the past or the knowledge of a previous engagement that worked well. Two of the respondents went as far as to say that if Fanning calls them for any future engagement, the answer would be "Yes," due to their past successful initiatives together. One respondent stated, "I did not want to buy into the LEADS process in the beginning, but by the end I really saw the value for my community."

We also found evidence of alignment with Weerts and Sandmann's (2008) observation that community partners want high quality relationships. One respondent stated, "Fanning often helps in a non-threatening

manner and always gives the community the ability to have honest conversations." Providing this kind of support may prove difficult if the community does not trust the university partners. The same respondent stated, "It is my job to protect the community." When probed to discuss protecting them from what, she responded with the following:

> Trust is huge and the community needs to know those doing the work understand the issues of confidentiality . . . [university partners] have to understand that certain issues require a high level of trust to enter into honest discussions . . . and trust that their [community members] issues will be handled in a confidential and professional manner.

The two-way model of community engagement allows the community member to trust the university team, and also gives equal weight to the community to trust their liaison is acting in their best interest. One respondent stated, "Trust is a big part and allowed folks to share more when they came to the table." This level of trust enabled the Georgia LEADS process to evolve along a more informed path than may have been possible for other statewide initiatives in the past. Five of the respondents mentioned that their trust was both in the institution and in an individual they had previously engaged with in other work. One respondent suggested that one person's leaving the project made it difficult to move forward with any form of implementation. "The community bought in [to Georgia LEADS] and trusted [the principal investigator] and once she was not involved it was difficult for me to manage community expectations." Trust is not considered a barrier for these respondents, but instead it is a given at the beginning of the initiative and they will not subject their community to a process they themselves do not trust will be successful.

"Ability to wrangle personalities"

The second emergent theme—relationships—included the interrelation surrounding logistics, process, and participation. Although only one respondent specifically stated the need to schedule meetings as far in advance as possible, each one alluded to the difficulty of bringing community members to the table on a consistent basis, maintaining enthusiasm, and implementing a product to showcase in a timely manner. One respondent indicated it was "very important for the community to do what it needs to do in between facilitated sessions." Another respondent specified, "Fanning visits and facilitation were great, but there was too much time in between meetings and I could not keep the momentum." Clarity of the end goal was confusing to five of the seven respondents, who each expressed that if they had known more at the beginning of the process they might have changed how they implemented it. One of those five mentioned, "I would often leave a meeting wondering if anything had been accomplished." All seven respondents spoke to both the difficulty in maintaining the community enthusiasm and interest in between the meetings, and being able to maintain a dedicated and consistent group of people within the community. Meetings often occurred more than 4 weeks apart, and this made scheduling and participation difficult for community members. Some respondents stated that it felt like each meeting was repetitive because of the need to review for all the new people in the room or the time between meetings, and that maintaining the balance of making sure the right people were in the room and making sure people were participating consistently was difficult. One respondent explained this with the following statement: "I felt like we were having several 'first meetings' with so many new people coming to the table for each time we met."

Another issue mentioned by all seven respondents was managing expectations of community and chamber members who did not feel the process was moving quickly enough. Additionally, some members were frustrated by not having a product to showcase to possible funders. One respondent saw this as a positive: "Fanning's ability to wrangle personalities and come to consensus on priorities was biggest strength." However, the respondent also identified a key challenge: "The chamber members saw a big Georgia LEADS rollout and then did not see results quick enough." Another respondent mentioned the structure of the Fanning team as a barrier to the relationship: "Not having one person solely focused on this project both at UGA and in [the community] was very difficult." Although Fanning did have what were called team leads, it was very possible that different team members

went down for each meeting. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) suggested the idea of a centralized office for this work, which we think aligns with the need for a single point of contact during projects.

Managing expectations was a large part of many of the respondents' interviews, but this was their role within the community for this initiative. Respondents indicated that for the Georgia LEADS process to work, the community member needed to be involved as much as or more than the Fanning faculty. One respondent agreed that although Fanning was able to build consensus, the challenge for the leadership program coordinator was to bring everyone to the table. As a final observation in this thematic finding, one respondent commented on the challenge of maintaining momentum, "The community members have 'heard it all before' . . . I had to set this initiative apart from what has happened in the past and give everyone a fresh perspective on leadership."

"The value is priceless"

The third emergent theme, as stated above, is "priceless," which was one participant's response to our question: What is the value of community engagement? All seven community respondents cited access to university resources as one of the most valuable reasons to participate in engagement partnerships. They valued how the university took an interest in the growth and change in their community. Respondents from the more rural communities stated they would not be able to succeed in their efforts to increase the potential of their community if they did not have access to initiatives like Georgia LEADS. Respondents suggested that as trust is built over time with successful smaller projects, the value begins to increase and the community is receptive to more innovative initiatives.

Value was described in several different capacities. The first was making sure the right people are in the conversation. One respondent stated a very positive outcome of the value of engagement: "The process makes us hyper aware of collaboration and also who's missing." This sentiment was echoed by several of the respondents who, prior to this engagement, had difficulty bringing all voices to the table. Emergent themes from our observational analysis spoke to this type of value as communities began to think about how the process could include the "non–usual suspects": community members who do not participate on community or nonprofit boards, do not participate in community-wide events, and lack awareness of what is happening within their community. Additionally, one respondent discussed how the partnership will affect their community in the future through engagement of the non–usual suspects and authentic youth engagement—that is, making sure the voice of the youth is represented as programs are created. This respondent stated, "The process empowered different demographic groups to serve as leader . . . the impact of Georgia LEADS to community moving forward will have a huge impact."

The second value type was in increasing knowledge of new technology and strategies. One respondent argued the issue of technology: "As a chamber we need to recognize as technology increases the Chamber is becoming less and less relevant and we need to offer real value for members." Essentially, this participant expressed that technology and new strategies facilitate better connection among the business community. Chambers of commerce are uniquely positioned to lead intentional community-building efforts. Their contributions can include both providing professional development and training for current leaders and fostering these opportunities for young leaders. As indicated in the themes found in the observational data, involving the non–usual suspects was inherent across all communities. To the respondents this meant looking to community members who have historically not been involved and bringing them into the conversation and design phase of the initiative. This led another respondent to note that with the strategies and technology discussed in the working group meetings, new ideas could begin diffusing through different parts of the community.

Value is also seen in the connectivity and networking that comes from being a part of a statewide partnership. Value lies not only in the partnership with the university, but also in automatically being connected to a statewide group of professionals doing similar work. One respondent speculated, "The networking alone is endless and [she] could not put a price on that value." All seven respondents mentioned impressions around a big picture, "helping the community to see the big picture and to reflect

on what we already have." The more urban respondents were very honest that their community has a plethora of resources, but that it is very easy to lose sight of how those resources can be harnessed to work toward a common goal for the community. The rural respondents were open and honest that without the university engagement opportunities, their community would not be able to design and implement initiatives at this high level. Respondents valued not only the faculty input into the engagement, but the use of students. Two of the communities utilize students at all levels of education from undergraduate to graduate, but they are clear with their community partners that the outcome of the work may differ depending on the students' level of commitment and ability.

All respondents spoke to valuing the outcome of their previous engagements, and how they are able to manage the expectations of their community when the outcome of the initiative might not be what was expected at the outset. Finally, when asked if anything was "missing" from these university–community engagements, all respondents stated emphatically, "No." They did not feel the need to elaborate. All respondents stated they got value out of the relationship, and if they needed anything throughout the engagement, they could ask for it.

Conclusions and Implications

Utilizing the Weerts and Sandmann (2008) two-way model of communication to examine the Georgia LEADS initiative through the eyes of the community member was insightful. Our study builds upon evolving definitions and models of community engagement and furthers our understanding of community members' own perceptions of the definition and process involved in successful two-way community engagement. Involving the community members as part of the design, implementation, and evaluation was a unique approach to scaling up a statewide leadership development initiative, and doing so allowed us to examine perceptions of engagement efforts across different communities participating in the same initiative.

In addition to the themes reported in the findings, we also asked respondents how they define the concept of community engagement. As stated in the literature review, the Carnegie Classification (paras. 1–2) has a definition, but we thought it might be an interesting twist to have community members give us their definition. All seven respondents laughed when asked, but they were able to articulate their definition in a succinct and understandable manner. Rather than offer up an alternative definition of university–community engagement, the interview participants gave responses that showed many similarities to the Carnegie definition.

Responses included the expressions "value-added," "high level of expertise," "economic impact," "partnership," "bringing people to the table," and "opens doors and resources otherwise unavailable." Each of these words or phrases is either mentioned or alluded to in the Carnegie Foundation definition (paras. 1–2). As Bringle and Hatcher (2002) noted, university and community partnerships are relational, and these responses speak to that relational need. We focused on barriers to community engagement in the literature review, but the interview responses suggest that these barriers did not factor in these university–community engagements. Georgia LEADS was designed to impact all of the concepts suggested by the respondents, but one respondent stated their concept of engagement succinctly as "having access to a university and having that university take an active and participatory role in Georgia's issues while continuing to be a resource to the community."

The two-way model of communication is also expressed in each of the respondents' comments, but especially in the concepts of partnership, "bringing people to the table," and "access to otherwise unavailable resources." All seven respondents had worked with institutions of higher education prior to this study, which may have affected their responses to the barriers of trust and process. In fact, five of the seven respondents either currently work for or have in the past five years worked for colleges or universities, which may show a predisposition to participate in community engagement efforts. Because each of the interview respondents was already a self-identified champion of community engagement efforts, future studies might explore the two-way engagement model with less engaged community members.

In addition to opportunities for future study, this study begins to bridge the gap in the literature between the theoretical discus-

sions of how community members engage in university–community partnerships and the return of the efforts of the community back to the university. Through the Georgia LEADS process, the J. W. Fanning Institute received additional understanding for and support in developing and supporting community leadership efforts, and several Georgia counties received additional support from the research base of UGA's Public Service and Outreach leadership faculty. Furthermore, the study provides a clearer understanding of community perspective and implications for working with community members as universities seek to further expand the support and work of faculty as they engage in community partnerships.

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High School–University Collaborations for Latinx Student Success: Navigating the Political Reality

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Abstract

Latinx students are a growing population in postsecondary education but attain degrees at a pace behind their non–Latinx peers. This research examines a partnership between a research university (RU) and career and technical education (CTE) high school, Hillside Technical High School (HTHS). Through a 2–year ethnographic case study, we found that different logistics and cultural values were primary contributors to the bifurcated pathway between high school and college. These pathways were most successfully connected through strategies such as flexibility, personal relationships, and incorporation of community resources as well as viewing the students as resources. Our study suggests a need to reframe partnerships in recognition of the assets that students bring to these efforts, while also creating opportunities for additional faculty support and community involvement.

Keywords: Latinx youth, career and technical education, high school–university partnerships, LatCrit

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Latinx college students have experienced the largest increase in rates of postsecondary education among racial and ethnic groups over the past two decades. However, these students continue to earn bachelor's degrees at lower rates than their peers (Krogstad, 2016). The discrepancy in educational attainment creates what Contreras (2011) refers to as the *brown paradox*, in which Latinx influence is spreading without corresponding levels of educational attainment or economic stability. Research that examines the educational pathway for Latinx student populations is needed to understand how disparities occur across enrollment, retention, and graduation (Solórzano et al., 2005).

The importance of postsecondary attainment emphasizes the need for alignment across high school and college (Brand et al., 2013). However, there is a history of P–12 and postsecondary bifurcation (Kirst & Usdan, 2007) that makes for two systems with little connection between them. This bifurcation can create challenges for Latinx students in navigating from elementary and secondary school into higher education. Scholars emphasize that developing stronger partnerships between these two components of the education pipeline is critical for improving college access and success for minoritized students (Howard et al., 2017; Kirst & Venezia, 2004). In this study, we examine possible ways to foster relationships between high schools and universities to promote student success. This study posed two research questions: (a) What factors impact the development of K–16 partnerships? (b) What strategies do educators use to develop K–16 partnerships? In this study, we examine one such partnership through an ethnographic case study to examine how collaboration can be fostered across K–16 pathways to better support Latinx populations.

Literature Review

In the following study, we use the term Latinx over Latina/o, Latin@, or other designations for those people with Latin American ancestry to align with emerging usage in higher education scholarship that promotes inclusivity and institutional understandings of intersectionality (Salinas & Lozano, 2017). To frame our study, we drew upon two bodies of literature: (a) high school–university partnerships and (b) Latinx education.

High School–University Partnerships

There is a long history of bifurcation between K–12 and postsecondary education systems (Kirst & Usdan, 2007). Fundamentally, engagement with knowledge and ideas is different within high school and university contexts. In high school, education is traditionally seen as the transmission of knowledge (Conley, 2007). Such views align with theoretical models that critique a banking model of education in which students are viewed as empty vessels that receive deposits of information from more knowledgeable instructors (Freire, 1970). In contrast, higher education environments are often described as sites of critical thinking and knowledge generation (Conley, 2007). Although techniques exist to help students prepare for this adjustment, such as senior seminars that introduce the reasoning and critical awareness required in postsecondary contexts (Conley, 2007), the shift is notable. Beyond this core component of learning, high schools are also logistically quite different from the heterogeneous spaces, academic calendars, and daily schedules of universities (Cunningham & Matthews, 2007; Hoffman et al., 2009).

Such discrepancies emphasize the need to align high school requirements with postsecondary expectations in a way that frames all curriculum as college preparatory (Jones, 2007). Researchers have found a need to support students across high school completion and college preparation, enrollment, and persistence (Goldberger, 2007). The term secondary–postsecondary learning options (SPLOs), introduced by the American Youth Policy Forum, provides an inclusive framing for the programs that link high school and college (Lerner & Brand, 2006). These programs span dual enrollment, technical preparation, middle and early college high schools, college access programs, and programs designed for mar-ginalized populations to positively impact college-going (Lerner & Brand, 2006). Eddy (2010) grouped these partnerships within seven categories: (1) education reform, (2) economic development, (3) dual enrollment or student transfer, (4) student learning, (5) resource saving, (6) shared goals and visions, and (7) international joint ventures. Within these partnerships, benefits for students include opportunities to prepare for college-level work (Goldberger, 2007; Nakkula & Foster, 2007) and develop collaborative peer networks (Cunningham & Matthews, 2007).

Many questions exist about the long-term possibility of high school–university partnerships. Prior literature has shown these collaborations to be most successful when they focus on specific issues and common interests rather than structural integration (Farrell & Seifert, 2007; Kirst & Usdan, 2007). However, it is not clear how partnerships can be sustained in perpetuity. For college faculty, participation in collaborative efforts may be at odds with structures of tenure and promotion within higher education (Eddy, 2010). In addition, collaborations may raise short-term costs as state funds cover both secondary and postsecondary expenses during the creation of new initiatives; thus, short-term investment is often seen as a trade-off for long-term benefits (Farrell & Seifert, 2007; Palaich et al., 2007). In this article, we seek to understand one high school–university partnership and what lessons it offers for other such collaborations.

Latinx Education

It has been well documented that Latinx students encounter numerous barriers in their pathways to and through secondary and postsecondary education (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Latinx are the largest and most rapidly growing minoritized ethnic group in the United States, but they have not experienced a subsequent increase in college graduation rates in three decades (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Here we use the term "minoritized" because it recognizes the social construction of representation and that individuals are not inherently minorities but are "rendered minorities in particular situations and institutional environments that sustain an overrepresentation of whiteness" (Harper, 2013, p. 207). Madrigal-Garcia and Acevedo-Gil (2016) coined the term "New Juan Crow of

Education" (p. 163) to refer to the inequitable resources and culture of control that hinder the academic preparation of Latinx students. Their examples included deficit labels from school administrators regarding student performance, use of physical locks to keep students in and out of educational spaces, and curriculum and processes designed to limit independent thinking. In other cases, Latinx students have been placed on noncollege tracks in K–12 education systems, received limited information on college preparation, and suffered from a lack of encouragement and support regarding postsecondary options (Gaxiola Serrano, 2017). These barriers suggest a need to look at an opportunity gap rather than an achievement gap to understand the ways in which Latinx students experience marginalization through educational systems (Contreras, 2011). The result of the opportunity gap is a leaky educational pipeline with disparities for Latinx students between 2-year and 4-year enrollments, transfer rates to 4-year institutions, and low retention and graduation rates (Solórzano et al., 2005).

Research has shown that school support networks (Gándara & Moreno, 2002), meaningful teacher–student relationships (Garza, 2009), and relationships with school personnel and college-bound peers (Stanton-Salazar, 2001) provide students with the encouragement and tools to succeed in high school and be better prepared to apply for and enroll in college. Services such as academic and career guidance, class scheduling, information regarding college, and campus visits are some of the elements that contribute to a college-going culture (Corwin et al., 2004). Additionally, Castillo and colleagues (2010) found that school counselors, in addition to parents and guardians, play a significant role in contributing to a procollege culture. Adapting organizational cultures to students' cultures is also necessary for improving student outcomes (Banks & Banks, 2009; De Jesús & Antrop-González, 2006). For such cultural change, teachers and adults need to learn about their students' interests, aspirations, and ecological surroundings to know how to communicate a genuine sense of care and create conditions that support academic success (De Jesús & Antrop-González, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999).

Although many high school–university partnerships exist, they "rarely attempt to destabilize racist structures while prioritizing the needs of marginalized communities, nor do they infuse equity and social justice work in sustainable and comprehensive ways" (Delgado Bernal & Alemán, 2017, p. 6). In contrast, programs that specifically work with Latinx youth often seek to prepare all students to enroll and succeed in college by integrating higher education into school experiences and establishing a college-going culture (Delgado Bernal & Alemán, 2017). Successful programs incorporate counseling, academic enrichment, personal and cultural support, mentoring, and scholarships. Programs that bridge the two educational systems provide important opportunities for students to gain familiarity with postsecondary environments, and often remain an important source of support and guidance even after graduation (Gándara & Contreras, 2009).

Researcher Worldview

As a research team, we strove to situate this project, pedagogy, and research within a critical lens to challenge current inequitable distributions of power that frame our systems of education. In using this lens, we drew upon critical race theory (CRT) and Latinx critical race theory (LatCrit). The framework of CRT emerged from legal discourse that framed racism as a tool to maintain inequity through curriculum, instruction, assessment, school funding, and desegregation (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Scholars have described CRT as composed of five tenets: (1) centrality and intersectionality of race and racism; (2) challenge to dominant ideology; (3) commitment to social justice; (4) centrality of experiential knowledge; and (5) interdisciplinary perspective (Solórzano, 1997; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a). In using CRT as both a theoretical framework and a methodology, researchers challenge deficit perspectives by providing liberatory or transformative methods (Solórzano, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001b).

LatCrit serves as a specific emphasis within CRT as a "framework that can be used to theorize and examine the ways in which race and racism explicitly and implicitly impact on the educational structures, processes, and discourses that affect People of Color generally and Latinas/os specifically" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a, p. 479). Here, we used LatCrit as a reflexive tool throughout the formation, implementation, data collec-

tion, and analysis of our high school–university partnership to inform our approach and center the voices of Latinx students. LatCrit provides an important framework to understand the experiences of Latinx students in education (Davila & de Bradley, 2010; Huber, 2010) and to share counterstories that challenge stereotypes and essentialization (Elenes, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a). This lens illuminates the ways in which current education pathways deter Latinx students from success through inadequate preparation, poor schooling conditions, and lack of support (Solórzano et al., 2005). In our study, a systemic lack of resources framed the educational context that our students navigated.

Using LatCrit and CRT emphasizes the ways that racism is embedded throughout education systems and acknowledges the multiplicity of realities (Ladson–Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT in education can provide ways to challenge racism by defining, analyzing, and looking at examples of race and racism and transforming education for minoritized students (Solórzano, 1997). Such approaches provide transformational resistance that "allows one to look at resistance among Students of Color that is political, collective, conscious, and motivated by a sense that individual and social change is possible" (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001, p. 320). Many traditional interventions in education reify societal inequities or emphasize ideas of multiculturalism without a focus on true social justice (Ladson–Billings, 1998; Ladson–Billings & Tate, 1995). Instead, using a critical lens can center the attributes of marginalized communities, such as the model of community cultural wealth posed by Yosso (2005) that outlines six forms of capital (aspirational, familial, social, linguistic, resistant, navigational) utilized by communities of color. Here, LatCrit and CRT framed our goals and motivations in approaching the educational partnership, our engagement with the high school teachers and staff, and our relationships with one another.

Theoretical Framework

In their discussion of organizational theory, Bolman and Deal (2013) conceptualize four approaches that illuminate how groups approach issues, distribute resources, and make decisions. Our study is informed by their political frame, which defines politics as "the realistic process of making deci-sions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and divergent interests" (p. 183). Assumptions embedded within this frame highlight the ways that coalitions comprise individuals with unique values and beliefs, that conflict is a daily by–product of scarce resources, and that power (defined as "the capacity to make things happen" [p. 190]) is the most important asset. Coalitions form when members are interdependent and prioritize collaboration, and goals evolve through negotiation and bargaining. In this frame, leaders are less likely to issue edicts around priorities than to build support and bring together groups in working relationships.

Trends in higher education suggest an increased need for partnerships within the preschool through bachelor's degree (P–16) trajectories, particularly to pool resources (Eddy, 2010). Such resources can include academic enrichment for students, postsecondary transitional support and exposure, and additional trained teachers. Although university–school partnerships can span school partners across K–12 education, we focus on high school–university collaborations and use the political frame to understand how two distinct education systems approach common issues. In these collaborations, high schools and universities have unique agendas, necessitating clear communication and acknowledgement of differences across goals and approaches (Farrell & Seifert, 2007). As Eddy (2010) noted, "these ventures may vary in motivations for members to join, rationales for cooperating, and ability to sustain" (p. 3). For example, faculty members may struggle to prioritize such involvement within a rewards system that primarily values research. At an institutional level, collaborations between high schools and universities require shared consensus, including defining and operationalizing ideas of college readiness and preparation (Farrell & Seifert, 2007). We interpret this theoretical framework through a LatCrit and CRT lens to recognize the racial context that frames political agendas, coalitions, and resources.

Methodology and Methods

This article stems from a larger 2–year ethnographic case study that took place at a career and technical education (CTE) high school, here given the pseudonym Hillside Technical High School (HTHS). Ethnographic case studies combine case

study techniques with ethnographic interpretation (Simons, 2009) to give "a sociocultural analysis and interpretation of the unit of study" (Merriam, 1988, p. 23). Although we use some ethnographic techniques such as participant observation and directive and nondirective interviewing, ethnographic case studies are not limited by the data collection and analysis techniques found in traditional ethnography (Simons, 2009).

This article focuses on one component of the study, the partnership between administration at HTHS and faculty from an institution of higher education given the pseudonym Research University (RU), a large public research institution in New England. The partnership was developed as part of an urban education initiative at RU focused on community engagement with Hillside. The project was led by a four-member university teaching team: two tenure-track faculty (lead instructors) and two doctoral students (teaching assistants) affiliated with RU. As part of that partnership, HTHS administrators agreed to have the teaching team instruct an 11th grade English language arts (ELA) course at the high school for 1 year. The course focused on developing students' research skills, increasing academic and critical literacy, promoting critical thinking, and incorporating Puerto Rican diasporic literature. There was also a youth participatory action research project within the course that students elected to focus on the school-to-prison pipeline. After the first year of the project, the high school's administration allowed the teaching team to continue working with HTHS students for a second year. At HTHS, the project reinforced district goals of improving literacy, graduation rates, and the overall educational trajectory and college access of primarily Latinx youth.

Research Site and Access

HTHS is located in the urban community of Hillside in the northeastern United States, selected for involvement in this study because of its physical proximity to RU, its lack of resources (most demonstrable through a designation as "failing" by the state), and its lack of preexisting connections with RU. Approximately 24% of Hillside residents age 18 or older do not have a high school diploma or equivalent certification. HTHS is a career and technical education (CTE) high school, and 90% of students identify as Latinx. The student population is predominantly Puerto Rican, and the Latinx diaspora within the study also encompassed students with Mexican and Dominican heritage. It is important to note that our study did not exclusively involve Latinx students. Two of our 15 student participants identified as white or biracial.

Research Participants

Our study consisted of engagement with multiple individuals from HTHS and RU. At HTHS, this included senior administrators, specifically the principal, associate principal, guidance counselor, and deans of students. We also engaged with several teachers at the high school, specifically two teachers who were assigned by HTHS leadership to "host" the teaching team's ELA course. The host teacher allowed us to use their classroom, occasionally observed our teaching, and served as a resource for HTHS information. The HTHS senior leadership selected the 15 students that participated in the class. Because our teaching team did not recruit members of the HTHS community into our project (instead, they were asked or volunteered by HTHS leadership to do so), we developed an informed consent/assent process to ensure that individuals had the option to participate in the class without having to participate in the empirical research project. In addition to the HTHS participants, this study noted the ways in which the four members of the teaching team navigated the two institutions of RU and HTHS.

Data Collection

During the first year of the project, we spent approximately 2 to 2.5 hours at the research site every other day over the course of an academic school year (a total of 114 contact hours). Approximately 90 minutes were spent on classroom instruction and 30 to 60 minutes engaging with HTHS staff, course planning, and course debriefing. During Year 2 of the project, we spent approximately 1 to 1.5 hours every other week (60 minutes with students, 30 with staff) engaging in college and career planning for a total of approximately 60 hours.

We collected multiple forms of data throughout the study, which is reflective of an ethnographic case study approach that utilizes several sources of information in data collection to provide in-depth description and explanation of the case (Simons,

2009). After obtaining institutional review board (IRB) approval, we engaged in participant observations, individual student interviews, and student focus groups, as well as reviewing students' photographs, written narratives, and reflections. Team members captured researcher notes and memos after class sessions; we also used email communication to share classroom reflections and engage in course planning. For this study, we focused predominantly on the data provided by the internal team documents represented by these observation notes, emails, and course lessons, as well as interviews with students during each year of the program.

Data Analysis

While our larger study reflected an ethnographic case study focused on the high school class the teaching team taught, the analysis presented within this article reflects only one part of that larger study. The purpose of this article (high school–university partnerships) emerged inductively as a theme in our initial data analysis. In our initial analysis, there was a strong emphasis on how the processes and individuals at RU and HTHS, as well as the partnership between the two, impacted the ability of the teaching team to work with the HTHS students. Although this topic was not the focus of the original study, the prominence of the theme warranted additional targeted analysis.

We sought to further understand and analyze this theme by developing research questions centered on it, engaging in inductive analysis as a team, and drawing upon the frameworks we present in this article (deductive analysis). To begin this analysis, the lead author read through all data collected through the project to identify the evidence most relevant to answering the research questions. All four members then reviewed the data points and developed memos to record initial reflections and potential themes and patterns within the case data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Simons, 2009). These memos allowed the team to engage in constant comparative coding by engaging first in open coding for interesting and important data and then axial coding to compare and connect ideas into categories (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Such codes included cultural relevancy in curriculum design, administrative instability, and student agency. We complemented inductive codes with deductive codes generated from our theoretical framework. Using Bolman and Deal (2013) and literature on high school–university partnerships, we created a codebook of concepts such as power, resource distribution, relationships, and negotiation (Simons, 2009). In developing our codes, we frequently discussed as a group how these themes were contextualized by race and racism, incorporating principles of LatCrit theory (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a).

Each member of the teaching team then coded for and wrote one section of the findings, using the data itself (e.g., participant narratives) as evidence of their interpretations and analysis (Guest & MacQueen, 2008). Finally, we used NVIVO software to analyze the data using multiple tools to identify patterns and themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The findings were then reviewed by all team members for consistency and a collaborative understanding of the data (Guest & MacQueen, 2008).

Positionality and Trustworthiness

As a teaching team, we brought our positionality to the course. The two lead instructors in the course were tenure–track assistant professors who identified as Black women (George Mwangi and Green). The two teaching assistants identified as a white woman (Bettencourt) and Latinx man (Morales). As both teachers and researchers, we sought to recognize the ways that our identities shaped our interactions with the project, frequently using peer debriefing and reflexive strategies through meetings and emails. This awareness was congruent with principles of CRT that advocate for constant reflection to avoid perpetuating social inequalities through education (Ladson–Billings, 1998; Ladson–Billings & Tate, 1995). In addition to our social identities, we brought a range of experience working across the educational pipeline. Although two members of our teaching team directly focused on postsecondary education and two on K–12 systems, we all had experience working with students in both contexts prior to the ELA course. Thus, we brought an emic perspective to our work. Additional techniques for engaging research trustworthiness include incorporating methodological triangulation through multiple forms of data collection (documents, interviews, observations) and data triangulation through engaging multiple data sources (e.g., students, staff, ourselves;

Patton, 2002).

Findings

Our research questions asked (a) What factors impact the development of K–16 partnerships? and (b) What strategies do educators use to develop K–16 partnerships? Our findings illuminated two primary areas. The two themes that emerged regarding the first question emphasized bridging the bifurcated systems between HTHS and RU that resulted in separate educational worldviews and administrative procedures. Regarding the second question, analysis showed that the teaching team developed strategies to address constant change and drew upon the students as resources to sustain the partnership.

Different Educational Worldviews

The difference in educational worldviews, exemplified across behavioral management and pedagogy, was a key factor impacting the partnership between the teaching team and the broader culture of HTHS. In the conceptual phases of the program, the teaching team attempted to center the Latinx student experience within lessons. The course was conceptualized by the faculty as "a literary arts course that would cultivate critical literacy skills; academic writing/college–level writing skills; heritage knowledge." In the course, students were expected to be critical thinkers and engaged in complex conversations about racism and power. One teaching team member saw this as "balancing that out with things that may not be considered as valuable in schools, but that we see as valuable to students' learning."

As a result, the students in the ELA class saw the course as a place where they learned not only academic content, but about what was going on in the world. One student referred to the course as his "activist course." Laura, a student studying health care, described the course as preparing her for the broader world, noting, "I want to know about everything that's happening in the world. That's exactly what we're doing." Such an approach challenged traditional banking approaches to education, in which students were expected merely to remember and repeat information (Freire, 1970). In this way, the course aligned with CRT by engaging in social justice, experiential learning, and minoritized perspectives (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a). Students often described other teachers at HTHS as not as engaged in student learning or critical thinking. Laura contrasted her experience with the ELA course with her overall experience at HTHS, noting that "I feel like some [teachers] don't care about us, what we do, and what makes us want to learn. If we don't want to learn they'll be like, 'Okay. You don't need to learn. Go home.'"

These differences in pedagogy aligned with the differences across the two institutions, where HTHS was primarily focused on preparing students for a career and the RU teaching team prioritized critical thinking aligned with college coursework. In this case, the worldview of HTHS was also informed by larger structural limitations like the impact of the state receivership imposed due to low test scores, continual change in leadership, and limited resources. The instability of resources limited the ability of the teaching team to engage in holistic planning as systems were often changing or information was unclear. Moreover, HTHS staff and teachers felt immense pressure to focus on state testing to stabilize the position of the school. The scarcity of resources and diverse interests at times created disconnect across divergent goals (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Expectations of and strategies related to behavioral management served as a second area reflecting the tension between educational worldviews. The teaching team articulated a community-based strategy rooted in a collegiate approach that asked students to establish group norms and hold themselves accountable. During the first class session, the teaching team asked the students to generate "ROPES," a shared set of expectations that used each letter in the word to generate key terms (e.g., R = responsibility or respect, O = openness or on-time). The team then attempted to revisit these principles during the course to remind students of the mutually agreed-upon expectations.

Ultimately, ROPES did not have the desired impact. Rather than inform a community agreement, the group listed various terms (e.g., polite, organized) without a clear consensus of their goal and how to hold one another accountable. The team later revisited the exercise by creating a collective contract that outlined the shared expectations for students and teachers. One of the teaching assistants described this process:

I put pieces of paper around the room that read "Expectations of Students," "Expectations of Instructors," and "Failing to Meet Expectations." The students got a marker each and wrote things on each piece of paper. Most students seemed to take the exercise seriously.

The approach of asking students to hold themselves accountable was different from the culture of the school in which students rarely shaped or had input in policies. Participants in the ELA course shared examples such as a no cell phone policy, the expectation to always carry their ID cards, and the shortened lunch period (approximately 20 minutes). One student, Juan, described the behavioral management at HTHS as a business rather than an educational institution. He shared an example of a student who was injured as the bystander of a fight and received suspension, describing how the student "was treated as if she was just any person outside on the street who stole someone's money or something."

Misaligned Logistics

A second factor was the logistical misalignment between K–12 and postsecondary education (Cunningham & Matthews, 2007; Hoffman et al., 2009). HTHS and RU had completely different academic calendars. The start and end dates differed (August and June for HTHS; September and April for RU), a dichotomy that was amplified by varying schedules for closures related to holidays, professional development, and inclement weather. Given the physical HTHS space and limited number of university members on the project, it was more practical to work within the HTHS calendar, rather than use the RU calendar or a hybrid. The commitment to the HTHS precedent required the teaching team to work outside our contracted employment schedule and to forgo breaks during the academic year because of limited overlap in break schedules. In discussing how to teach the HTHS class while the university was closed for winter break, one team member explained, "Figuring out December will be tricky, but . . . we just need to map our time out on the calendar and see who will be here and then we can work around any holes." The misaligned schedules led to feelings of burnout for the teaching team.

Communication was another logistical issue. Although HTHS staff were typically responsive to email inquiries and the teaching team utilized in-person communication where possible, it was challenging to receive up-to-date information. In one example, teaching team members were told by HTHS administration that the school had implemented a new website to post updates and communication throughout the year. However, the website was often out of date. For HTHS teachers who were on the campus daily, other forms of communication supplemented the online presence. For the RU team, the lack of information available online created confusion. In trying to use the website to complete required field trip paperwork, one team member emailed the group to explain, "There used to be a link to it from [the website], but I don't see it there anymore. . . . maybe [HTHS] aren't using it anymore." Teaching team members were not on official staff electronic mailing lists or privy to other forms of communication, as they were not considered HTHS staff. Therefore, team members did not have a formal mechanism for receiving real-time information about the school (e.g., schedule changes, new initiatives, staff turnover) and, at times, made decisions about the project using outdated or inaccurate information. The misinformation reflects the conflicting priorities around which resources were most important (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

The misaligned calendars and communication also made it challenging for RU team members and HTHS partners to meet and engage collaboratively, a challenge amplified by differences in roles and level of commitment/responsibility to the project. The RU team was responsible for coordinating the project, whereas HTHS staff served in support roles, causing much of the communication to occur through requests to the administration rather than direct collaboration with teachers. For both parties, there were challenges in making the collaboration a priority due to competing obligations and times to sit down in person (Bolman & Deal, 2013). For example, in an email to the school administrators to request a meeting at the end of Year 1, one RU team member asked,

[We] are reaching out to see if you have any interest in meeting before the end of the school year to share what accomplished during

the school year, and/or to hear your thoughts about the year or to answer any questions. We are also interested in knowing more about the schedules for the students in our class, toward a possibility of continuing to work with these students through graduation.

Unfortunately, this meeting was never scheduled. Across the project, team members were unable to find times to reflect together and to make mutually beneficial adjustments that supported all stakeholders. While the project was conducted, these logistical misalignments created difficulty in developing a clear partnership.

Navigating Across Change

Given the challenges of two very different educational systems, the teaching team drew upon several strategies to create partnerships. During the 2 years of the ELA project, the host teacher and key administrators (e.g., principal, associate principal, dean of students) all left HTHS and were replaced by new individuals. HTHS was placed under a receivership by the state due to low test scores. RU also underwent substantial changes during the project, resulting in turnover for multiple key leadership positions on campus and creating challenges to sustaining the partnership (Eddy, 2010). To navigate these changing circumstances, the teaching team used individual relationships, flexibility in design, and community resources.

The teaching team collaborated with members of the HTHS staff and administration to support the efforts of the course, building individual relationships to obtain resources and information. In one example, one team member discovered an unexpected connection in that "the new Dean of Students is my old neighbor." She leveraged her prior familiarity to open a communication channel, which she used to get administrative buy-in at HTHS for field trips and activities with students. In a second example, the teaching team supported the HTHS host teacher during Year 1 by helping to cover additional class sessions when a time conflict arose, providing a space to process concerns, and even celebrating his retirement. During the students' senior year, the teaching team built connections with the guidance counselor and new ELA host teacher to facilitate opportunities related to college and career planning. In an email to establish a plan for the year, one member noted that "we are looking forward to continuing our relationship with the students and the school this year. We are committed to seeing everyone graduate, and hopefully transition to a post-secondary pathway or opportunity." Without a formal system, building individual relationships provided support and assistance. These relationships allowed the teaching team to offer their expertise and assistance to HTHS staff in return for insider knowledge of the school and students (Bolman & Deal, 2013). As a result, HTHS and teaching team members were able to form a loose coalition related to mutual benefit.

Flexibility in design occurred as the HTHS schedule was constantly evolving or shifting due to state testing, CTE curriculum, and changing needs of students. During the last semester of the project, the students were unavailable during the previously established time. In addition, both faculty members were on parental leave during the semester. To accommodate the new schedule and the smaller team, one of the teaching assistants proposed a plan where "at least two [teaching team members will] be able to keep doing some small group/1:1 attention as students work on applications, scholarships, and job applications." When these concerns were no longer salient with students, who largely had plans after high school, the team moved to an individualized support model. In this way, the teaching team renegotiated relationships and resources not only externally, but within their own practice as well (Bolman & Deal, 2013). As one of the research assistants described,

> It seems like, our group is ready to be off on their way and isn't engaging as much in [group] planning for next steps at this point. We've made sure that they have our contact information so that we can help individually.

In addition to the course and physical meetings, engagement in virtual spaces such as Facebook, Google chat, and texting also allowed for communication across teachers and students.

The flexibility also occurred in the ability to respond to the high school climate. When one student, Juan, was involved in a physical altercation at HTHS, the teaching

team wrote a letter to the administration to advocate for a developmental process rather than a suspension:

> We see in him an immense capacity that can continue to grow with continued support, encouragement, and opportunities to stimulate his intellect and creativity. As educators, we believe the school environment is one of the primary contexts in which this can happen and thus ask that he not be removed.

In this case, the fact that the faculty had the expertise and credentialing of college professors also bolstered the intervention of the teaching team on behalf of the student. It was an attempt to utilize the power that the RU team had accumulated through the project to advocate for an alternative disciplinary outcome (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Although Juan was still ultimately suspended, the letter gave Juan's family a tool to draw upon in meetings with administration.

The final subtheme focused on the ways in which the ELA class incorporated local and community resources beyond HTHS. One of the faculty members was well-connected with both national scholars and local activists performing social justice and racial equity work and used her connections to bring prominent individuals to HTHS. In an email, she stated,

> We are hoping to expose students to programming at [the Hillside Community College], students (Latinx and/or activist groups), faculty who work on education and incarceration issues, or perhaps sit in on a [college] class.

In another example, one of the doctoral students frequently passed along opportunities to participate in local events and activities of interest. Perhaps the clearest example was a field trip in which the teaching team took students to a conference on the school-to-prison pipeline hosted by an Ivy League university. The field trip provided students with exposure to higher education beyond their immediate environment, connected them with outside peers, and offered them new research skills. These supplemental opportunities helped provide resources and opportunities not present within the turbulent environment of HTHS, demonstrating the ability of the RU team to integrate resources beyond the immediate partnership to bolster their work (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Students as Resources

In many traditional educational contexts, young people are not viewed as knowledgeable assets. At times, HTHS fell into a similar pattern of treating students as receivers of information and services. In this high school–university partnership, however, students were assets and experts with whom the teaching team partnered to receive information and learn. As outsiders and newcomers, the teaching team benefited from information that the students provided about the historical and contemporary contexts of HTHS. This navigational capital (Yosso, 2005) was invaluable. Given the differences within the high school standard operating procedures, schedules, routines, policies, and cultural norms, students served as a main point of contact enabling the teaching team to decode HTHS. For example, the school operated on an "A" and "B" day rotation, which related to when students went to certain academic classes or their "shops" or vocational tracks. This schedule was disrupted by snow days, holidays, or testing days, changing the rotation. One such schedule change happened at the beginning of the year, as described by one of the faculty members:

> Early in the school year, we showed up at the school and there was no class; we had come on the wrong day. One of the students had actually tried to tell [us] the week prior, but we didn't listen, and thought we had the schedule correct.

These logistical pieces of information also took the form of information about school policies or staffing changes, including the departure of the dean of students and the retirement of the host teacher during Year 1.

Similarly, the teaching team gained insight into the contentious dynamic between HTHS and Hillside High School (HHS), the two high schools in the area, through the students. According to ELA students, HTHS had been a "credible" option for those interested in a trade, with many of the students' parents having been alumni. During our project, however, HTHS carried a stigma felt by the students and was viewed as not as academically rigorous as HHS. From the students, the teaching team learned that the "students do not have a lot of school pride,"

"the school does not care about students, or does not show much care," and that "disrespectful students and staff" were perceived as part of HTHS culture. Students shared information on the reputation of particular Hillside neighborhoods, the relationship between the two high schools, and the ways their Puerto Rican identities were framed in the broader Hillside context. In this way, the students were also able to offer counterstories that challenged the stereotypes given to the Hillside community (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a).

In addition to their knowledge of the context of Hillside, students served as key partners in shaping curricular choices. Prior to the school year, the two lead instructors collaborated to create a skeleton curriculum. Without input from the students or information about their academic skills or interests, the lesson plans were outlined with the understanding they might need to change after meeting the students. This pedagogical approach meant remaining flexible and viewing student input as an asset. For example, at the beginning of the school year, one of the faculty members began introductions and mentioned that the class would use the HTHS online platform. Students voiced concerns that the platform had not worked well during the prior year, often failing to update their grades. Additionally, the instructor suggested using Twitter for the class, which also was met with mixed reactions from students. One student remarked that "education should not be on social media," but another student offered the opinion that Twitter would be good "because it allows other people to see what we are doing in class." Ultimately, the teaching team decided to forgo using the HTHS system and Twitter, opting for simply emailing, texting, or calling the students based on the responses they provided. We eventually created a Facebook page for the class as a popular platform among students. In the ELA class, students were also treated as holding power and were individuals with whom we as a teaching team had to collaborate and negotiate to build a coalition for our shared educational goals (Bettencourt, 2018; Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Discussion

In this study, we attempt to reconcile the political frame of Bolman and Deal (2013) with the tenets of LatCrit theory (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a), which center Latinx student voices. Our study emphasizes the fluid nature of political relationships. In order to "make things happen" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 190), the faculty and teaching assistants were challenged to be constantly flexible to create working relationships that often changed in the context of the school. However, the use of LatCrit theory allowed the teaching team to center an important resource often overlooked within such collaborations—the students themselves. By viewing students as resources, we also drew on asset-based frameworks such as community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) that challenge deficit views applied to marginalized communities.

In particular, the navigational capital of students was crucial to create the collaboration and understand the culture of HTHS (Yosso, 2005). Navigational capital is described as the "skills of maneuvering through social institutions" (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). Indeed, it was the students' navigation abilities that helped to bridge the bifurcated pathway. This was particularly important as none of the four members of the teaching team identified as Puerto Rican or as staff at HTHS. The insider knowledge was crucial to bridging the divergent interests at HTHS and RU. The students provided pragmatic support in helping to manage the different logistical systems of the two institutions. Importantly, they also helped to illuminate the hidden curriculum (Anyon, 1980) of HTHS that dictated how students were expected to learn and act.

Our participants also engaged in resistant capital that challenged the deficit views within the high school, Hillside, and the larger geographical community that they were less capable than other students or that pursuing CTE was less valuable than traditional curriculum. Yosso (2005) described resistant capital as "knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality" (p. 80). Although participants experienced inequity daily, the ELA course helped students to position their experiences within larger national discourse. They connected their experiences with key ideas and terminology, and they situated their experience within a national landscape of racial injustice that included the election of Donald Trump, the Black Lives Matter movement, and school discipline policies (Morales et al., 2017). Resistant capital helped the students navigate through the racism, classism, and

violence that pervaded their daily lives. In this way, our participants directly embodied key tenets of CRT such as challenges to dominant ideology, commitment to social justice, and the importance of experiential knowledge (Solórzano, 1997; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a).

Thus, our study expands the political framework (Bolman & Deal, 2013) to examine how traditionally marginalized communities wield power in partnerships. Rather than viewing Latinx students as passive entities to whom these partnerships happen, our study illuminates the agency of our participants and the community. Moreover, LatCrit served as a social justice tool to link theory with our own teaching practice, scholarship with teaching, and the academy with the broader community. Like prior studies, this research shows that students and teachers can partner to adapt curriculum and take advantage of limited resources (Madrigal-Garcia & Acevedo-Gil, 2016).

The HTHS and RU partnership also suggests a need to recenter communities as part of this collaboration. Given the administrative changes at both HTHS and RU, the local community college, museums, and organizations provided key resources that would have otherwise been unavailable. Taken with the last point, our research suggests a need to create an infrastructure for these partnerships that involves students, families, and community organizations in addition to colleges and universities. Since most successful partnerships are largely rooted in organic creation (Delgado Bernal & Alemán, 2017) instead of government-mandated efforts (Farrell & Seifert, 2007), a best practice may be to regularly convene meetings of such collaborators to examine the broader trends and needs in the community and create strategies for successfully addressing them.

Although this study provides significant considerations for partnerships, it is important to note that HTHS was a highly surveilled school that was deemed failing by the state, and was even perceived as a deficit by the local community when compared to the other local high school. This partnership was also unique based on the limited resources and particular circumstances of HTHS and the time period in which our course took place, during the transition to and imposition of a state receivership. Our collaboration probably would have looked very different at a highly resourced institution or in another context.

In addition, HTHS was a CTE school. Prior research has found that the high school outcomes for CTE students often are different; students are more likely to attend community colleges and pursue shorter term career interests or delay their educational goals (Laird et al., 2006). Literature around partnerships between research universities and CTE schools is exceedingly rare. However, it is possible that for some students in CTE schools, college-going may not be an immediate goal. Or, more specifically, college-going at a school such as RU may not be the goal. In these cases, it may be crucial for stakeholders to decide earlier on what the goal of these collaborations is. As a research team, we attempted to center student agency over traditional student success metrics. However, such a view requires that colleges and universities more holistically grapple with their role in local communities beyond the goal of enrollment. This question is one that other scholars have also grappled with, and the partnership here echoes those considerations:

> To the extent that these students are arriving at the university underprepared for the rigors of college-level work, leaders of these institutions believe it to be in their self-interest to help strengthen the public schools. At another level, the involvement of public colleges and universities stems in part from a growing perception by taxpayers that the university holds some responsibility for the state of American education, and that some of its resources should be put to the task of improving public schooling. (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, p. 277)

Limitations

The partnership that we analyzed within this article demonstrates the complex dynamics that can emerge in high school-university collaborations. Nonetheless, our study also reflects limitations that should be considered when interpreting our findings. Primarily, our study was not intentionally designed to study the partnership herein described. Instead, our study was intended to focus on the teaching team's work with HTHS students and engagement in the 11th grade ELA course. Therefore, the partner-

ship was not selected for being a model or for other targeted characteristics. Although the partnership topic emerged as a major theme within the study, we recommend future researchers working in similar partnerships intentionally capture their partnership's structure and engagement through their research design, rather than a sole focus on the outcomes.

Implications

College education is increasingly important given the nation's focus on a global knowledge economy, the collapse of blue-collar labor positions, and the scarcity of social resources (Carnevale, 2007). Although Latinx college-going rates may be increasing, gaps around degree achievement persist (Krogstad, 2016). To support students, further efforts are necessary to help manage student expectations prior to enrollment, to prepare college faculty, and to develop more structural resources (Kanny, 2015).

Our study illuminates potential challenges and opportunities to building high school–university partnerships. By establishing educational pathways, institutions can move from expecting students to be college ready to being student ready for the populations that arrive on campus. This student-ready mind-set requires that institutions create climates that involve K–12 and higher education stakeholders in a process of challenging the deficit labels and biases that frame minoritized students as lesser and instead seek to be more proactive and innovative in providing support (McNair et al., 2016). In this case, there is a direct need to prepare faculty members to engage in these types of research and partnerships. These topics could include how to develop these partnerships, ongoing support, and introductions within the local community.

A key priority moving forward for these partnerships is to identify areas of interest convergence. If peer-refereed journal articles are the metric of success for faculty members (Slaughter & Rhoads, 2004; Webber, 2011), collaborations between high schools and colleges may provide unique opportunities to engage in research with a variety of participants. The P–12 sector provides rich sample sites for scholars to engage with participants and to collaboratively investigate pedagogy, youth development, and postgraduation trajectories. However, these partnerships also challenge traditional conceptions of merit. Community-engaged research may involve different pedagogies and products that are not traditionally recognized within academia, suggesting a need for senior faculty and administrators to proactively emphasize their value (Fine, 2008). National organizations can also support this trend. For example, in 2018 the Association for the Study of Higher Education, one of the main postsecondary research organizations in the United States, added a section to its annual program on community-engaged research. There is a pressing need to address the issue of K–12, higher education, and Latinx community partnerships because Latinx students represent an untapped resource in the academic production of knowledge. We need to highlight the importance of educational partnerships that support and sustain Latinx youth in the educational system.

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The Effect of Town and Gown on Local Economic Development: An Analysis of Partnerships, Planning, and Policy

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Abstract

The relationship between institutions of higher learning and their local communities is often described as "town and gown." Few studies examine how these partnerships affect state and local public administration and local economic development. We analyzed data from the 2014 Economic Development Survey carried out by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) to reveal empirical evidence regarding the factors that influence the formation of town and gown partnerships and the effects of these partnerships on local economic development. Communities that form town and gown partnerships were more likely to have written economic development plans and to utilize multiple development tools.

Keywords: economic development tools, town and gown partnership

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State and local governments operate in an environment of constraint, facing complex economic and social challenges. Colleges and universities are some of the most important assets for state and local governments. These institutions contribute greatly to the social, political, and economic life of the communities in which they are located (Carroll & Smith, 2006; Chatterton, 2000; Gray, 1999). Institutions of higher learning maintain large, stable, and creative workforces that play significant roles in local economies (Lendel, 2010), and they are in a unique position to provide culture and amenities and a steady supply of new ideas and technologies. Boston's highly productive creative class economy, for instance, owes an enormous debt to the city's world-class institutions of higher learning (Florida, 2014), just as Silicon Valley owes an enormous debt to the expertise provided by the faculty and students of Stanford University (Glaeser, 2011).

Yet despite the vital assets that universities and colleges represent for many communities, town and gown relations often become strained, impeding the formation of partnerships (Brockliss, 2000; Bruning et al., 2006; Kemp, 2013; Martin et al., 2005; Mayfield, 2001; O'Mara, 2012). Conflict may arise over such issues as taxes, land-use decisions, and the behavior of students (Hatcher & Childress, 2016). Efforts to foster town and gown partnerships must accordingly take into account factors that promote their formation in the first place, as well as their effects on local policy. These issues, however, have been understudied in the public administration literature. Few studies, before this one, have used empirical data to assess the characteristics of communities that form strong relationships with local institutions of higher learning and the effects of these relationships on state and local government and economic development.

Beyond the economic benefits of town and gown and partnerships, there are a host of engaged learning opportunities produced by universities and their communities working together. The engaged learning opportunities can include internships, service-learning projects, speaker series,

applied research, and other experiential activities that benefit students and community partners as well (Martin et al., 2005). Additionally, robust town and gown partnerships have the potential to create interdisciplinary workgroups that include faculty from numerous fields working with students and community partners to address local problems and in doing so provide an effective engaged learning experience for students (Laninga et al., 2011).

Given the economic, social, and learning impacts of universities and colleges, public administration has a responsibility to help state and local governments form meaningful town and gown partnerships. The present study was accordingly designed to answer two research questions. First, what factors influence the formation of town and gown partnerships? Second, are there significant differences regarding local economic development in communities with town and gown partnerships? To answer these questions, we relied on data from the 2014 Economic Development Survey conducted by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) (ICMA, 2014a).The ICMA's Economic Development Survey is a national survey sent to U.S. counties and municipalities to collect information on the economic development priorities, practices and challenges of local governments. Given the limited research on town and gown partnerships, our analysis was necessarily exploratory in nature, intended to offer a grounded explanation for the formation of these partnerships and an account of their effects on community economic development.

Town and Gown Relations

Universities and colleges serve as hubs for innovation and research, connecting public, private, and nonprofit entities in ways that promote local economic development and strengthen state and local governance. Educational institutions are stable assets that not only benefit local economies but also invigorate communities socially and politically (Breznitz & Feldman, 2012). Such economic success stories as those of Boston and Silicon Valley have been widely discussed in the scholarly and popular literature on community development (Glaeser, 2011). Past studies have focused on such issues as the influence of educational institutions on economic growth through technology transfer (Miner et al., 2001), with little attention paid to the contributions of universities to the development of the surrounding communities (Breznitz & Feldman, 2012; Feller, 1990; Franz, 2009; Trencher et al., 2014).

In many cities, institutions of higher education have played crucial roles in the revitalization of neighborhoods, especially in areas bordering universities and colleges (Garber & Adams, 2017). An example is Louisville, Kentucky, where the University of Louisville, through the Housing and Neighborhood Development Strategies (HANDS; now known as Sustainable Urban Development or SUN) initiative, spearheaded the redevelopment of the city's East Russell neighborhood, helping to address local economic problems by building a consensus among various partnering development organizations (Mullins & Gilderbloom, 2006). This effort promoted new businesses in the neighborhood, improved the availability of housing, and led to a discussion of redesigning the streetscape to include slower two-way roads with bike lanes (Meares et al., 2015). The Louisville case is an example of the benefits to be gained from an understanding of the administrative features of town and gown partnerships and the roles of universities as coordinating bodies in the forging of a consensus for community development.

Moreover, universities serve as anchor institutions (Birch et al., 2013), for the education industry is central to the growth of the knowledge economy. And since this industry is characterized by significant levels of face-to-face interaction, colleges and universities are commonly bound to a particular location, for which reason their land-use, procurement, and employment practices help to stabilize local economies. The procurement policies of the University of Pennsylvania, for example, have injected nearly $122 million into local businesses in West Philadelphia during fiscal year 2015 (University of Pennsylvania, 2016).

University and local officials often, however, find themselves engaged in conflict rather than cooperation (Martin et al., 2005; Silva et al., 2003), so there is again a need for research in public administration to understand how state and local governments can help form collaborative town and gown partnerships. Collaboration among public institutions is obviously required to address the complex challenges that states and localities face (Kettl, 2006). This need

is underscored by the environment of constrained resources that public agencies operate in, which encourages competition rather than collaboration. Public managers who appreciate the interdependence of community governance and economics tend to encourage their organizations to engage in collaborative solutions (O'Leary & Bingham, 2009; Thomson & Perry, 2006), one important example being administrative decisions to form town and gown partnerships.

The aforementioned cases of the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Louisville highlight some of the positive features of town and gown relationships; however, there are also negative aspects. Although universities serve as anchor institutions and have a vested interest in nearby neighborhoods, the main focus of a university is attracting and retaining students (Bose, 2015; Ehlenz, 2018). Thus, university investment decisions may at times reflect a tradeoff between serving the students and being a good community partner. This has led to many instances of tense relationships between a university and the surrounding neighborhoods. The development activity of a university can increase rents and home prices in adjacent neighborhoods (Bose, 2015). Universities also market some neighborhoods as student enclaves, which can exert upward pressure on the cost of housing in these neighborhoods. The increase in housing cost can lead to gentrification and displacement of existing residents, as has occurred, for example, in the Brighton neighborhood in Boston. Brighton is located in close proximity to local universities. With a growing demand for private market student housing close to campus, the cost of housing has increased significantly, which has pushed a portion of the nonstudent population out of the neighborhood (City of Boston, 2014). This problem is seen in many cities, including Atlanta, London, Toronto, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago (Ehlenz, 2016, 2018; Foote, 2017; Smith, 2008). Tense relationships between universities and the surrounding neighborhoods hinder collaborative efforts of cities and universities in different policy areas, including economic development.

Further case study evidence makes clear that collaboration can be difficult to achieve. First, the development decisions of universities often run counter to the wishes of local officials and business leaders (Kemp, 2013; Martin et al., 2005), with issues relating to land use and taxation having proved particularly vexatious for town and gown relations. A second major source of tension reflects social concerns. In some cases, universities view the surrounding areas as unsafe; in others, students are held responsible for a variety of community problems ranging from misbehavior to lack of parking (Kemp, 2013). Again, however, these challenges must be considered in the context of the wealth of opportunities that town and gown partnerships can bring when, for example, faculty share their expertise with the community, students volunteer to take part in local projects, and instructors use local communities as classrooms (Barnes et al., 2009; Kennedy, 1999; cf. Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Maurrasse, 2002).

Scholars and practitioners have arrived at various, often competing, explanations for the ways in which town and gown partnerships can provide experiential learning opportunities for students (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002), facilitate public health outreach (Seifer, 2000), and improve economic development. Once more, however, few studies have sought to identify the specific features of communities that form town and gown partnerships. In one such study, Martin et al. (2005) relied on case study evidence to identify funding, communication, synergy, measurable outcomes, visibility of applied research, and organizational capacity as key factors in the formation of successful town and gown relationships; however, neither this study nor any other has yet provided an empirical account of the characteristics of communities that form town and gown partnerships and the effects of these partnerships on local economic development policy. We accordingly sought to address this gap in the literature by using ICMA data to identify factors that promote the formation of town and gown partnerships and to explore the effects of those partnerships on local economic development policy.

Methodology and Exploratory Research Models

Since there have been few studies in the literature examining the administrative features of town and gown partnerships, we developed an exploratory research design that used data from ICMA's 2014 survey on local economic development. ICMA administered this survey by mailing a paper copy in June 2014 to a nationwide sample of

5,237 municipal and county governments. Accordingly, the units of analysis were cities and counties. ICMA also made an online survey available. Of potential participants, 1,201, or 23%, completed the survey, a response rate that falls within a range commonly seen in public administration scholarship. We recognize this response rate as a limitation on our research and thus again stress that our work here was exploratory in nature. At the same time, data collected by ICMA have been used in numerous studies in the public administration literature, including investigations of the effectiveness of local government (Pavlichev, 2004), the implementation of e-government services (Reddick, 2009; Reddick & Frank, 2007), and especially economic development (Feiock & Kim, 2001; Sharp, 1991).

The ICMA survey instrument contains a number of economic development questions relevant to this study. To examine empirically the efficacy of town and gown partnerships, we used those indicating the existence of town and gown partnerships and those indicating the economic development practices in place in various communities. We analyzed the questions using basic descriptive analysis and multivariate analysis to develop three complementary models to account for the formation of town and gown partnerships and their effects on economic development planning and policy.

Model 1: Explaining the Formation of Town and Gown Partnerships

In developing a model for the formation of town and gown partnerships, we hypothesized that the size of a community, the form of the local government, the type of organizations responsible for local development, and the regional context would be significant factors in determining whether a community is likely to form partnerships with a local institution of higher learning. The formation of a town and gown partnership was thus the dependent variable for the first model.

Regarding the effect of community size, larger cities and counties may be home to multiple industries and therefore less dependent on local higher learning institutions than smaller ones and less likely to form town and gown partnerships. Furthermore, such sources of friction between local governments and institutions of higher learning as land use and development may be more prevalent in larger communities than smaller ones. We accordingly created the variable "metro size" or analysis of the size of communities in all of our models.

Moving on to the next factor, previous studies have demonstrated that, unsurprisingly, the form of local government affects economic development policy (Feiock and Kim, 2001; Sharp, 1991). Thus, governments can be classified in terms of their structure as mayor–council, council–manager, commission, town meeting, or representative town meeting, and counties as commission, council–administrator (or council–manager), or council–elected executive. (These classifications were based on the ICMA data and the literature on the influence of the form of local government.) We found systems run by a professional city or county manager and a council to be most likely to adopt and implement rational, evidence-based policies. From our perspective, the formation of town and gown partnerships when possible is more rational than the pursuit of policies that do not involve such partnerships. To analyze the effect of the local form of government, we coded the communities based on their answers to the ICMA survey question regarding their form of government, being particularly interested in the effect of a professionally selected manager or local executive on town and gown policies.

The type of organization responsible for local economic development is the third factor taken into account in Model 1 with regard to the relationship between town and gown partnerships and economic policy outcomes. The type of organization responsible for local economic development is classified into two groups: directly managed by the local government or operated by a nonprofit organization. Agencies directly managed by the local government normally include offices within cities and counties. The types of nonprofit economic development organizations (NEDOs) involved in local economic development include many forms of nonprofits. Some examples are chambers of commerce, business advocacy groups, state and federally funded community organizations, and small-business development. Administrative decisions may differ in a community that relies primarily on nonprofit organizations, or rather, on government agencies to manage its economic development (Feiock & Andrew, 2006; Lipsky & Smith, 1989; Mirvis, 1992; Moore, 2000). As it happens, communities

have in recent decades turned to NEDOs—which blend private and public features and are inherently less political than governmental agencies—for local development policy (Sullivan, 2004). Given that nonprofit organizations tend to be more flexible than governmental agencies (Feiock & Andrew, 2006), we hypothesized that communities in which NEDOs are primarily responsible for local economic development would be more likely to form town and gown partnerships than those in which governmental agencies are primarily responsible for development. In order to test this hypothesis, we included the variable of economic development responsibility in our models.

Model 2: Explaining the Effect of Town and Gown Partnerships on Economic Development Planning

Model 2 was designed to examine the effect that town and gown partnerships have on the overall efficacy of local economic development. Our aim here was to determine whether communities that had entered into town and gown partnerships were more likely to have been pursuing evidence-based strategies than communities that had not. Previous studies have investigated thoroughly the role of planning in local economic development (Blair, 1998; Garcia et al., 1991; Pammer, 1998). In the literature on local government and economic development, planning has consistently been identified as a crucial evidence-based strategy for communities. Kemp (1992) found that strategic planning helped local governments to function effectively and moderated the influence of politics on local administrative decision-making. Leigh and Blakely (2013) argued similarly that, by planning for local economic development, communities could avail themselves of a means of addressing economic challenges created by changing employment climate processes such as globalization, growing inequality, and the increasing scarcity of stable jobs. To assess whether town and gown communities were more likely to plan, we created a binary dependent variable for whether communities did or did not have a written economic development plan. The other independent or control variables for this model were the same ones used in Model 1, and the dependent variable for Model 1 (i.e., town and gown partnerships) served as an independent variable in Model 2. When considering the planning performed by local agencies, the form of government is an important variable to take into account. Thus, for instance, Feiock and Kim (2001) found that council-manager cities were more likely to engage in strategic planning for economic development than mayor-council cities.

Models 3a–3c: Explaining the Effect of Town and Gown on Economic Development Policies

With our last series of models, Models 3a–3c, we examined the effects of town and gown partnerships on the types of economic development policies on which local development agencies rely. The ICMA survey asked respondents to identify economic development tools used by their agencies, and their answers were used to construct Models 3a–3c. Table 1 reports the types of tools used by the various communities. Previous research has found diversity in the types of policies implemented with respect to these tools (Feiock and Kim, 2001), with scholars urging communities to be entrepreneurial by implementing a variety of them (Clarke and Gaile, 1989).

To examine the effect of town and gown partnerships on local economic development policies, we constructed indices of the respondents' answers to the questions regarding the types of development tools used by their communities relating to (a) small business, (b) business retention and expansion and attraction of businesses, and (c) community development. The dependent variable for these models was accordingly the type of tools deployed. To be specific, and as discussed further in the Analysis and Results section, we constructed the indices based on the sum of responses for the various types of development tools (see Table 1) and used them as the dependent variables for Models 3a–3c (which, again, were designed to explicate the effects of a town and gown partnership on a community) concerning the types of tools used in the areas of, respectively, small business, business attraction and business retention and expansion, and community development. The other independent variables or controls were the same ones used in Model 1.

In effect, the variables of interest for these analyses were partnership with college or university, economic development plan, economic development tools, economic development responsibility, form of government, metro status, and geographic region.

The first of these variables, partnership

Table 1. Local Economic Development Tools

Small business

a. Revolving loan fund

b. Small business development center

c. Microenterprise program

d. Matching improvement grants (physical upgrades to business)

e. Vendor/supplier matching

f. Marketing assistance

g. Management training

h. Executive on loan/mentor

Business retention and expansion

i. Surveys of local business

j. Ombudsman program

k. Local business publicity program (community-wide)

l. Replacing imports with locally supplied goods

m. Export development assistance

n. Business clusters/industrial districts

o. Technology zones

p. Energy efficiency programs

q. Business improvement districts

r. Main Street Program

Business Attraction

s. Local government representative calls on prospective companies

t. Promotional and advertising activities (e.g., media, direct mail)

Community development

u. Community development corporation

v. Community development loan fund

w. Environmental sustainability—energy audits/green building

x. Transit to promote commuting

y. High quality physical infrastructure

z. Job training for low-skilled workers

aa. Business assistance, loans, and grants to support child care

bb. Affordable workforce housing

cc. Investments in high quality of life (good education, recreation, and arts/culture)

dd. Tourism promotion

ee. Public/private partnerships

ff. Programs to promote age-friendly businesses for seniors

Note. Information compiled from ICMA (2014a) Economic Development Survey.

with a college or university, was measured based on responses to the ICMA survey question asking whether communities had formed partnerships with a local institution of higher learning. We coded communities that had entered into such a partnership as 1 and communities that had not as 0.

The economic plan variable was measured based on responses to survey questions asking whether communities had a written economic development plan; those that had such a plan were coded as 1 and those that did not as 0.

Economic development tools were measured in terms of the three aforementioned general economic development areas concerning small business, business attraction and business retention and expansion, and community development. Each general economic development area was assessed using a series of four-point scale items relating to communities' evaluations of the extent of their use of various tools. The response options for the ICMA survey questions consisted of *not at all* = 1, *low* = 2, *medium* = 3, and *high* = 4. For the purpose of this analysis, we constructed a composite score for each of the three general economic development areas using the sum of the responses to the respective survey items so that higher scores indicated more extensive reliance on a given tool.

The economic development responsibility variable was measured based on responses to the survey question regarding the entity that had primary responsibility for undertaking economic development activities within each community. This variable was coded 0 for communities in which nonprofit development corporations managed economic development and 1 for communities in which local governmental agencies were responsible.

The form of government was coded as 1 for "council-manager or council-administra-tor" or 0 for "mayor-council or council-elected."

Metro status was operationally coded as 0 for large communities comprising urbanized areas with at least 50,000 people or 1 for smaller communities with urban areas between 10,000 and 50,000 people.

Finally, geographical region was assessed by creating dummy variables based on the four population regions distinguished by the U.S. Census Bureau, namely Northeast, North Central, South, and West, with "Northeast region" as the reference group. Regions with more nonprofits may have more NEDOs conducting economic development for local governments. Hatcher and Hammond (2018), for example, found that the South had fewer NEDOs than other regions. Accordingly, we include region as a variable to examine variations in the study's variables across different parts of the nation.

Analysis and Results

A striking finding from the ICMA data is that, although a majority of local governments (63%) reported the presence of a college or university in their communities, only a quarter (25%) had actually formed a partnership with an institution of higher learning for the purpose of collaboration on economic development strategies (Table 2). Given the benefits of town and gown partnerships, there is need for a call to action (discussed in the conclusion of this article) for institutions of higher learning to focus on building effective relations with their local communities and for local policy makers to look to their universities for support on community projects.

Also significant was the finding that, among the partners with whom local governments had worked on economic development, various local agencies were more common

Table 2. Colleges and Universities in Economic Development		
	Local government	Percent[a]
Have a college or university in their communities	731	63%
Partner with a college or university in their development strategies	297	25%

Note. Data from ICMA (2014a) Economic Development Survey.
[a] Percentages do not add up to 100.

Table 3. Local Government Partners for Economic Development			
Type of partnership	*Percent involved in the partnership*	*Type of partnership*	*Percent involved in the partnership*
City	86%	Public/private partnership	33%
County	55%	Private business/ industry	32%
State government	37%	Private/community economic development foundation	10%
Federal government	6%	Utility	21%
Chamber of commerce	57%	College/university	25%
Economic development corporation	40%	Citizen advisory board/commission	26%
Regional organizations	38%	Ad hoc citizen group	8%
Planning consortia	8%	Nonprofit organizations servin the poor	

Note. Data from ICMA (2014a) Economic Development Survey. Table reprinted from ICMA's (2014a) summary report on the survey.

than colleges or universities. Thus, 57% of communities reported having partnered with chambers of commerce, 38% with regional organizations, and 33% with private industry, whereas, again, only 25% reported having partnered with an institution of higher learning.

Table 4 provides the frequencies and percentages for the main variables used in the models. Given that planning is, as has been seen, a key tool of evidence-based economic development (Feiock & Kim, 2001), a surprising finding was that nearly half of communities (43%) that responded to the survey reported they had no written plan. This is more surprising because the ICMA sample (as seen in Table 3) was biased toward council-manager forms of local government and, at least according to Feiock and Kim (2001), council-manager cities are more likely to utilize strategic planning than mayor-council cities. More extensive use of written comprehensive plans might also be expected based on the large number of council-manager systems included in the ICMA data (77%).

We would like to contextualize the finding concerning economic development plan-

ning. Past studies (Feiock & Kim, 2001) found that council-manager forms of local government were more likely to conduct strategic planning than other forms of local government. Our analysis found that many communities (43%) did not have an economic development plan. However, this does not mean that the communities do not engage in strategic planning in the area of economic development. Their economic planning strategies may be part of a larger, comprehensive plan. Future studies need to explore the extent to which cities and counties write separate plans for economic development.

Regression analysis was used to assess the study's three main models, specifically logistic regression for Models 1 and 2 and ordinary least squares (OLS) regression for Model 3. All models were found to be statistically significant; the range in the variance from 4% to 8% we attribute to the exploratory nature of our study. Moreover, methodologists have agreed that these measures, although they can seem quite small in comparison with most statistical metrics, can have practical significance in natural settings (Abelson, 1985; Ellis, 2010; Schutt, 2011).

Table 4. Description of Variables	
Variable	**Frequency (%)**
Economic development responsibility	
Nonprofit (0)	254 (23.9%)
Local government (1)	810 (76.1%)
Form of government	
Mayor–council and council–elected (0)	235 (23.3%)
Council–manager and council–administrator (1)	774 (76.7%)
Metro status	
Large—Urbanized with at least 50,000 people (0)	749 (82.9%)
Small—Urban with at least 10,000 people (1)	155 (17.1%)
Written economic development plan	
No (0)	397 (43.5%)
Yes (1)	515 (56.5%)
Geographic region	
Northeast	133 (12.5%)
North Central	330 (31.0%)
South	353 (33.2%)
West	248 (23.3)

Note. Table adapted from ICMA (2014b) Economic Development Survey. Data from ICMA (2014b) Ecomonic Development Survey.

The first model, as discussed, examined factors influencing the formation of town and gown partnerships. Logistic regression was accordingly used to determine the type of communities likely to form such partnerships. For each model, we used three control variables, namely (1) the type of government, (2) the entity responsible for economic development, and (3) the size of the locality. As discussed in the previous section, each of these variables has been associated in the literature with economic development activities and thus needed to be accounted for when determining the statistical significance of the impact of town and gown relationships on economic development.

As can be seen in Table 5, the model depicting the likelihood that a city or county would form a partnership with a college or university for the purpose of economic development was statistically significant. Furthermore, with the exception of form of government, all of the other variables appeared to have a statistically significant effect in predicting whether a city or county had formed an economic development partnership with an institution of higher learning.

Contrary to our expectations, communities in which local governments managed economic development were found to be some 47% more likely to form town and gown partnerships than communities in which NEDOs took the lead. This finding may be attributable to the expertise that a NEDO provides or to administrative differences between the two sorts of entities (Feiock & Andrew, 2006; Lipsky & Smith, 1989; Mirvis, 1992; Moore, 2000).

Another significant finding was that communities that were smaller as defined above were 1.57 times more likely to partner with a college or university for economic development than larger communities. This result is consistent with our hypotheses that smaller localities would be relatively more dependent on local institutions of higher learning for expertise and that the latter, because they exert significant power in the local economy, would be more likely

Table 5. Logistic Regression Analysis of Partnership with College or University				
Independent Variable	**Coefficient (SE)**	**Wald**	**Odds (Exp(B))**	**95% CI[a]**
Economic development responsibilty	−.75 (.18)	17.59	.47**	.33−.67
Form of government	−.10 (.20)	.27	.90	.61−1.33
Metro status	.45 (.20)	4.87	1.57*	1.05−2.34
North Central region	−1.01 (.36)	8.10	.36**	.18−.73
South region	−.50 (.34)	2.14	.61	.31−1.19
West region	−.49 (.36)	1.89	.61	.30−1.23
Constant	.07 (.37)	.05	1.09	
Pseudo R²	.07			
Model X² (6)	41.57			
N	1,064			

Note. Table adapted from ICMA (2014b) Economic Development Survey. Data from ICMA (2014b) Ecomonic Development Survey.
[a] 95% CI denotes the lower and upper 95% confidence interval of the odds ratio. The dependent variable in this analysis is whether a city or county has a partnership with a college or university.
*p = .05. **p = .01.

to be included in economic development planning. Also, region of the country was shown to have a significant effect, with communities in the Northeast being less likely than those in other regions to engage in town and gown partnerships targeting economic development. This finding may have occurred because the region, like the South, has fewer NEDOs than other regions (Hatcher & Hammond, 2018).

For the second model, regarding the effect of a written economic development plan, we again employed logistic regression, in this case to assess factors that predispose a community to come up with such a plan. Table 6 presents the results of this regression analysis, controlling for the entity with economic development responsibility, form of government, metropolitan status, and geographic region.

Model 2 proved statistically significant, but none of the control variables had a statistically significant effect in predicting whether cities or counties had a written economic development plan. Although this latter finding contradicts our hypothesis, again, given the exploratory nature of this research, it is not a cause for concern regarding the overall validity of our argumentation. Controlling for the effect of the other variables did not affect the statistical significance of the effect of a town and gown partnership for economic development apart from a slight increase in the odds ratio; thus, communities engaged in such a partnership were more likely to have come up with a written economic development plan. This finding, which suggests that this kind of partnership tends to be formed by localities that pursue evidence-based strategies, may be attributable to the fact that higher learning institutions often provide an economic development plan or assist in the formulation of one when a town and gown partnership is established.

Model 3 examined the effect of town and gown partnerships on communities' economic development policies. An ordinary least squares regression was employed to determine whether a town and gown partnership for the purpose of economic development actually had any effect. The analysis was performed for the three major economic development activities described above (i.e., those relating to small business, business retention and expansion and business attraction, and community development). Table 1 details the types of economic development activities, each of which was measured based on an index score comprising the sum of a number of economic development initiatives. Thus, the variable for small business activities was measured

Table 6. Logistic Regression Analysis of Written Economic Development Plan

Independent Variable	Coefficient (SE)	Wald	Odds (Exp(B))	95% CI[a]
Partnership with college or university	.48 (.18)	6.96	1.61**	1.13–2.30
Economic development responsibility	.27 (.19)	2.04	1.31	.91–1.88
Form of government	.29 (.18)	2.50	1.33	.93–1.90
Metro status	−.08 (.21)	.15	.92	.61–1.39
North Central region	.01 (.34)	.00	1.01	.52–1.98
South region	.36 (.34)	1.15	1.44	.74–2.78
West region	.56 (.35)	2.57	1.75	.88–3.49
Constant	−.46 (.37)	1.53	.63	
Pseudo R^2	.04			
Model X^2 (6)	23.25			
N	1,064			

Note. Table adapted from ICMA (2014b) Economic Development Survey. Data from ICMA (2014b) Ecomonic Development Survey.
[a] 95% CI denotes the lower and upper 95% confidence interval of the odds ratio. Dependent variable in this analysis is whether city or county has a written economic development plan.
**p = .01

Table 7a. OLS Regression Analysis of Small Business Activities

Independent variable	Coefficient (SE)	t value	95% CI[a]
Partnership with college or university	2.17 (.34)	6.32**	1.49–2.84
Economic development responsibility	−.08 (.36)	−.22	−.79–.63
Form of government	−.12 (.36)	−.32	−.83–.60
Metro status	1.83 (.41)	4.48**	1.03–2.62
North Central region	−.39 (.71)	−.54	−1.78–1.01
South region	.30 (.70)	.42	−1.09–1.68
West region	−.33 (.72)	−.45	−1.75–1.09
Constant	13.60 (.77)	17.65**	12.09–15.11
Model F–test	11.43, p < .05		
Adjusted R^2	.08		
N	865		

Note. Data from ICMA (2014b) Economic Development Survey. Data from ICMA (2014b) Ecomonic Development Survey.
[a] 95% CI denotes the lower and upper 95% confidence interval of the coefficient. The dependent variable in this analysis is small business activities; the sum of eight small business initiatives serves as the index score.
**p = .01.

Table 7b. OLS Regression Analysis of Business Retention and Expansion Activities

Independent variable	Coefficient (SE)	t value	95% CI[a]
Partnership with college or university	2.89 (.52)	5.54**	1.87–3.91
Economic development responsibility	–.33 (.55)	–.61	–1.41–.74
Form of government	.55 (.55)	.10	–.53–1.63
Metro status	–.63 (.62)	–1.02	–1.84–.59
North Central region	.06 (1.08)	.05	–2.07–2.18
South region	.96 (1.07)	.90	–1.14–3.05
West region	1.18 (1.10)	1.07	–.98–3.34
Constant	23.62 (1.17)	20.21**	21.33–25.92
Model F-test	6.05, $p < .05$		
Adjusted R²	.04		
N	863		

Note. Table adapted from ICMA (2014b) Economic Development Survey. Data from ICMA (2014b) Ecomonic Development Survey.
[a] 95% CI denotes the lower and upper 95% confidence interval of the coefficient. The dependent variable in this analysis is business retention and expansion and business attraction activities; the sum of 12 business retention and expansion and business attraction initiatives serves as the index score.
**p = .01

Table 7c. OLS Regression Analysis of Community Development Activities

Independent variable	Coefficient (SE)	t value	95% CI[a]
Partnership with college or university	3.52 (50)	7.12**	2.55–4.49
Economic development responsibility	–.93 (.52)	–1.80	–1.95–.09
Form of government	–.09 (.52)	–.17	–1.12–.94
Metro status	.63 (.59)	1.07	–.52–1.78
North Central region	–1.91 (1.02)	–1.87	–3.92–.10
South region	–1.42 (1.01)	–1.41	–3.41–.56
West region	–1.89 (1.04)	–1.82	–3.93–.15
Constant	26.80 (1.11)	24.24**	24.63–28.97
Model F-test	10.67, $p < .05$		
Adjusted R²	.07		
N	862		

Note. Table adapted from ICMA (2014b) Economic Development Survey. Data from ICMA (2014b) Ecomonic Development Survey.
[a] 95% CI denotes the lower and upper 95% confidence interval of the coefficient. The dependent variable in this analysis is community development activities; the sum of 12 community development initiatives serves as the index score.
**p = .01.

as the sum of eight relevant initiatives, that for business retention and expansion and business attraction activities as the sum of 12 relevant initiatives, and that for community development activities as the sum of 12 relevant initiatives. Tables 7a–7c show the results of the regression analysis explaining the effect of town and gown partnerships on economic development policy.

Though the analyses showed that the models explained only a relatively small portion of the variation in economic development activities, the results did make clear that cities or counties that had partnered with a college or university for economic development were consistently more likely to engage in the three kinds of activities just listed than those that had not formed such partnerships. This finding further supports the notion that town and gown partnerships facilitate localities' engagement in significant economic development activities.

Discussion

The analysis, then, produced models with relatively low explanatory power, but we are again quick to point out that our research was exploratory in nature. We accordingly hope that our results will point the way to future research into the administrative features of town and gown partnerships. Having communities that take advantage of their assets is a key goal of state and local government. And in many communities, institutions are the primary asset. Public administration has a responsibility to help state and local governments form meaningful town and gown partnerships.

Although our analysis failed to validate for the exploratory models meant to describe town and gown relations, our choice of variables did find statistical support. Specifically, we were able to show that governmental agencies are more likely than NEDOs to partner with colleges or universities. This finding is in contrast with earlier research and in this respect alone represents a contribution to the literature. Previous work has demonstrated that nonprofits tend to rely on partnerships to build capacity (Wing, 2004). Entities that fund nonprofits (i.e., donors, governments, and other nonprofits) thus encourage organizations to form collaborative partnerships for precisely this purpose in furtherance of their organizational goals (Cairns et al., 2005; Connolly & York, 2002). This being

the case, NEDOs would be expected to take advantage of the added capacity that colleges or universities provide in town and gown partnerships. Thus, for example, faculty members and students might assist in the design, administration, and analysis of surveys for local nonprofits involved in economic development.

However, as noted, we found that communities in which local governmental agencies were primarily responsible for economic development were more likely to form town and gown partnerships than those in which nonprofits took the lead. Part of the explanation for this finding may be that the nonprofits engaging in economic development may have lacked the time or resources to cultivate town and gown relationships.

Also worthy of further consideration is the finding that smaller metro areas (again, those with populations ranging from 10,000 to 50,000) were more likely than larger metro areas (those over 50,000) to form town and gown partnerships. As mentioned, smaller communities may rely more heavily on local institutions of higher learning than do larger communities with a wider array of economically vital sectors. From this perspective, a lack of policy capacity in small communities may push them to partner with various organizations, including colleges and universities, to increase their expertise. Thus, taking into account the previous result as well, we found that small metro areas in which local governmental agencies were in charge of economic development were more likely to form town and gown partnerships than large metro areas in which nonprofits were managing development.

A further significant finding is that town and gown partnerships affect economic development planning and policy. Thus, communities engaged in such partnerships were more likely to have come up with a written plan for economic development than those that had not worked closely with local higher learning institutions. Through these partnerships, community leaders may have opportunities to interact with experts from various fields who advocate the use of planning as an economic development tool. When communities draft development plans, they are practicing evidence-based management, in the context of which they may come to recognize the value of partnering with local institutions of higher learning. Our study does show that the commu-

nities that had partnered with colleges and universities tended to engage in planning and also to deploy a fairly wide variety of economic development tools.

Town and gown partnerships affect economic policies, in particular regarding the development of small business and the community in general. Our analysis thus shows that partnerships with local institutions of higher learning can be an important factor in local development planning and policy. Town and gown communities can promote entrepreneurial economic development by making use of a variety of tools (Clarke & Gaile, 1989).

Our findings are not entirely consistent with earlier work by Feiock and Kim (2001), suggesting that the form of government has an effect on the likelihood that a community will engage in development planning and on the types of development policies that it pursues. The present study does, however, corroborate research by Kwon et al. (2009) regarding the importance of institutional factors in local economic development; their work also, like ours, downplayed the importance of the form of government in predicting development policies.

The analysis presented here by design took into consideration only the likelihood that local governments would partner with institutions of higher learning and the relationship of such partnerships to evidence-based development practices. The analysis showed our models to be underspecified and to explain only a small amount of variation in partnering on the part of governments. Nevertheless, it is our hope that this exploratory research will suggest future avenues for making sense of town and gown relations.

Conclusions and Building Town and Gown Partnerships

This study, then, provides a starting point for further exploration of the formation and effects of town and gown partnerships. Our finding that communities in which local governmental agencies managed development were more likely than those in which nonprofits held this role to form town and gown partnerships represents a significant finding given that earlier work has shown nonprofits to be more likely than governmental agencies to engage in partnerships designed to develop policy ca-

pacity. Similarly significant is our finding that smaller communities were more likely than larger ones to form town and gown partnerships. State and local governments can use this information in their efforts to form town and gown partnerships. Future research needs to move beyond our exploratory findings by designing specific survey instruments on the administrative features (e.g., barriers, institutional arrangements, benefits) of town and gown partnerships. Also, according to the analysis presented here, communities that had formed town and gown partnerships were significantly more likely than those that had not to engage in economic planning. Communities in town and gown partnerships likewise showed a greater tendency to make use of a variety of economic development tools in the three areas covered in this study: small business development, business attraction and business recruitment and retention, and community development.

The findings here are certainly consistent with the general opinion voiced in the literature that communities benefit when they strengthen town and gown relationships. One area of benefits can be engaged learning. We want to stress how strong economic development projects from town and gown partnerships provide a host of opportunities for engaged learning. Accordingly, by bringing the university into the town, communities benefit from university expertise in their economic development work, and students gain additional opportunities to participate in experiential learning. Even with these benefits, however, our study found that only 25% of surveyed local governments reported partnerships with the colleges and universities in their communities. Thus, many communities are not exploring the benefits of professors, university leaders, local government leaders, citizens, and students working together to form effective town and gown projects. This finding should be a call to action to push university leaders and local governments to build effective town and gown relations. Having strong town and gown partnerships will provide social, economic, and educational benefits.

To help build town and gown partnerships, we suggest that university leaders and local government officials focus on the following strategies. Advocates of town and gown partnerships should focus on the benefits, not the costs, of the projects. Arguments

should point to how local nonprofits, governments, businesses, students, faculty, and others will benefit from the partnerships. Discussion should recognize the tensions between universities and their communities, especially in the area of land use, but focus should be turned to the benefits of effective town and gown. Advocates can also focus on potential benefits of having the combined support of universities and community organizations, in that local projects may be more likely to receive federal or state funding. The goal of economic development may be a unifying one, helping advocates make these arguments, and to put these strategies in place, universities need to have a dedicated infrastructure focused on building town and gown partnerships, such as an office of town and gown, community outreach, or volunteer services.

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The Impact of Service-Learning on Undergraduate Awareness and Knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Abstract

As the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) rises and individuals with ASD seek community inclusion, there is a great need for community awareness and knowledge of ASD. This study aimed to address this need using service-learning pedagogy to increase undergraduate students' awareness, knowledge, and perception of ASD. Two cohorts of undergraduate students (*N* = 44) enrolled in a course that required 30 hours of hands-on community service with individuals with ASD in addition to 3 hours per week of in-class participation. Based on students' responses to a pre- and postcourse survey as well as their open-ended case study responses, service-learning pedagogy has the potential to improve undergraduate student awareness, knowledge, and acceptance of ASD. Lessons learned and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Keywords: service-learning, autism, autism spectrum disorder

The prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has increased over the past three decades; now 1 in 59 children are diagnosed with ASD (Baio et al., 2018). While children and youth with ASD are in child care and school, a number of professionals interact with them routinely (e.g., teachers, service providers, healthcare professionals). However, as young people with ASD seek higher education, employment, and community inclusion in adulthood, they will also interact with others in the community such as those in business, retail, recreation, and entertainment. Unfortunately, adult outcomes for people with ASD are quite poor in areas such as employment and social inclusion (Howlin et al., 2014). As more people are diagnosed with ASD, the need increases for community awareness, knowledge, and acceptance of individuals on the autism spectrum in order to improve adult outcomes. Additionally, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008) provides more opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities, including ASD, to attend college and become involved in the campus community (VanBergeijk & Cavanagh, 2012). Therefore, university students are increasingly likely to encounter peers with ASD on campus as well as in their future professional and social lives. Increasing awareness, knowledge, and acceptance of ASD at the undergraduate level may improve adult outcomes for people with ASD by creating peer allies within the community who are comfortable with befriending, employing, socializing with, and coworking with people on the spectrum. This study explores the utility of service-learning pedagogy to increase awareness, knowledge, and acceptance of people with ASD in undergraduate university students.

Professional Perceptions of People With ASD

Presently, the absence of standards for professional education on the topic of ASD creates vast variability in knowledge, awareness, and perception of ASD within and

across professional disciplines. In a study of over 200 teachers in the United States, Chung et al. (2015) found that the teachers were more likely to report dislike and avoidance of a student with ASD described in a classroom scenario relative to a scenario about a more typically developing student. Elementary school teachers and teachers who held special education certifications were more likely to demonstrate positive and inclusive attitudes toward students with ASD. Similarly, Park and Chitiyo (2011) surveyed 127 teachers and found that though the majority of teachers reported positive attitudes toward students with ASD, the teachers most likely to report a positive attitude toward students with ASD were female, under age 56, teaching elementary school–aged children, and had received professional development related to ASD. Teacher attitude toward students has been found to influence the success of autism interventions in the classroom (Gregor & Campbell, 2001), as well as inclusion of students with ASD in regular education classroom settings (Horrocks et al., 2008). Furthermore, teacher attitude sets the tone of the classroom and may impact how other children in the class perceive peers with disabilities. Thus, it is critical that aspiring classroom teachers and other professionals who will likely work with children and youth with ASD receive education to increase their awareness, knowledge, and acceptance of people with ASD.

Very few studies have surveyed healthcare professionals' knowledge of ASD. Golnik et al. (2009) surveyed nearly 3,000 primary care physicians for children with ASD and found that physicians reported lower perceived self-competency in treating patients with ASD. Physicians further reported a greater desire for continuing education in the area of ASD relative to treating children with chronic medical conditions and those with other developmental disabilities. Predictors of higher physician report of self-competency included having a greater number of patients with ASD, having a friend or relative with ASD, and having previous training on the topic of ASD. Unfortunately, level of physician knowledge of ASD in adult healthcare providers is similarly low. In a survey of over 900 physicians, most reported a lack of knowledge and skills needed to care for adults diagnosed with ASD (Zerbo et al., 2015).

Female students in various health and social professional degree programs (i.e., occupational therapy, speech–language pathology, social work, education, nursing) were surveyed about their attitudes toward working with people with ASD (Werner, 2011). Many students reported negative attitudes regarding the perceived difficulty of working with patients with ASD, but also some positive attitudes related to the potential reward of working with this population. Negative attitudes from preprofessional students raise concerns because these attitudes may cause them to avoid working with people with ASD once they are employed (Curl et al., 2005). In a survey of 67 speech–language pathologists across the United States, Schwartz and Drager (2008) found that although ASD was addressed in their clinical training, the majority of respondents reported that they would have benefited from additional education and training related to ASD. Most of the speech–language pathologists surveyed had accurate knowledge about the characteristics of ASD, but many of them reported a lack of confidence in providing services to this population. Both Werner (2011) and Schwartz and Drager (2008) highlighted the importance of improving education for students who are likely to work with individuals with ASD. They further suggested hands-on experiential and interprofessional learning experiences as ideal means of providing this education.

Community Perceptions of People With ASD

Huws and Jones (2010) conducted semistructured interviews about ASD knowledge and awareness with 10 lay community members. They reported that people may have strong beliefs about ASD, yet these beliefs are not always factually correct and may not be based on any actual experience with individuals who have ASD. Chambres et al. (2008) drew similar conclusions based on their work using an experimental paradigm. They asked adults to rate the behavior of a 6-year-old child as problematic or not. Responses were more positive when the raters were told that the child had ASD, suggesting that such knowledge may be enough to change one's attitudes.

Within community settings, including school, adolescents with ASD are more likely to be bullied and victimized than their peers. Furthermore, the greater their deficits in perspective taking, the more likely

they are to misinterpret bullying as nonbullying (van Roekel et al., 2010). Sreckovic et al. (2017) demonstrated preliminary efficacy for using a peer network intervention to reduce bullying and victimization of high school students with ASD, indicating that peer education and experience with individuals with ASD may be an important element in reducing bullying.

College Students' Perceptions of People With ASD

As stated previously, in recent years, increasing numbers of young adults with ASD are attending college; however, their experiences are not ideal. Many college students with ASD do not graduate (Sanford et al., 2011). Research suggests that this may be a result of bullying and social exclusion of these students (Gelbar et al., 2014). In addition, the complexity of college, including varying daily schedules, class times, and class styles may lead to incompletion (Kapp et al., 2011). One probable cause of these negative experiences may be other students' and faculty members' lack of awareness of ASD itself (Gillespie-Lynch et al., 2015). As a result, researchers are beginning to examine college students' perceptions regarding their peers with ASD.

Tipton and Blacher (2014) recently surveyed a Southwestern campus community and reported overall ASD knowledge to be relatively high. Undergraduates scored significantly lower than graduate students and faculty, though some faculty also demonstrated limited knowledge. In addition, the authors found misconceptions among those surveyed, including that although most survey responders recognized that ASD is increasing in prevalence, many attributed the cause of the increase to vaccinations. Gillespie-Lynch et al. (2015) also identified misconceptions among university students, such as confusing ASD with other learning disabilities. The researchers suggest that these misconceptions could impact the experience of college students with ASD. Not surprisingly, research has described that those with family members with ASD demonstrated increased knowledge and were more open to having peers with ASD (Nevill & White, 2011; Tipton & Blacher, 2014). In another study, Butler and Gillis (2011) reported that behaviors associated with autism, as opposed to the diagnostic term "autism" itself, resulted in university students viewing their peers with ASD as "different." This finding is promising in that providing behavior supports and intervention to individuals with ASD early in their school careers may help them to become more socially skilled and successful by the time they get to college (VanBergeijk et al., 2008). Gardiner and Iarocci (2014) identified that undergraduate students' acceptance of and willingness to volunteer with individuals with ASD was best predicted by both the quality and quantity of their previous experiences with people with ASD. Those students with a greater number of positive experiences were more accepting and willing to volunteer. In order for individuals with ASD to succeed in college, it is crucial that their peers be informed, aware, and accepting of ASD.

Effective means to inform undergraduate students about ASD are being explored. One example is an online training that has been used with some success to increase knowledge and decrease stigma associated with ASD among undergraduates (Gillespie-Lynch et al., 2015). Other researchers have explored a course focused on disability and its impacts on undergraduate students (Bialka & Morro, 2017). These researchers documented that educating students on ableism, including content that focused on students' own "ability privileges," led to increased student knowledge and awareness of disability and their ability privilege. As suggested by Huws and Jones (2010), direct interaction with individuals with ASD may be an effective means of increasing awareness. Although a few studies have focused on promoting awareness and understanding of disability (e.g., Bialka & Morro, 2017; Gillespie-Lynch et al., 2015), there is a need for more hands-on experiences to further apply knowledge and develop acceptance. One way to gain more hands-on experience is through engaged scholarship through service-learning.

Applying Service-Learning With Undergraduates

Service-learning is a pedagogical practice promoting active learning for students. Its overall goal is to connect classroom content to real-world experience while partnering and engaging with the community. This is accomplished via engaged scholarship with members of campus communities creating collaborative partnerships with community organizations that are relevant to the course content. Students then complete service-

learning hours at one of these community organizations with a focus on meeting both the organization's needs and the students' learning objectives. Students are able to reflect upon their real-world experiences and apply the content in the course.

Service-learning differs from clinical practicum or internship as a pedagogical tool. According to Baldwin et al. (2007), service-learning experiences are focused on community experiences, mutual decision-making, and providing services that are priorities for community partners, whereas practica or internships are more focused on practicing the skills needed to perform a particular job. Service-learning can assist students in the application of their content knowledge, as well as in the development of skills in individualizing and addressing diverse needs and priorities of individuals with disabilities and their families. These real-world experiences are often more meaningful to students than content knowledge alone, while at the same time benefiting the local community (Carrington & Saggers, 2008; Chen, 2003).

Service-learning has been beneficial in increasing students' civic responsibility, academic abilities, and life skills (Astin & Sax, 1998). When service-learning was conducted as part of an academic course, Astin and Sax (1997) discovered that the students were more committed to their communities, had a better understanding of community problems, were more prepared for future careers, and were better at conflict resolution. Able et al. (2014) found that a service-learning course for future early childhood educators led to an increased awareness of family diversity and how varying backgrounds may influence child success and parent involvement. Moreover, longitudinal studies have suggested that the positive effects of service-learning courses are enduring and include an increased sense of self-awareness, better relationships with others, and increased openness to new experiences (Jones & Abes, 2004). Similarly, Fenzel and Peyrot (2005) described that alumni who participated in a service-learning experience as part of their undergraduate career had better attitudes toward personal and social responsibility and were more involved in community service and service-related careers. Though some of these studies use service-learning to promote acceptance of and experience with people with disabilities, there is scant literature on courses with a focus on inclusion of individuals with ASD. To our knowledge, there is a gap in the literature related to service-learning application in undergraduate settings for increasing acceptance and awareness of individuals with ASD.

Present Study and Gap in the Literature

There is a need for greater understanding of ASD in the campus community, especially as more students on the autism spectrum are attending college. Service-learning has been shown to promote students' awareness, knowledge, and acceptance; therefore, it may be a beneficial pedagogy to apply in relation to the ASD population. The present study addressed this gap in the literature by applying service-learning to an ASD course for undergraduates and reporting on the results of a survey conducted at the start and end of the course. Two primary research questions were addressed: (a) To what degree do undergraduates change their knowledge of ASD after taking an autism-focused service-learning course? (b) To what degree do undergraduates change their perception of ASD after taking an autism-focused service-learning course?

Method

The course was offered as a one-semester course for two academic years and enrolled two cohorts of students. In spring 2016, 19 students were enrolled in the course, and in spring 2017, 25 students were enrolled (total *N* = 44). Students were required to complete 30 hours of community service during the semester at one of the course community partner organizations in addition to attending the class 3 hours weekly. Course content was presented in modules with specialist guest speakers from the university and community in a seminar format designed to highlight a variety of topics in ASD across the life span (see Table 1 for class topics). Assignments consisted of reflection papers integrating course content with community placement experience, an interview about community inclusion with an ASD professional or family member, a group presentation on an evidence-based practice related to ASD, and a paper about how a popular aspect of media (e.g., movie, article, TV series, political speech) represents ASD to the community. Course learning objectives were as follows:

- Identify core symptoms of autism spectrum disorder, recognizing that these symptoms are expressed uniquely in individuals and are subject to change over the life span or with intervention.

- Describe how individuals with autism spectrum disorder and their families may face challenges in accessing school and community supports and strategies through which they may overcome those challenges.

- Explain how interdisciplinary professionals in school and community settings support individuals with autism.

- Discuss the importance of evidence-based practices in treating individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

- Reflect on personal interactions with individuals who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

- Consider how schools and communities can implement inclusive attitudes and practices for individuals with developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder.

Course community partners included (1) a camp program offering services for individuals with ASD and their families across the life span, (2) a high school transition-to-adulthood program designed to prepare participants for a computer coding career both socially and technically, (3) one of two early intervention placements that was offered to each cohort: a clinic-based toddler intervention program or a clinic-based toddler intervention research study. Students were matched with a community placement based on ranking their interest in each placement, scheduling, and experience with individuals with ASD (i.e., early intervention community partners required more experience from volunteers).

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and students were informed of their rights as participants and consented to participation. Students were also told that grading was not indicative of their participation in the study and all information they provided would be deidentified and anonymous. All of the students in both classes consented to participate in the study.

Table 1. Class Topics for EDUC/SPHS 400: Autism in Our Communities: An Interdisciplinary Perspective
Module 1: Introduction to Autism and Early Child Development
Course overview: Introductions What is ASD?
History of autism Community perception of autism and developmental disability Person-first language discussion
Ethics and professionalism: Introduction to our community partners
Early signs of autism
Module 2: Assessment and Diagnosis
Intro to screening and assessment of ASD
Language & social communication
Sensory and motor features
Restricted, repetitive interests and behaviors Sex differences
Psychiatric and medical comorbidities

Table continued on next page

Table 1. Class Topics for EDUC/SPHS 400: Autism in Our Communities: An Interdisciplinary Perspective *Continued*
Module 3: Family Perspective
Parent and sibling panels
Cultural perspective
Module 4: Interdisciplinary Roles
Assessment and treatment clinic teams
School teams
Early intervention teams
Module 5: Intervention
Evidence-based practice
Parent training programs
Comprehensive treatment models
Alternative treatments
Module 6: Transition and Adulthood
Outcomes in ASD
Postsecondary education
Postsecondary employment
Housing
Transportation
Relationships and sexuality
Module 7: Community Integration
Community activities and accessibility
Religion and spirituality
Self-advocate panel
Group reflections and wrap-up

Recruitment and Eligibility

All undergraduate students at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill were eligible to enroll in the course. A course flyer was created and posted in classroom buildings across campus as well as shared with student organizations, including groups consisting of students interested in learning more about ASD (e.g., Autism Speaks U, Best Buddies, preprofessional student organizations). After students enrolled in the course, they were eligible to participate in the study. High school students seeking course credit at the university were excluded due to high interest in the course from full-time undergraduate students. Students requesting to audit the course were also excluded, as they would not be participating in the service-learning component and therefore unable to fully contribute to class discussion and meet course learning objectives.

The class size was capped at 20 students for Year 1 and 25 students for Year 2, with the goals of effectively meeting (1) the needs of service-learning as a teaching practice and (2) volunteer need at the community placements. Students for the first year enrolled in the course first come, first served. Twenty students enrolled as a cohort in Year 1; one dropped the class prior to the first class, and no students on the waiting list were able to fill the seat. At the end of the semester, more than 90 students were on the waiting list. These students were notified about potential enrollment the semester prior to the second year of the course.

Based on needs communicated by community partners, students who were male or spoke more than one language (e.g., English and Spanish) were selected first from the waiting list, followed by those who had been on the waiting list the longest. Twenty-five students enrolled as a cohort in Year 2 in the class and in the study.

Participants

Participants in this study were undergraduate students enrolled in an autism service-learning course at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The majority of students in both cohorts were White females. This gender imbalance is not surprising given that women are overrepresented in professions involving work with individuals with disabilities, such as education (National Center for Education Statistics, 1987–2016a, 1987–2016b), psychology (American Psychological Association, 2015), and speech–language pathology (Rowden-Racette, 2013). The students in Cohort 2 were slightly older than those in Cohort 1 because many of the students who were wait-listed for Cohort 1 as first-year students or sophomores were enrolled in Cohort 2 as upperclassmen. One student in each class cohort self-identified as having a diagnosis of ASD. There were no significant differences between cohorts on any demographic variables. Student demographic information is presented in Table 2, including age, year of school, major, gender, and race/ethnicity.

Data were collected on student majors, minors, and career aspirations on the first day of class. Most students reported multiple majors or minors. Psychology was the most common major for students in both cohorts ($N = 7$ for each cohort), followed by exercise sport science (Cohort 1, $N = 4$; Cohort 2, $N = 7$). Exercise sport science was the most common reported major for students pursuing careers in occupational therapy, whereas students pursuing careers in speech–language pathology or audiology tended to major in psychology and minor in speech and hearing sciences. Cohorts also included some students enrolled in the human development and family studies major through the School of Education (Cohort 1, $N = 5$; Cohort 2, $N = 3$), which is

Table 2: Cohort Demographics		
	Cohort 1 **n = 19**	**Cohort 2** **n = 24**
Age at beginning of semester (Years)		
Range	18–22	19–27
Mean (*sd*)	20.47 (1.07)	21 (1.77)
Gender: Female *n* (%); nonbinary *n* (%)	17 (90%); 1 (5%)	21 (87%); 0 (0%)
Race n (%)		
White	17 (90%)	22 (92%)
African American	1 (5%)	–
Asian	1 (5%)	1 (4%)
Mixed race/other	–	1 (4%)
Class Year n (%)		
First year	1 (5%)	–
Sophomore	3 (16%)	4 (17%)
Junior	8 (42%)	10 (42%)
Senior	7 (37%)	9 (37%)
Unknown	–	1 (4%)

designed to prepare students for careers in education or allied health. Cohort 2 included more science majors and students pursuing medical degrees than Cohort 1 (Cohort 1, *N* = 2; Cohort 2, *N* = 7). This difference may have reflected the change from hosting the course in the School of Education to the Department of Allied Health Sciences from Year 1 to Year 2. It could also be attributed to word-of-mouth from students in related fields.

Not all students were seeking degrees in fields directly related to working with individuals with ASD. One student in each cohort (one business major and one mathematics major) did not plan to work in the ASD field. Some students, particularly underclassmen, expressed general interest in the ASD field but no particular career preferences at the time they started the course. The most common reason that students reported for taking the course was to "gain knowledge and experience for future career" (Cohort 1, *N* = 19; Cohort 2, *N* = 23).

Survey Methods

A survey was conducted at the beginning and end of the semester to assess students' change in knowledge, confidence, and understanding of ASD as a result of the service-learning course. Students were not given advance warning that the survey would be distributed. They were encouraged to answer honestly and to the best of their ability because the surveys would be used to improve future sections of the course and inform others about service-learning courses like this one. There was minimal performance pressure since students completed the surveys anonymously and were reminded that their responses and participation in the research survey had no impact on their grade. The survey took 10–20 minutes to complete.

To address Research Question 1, the survey included a quantitative portion consisting of 20 statements. Students were directed to select one of three answer choices: "True," "False," or "Don't know." These items were based on (1) a general ASD knowledge survey that had been used successfully to measure change in ASD knowledge in faith-based community leaders and members following a day-long ASD workshop and (2) key concepts pulled from each of the course syllabus modules (see Table 1). Students responded to 10 statements regarding student confidence about their knowledge of ASD

(e.g., "I am confident in my knowledge of post–high school education opportunities for students with ASD") and implementation of that knowledge (e.g., "I am confident in my ability to interact with someone with ASD") using a 4-point scale (*strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree*), with a fifth option of "Don't know." The questions from this survey can be viewed in the Results section.

To address Research Question 2, qualitative data were collected from a case example that was included on the survey given to students before and after the class, to obtain their perception of ASD and whether that perception changed as a result of the course. The case study centered on Rob, a college student with ASD, and his preferences, interests, and activities while attending a university. The scenario described difficulties Rob experienced with other students being loud and moving things around in the study lounge. The questions following the case study were (a) whether participants had experience with students like Rob at their university, (b) how Rob is similar to and/or different from other students they have met during college, (c) what might be happening when Rob feels distressed, and (d) a request for suggested actions to take to prevent future frustrations. Students wrote answers to these questions, and all student answers from the pretest and posttest were typed verbatim and coded with the use of qualitative software (ATLAS.ti; Muhr, 2004). Codes were developed in a continuous, constant comparative approach to allow for constant revision and recoding as new ideas emerged; they were then used to develop themes both within and between the pretest and posttest data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Saldana, 2016). The pre- and post–case study responses for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 were coded separately and then compared and contrasted to identify any changes in student perception. These changes, which we refer to as themes, were observed in both cohorts.

Results

Responses to Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what degree do undergraduates change their knowledge of ASD after taking an autism-focused service-learning course? The 20 true/false knowledge survey questions were analyzed by calculating a total score for each student at each time

point. "Don't know" responses were counted as incorrect for the purpose of analyses. A mean total score was calculated for each cohort at each survey time point. Mean survey scores were analyzed using *t*-tests to determine differences in mean scores from pretest to posttest for each student cohort. Cohort 1 (*n* = 19) demonstrated significant differences in mean total survey scores from pretest to posttest (pretest mean = 12.63; posttest mean = 16.05; *t* = 5.14, *p* ≤ .01). Cohort 2 (*n* = 25) showed very similar changes in mean score and significant differences from pretest to posttest (pretest mean = 12.88; posttest mean = 16.28; *t* = 6.59, *p* ≤ .01). Since there were similar changes in both cohorts and groups were not significantly different on any demographic variables, the cohorts were combined (*N* = 44) and mean differences were still significant (pretest mean = 12.77; posttest mean = 16.18; *t* = 8.39, *p* ≤ .01).

The 10 Likert scale items examining confidence levels of knowledge and implementation (Table 3) were analyzed by calculating a mean total score for each item at pretest and posttest for the two cohorts combined. "Don't know" responses were omitted (i.e., counted as missing data) from these analyses because it was not possible to ascertain the degree to which the student felt confident. Based on chi square test results, significant changes occurred in mean confidence ratings for all survey questions except Question 7: "I am considering a career in working with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder." About a quarter of the students responded "Don't know" for this question. There were also several (*n* = 6) "Don't know" responses for the question about confidence in being able to identify a young child who is at risk for ASD, although most students indicated that they were confident that they had the most up-to-date information about the early signs of ASD and that they could explain that information to friends and family by the end of the course.

Research Question 2: To what degree do undergraduates change their perception of ASD after taking an autism–focused service–learning course? The qualitative written student responses to each of the case study questions focusing on Rob, the college student with ASD, on the pretest and posttest were typed, uploaded, and coded using ATLAS.ti software. Student responses were coded using one level of descrip-tive codes specific to each question such as "Difference: Has Few Friends" and "Solution: Rob May Use Headphones." Codes were then analyzed, compared, and contrasted using a constant comparative method to determine themes that illustrated changes in student perceptions from pretest to posttest. Specifically, the frequency of responses was analyzed to determine whether more or fewer students responded in a certain way following the course.

Cohort 1 data were coded first, and those codes were applied to the coding process of Cohort 2, with a few novel codes added for Cohort 2, including "Distress Caused On Purpose." Four themes related to changes in student perception between pretest and posttest responses stood out as most noteworthy: (1) increased involvement of Rob in the solution, (2) decreased separation of Rob, (3) increased awareness of sensory processing differences, and (4) increased education about Rob. A summary of these themes with quoted student responses at pretest and posttest is provided in Table 4.

Summary of Student Responses by Case Study Question

Experience With Students Like Rob. Student responses in regard to whether they had experience with students like Rob at the university were quite variable. In Cohort 1, the number of students who answered "yes" to this question increased from pretest to posttest, and the number of students who answered "yes" decreased slightly in Cohort 2. Some students noted that they had experience with someone like Rob, but not within the university, and these answers were coded as "somewhat."

Rob's Similarities to and Differences From Other Students. Students across both cohorts noticed similarities with other students at the university regarding Rob's hobbies, interests, and academic aspirations. These views of similarities did not change between pretest and posttest. Students also reported differences between themselves and Rob, including Rob's reporting that he does not need friends. Students also highlighted that he is different in his lack of desire to be social and participate in social activities. One student reported: "He is similar in that he seems focused on schoolwork but different in the way he talks about friends. Most people at UNC tend to find some type of niche that they make friends in." Much as with similarities, there was little differ-

Table 3: Results of Quantitative Survey ($N = 44$)				
Survey question	Number of "Don't know" responses	Precourse mean	Postcourse mean	Chi-square test results
1. I am confident that I could identify a young child who is at-risk for ASD.	6	2.45	3.19	X^2 (3, N = 82) = 30.60, $p \leq$ .01
2. I feel that I have the most up-to-date information about the early signs of ASD.	2	2.05	3.45	X^2 (3, N = 86) = 83.19, $p \leq$ .01
3. I am confident in my knowledge of post–high school education opportunities for students with ASD.	1	2.02	3.36	X^2 (3, N = 87) = 80.75, $p \leq$.01
4. I am confident in my ability to interact with someone who has ASD.	2	3.39	3.75	X^2 (2, N = 86) = 10.32, $p \leq$ .01
5. I am confident about my knowledge of treatments that can help people with ASD.	2	2.17	3.27	X^2 (3, N = 86) = 66.17, $p \leq$ .01
6. I know where to find accurate resources for people with ASD and their families.	2	2.40	3.48	X^2 (3, N = 86) = 51.04, $p \leq$ .01
7. I am considering a career in working with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.	9	3.40	3.51	X^2 (3, N = 79) = 3.71, $p \leq$ .29
8. I am confident in my ability to explain the characteristics of individuals with ASD to friends and family.	1	2.74	3.73	X^2 (3, N = 87) = 39.18, $p \leq$ .01
9. I am knowledgeable about the types of early intervention services for children with ASD.	0	2.27	3.39	X^2 (3, N = 88) = 65.23, $p \leq$ .01
10. I am knowledgeable about the types of services and supports students with ASD receive while enrolled in school.	2	2.29	3.34	X^2 (3, N = 86) = 57.43, $p \leq$ .01

ence between comments on the differences between Rob and other students between pretest and posttest.

What Might Be Happening When Rob Feels Distressed. Both cohorts attributed Rob's distress to his dislike of noise and need for routines and consistency. One important theme observed across cohorts from pretest to posttest included an increased awareness of sensory processing differences (see Table 4). This was observed in both cohorts, although more so in Cohort 1. Cohort 2 appeared to have a greater understanding of sensory processing coming into the course, which may be the result of many of the students in Cohort 2 having medical-related majors, suggesting that they may have had prior exposure to neurological concepts such as sensory processing. Although it should be noted that some of the concepts of challenges related to sensory processing such as Rob's dislike of noise and disruption of routines were present in pretest responses, many students adjusted their answers to integrate sensory-specific terminology.

Actions to Prevent Future Frustrations. Many of the most interesting findings from this case study arose from the final question regarding what actions students would take to prevent future frustrations for Rob. A theme emerging from both Cohorts 1 and 2 indicated their increased appreciation for full inclusion of students with ASD. The first theme that was observed in both cohorts was "Increased involvement of Rob in the suggested actions to prevent future frustrations" (Table 4). Students went from solutions that focused on taking control themselves (e.g., telling the RA, telling the group what to do) to more inclusive ideas such as facilitating a conversation between Rob and the group. Although some students included Rob in the solution in their pretest answers, the number of students who included Rob in the solution at posttest increased substantially across both cohorts.

Aligning with the increased involvement of Rob in the solution and full inclusion of Rob, a theme among suggestions for preventing future frustration that was observed in Cohort 1 was "Decreased separation of Rob." A few students suggested a solution of Rob studying alone in the pretest, and no students suggested that in posttest. Thus, students seemed to understand that separating Rob and excluding him from the group is also not an effective solution. Interestingly,

none of the students in Cohort 2 suggested that Rob should study alone, although students in Cohort 2, both pretest and posttest, did suggest taking Rob elsewhere if he becomes agitated.

Another significant theme observed in the final question for Cohort 1 included an increased number of students who suggested "Educating others about Rob" as a solution in the posttest versus the pretest (see Table 4). Though there was not an observed increase in Cohort 2, a high number of these students suggested this at both pretest and posttest.

Discussion

Our findings uniquely fill a gap in the literature on service-learning pedagogy as a means to teach undergraduate students knowledge about and acceptance of individuals with ASD. The results support and build upon previous research on service-learning and its effects on perception of individuals with disabilities and families from diverse backgrounds (Able et al., 2014). Revisiting the research questions addressed in the present study, our findings suggest that the service-learning pedagogy increased students' knowledge relative to ASD (RQ1) and perceptions of ASD (RQ2), thus supporting the idea that gaining hands-on experience in partnership with community providers may enhance student learning. The service-learning experience may have contributed to increased student confidence because students were able to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. This may be beneficial both to students themselves as they continue in their education and move into careers where they will inevitably encounter individuals with ASD, and to individuals with ASD, who will likely experience a stronger sense of acceptance and inclusion from students who participated in the service-learning course. Furthermore, the students who participated in the service-learning experience may be more likely to include individuals with ASD in decision making and solution generation.

Our findings additionally support service-learning as a means to educate students specifically about ASD and as a means to increase students' confidence in their ability to share this knowledge about ASD with others in the community. Specific quantitative and qualitative findings from our survey of the students are further described.

Table 4: Main Themes Development From Responses to Case Study Questions			
Theme	*Definition*	*Pretest Quotes*	*Posttest Quotes*
Increased involvement of Rob	Relating to students' comments to have Rob be part of working out solutions to prevent future frustrations	Maybe I could speak to the group about not moving the furniture when they congregate in the lounge. Put up a sign asking students to not move the furniture.	I would attempt to facilitate a relationship between Rob and the other students so he could express his concerns to them himself next time Discuss both with Rob and the group the other side's perspective and help reach a compromise.
Decreased separation of Rob	Comments about pulling Rob out of the group situation to study alone	If available, I would have Rob check out an individual study room. It would be helpful to create a schedule of times when Rob can use the lounge by himself and make the agreement that whoever uses the lounge will put furniture back in place before they leave.	Perhaps some students could talk to the RA about having a dorm-wide meeting that discusses respecting the preferences of students with special needs.
Increased awareness of sensory processing	Comments about Rob's distress being caused by differences in sensory processing	It's because of the noise and movements of the people there.	With a diagnosis of autism, Rob has problems with sensory processing. It is likely that the increased auditory stimuli are overwhelming to Rob.
Educating others about Rob	Comments about helping other students understand Rob and ASD	Ask them to stop moving furniture as much and talk a little quieter.	Tell the group about autism and Rob, talk to Rob and the group about schedules and Rob's routines.

Quantitative

Results from the survey indicated that students in both cohorts increased their knowledge and awareness of ASD following participation in the course. This is particularly important as ASD has increased in prevalence and, as a result, students will likely be in contact with individuals with ASD in their education, careers, and social lives. Therefore, these students' increased abilities to understand, accept, and include individuals with ASD may benefit society as a whole.

Students in the course also reported increased confidence in their ability to recognize and interact with individuals with ASD and, perhaps equally important, to explain ASD to others in the community. These acquired skills could be very beneficial in the workplace. Students who participated in the course may be able to educate coworkers about an individual with ASD and suggest supports and resources to assist the individual with ASD, leading to a more productive working environment.

Qualitative

The results from the qualitative case study analysis similarly suggest that students learned about the importance of inclusion of individuals with ASD, in addition to learning about symptoms associated with ASD. As noted in the results, there were some discrepancies in students' reports of experiences with other students with ASD at the university (i.e., in Cohort 1, the number of students reporting that they had experiences increased from pretest to posttest, and in Cohort 2, the number of students reporting experiences decreased). Perhaps as a result of gaining knowledge and awareness of ASD, students in Cohort 1 began to recognize more similarities among their peers to the student in the case study. On the other hand, as a result of gaining knowledge and awareness of ASD, students in Cohort 2 found that those peers who they thought were similar to the student in the case study prior to starting the course, actually were not. Alternatively, these differences may have been random variation across groups.

The course content included an overview of sensory processing. As a result, students indicated an increased understanding of sensory processing difficulties for individuals with ASD. More students used this terminology in their posttest case study responses, which reflects that they learned that actual neurological processes may underlie Rob's discomfort with noise and change.

The importance of inclusion of individuals with ASD in society as a whole was the focus of the course and many of the writing assignments. The most noteworthy theme in the case study analysis was that of increased inclusion of Rob in the solutions generated to reduce his frustration. Both cohorts suggested (more at the posttest than at the pretest) that Rob himself should be included in finding a reasonable solution. These results suggest that the students gained an understanding of the importance of including individuals with ASD in decision making and solution generation and that they were able to apply that knowledge to the case study with Rob. This concept is further reflected by the students' decrease in responses that suggested Rob study alone.

In concordance with including Rob in the solution, students' recognition of the importance of educating others about Rob is a relevant finding. With the exception of one student who suggested that the group who was bothering Rob may be disruptive on purpose, most students recognized that the group is likely unaware of Rob's differences and his ASD diagnosis. With a focus on community inclusion and acceptance, the students appear to have learned from the course that awareness of ASD, and ensuring that the community and other students are aware of ASD, are important steps. Furthermore, it appears that, following the completion of the class, students were confident in their own ability to educate others about ASD, which could have a tremendous impact in their future careers and contributions to society.

In sum, students who participated in the ASD service–learning course reported increased knowledge about underlying sensory processing differences in individuals with ASD, awareness of the importance of including individuals with ASD in making decisions about what might work best for them, and understanding of the importance of educating others about ASD in order for individuals with ASD to be fully included in the community. These findings contribute to our understanding about the importance of ASD education and training with undergraduate students.

Limitations

This research study has a few limitations. Most data were student reported and were collected in a classroom setting. Although students were told that their answers would not affect their grade, some of the answers they provided may have been influenced by awareness that their professors would be reading them. This is especially relevant to the open-ended questions following the case study. Although the data included two cohorts of students, the sample size was small and all students attended the same university, which limits the generalizability of the data. Results of this study would be strengthened by collecting data from students who did not enroll in the course to serve as a comparison group to the two cohorts of students in the course. Moreover, the majority of students in the course indicated prior interest or experience with ASD and related disabilities before enrolling, so their pretest answers may reflect that knowledge.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research to better understand service-learning and its impact on undergraduate students' knowledge, acceptance, and awareness of ASD is needed. Studies could include a focus on in-depth analyses of students' and community partners' lived experiences as participants in the course and their service-learning experiences. Future individualized interviews or focus groups conducted with students and community partners may help provide this information.

Furthermore, findings from this study can aid in the development of an assessment tool for community members to capture understanding, acceptance, and attitudes toward individuals with ASD. More and more individuals with ASD are participating in the community, so a means to assess community perceptions may be warranted.

In turn, these assessments could provide information on ways to better include individuals with ASD and develop future training for community members.

Longitudinal and follow-up studies should be conducted with students as an effort to determine whether changes in attitude and acceptance persist long term. It would be interesting to follow up on where students find careers in the future and how they interact with people with ASD. This follow-up information may additionally include surveys given to future employers to assess whether employers also perceive that students who completed this course are inclusive of individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

Conclusion

Service-learning pedagogy has potential to improve student knowledge and perception related to individuals with ASD. Especially for aspiring educators and therapists, having experience working with and interacting with individuals with ASD in a service-learning course could ease perceived challenges reportedly faced by new teachers and therapists working with young children with ASD (Chung et al., 2015) and increase positive perceptions of students with ASD by all teachers (Park & Chitiyo, 2011). This is particularly relevant for aspiring physicians, who have also reported less competency in working with individuals with ASD (Golnik et al., 2009). Physicians will undoubtedly continue to encounter individuals with ASD in their practice, and participation in the service-learning course appears to better prepare them to work with these individuals. All in all, our findings suggest that service-learning is a viable and effective approach to increasing undergraduate students' knowledge and perception of ASD and individuals with ASD.

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Faculty Members' Conceptualization of Community-Engaged Scholarship: Applying Michael Burawoy's Framework

Nelson Masanche Nkhoma

Abstract

Michael Burawoy (2010) suggested that scholars have an obligation to question the status quo of knowledge production and application. Using a mixed methods approach to explore a national case study of faculty members, this article explores two specific questions: For whom do faculty generate knowledge through community-engaged scholarship? What is the purpose of the knowledge produced through community-engaged scholarship? The findings, which are cognizant of insights from Burawoy's (2010) conceptual framework, reveal that faculty members conduct community engagement largely for public, professional, and policy reasons and to a lesser extent for critical reasons. Hence, the article ends with a reflection on why these faculty perspectives might be contextually the same as or different from those of faculty members elsewhere. The article also suggests why it is important for various actors in universities to understand the way faculty members view their community-engaged scholarship.

Keywords: community engagement, public engagement, Africa, Malawi, Burawoy

There is consensus on the importance of community engagement toward the achievement of socioeconomic and national development (Byrne, 1998; Austin, 2010; Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, & Swanson, 2019). Various actors such as the Association of African Universities (AAU) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have provided recommendations toward effecting positive transformation of Sub-Saharan African higher education in and through community engagement (Mamdani, 2008; Preece, Ntseane, Modise, & Osborne,2012). The recognition of the importance of community engagement is based on the premise that African higher education institutions play a critical role toward the attainment of human development (Cloete, Bailey, Pillay, Bunting, & Maasen, 2011). However, this agreement over the value of community engagement faces differing and contentious perspectives regarding its application (Bernardo, Butcher, & Howard, 2012). This is because faculty in various contexts undertake community engagement based on the needs of their universities and communities (Cloete et al., 2011). According to Holland (2010), faculty work is influenced by local and global factors through a process of institutionalization. Hence, although community engagement is an important activity in human development, it cannot take a one-size-fits-all approach, as has been predominantly the case with various higher education practices that are crafted in relation to the dictates of the neoliberal conceptualization of development (Willis, 2011).

Community engagement as an educational process has not been subjected to scrutiny in this neoliberal and postcolonial context of African higher education. Literature on community engagement has often taken for granted that we know who faculty members in universities work for—the funder. We

therefore lack a concerted theoretical understanding of the function and purpose of community engagement, especially for faculty members located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Hence, little is known about the persistence, disruptions, and transformations of hegemonic practices in this approach to knowledge production and service in universities. Community engagement programs, as part of higher educational institutions, are well suited to exploring how faculty members interpret and remake knowledge in hegemonic and counterhegemonic ways. Taking community engagement practice in Malawi as a case study, I explore how faculty members' interpretive and knowledge-making practices are shaped by the context in which they work. In other words, I explored how their scientific and cultural imaginings of others located beyond the university confines are shaped by how they interpreted and translated disciplinary knowledge and discourses to produce a sociological division of their labor.

This study contributes to the ongoing discussion on the institutionalization of community engagement by scrutinizing different purposes of community engagement in Sub-Saharan African higher education. As observed by Bernardo, Butcher, and Howard (2012) and Mtawa, Fongwa, and Wangenge-Ouma (2016), a gap exists in current literature owing to the dominance of perspectives from global North countries such as the United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. Perspectives from the global South are crucial to broadening our understanding of the various purposes of community engagement and for whom it is conducted. The global South perspectives are also significant in that they assist in mapping how we can understand institutionalizations and disruptions in the higher education political economy through community engagement. Consequently, this article seeks to present a case study located in a social, cultural, political, and economic context that is different from the global North. This study is guided by a sociological framework that validates the purpose and target of community engagement as conceptualized by faculty members in Africa (Burawoy, 2010). It draws from the perspectives of faculty from three public universities in Malawi, whose explicit mandate is to contribute to national development via community engagement.

Paradigmatic Perspectives in Literature on the Purpose of Community Engagement

Community-Engaged Scholarship Defined

Community-engaged scholarship focuses on the role of faculty in cultivating an environment in which institutions serve as citizens to their communities (Votruba, 2010). Community engagement also recognizes that faculty service roles have a place in scholarship and scholarly work (Boyer, 1996; Diamond & Adam, 1995). Boyer (1996) critiqued the then-current paradigm of scholarship, which was based on four key functions—discovery, integration, application, and teaching—and added a fifth component, community-engaged scholarship, which he postulated covers the four functions into one (Ward & Moore, 2010). Boyer's (1990) conceptualization of scholarship suggests that faculty work strives toward academically relevant work that simultaneously fulfills the campus mission and goals and the needs of the community where the institution is located (Sandmann, Williams & Abrams, 2009; Votruba, 2010). Hence, the definitions of community engagement draw from functionalist, constructivist, and emancipatory perspectives (Burawoy, 2009; Fear, Rosaen, Bawden, & Foster-Fishman, 2006; Hale, 2008; Mitchell, 2011).

A consideration of these multiple conceptualizations is of significance in this study. It helps us to determine how faculty understand their community-engaged scholarship and define its purpose. Hence, I adopt, pursuant to my discussion on these community engagement paradigms, Burawoy's conceptualization of community engagement and use it as a lens to unpack the views of faculty in Africa on why and for whom they conduct their scholarship of engagement.

Three Perspectives on the Function of Community Engagement

Higher education and development studies frame the purpose of community engagement and for whom it is conducted into three different paradigms. The conceptualization uses different units of analysis depending on the purpose of the studies and community engagement. One set of community engagement studies draws from a *functionalist's* paradigm that focuses on the university organization as a unit of analy-

sis. These studies examine how universities institutionalize their organizational service mission and interact with communities in order to promote mutual benefits and capacity building. Functionalist studies of community engagement (Bloomfield, 2005; Furco & Holland, 2004; Sandmann & Plater, 2009) assume that economic rationalism, efficiency, and effectiveness play a critical role toward the achievement of an ideal functioning of community engagement processes and outcomes. Despite being foundational, these functionalist studies are limited because they focus on organizational structures, quality, and efficiency, and thus ignore the human element of community engagement.

The second set of studies utilizes a *constructivist* or interpretivist paradigm in their focus on faculty and community actors as the unit of analysis. These studies explore how human beings create reality and processes and demonstrate how these are shaped by different faculty institutional cultures, histories, and contexts in the community engagement systems (Glass, Doberneck & Schweitzer, 2011; Lunsford & Omae, 2011; O'Meara, 2008; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010). For instance, Weerts and Sandmann (2010) conclude that faculty at research universities in the United States of America have shifted from a one–way approach to a two–way approach to increase the benefits of community engagement. These interpretivist views localize cultures and contexts as social constructions and therefore foreground language, discourse, and symbolic communication patterns in their analyses of faculty interactions in universities and their engagement with communities. Nonetheless, one limitation of interpretivist studies is that they ignore the broader communities as units of analysis and do not fully address issues of empowerment or emancipation as the purpose of community engagement.

The third set of studies draw on the *emancipatory* paradigmatic approach in their focus on the power structures inherent in the re-

lations between universities and communities as units of analysis. Studies from this perspective use various units of analysis and apply critical lenses to emphasize power relations and the need to focus on community problems in the pursuit of community empowerment (Chari & Donner, 2010; Hale, 2008; Mitchell, 2008). This approach is relevant to this study's aim at unpacking how faculty community engagement is mediated by social, economic, and political relations of power and collective struggles in order to achieve community development in developing countries. Moreover, the use of the community as a unit of analysis mitigates the otherwise fluid boundaries between universities, faculty, and communities, which the first and second approaches assume. Hence, this broad view of the concept of community opens multiple ways of understanding the purpose of community engagement in relation to community development as perceived by faculty members.

Burawoy's Framing of the Function of Community Engagement

Burawoy (2010) proposes four divisions of sociological labor and connects these divisions with community engagement. Burawoy's conceptualization of community–engaged scholarship comprises professional, policy, public, and critical divisions, depending on what a scholar views as the function of the knowledge and whom it is produced for; see Table 1 below. The framework also highlights the importance of teaching and how teaching can be integrated with the other important functions that faculty perform in universities in relation to outreach, service, and research. Burawoy (2010) states that professional knowledge includes much more than "discovery," a concept that Boyer (1996) uses, which implies that research occurs in a broader context. Burawoy also states that, in contrast to the broad notion of application, policy knowledge implies a specific relationship of scholars to a client or patron. This is very different from public

Table 1. Frameworks for Community–Engaged Scholarship		
	Academic audience	*Extra–academic audience*
Instrumental knowledge	Professional	Policy
Reflexive knowledge	Critical	Public

Note. Table adapted from Burawoy (2009).

knowledge, which involves dialogical relations between the scholar and the public. In addition, "integrative" scholarship that Boyer (1996) adds as a third aspect of his framework for community-engaged scholarship—that which brings together scholars from different disciplines—is only one aspect of critical knowledge that challenges narrow professional knowledge.

Therefore, Burawoy's (2010) categorization of community engagement is closely related to the features of the new modes of knowledge production, which are reflexivity, transdisciplinarity, and heterogeneity (Gibbons et al., 1994). Reflexive knowledge is critical scholarly work that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. Such scholarly work is considered transdisciplinary and heterogeneous because of its association with multiple and diverse perspectives in the production of knowledge. Burawoy's framework also resonates with Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge production based on the purpose and audience of the knowledge produced through community engagement. In Mode 1 community engagement, faculty members initiate discipline-based community projects that are driven primarily by the quest for knowledge production for its own sake. In Mode 2 community engagement, the engagement process is context-driven, problem-focused, and interdisciplinary. Mode 2 also involves multidisciplinary teams that work together for short periods of time on specific problems in a real-world setting.

Critical Issues in Community Engagement in Africa

Many issues make community engagement in African universities specific but comparable. First, Favish, McMillan, and Ngcelwane (2012) suggested that on the basis of knowledge production and service provision, universities in Africa share knowledge through broader international discussions such as The Research University Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN), the Talloires Network, international conferences, and exchange programs. Despite this interconnectedness, there is a dearth of texts that discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the practice of community engagement in the African context.

Second, Preece, Ntseane, Modise, and Osborne (2012) make observations similar to those by scholars from the United States such as Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, and

Swanson (2019) and show that community engagement has become a central practice, although it is very difficult to measure its impact. These scholars also highlight that universities tend to take a discipline-specific, time-bound, donor-supported, project-based approach to community engagement. This has meant that much of what is done in community engagement, especially in Africa, remains a mystery.

To demonstrate the centrality and difficulties in community engagement, Preece (2011) examines pan-African action research projects on how universities used their community service to address internationally agreed-on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Interestingly, one of the participating institutions was the University of Malawi, Chancellor College. Preece's book is prototypical of the critical issues in literature on community engagement in that it empirically highlights the overwhelming appreciation felt by communities toward the universities' involvement and the amount of mutual learning that was experienced by university staff, students, and community members. A consequence of this is that a very narrow picture of the functions of community engagement emerges.

The above issues draw attention to the third issue facing community engagement in Africa. When one critically examines the way community engagement is framed, it tends to appear that it is a strategy for universities to deal with problems outside the university. This does not really offer a nuanced understanding of why and for whom faculty members conduct community engagement. These underpinnings to community engagement are also reflected in Malawian universities. For example, the Malawi Growth Development Strategy (MGDS) recognizes the higher education sector as a key driver of competitiveness and growth through university–community engagement. The University of Malawi (UNIMA), the nation's biggest and oldest higher education institution, was established in 1965 soon after independence from British colonial rule in 1964 (Mambo, Salih, Nobuyuki, & Jamil, 2016). Despite being an elite system, the university at times assumed a critical position in defense of justice and freedom. A good example is in the way the university fought for a democratic system of government in Malawi in the 1990s (Lwanda, 2002). Ostensibly, the country's higher education consists of four

public universities. The public universities were established through Acts of Parliament. There also exist private universities, and these were established through charters accredited by the state. Taken together, public institutions currently enroll approximately 12,000 students and have a total number of faculty of up to 1,000 (Mambo et al., 2016). At the time of this study only three of the four institutions were operational, as the fourth was still under construction with the support of a loan from the government of China.

Community engagement in Malawi revolves around autonomy, accountability, and academic freedom. The Malawian public higher education institutions, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), follow the MoEST's directives regarding the strategic direction of higher education. This role of the state organs often leads to contestations regarding the purpose of community engagement. For instance, the Department of Higher Education in the Ministry liaises with universities on policy issues, yet universities are statutory organizations that operate autonomously from the Ministry (MoEST, 2008). This conflict points to how the politics of autonomy make community engagement a politically contentious endeavor owing to the contestations between government and universities over the role of the university toward the public.

The role of the university to the public is tied to funding. The Malawian public universities have three main sources of revenue: government subventions, tuition fees, and resources generated by the universities in the form of project and research grants from local or international organizations. As in most African countries, government contributions, which range from 75% to 85% of recurrent budgets, constitute the largest share of revenue for public institutions in Malawi. Tuition fees contribute between 4% and 14% of total income, with the balance accounted for by locally generated revenue. Salaries and student services take up 90% of the budget, with less than 10% of resource utilization expended on educational and research–related costs (Mambo et al., 2016). This form of distribution of expenditure highlights the financial limitations that faculty face as they conduct community engagement and research. Thus, public universities conduct consultancies and apply for grants from external partners to supplement the limited funds available for community engagement. Often external funding comes with accountability and strict requirements that have tended to create infighting over the control and use of resources. Tied to such funding sources are the sustainability of funding and the impact of short–term community engagement projects that such partnerships entail. The country's community engagement capacity is equally undermined by years of underfunding, a legacy of inadequate infrastructure and facilities, and a relative scarcity of financial grants (Holland, 2008; LUANR, 2012; UNIMA, 2012).

Within these precarious university conditions, examples of projects of community engagement at different institutions include theater for development (Kamulongera, 2005), where performing arts such as poetry and drama are used as mechanisms for data collection in research and for providing knowledge to communities on issues such as HIV/AIDS as well as rural or urban development. Another example is community-based medicine, where students and faculty at the college of medicine spend time residing in the community to understand and generate knowledge for dealing with the burden of diseases. This approach is framed as both a research approach and community–based learning practice. Additional examples of community engagement are the legal clinic where faculty and students from the Law School provide legal knowledge and representation for communities on various legal cases as a form of service and outreach. Community engagement is not limited to the social sciences. In the chemistry department, for instance, faculty members draw on research on chemical composition of various crops to develop procedures for processing food crops, manufacturing equipment for processing farm products, and developing a market chain with local stakeholders and industries for marketing such products. It is under such governance, financing, and historical conditions that this study investigated how faculty conceptualize the purpose of community engagement and for whom they conduct it to begin to inspect the theoretical basis of such work. The following sections explicate the methods used in this study.

Methods and Data Analysis

Data for this study were collected from three purposively selected public univer-

sities in Malawi. The selected public universities have a mission of community-engaged scholarship. The study participants consisted of both male and female faculty members from across 10 academic disciplines. A survey instrument that had 44 items, including demographics, was used to collect data. The faculty members were sampled purposefully, drawing on the university registers and directors of research records of community engagement at each university. All heads of departments were also sampled since they are active members in conducting community-engaged scholarship. Purposeful sampling ensured that study participants found the questions meaningful and that faculty were knowledgeable about the concepts under investigation. A total of 110 faculty members completed the survey. Of this number two were missing cases; however, a detailed description of the participants is provided in the Findings section.

The survey instrument included items that asked faculty to score their level of agreement with statements that asked about frameworks used to conduct community-engaged scholarship. These frameworks were influenced by both O'Meara's (2008) factors that motivate faculty to conduct community-engaged scholarship and Burawoy's framework proposed in the discussion above. O'Meara's conceptual framework proposes that the faculty members' motivation to conduct community-engaged scholarship is shaped by their individual, institutional, and departmental characteristics, which determine their work, and external factors, which influence the work conditions.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was used for data analysis. The aim was to explore how participants' responses tended to cluster around certain points of agreement or disagreements on survey items (Field, 2013). Faculty conceptual frameworks examine issues that incentivize staff to conduct community-engaged scholarship. Follow-up interviews with faculty members were analyzed qualitatively. Patton (2002) points out several approaches that can be used in qualitative data analysis, and this study opted for a deductive analysis approach. This approach was best suited for this study for two major reasons. First, the approach is significant in that it transforms general theories found in the literature, such as Burawoy's conceptual framework,

which were used as background to analyze how faculty in Malawi conceptualize community-engaged scholarship. The deductive approach gave room to take the conceptual framework as a specific hypothesis suitable for testing. In this case it helped in the identification of the purpose and audience for faculty community-engagement scholarship. The research approach followed ethical practices of social science research. The protection and anonymity of research participants is assured. The study obtained ethical review from the University of Minnesota in the United States as well as the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) in Malawi.

Findings

Before delving into the actual findings, it is important to provide a description of the study participants. Of the 108 participants, 10 participants (9.1%) had bachelor's degrees, 45 participants (40.9%) had master's degrees, and 52 (47.3%) had doctorates. Only one participant had qualification in the category of other, which when combined with the two missing cases constituted 2.7%. In terms of appointment status, 23 (21.3%) were tenured, 77 (71.3%) were permanent, 5 (4.6%) were on probation, and 3 (2.8%) were either visiting or adjunct faculty members. The data about the participants' academic rank shows that there were 4 (3.7%) staff associates, 3 (2.8%) assistant lecturers, 45 (41.7%) lecturers, 1 (0.9%) associate lecturer, 28 (25.9%) senior lecturers, 2 (1.9%) assistant professors, 11 (10.2%) associate professors, 12 (11.1%) full professors, and 2 (1.9%) classified as other. In addition, there were a total of 78 male and 30 female participants, representing 72.2% and 27.3% (these numbers total less than 100% because of the missing cases). According to recent data from Mambo et al. (2016), the gender distribution is representative of the numbers of female and male faculty in the Malawi public university system, which currently stand at 1 to 3.

The study's key findings are discussed in the following sections. The discussion responds to questions on how faculty conceptualize community-engaged scholarship, teaching, and research, and the factors that influence such perspectives. The findings of this study illustrate how community engagement is staged by faculty members as technology to produce healthy bodies, communities, and environments,

and implicitly positions university faculty as productive citizens of a modern nation. Communities were often characterized as sometimes empowered and at other times as not–yet–modern and in need of reform. However, community engagement also constitutes an alternate pedagogical site of engagement in that faculty encounters with community members disrupted their assumptions about these communities to an extent. Nevertheless, institutionalized practices of assessment, as well as epistemological and ontological understandings of the nature of science inherent in community engagement, tended to privilege the popular cultural stereotypes of producing scientific knowledge as the purpose of community engagement, thereby excluding the place–based narratives of local communities and students. Table 2 presents these complexities in greater detail, drawing from Burawoy's (2009) categorization of the professional, policy, public, and critical functions of community engagement. These four thematic concepts are further discussed in a later section, with evidence from the survey data to demonstrate how comparable faculty members work in a global South context, refusing to be pigeonholed into prevailing theoretical constructs.

Professional Community-Engaged Scholarship

Table 3 shows means and standard deviations for each of the 14 individual items to illustrate the participant's level of agreement with the professional incentives driving their community-engaged scholarship. The results showed that the respondents agreed that they were incentivized and scored high means on 10 of the conceptual frameworks or professional incentives. However, the other four items yielded more negative results. The results indicate disagreement, with 39.8% (43) of the respondents strongly disagreeing with the view that they were driven by the need to perform charity work, 52.8% (57) disagreeing that they were incentivized to earn extra money, 70.4% (76) strongly disagreeing that they were driven to conduct community-engaged scholarship to raise their political concerns, and 67.6% (73) strongly disagreeing with the view that they were driven to gain recognition and honor in the community when conducting community–engaged scholarship. The table illustrates that faculty members were driven to conduct community-engaged scholarship due to the need to improve their personal

knowledge, transform society, use their personal skills to solve problems in society, and fulfill the desire to cocreate knowledge with community partners and improve the students' capacity to learn. This conceptualization fits into Burawoy's (2010) definition of professional community–engaged scholarship.

According to Burawoy (2010), *professional community engagement* pursues dilemmas that would have been defined by professional programs. These puzzles are pursued within a given framework. This form of community-engaged scholarship uses specifically crafted theories and takes for granted certain conditions, values, interests, and aims that shape human behavior and action. This is how teaching, research, and service are conducted by taking as given a range of assumptions that define a framework and then grappling with the inherent inconsistencies. The professional conceptualization of community–engaged scholarship is a theme that appeared in the in–depth interviews where faculty, as noted in Table 2, pointed out that they saw community engagement as a professional framework for solving community problems.

Faculty members were also asked to reflect on institutional incentives and their thoughts on how the institution drove their community-engaged work. As Table 4 demonstrates, overall, faculty tended to strongly agree with various institutional incentives as conceptual frameworks driving their motivation to conduct community-engaged scholarship. Where 65.7% (71) strongly agreed or agreed that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because it was a mission at their university, 66.7% (72) strongly agreed or agreed that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because of professional and academic disciplinary requirements. Faculty members also agreed that they were driven by the need to achieve promotion and tenure, and they mostly disagreed that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because of the financial support their university provides for such work. Only 39.8% (43) of the faculty members strongly disagreed that they were involved in community-engaged scholarship because of the possibility of getting promotion and tenure, whereas as much as 58.3% (63) strongly disagreed that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because of university financial

Table 2. Qualitative Findings		
Conceptualization of community engagement themes	*Community engagement purpose*	*Qualitative data illustrative quotes*
Professional	To achieve university goals and aims on research, teaching, and outreach, seeking to advance the academic discipline and profession.	"Our role is that while we teach we also have to do research, so promotion is based on research and publication so that is why we have to be involved in communities but at the same time we want to be involved in solving real world problems we don't want to only work in the lab." (Male faculty, Chemistry) "One aim is professional development. As academic members of staff we normally want to engage ourselves and we do a lot of research in the field and from that we collect data from which we publish. Secondly, as an institution we want to engage communities because one of the pillars of the university and polytechnic in particular is to engage in what we call research, consultancies and outreach program." (Male professor in water and engineering science) "It's something that we have been into already for some time from various perspectives. The university has always had in its vision of major activities as teaching, research and community outreach. These have always been there." (Male professor, literature, dean of humanities) "Promotion is okay but if your aim is just promotion you will not progress in your career. If your aim is just money you will not progress. It's not that we don't need money. Money is not an end in itself, it's just a means." (Male professor in aquaculture and fisheries, deputy vice chancellor of the University of Agriculture)
Policy	The solving of problems as defined by various clients to a scholar. These clients may be NGOs, a politician, a trade union, or any entity that has predetermined goals and the resources to obtain the service of a scholar.	"If you are called a professor and you have not made an impact on people then that is worthless and I tell people . . . , if that PhD cannot be used for policy reform, policy change then it's useless." (Female senior lecturer, in Nutrition Department "The main motivation is intertwined, you want to show something (research findings), you also want to see what would impress the funders, and you also want to see how you can as I said, show results on the lives of people. So . . . showing impact, showing the available resources, where the resources are available and what touches people's lives the kinds of motivations for community engagement." (Female Ph.D. student/staff associate, Forestry Department)

Table continued on next page

Table 2. Qualitative Findings *continued*		
Conceptualization of community engagement themes	*Community engagement purpose*	*Qualitative data illustrative quotes*
Policy	The solving of problems as defined by various clients to a scholar. These clients may be NGOs, a politician, a trade union, or any entity that has predetermined goals and the resources to obtain the service of a scholar.	"At times there are institutions outside the country that want particular information and they contact us and we conduct that kind of research, service or create knowledge and provide the information and data for them from the communities." (Male professor in Engineering/Research and Outreach Coordinator). "The Polytechnic strategic plan, one of the key components or pillars of the university, is to engage in what we call consultancy or extension services. It is part of the require–ment that we engage in but at the same time as an individual with the expertise that I have in policy analysis and development, I have been engaged by various stakeholders to help them promote such issues. In addition, I have worked as a practicing journalist in Malawi for many years. And so, I have expertise in journalism and so from time to time when need arises people have asked me to support them either in doing or in establishing of community radios or improving skills." (Male senior lecturer, dean of journalism and media studies) "Working with communities in Malawi you really need to know the local leadership, so if you go to the village you have to talk to the Traditional Authorities . . . convince the chiefs about your initiative then they can communicate to their people. . . ." (Female senior lecturer and deputy head of Nutrition and Food Science Department
Public	Aims at bringing change in, with, for, and through the public.	"At my career stage when you become a professor you start to begin to ask questions on how you have affected people's lives. That is a big driving factor. No one would be happy to be a full professor and have not touched the lives of people. So that is one driving factor that leads to community engagement." (Male professor in plant pathology and genetics, Vice Chancellor University of Agriculture) "I am an advocate for democracy. . . . And that drives my community engagement. When there are things I need to do and right now there [are] things I am working on as an advocate for gender and mitigating gender based violence. Just two hours ago I was actively involved with my students in a cyber–dialogue on sexual harassment, which is a regional based activity involving 16 days of activism." (Male senior lecturer, dean of journalism and media studies)

Table 2. Qualitative Findings *continued*		
Conceptualization of community engagement themes	*Community engagement purpose*	*Qualitative data illustrative quotes*
Public	Aims at bringing change in, with, for, and through the public.	"It is also a requirement at the University of Malawi that you demonstrate the generation of funds for the university . . . we are offering lifelong learning. So while that is a public service mandate, it is also used in way to generate revenue for the government and the institution so that is also motivation." (Male senior lecturer, dean of the College of Education) "So we involve community and do both lab–based as well as community–based research because we have resources in the community on issues of fertility. These are things that people don't talk much about and so confining ourselves to the lab would not unleash most of these taboos that people think they are. For instance, here in Malawi, rarely will you find male patients coming out to be diagnosed and find out if they are fertile or not. Our aim is to change that." (Male professor in physiology, medi–cal shool)
Critical	Aims to critique strict adherence to certain assumptions over methods, aims of community engagement, and how to perform scholarship in relation to academia and the public.	"We inherited the misconception that it is the hard sciences and its innovations which is the savior of the human society and next to that is the social science. And well, the humanities is remembered last. We as African universities have inherited this problem of knowledge and disciplinary categorization. In our own context we have inherited it without critiquing it, without trying to problematize nor understand what is good to us. Mostly also because of what I described as the tragedy of the African university—that we listen to those that have the money." (Male, senior lecturer, deputy head of History Department) "We are trying to change . . . the mind set with researchers because . . . what they mostly think is that the community is a small–scale farmer. This is where universities and tertiary education in Malawi has failed bitterly. Because with that 1964 orientation of agriculture and 90% of the population being small holder farmers, all our community engagement has been with the small–scale local people and we need to change that." (Male professor in aquacul–ture and fisheries, deputy vice chancellor of the University of Agriculture)

Table 2. Qualitative Findings *continued*		
Conceptualization of community engagement themes	*Community engagement purpose*	*Qualitative data illustrative quotes*
Critical	Aims to critique strict adherence to certain assumptions over methods, aims of community engagement, and how to perform scholarship in relation to academia and the public.	"Of course when you compare the way universities in South Africa operate they actually recognize somebody's engagement with the community as part of their progression in their career. Ours are rigid; you only have to publish; if you don't publish you perish. You teach well nobody will actually blink and look at you and say well you are going to get a promotion." (Male senior lecturer, dean of journalism and media studies) "People go and work in the communities because some people think that they have a debt to the communities because it's like we almost took over all their land. So, people feel like we are close to their land so these people need to benefit from the college because the college is in their village or district." (Female lecturer, deputy dean of social sciences)

support. Table 3 shows mean scores of all items. On average, faculty tended to strongly agree with the institutional mission as a major driving force for their community–engaged scholarship (*M* = 6.26, *SD* = 3.04).

Faculty conceptualized community–engaged scholarship as teaching, research, and outreach that deals with communities' problems. One faculty member in the humanities department put it as follows:

> It is something that we have been into already for some time from various perspectives. The university has always had teaching, research and community outreach in its vision or as major activities. These have always been there. When every member of the faculty is recruited into the system, he does understand that there are these three major activities involving their work.

This response suggests that faculty conceptualize community–engaged scholarship as fulfilling the institutional mission. In this context, faculty members work within the confines of institutional vision to conduct their various forms of scholarship. A good example of such work is noted in one faculty member's description of a "theater for development" where students are taken to communities to perform various theatrical plays to sensitize the public on voting, nutritional practices, and health practices such as the spread of HIV/AIDS while learning about art, drama, and conducting research in this discipline with the help of faculty.

Policy Community–Engaged Scholarship

Burawoy (2010) defines policy community engagement as the solving of problems that would have been identified by various clients to the scholar participating in community engagement. These clients may be nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), a politician, a trade union, or any entity that has predetermined goals and the resources to obtain the service of a scholar to conduct community–engaged scholarship. In a nutshell, faculty conceptualized community–engaged scholarship as a process of knowledge production that seeks to inform the application of important processes in society. Equally, faculty saw their scholarship labor as informing various policies. This view was not limited to specific disciplines. As a result, faculty members highlighting the solutions to various problems for their clients also suggested solutions to the challenges of working across disciplines to effect scholarship of integration as Boyer (1996) suggested. Thus, the following vignette shows how faculty conceptualized the application of knowledge. It also reveals that faculty members found it difficult to work across disciplines and hence failed to inform each other's work. This theme was raised throughout the in–depth interviews as noted here:

Table 3. Professional Incentives (All Items), (*N* = 108)				
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
To improve personal knowledge	1	10	7.63	2.628
Transform society	1	10	7.54	2.592
Use my skills to solve problems in society	1	10	7.45	2.62
Cocreate knowledge with community partners	1	10	7.3	2.648
Improve my students' capacity to learn	1	10	7.25	2.598
Go above and beyond what is academically required	1	10	6.77	2.857
"Do good" in my community	1	10	6.29	2.641
Empower oppressed communities	1	10	6.21	2.802
Deal with social wrongs in society	1	10	5.83	3.074
Gain professional/personal connections	1	10	5.33	2.995
Fulfill my commitments to charity	1	10	4.7	3.049
Earn extra money	1	10	3.7	2.852
Gain recognition and honor in the community	1	10	2.67	2.23
Raise my political concerns in the communities	1	10	2.52	2.29

Table 4. Institutional Incentives (All Items), (*N* = 108)				
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
My academic discipline/profession requires me to.	1	10	6.26	3.04
It's a mission at my university.	1	10	6.25	3.02
There is professional development for such.	1	10	5.59	2.96
It's a framework for the competitiveness of the university.	1	10	5.38	2.93
I could get/got promotion and tenure.	1	10	4.83	3.17
The university allocates time for it.	1	10	4.42	3.00
The university provides time and financial support for such.	1	10	3.44	2.72

We have provided evidence that the processing method of cassava which includes the peelings and soaking, results in the higher accumulation of the toxic elements and the communities here become more highly exposed to intoxication. . . . So you find that this new knowledge has application. Government, NGO, community, including industries can now make improvements in either their program or cassava products and revise their process. Therefore, the university and faculty have a specific responsibility to generate evidence, which should inform policy review, policy reform and formulation and program implementation and there lies our relevance of community-engaged scholarship to society.

Faculty participants also responded to the question of how state government incentives motivated and shaped the way they visualized conducting community-engaged scholarship (see Table 5). The results show that faculty members tended to strongly disagree with the view that government incentivized them to conduct community-en-

Table 5. Government Incentives (All Items), (N = 108)				
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
It is a government development agenda.	1	10	4.48	3.06
Government policy requires us to do so.	1	10	4.05	2.83
The government is democratic and peaceful.	1	10	3.88	2.74
There is accountability to the government.	1	10	3.49	2.62
Government officials support my engagement work.	1	10	3.16	2.68
There is need for transparency to the government.	1	10	3.00	2.19
I can/will/got government public appointments.	1	8	2.17	1.83
I receive government funds for engagement.	1	9	2.08	1.75
The government is undemocratic and oppressive.	1	7	1.80	1.45

gaged scholarship. A total of 80.6% (87) of faculty members reported that they strongly disagree with the assertion that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because the government provides them funds for such. In the same way, 76.9% (83) strongly disagreed that they conduct engaged scholarship because they get or would get government public appointments. Although the mean scores on this section were very low compared to other items, they showed that faculty tended to agree that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because it was a government agenda (M = 4.48, SD = 3.06) and that government higher education policy required them to do so (M = 4.05, SD = 2.83; see Table 5).

Public Community-Engaged Scholarship

Burawoy's framework presents public community-engaged scholarship as aimed at bringing change in, with, for, and through the public. As means in Table 6 indicate, faculty members were more inclined to strongly disagree on several items related to the external community as driving incentives for conducting their engagement. However, the faculty members elaborated at length in in-depth interviews how they depended on external donors for funds and worked with the public to bring social change. A total of 77% of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that they conducted community-engaged scholarship because they gained social and political support. A total of 91.5% (101) strongly disagreed or disagreed that they were driven to conduct community-engaged scholarship because the external local community provided them with financial support. On aver-

age, the mean scores showed that faculty were driven by the trust that the community had in them and due to their belief that communities were knowledgeable on the issues that concerned them (see Table 6).

Faculty believe that government funding has decreased in the past years. As a result, academics conceptualize their community engagement as a framework for working with private or external donors in support of their projects. The response below confirms this:

> And at times there are institutions outside the country that want particular information and they contact us and we conduct that kind of research and provide the information and data for them from the communities.

Analysis of such views of community engagement using Burawoy's (2010) conceptual framework reveals the problematic purposes that can underlie community engagement in ways that are often overlooked. Burawoy suggests that community-engaged scholarship is not simply the application of accumulated knowledge. Public engagement is part of the process of forming, testing, and improving knowledge. In short, community-engaged scholarship is a matter of critique, not just advocacy. It is part of a project of producing new knowledge, of integrating more abstract and universal sorts of knowledge with more concrete and local sorts of knowledge, and of keeping action and its possibilities at the center of attention.

Table 6. External Community Incentives (All Items), (*N* = 108)				
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
Communities trust faculty like me in my work.	1	10	5.94	2.95
Communities have the knowledge and expertise.	1	10	4.94	2.83
I receive/will receive international aid and grants.	1	10	3.95	2.93
The community invited me to serve them.	1	10	3.80	3.08
I can/have/will gain better jobs.	1	10	3.52	2.58
I gain social-political support from the community.	1	10	3.11	2.45
I receive financial support from the local community.	1	10	1.80	1.65

Indeed, community engagement discourses inform policies and programs, often being used to make "scientific" arguments to restructure material and cultural realities in incredibly powerful ways. Scholars have shown how these discourses have been shaped by historically specific cultural and political processes (Escobar, 1995; Latour, 2009). Such claims have been possible because of the deep complicity between the state and markets of academics and practitioners working from within various disciplines in the production of development discourses about communities (Parker et al., 2012). There are numerous examples, as Latour (2009) explains in an examination of how knowledge produced through community engagement for the public might be complicit in perpetuating unjust and oppressive health, educational, and political systems. This only further emphasizes the need for faculty members to constantly question why and for whom they conduct their community engagement, whatever theoretical frameworks inform the conceptualization of their work. The following section looks at how faculty in this study viewed community-engaged scholarship as a critical activity.

Critical Community-Engaged Scholarship

Burawoy (2010) also notes that critical community-engaged scholarship ought to relate directly with professional community-engaged scholarship because both are primarily aimed at an academic audience. According to Burawoy, critical community-engaged scholars are in dialogue with other scholars and the broader public and expressing their critique in strict adherence with certain assumptions over methods, aims of the community engagement, and the performance of scholarship in relation to academia and the public. Both the qualitative and quantitative data in the above sections show that faculty were more inclined toward the professional, policy, and public purposes of community-engaged scholarship than the critical perspective of community-engaged scholarship. In comparison to other disciplines, faculty in the humanities and social sciences were more inclined to adopt a critical purpose for community engagement. For example, one faculty member questioned why the minister of education was pushing for a policy that promoted science subjects and not the humanities. Faculty also pointed out that disciplines in the sciences received more attention and funding to conduct community engagement. One professor expressed the lack of support for critical community engagement as follows:

> We inherited the misconception that it is the hard science and its innovations, which is the savior of the human society and next to that is the social science. And well, the humanities is remembered last. We as African universities have inherited this problem of knowledge and disciplinary categorization. In our own context we have inherited it without critiquing it, without trying to problematize it and understand what is good to us. Mostly also because of what I described as the tragedy of the African university—that we listen to those that have the money.

The above quote epitomizes so many issues impacting faculty community engagement. It demonstrates the increasing neoliberal influence that favors more hard science disciplines as well as the influence from donors who support specific types of community engagement. The key essence of the

quote is that the importance of community engagement to social action is not limited by discipline. It also shows the need to look beyond the narrow use of resources and the commercialization of knowledge. Hale (2008) urges that faculty ought to allow the above-quoted way of conceptualizing community engagement to permeate all types and functions of scholarship. According to Hale, critical community-engaged scholarship is important because the world is in considerable need of improvement, and improvement comes in large part by means of social movements, struggles, and campaigns to change public agendas. This view of community engagement problematizes the production function model of scholarship with its view that problems are better solved with a single streamlined approach and a lot of resources, such as money. The following sections discuss some contextual factors that might explain why faculty in Malawi conceptualize community-engaged scholarship in ways that at times align with and at times divert from Burawoy's framework. I also draw some implications for these findings to higher education in these sections.

Discussion

Cloete et al. (2011) suggest that there are two major ways in which higher education is conceptualized as a development tool, namely, "instrumentalist or 'service' role, and an 'engine of development' role which is based on strengthening knowledge production and the role of the universities in innovation processes" (p. 6). This conceptualization shaped the way faculty view the purpose of community-engaged scholarship and for whom they conduct it. The instrumental role of foreign donors and multilateral agencies figures significantly here. These agencies, which include the United Nations, USAID, UNESCO, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, seek to revamp the application of community-engaged knowledge production based on the assumption that faculty members and universities are experts and knowledge banks whose resources should be applied to solve development dilemmas such as reducing poverty and supporting health and education. As a result, faculty in Malawi took this role very seriously in their conceptualization of the policy and public use of community engagement.

Furthermore, the view that the university is an engine of development is added to the perspective defining the university as a development tool. This university as engine of development perspective considers higher education a mechanism for promoting the knowledge economy, knowledge production, and technological innovation. Without a doubt, faculty members in Malawi, as elsewhere, anticipate and conceptualize community engagement as a panacea. A caution to bear in mind is that although we know the positive impact that community engagement might entail, we cannot take everything for granted and assume that this will always be the case. Hence the following sections focus on some of the key observations from the findings and implications on the need to broaden the conceptualization of the functions of community-engaged scholarship. The sections also consider the findings related to the emphasis on considering reflexive and critical views in the function of community engagement.

Contextualizing Community-Engaged Scholarship in Malawi

A comparative analysis of the current research findings with previous studies shows the usefulness of Burawoy's division of sociological labor in understanding how faculty in different contexts view scholarship. The contextual understanding of the study's findings is established here through the discussion of two important points in relation to ideas presented by Holland (2008, 2010). Holland's two studies, which examined the institutionalization of the social sciences in public universities in Malawi, are salient to the demonstration of some of the factors that determine the way faculty in Malawi view community-engaged scholarship. Both studies uncovered several issues that are interrelated to the current findings. Thus, as in the present study, Holland (2008) showed that our understanding of the social life of faculty and how they carry out their scholarship can be made better by examining the relationship between the authority in the university and the state and the international agents involved in the process. Hence, the institutional authority, the state, and, in particular, the international agents, play a crucial role in conceptualizing, formulating, and implementing policies on community-engaged scholarship as well as in the financing and development of higher education. This finding supports the current study's observation of the significance of state government and international agents

in driving faculty work and their conceptualization of community-engaged scholarship.

In addition, Holland's study notes that the professional life of the majority of faculty in Malawi involves navigation in a bifurcated field in which academic values circulate uneasily with entrepreneurial ones. An analysis of the study's qualitative interviews resulted in the formulation of two major themes. The themes are (1) lack of funding from a government that is highly suspicious of faculty work yet seeks positive benefits of community engagement and (2) dependency on international donors. The ultimate result is that faculty conceptualized their community-engaged scholarship as aimed at the profession and policy mostly through consultancies. Although consultancy is a legitimate process for third-stream income, it poses challenges owing to the likelihood of developing a dependency, lack of critical reflection, and the complications encountered while trying to balance autonomy and accountability with the state mechanism of financing higher education (Mamdani, 2008; Preece et al., 2012).

Holland (2008) has also shown that faculty members' production of Mode 1 (basic research historically introduced and conducted for its own sake) and Mode 2 (research that came later due to international market demands) was driven by different incentives. She discovered that although "Mode 1 in Malawi had historically promoted an ethos of service and duty to the nation, Mode 2 tended instead to demand a service-to-the-client orientation and to promote monetary incentives more so than intellectual or service-oriented ones" (Holland, 2008, p. 679). Although Holland's finding might hold some truth regarding the context in which the research was conducted, it differs from the current study findings. Faculty members involved in this study openly pointed out that the absence of governmental and institutional support compelled them to seek financial support from international entrepreneurial organizations. The faculty members noted further that their attempts were not for financial incentives but were a way to solve and deal with bigger problems facing the communities and to advance knowledge in their academic disciplines. This approach suggests the applicability of Burawoy's public community-engaged scholarship. Nevertheless, the limitation of partnerships and support from the private sector and government to community-engaged scholarship demands that we begin to honestly problematize the nature of what is considered public or private and how faculty are conceptualizing the public. Hence, it is important for universities to bridge the gap between the so-called private and public, especially within African universities, as universities from other parts of the globe have mostly succeeded in bridging this gap.

Politics of Community Engagement and Academic Freedom

Although the history and purpose of the U.S. higher education system differ greatly from those of the Malawian system, community engagement faces a similar kind of politics in both countries (Altbach, 2004). Faculty across the globe continue to struggle against slow-transforming institutional cultures that view community-engaged scholarship as less scientific and limited in its impact. Furthermore, the financial demands of community engagement work at an institutional level compel faculty to wear multiple hats as fund raisers, political ambassadors, and marketers of their projects. Nonetheless, they continue to receive the standard admonition: "Leave your politics at the door" (Hale, 2008, p. 10). This is indeed ironic, for if we consider the full spectrum of affiliations that the word *political* entails, we find politics in academe at every turn as faculty straddle between the university and government or private sector pursuits driving various social change projects.

Faculty work is impacted by politics and lack of academic freedom (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). This has adversely impacted the level of institutionalization of community engagement. The plague of political extremism and dictatorial tendencies on the part of governments is evident in the absence of policies that treat community engagement and higher education as central issues to national development. Universities and faculty require appropriate freedom and autonomy to shape their own community engagement programs and practices (Altbach, 2014b). The uneasy relations with the state and strong reliance on external support for consultancies and community engagement programs raise concerns regarding the balance between autonomy and accountability. Concomitantly, opposing conceptualizations of what is relevant in higher education are circulating within academic spheres and political debates, resulting in increased

pressure on higher education to achieve competing and opposing political agendas (Altbach, 2014).

The way faculty in Malawi conceptualize the function of community–engaged scholarship resonates with that of other African countries. Mtawa, Fongwa, and Wangenge–Ouma (2016) found that faculty in Tanzania considered consultancies for government and international donors to be the major function of community–engaged scholarship. Olowu (2012) argued that despite numerous attempts by South African scholars to clarify community engagement, it remains a vague concept in South African higher education institutions, resulting in misunderstanding of its functions. These observations were also highlighted by Favish et al. (2012) in their finding that South African faculty members face serious challenges with community–engaged scholarship because the system is highly segmented and operates unquestioningly under taken–for–granted ideas about scholarship and how knowledge production is applied.

The Trope of Critical Community–Engaged Scholarship

Evidence has shown that, to a greater extent, faculty conducted community–engaged scholarship for professional, public, and policy purposes. Faculty in education, medicine, humanities, and agriculture were certain that their work influences policy and social change. Faculty were not necessarily driven to question but rather to support the government agenda. Thus, it is important for faculty conducting community–engaged scholarship to craft policies that benefit people. At the same time, faculty community–engaged scholarship should challenge the oppressive or unjust knowledge and ideological systems that drive development agendas (Hale, 2008). We can never easily justify the usefulness of community engagement by merely labeling it a scientific endeavor to solve society's problems when science itself can be complicit in disorganizing and disrupting what people truly value for authentic reasons.

Although community engagement should concern itself with scientific knowledge application, it should also take seriously forms of authority and injustice that may accompany development work. A critical community–engaged scholarship ought to situate social problems in historical and cultural contexts. This is where differences in the conceptualization of community engagement arise for faculty in developed countries and those in developing ones such as Malawi. Higher education in Malawi, as in most African countries, is strictly controlled by the government. Tensions between the government and the university are common, and this leads to faculty conducting their academic work in fear. The fear also leads faculty to ignore critical components of community engagement. According to Hale (2008) and Burawoy (2010), neoliberal representations should be subjected to a critical policy analysis, formulation, and application that can lead to rejection of the idea that any policy formulation and application is an objective depiction of solutions for other people. Critical scholars in policy studies ought to adopt alternatives that encourage reflection on politics of their work and the solutions they put forward. In these accounts, the embodied, collaborative, dialogic, and improvisational aspects of policy are clarified. In addition, the potential fallibility of policies should be critically questioned and improved upon (Hale, 2008; Isaacman, 2003).

Transferability of the Malawian Faculty's Perspectives on Community–Engaged Scholarship

Levitt and List (2007) remind us that "theory is the tool that permits us to take results from one environment to predict in another" (p. 170). Theory is needed to make sense of superficial and meaningful differences when the precise nature of treatments or cases varies across sites. Theory is required when the contexts differ—institutional versus national versus global interactions, private versus public—to create generalizations from one case to another. We rely on theory in the face of differently measured outcomes to predict how a causal process will express itself across sites. It is precisely in this context that Burawoy's (2005, 2009, 2010) theoretical framework comes in to demonstrate the transferability of Malawian faculty perspectives. Seen through Burawoy's theoretical framework, there are two factors that could make Malawian faculty views on community–engaged scholarship stand as isomorphic and transferable to other contexts. One of the factors is evident in the way faculty community–engaged work is shaped by government and external community relations. The history of most public universities in African, North and South American,

and European countries is critical here. Historically, the role of faculty in the university was to teach. However, the increasing predominance of the knowledge economy and significance of research have meant that faculty in Malawi, like elsewhere, have had to engage in more research and community engagement to gain promotion based on institutional incentives. Although personal and professional growth is deemed important for faculty across the globe, it is the social, economic, and political impact of their work that drives faculty initiatives in community-engaged scholarship. It is for this reason that faculty in Malawi, like those elsewhere, viewed community-engaged scholarship as a professional and public activity that is influenced by the institutional mission and demands of the public.

Globalization and internationalization shape how faculty views of community engagement in Malawi are generalizable to other contexts. Public universities tend to be similar in different contexts because they draw their mandate and support from international actors. Although the level of funding might differ in accordance with the wealth of individual countries and the prestige of the institution, faculty in Malawian universities, like those elsewhere, depend on government support and external funders such as philanthropic organizations. Most African universities receive much of their external funding from government and philanthropic organizations in the global North. In this regard, faculty in Malawi viewed and practiced public community-engaged scholarship in a way that is to a great extent similar to that in other contexts as they are driven by similar pressure to produce quality work, compete for funding, and contribute to scientific knowledge production to build an international reputation. This explains why faculty viewed the practice of consultancies in community-engaged scholarship as a mechanism to raise revenue for the university, especially within a context of declining public funding support. The art of bringing funding to the university from external sources in the global North is seen as an important component of community engagement, as the funds are used to solve problems for the community while also bringing scarce resources to the university. Qualifying for this kind of funding also contributes to raising the level of academic integrity of African faculty members to that of their counter-parts in other parts of the world. The prestige of the university and individual faculty is enhanced with the increasing amounts of funding and numbers of community-oriented projects they undertake. Hence, bringing external funding and engagement with the public is increasingly the hallmark of productivity and quality in faculty work in Malawi and across the globe (Altbach, 2014b). Using Burawoy's (2009) theoretical lens helps to take stock and visualize the work of Malawian faculty members.

A Differentiated Application of Burawoy's Framework and Future Research

There are three factors that engagement policy and practices at national and institutional levels need to take into consideration to contextualize, problematize, and entrench community engagement, as conceptualized within Burawoy's framework. First, universities ought to acknowledge and tap into the growing impact of internationalization, regionalism, and globalization of strategies for community engagement. Nonetheless, how faculty conceptualize the purpose and use of the four frameworks—professional, public, policy, and critical engagement—should be based on the specific realities of the national and institutional context. Hence, a differentiated community engagement is vital for relevant higher education (Cloete et al., 2011)

Second, what Burawoy (2010) terms *community engagement division of labor* can help us to see the need for a more critical questioning of taken-for-granted assumptions. We cannot assume that influencing policies and dealing with the public will automatically bring mutual benefits to communities. It is crucial for faculty to conceptualize community engagement as a process that is driven by power differentials that demand constant questioning and anticipate ways of improving this process.

Finally, community engagement demands autonomy, academic freedom, and ample funding for it to thrive. Research findings have shown that community engagement has multiple purposes and functions. Therefore, the conceptualization of various functions of community engagement must move beyond the problems that arise in its wake, and we have to consider community engagement as a vital source of alternative funding, a platform for fighting for academic freedom, and a space through which faculty can exercise their autonomy

in bringing about social change.

Furthermore, an understanding of faculty members' different perceptions on community-engaged scholarship is crucial for the faculty members themselves, university institutions, local and international funders, governments, and the public at large. There is a growing concern over the neoliberal impacts of universities in Africa and the world over (Breton & Lambert, 2003; Knight, 2008; Pike, 2015). Pike (2015) states:

> The classic hallmarks of neoliberal thinking in education include: curricula increasingly oriented to the imperatives of a free-market global economy and the honing of skills necessary to perpetuate it; an insistence on "learning outcomes" that are closely allied to the perceived needs of employers; the prioritisation of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects over the "softer" and more creative arts, humanities and social sciences; an attribution of greater value to learning that can be immediately measured; and an increasing commercialisation of education that views learning as a product to be acquired, rather than as a lifelong way of being. (pp. 13–14)

Central to this criticism is that universities and their faculty are narrowly focusing on the commercialization of training and knowledge production in accord with the neoliberalization of higher education's agenda. These criticisms and indeed the way faculty conceptualize the broad purpose of higher education impact the way faculty conduct their community-engaged scholarship. Although it is important to point out limitations in faculty work, most of the criticism lacks a deep understanding of how faculty members, especially those in the global South, conceptualize their work. The empirical evidence in the current study demonstrates how faculty view their community-engaged scholarship, the motivations of their work, and the challenges they face. These faculty members are indeed paying attention to the commercialization of knowledge, but it is not in the narrowest sense. Such an understanding is crucial for all actors in higher education seeking ways to motivate faculty and appropriately reward their work on establishing collaboration and dealing with

the various problems facing our societies. Although it was not the major focus of the study, a consideration of the broad theory of community-engaged scholarship shows to some extent how faculty members perceive community-engaged scholarship as professional, public, policy, and critical endeavors that affect their motivation, performance, work quality, and impact. Since faculty tended to see the broad positive impact of community-engaged scholarship at both private and public levels, they were then driven to continue with their projects regardless of the hindrances of the neoliberal forms of funding, suspicion from government, or mistrust from the communities and politically charged conditions of donor funding.

Conclusion

The application of Burawoy's framework to the African context assists greatly in comparatively determining how faculty conceptualize their community-engaged scholarship in different contexts. Minor contextual issues must be considered here, however. The first is that faculty harbor different motivations and drives while conducting their community-engaged scholarship. These multiple motives suggest that, although their work may appear impartial, they usually carry out scholarship with multiple aims that are often contradictory in nature. It is hard to categorically isolate a faculty member's work in one silo, as their work might achieve various functions, planned and unplanned. These multifaceted results might suggest the need for faculty to emphasize how community-engaged scholarship can influence change in complex ways and speak truth to power.

Second, the framework critically assisted in mapping the limited conceptualization of reflexive knowledge or critical reflections on community-engaged scholarship. This is not to say that this form of community engagement does not occur among faculty in Malawi; rather, there is need for faculty to make this work more visible. Hence, as noted by Bourgois (2006, pp. x–xi), the university's repositioning of itself in a globally connected and more culturally diverse society demands that it diversify its capacity to deliver that creative consciousness and participatory citizenship and recognize the positive and liberating potential of critical emancipatory universal learning in enabling us to connect with the possibilities of an

unknown future.

This study, therefore, concludes that we cannot easily assume that interactions with local communities in community engagement and development programs democratize knowledge production as the purpose of community engagement without a simultaneous engagement with postfoundational epistemologies that set the boundaries and sociological divisions of faculty members' labor. Although faculty might conceptualize the purpose of community engagement in the broad areas of professional, public, policy, and critical functions, it behooves us to maintain scrutiny of the taken-for-granted distinction of science and culture in the various ways knowledge production is carried out in universities. This problematic aspect of the way faculty conceptualize community engagement as a scientific endeavor is not unique to universities in Africa. As the conceptualization and practice of community engagement continue to attain centrality, the need for further research on the practice grows.

Finally, one challenge is that we still know very little about how faculty members' views of community-engaged scholarship affect the quality and impact of their work. This is an area that requires more research to establish the extent to which the conceptions of faculty community-engaged scholarship affect the quality and level of engagement within society. Future research on faculty community-engaged scholarship can thus contribute to generating an understanding of processes, techniques, methodologies, infrastructures, and practices that mobilize university knowledge for the benefit of society, drawing from and generating new theoretical frameworks other than that of Burawoy (2009). It may well be that we lack knowledge about community engagement in Africa and elsewhere not because the practice is too complex; rather, the limitations lie in the concepts and constructs we use to apprehend the phenomenon. This article, therefore, contributes to the practice of community engagement by demonstrating a way to refine a theory of community engagement by testing its applicability in a dissimilar context.

Acknowledgments

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Project SASI: A Community Engagement Project to Increase Recruitment and Retention of Professionals Working With Students With Sensory Impairments in Rural and Remote Schools

Christopher S. Davis, Rona L. Pogrund, and Nora Griffin-Shirley

Abstract

Project SASI (Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments) tested the use of community engagement strategies to increase recruitment of professionals working with students with sensory impairments in rural and remote communities to address personnel shortages in these areas. The project was based on the intersection of high-impact strategies for recruitment of teachers in rural regions and a model of engaged scholarship for creating reciprocal learning relationships between faculty and communities. The project incorporated community engagement strategies before and during coursework, as well as a postfunding sustainability plan. Findings suggest overall satisfaction with the project and that professionals prepared with these connections to the community intended to remain in the region for many years. Further research is necessary to understand how individual components of engagement, as well as long-standing relationships between communities and faculty members, contribute to continued recruitment and retention of professionals working with students with sensory impairments.

Keywords: rural scholarship, teacher recruitment, community engagement model, sensory impairments

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This article describes how a university personnel preparation program used community engagement to address recruitment and retention in rural and remote regions for sensory impairment professionals, including teachers of students with visual impairments, teachers of students with deafblindness, teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, and orientation and mobility specialists. This project focused on alleviating the shortage of professionals in rural and remote regions who work with students with sensory impairments who are otherwise unable to access appropriate services. Students without access to needed services from certified professionals in the area of sensory impairment are much less likely to meet learning outcomes, gradu-ate from school, continue through college, attain satisfactory employment, or achieve independence as adults.

The purposes of this article are to show how one project used community engagement to solve the problem of the lack of personnel to serve students with sensory impairments in rural areas and to offer that project as a model for others to consider. This article accomplishes that purpose by connecting theoretical work in the field of community engagement, primarily the engaged schol-arship model by Franz (2009), with activi-ties in a personnel preparation grant proj-ect. The article presents several early forms of empirical evidence: survey results with stakeholders, participants, and employers; data collected on results of grant activities;

and participant voices from community partners, program graduate students, and researchers. These project results support the idea that engagement practices hold strong prospects for increasing the number of personnel to serve students with sensory impairments in rural and remote regions.

Context of the Project

Project SASI: Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments was a program partnering Texas Tech University with six states: Arkansas, Idaho, Mississippi, Montana, Texas, and Wyoming. All of these states have large rural and remote regions where students with sensory impairments do not have access to highly trained and qualified professionals. The U.S. Census defines "rural" as geographic areas that are not urban (i.e., a population of 50,000 or more) or urban clusters (i.e., a population of at least 2.500 and less than 50,000; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Idaho, Montana, Texas, and Wyoming are classified as rural states due to their large amounts of land classified as rural. Additionally, the majority of the counties in Arkansas and Mississippi are considered rural by the U.S. Census Bureau. The term "remote" refers to a territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles from an urbanized area (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). Additionally, five of the states did not have any university programs that provided training to educators of students with sensory impairments in at least one of the four target areas of the project: teachers of students with visual impairments, teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, teachers of students with deafblindness, and orientation and mobility specialists. Even though Texas has these personnel preparation programs, it had a shortage of teachers in the area of deafblindness. Thus, the Virginia Sowell Center for Research and Education in Sensory Disabilities provided training to graduate students from these six states.

Community engagement entered the discussion by faculty from Texas Tech University and key personnel from the field of education of children with sensory impairments from the above-mentioned states as a sustainable means to recruit educators of students with sensory impairments. Key personnel from some of these rural states had previously been involved in personnel preparation grants with Texas Tech University.

A full theoretical model is developed later in this article, but initial reflections by Texas Tech University faculty and staff on the nature of the problem revealed that training graduate students from these rural and remote regions was likely to be successful for two reasons. First, after achieving improved education, the educators created a learning community of professionals serving children with sensory impairments. Second, future grant projects were written and funded to sustain the need for a continued supply of specially trained personnel to alleviate the lack of qualified professionals to serve children with sensory impairments in these rural and remote areas. To solve this problem, Project SASI integrated rural and remote stakeholders (i.e., state department of education personnel, schools for the blind and/or deaf personnel, university faculty and graduate students, parents of children with sensory impairments) as early in the process as possible. At a grant-development meeting, these stakeholders partnered with faculty at Texas Tech University to propose a community engagement–centered personnel preparation program. Educators who were already working as teachers in other areas from rural and remote regions were recruited, offered distance education to keep them in their local context, participated in a curriculum strongly based in local needs, and connected to professional networks and resources. Subsequently, the educators were employed in these rural and remote regions, where they provided sustainable and qualified services to students with sensory impairments.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framings

Project SASI was intended to increase the number of educators to work with students with sensory impairments in rural and remote settings through community engagement. By connecting graduate students with rural and remote communities, training them with the specific needs of those communities in mind, and building relationships throughout the training period, it was felt that the number of these specialized professionals in rural and remote regions could be greatly increased.

Special education teachers leave rural schools at high rates, but a deciding factor in their retention is the "rootedness to

the community" or "community sphere" (Bornfield et al., 1997, p. 36; Davis, 2002). However, little information has been shared on exactly how to develop this rootedness, and it was felt that community engagement between programs, graduate students, states, and rural communities was the key. If students from local communities in rural areas were recruited and then trained in a very specific area of special education (education of children with sensory disabilities), would this help relieve the personnel shortage? The phrase "rooted in the community" was an ideal match with community engagement strategies for Project SASI.

Engagement Model

This program's engagement strategy can be understood in three parts. In the first, the faculty's engagement was situated in what Ernest Boyer called the scholarship of integration, focusing on "connections across disciplines and the functions of research, teaching, and outreach" (Boyer, 1996; Franz, 2009, p. 32). The graduate students within the project engaged with their communities in a variety of manners that can be understood through Butin's (2003, 2005) "four lenses" approach. Finally, the relationships between all five partners in the model fulfilled Project SASI's sustainability objectives. This section introduces the engagement model and then explains the underlying theory behind the faculty part of engagement, the graduate student part of engagement, and then the sustainability plan.

Project SASI's Engagement Model. Project SASI created an engagement model that represents how the five major participants (faculty, graduate students, rural/remote communities, state collaborative partners, and professional networks) engaged at different times throughout the model. The functional parts of these relationships will be discussed later in the article (Figure 1 depicts the engagement model for Project SASI). In this section, the theoretical grounds for understanding the engagement will be explicitly introduced.

The multipurpose nature of engagement is integral to Project SASI. As in much engaged scholarship, there is both a pedagogical/andragogical opportunity for the graduate students and a reciprocal learning relationship between faculty and rural communities. But beyond both of those factors, Project SASI was also intended to build sustainable rela-

tionships that would last beyond the end of each student's program, the larger project, or even their career as faculty. Since rural and remote locations will always have students with sensory impairments, there will always be a need for appropriate instructors. Solving the problem of a shortage of qualified instructors for rural and remote students with sensory impairments means developing sustainable relationships not just with the immediate and current members of the project (faculty, graduate students, and community partners) but also the institutions those people represent (universities, teachers-in-training, and rural and remote communities in the participating states).

Faculty Engagement. It is difficult to find a model from research that speaks to engaging communities in personnel preparation programs, and one goal of this project was providing initial theoretical work in this area. To build a model that explained community engagement in the context of a personnel preparation program, the researchers began by describing the role of faculty engagement according to the "leverage points" that Franz (2009) suggests in the engaged scholarship model. Franz describes six leverage points: (1) discover knowledge, (2) develop knowledge, (3) disseminate knowledge, (4) change learning, (5) change behavior, and (6) change condition (see Figure 2).

Project SASI focused on three of these leverage points as areas of engaged scholarship: change learning, change behavior, and change condition. First, faculty wanted to change learning by integrating local needs and circumstances with professional standards and research-based practices. This change required inventing a pedagogy where graduate students became experts in collaboration and reflection alongside the explicit skills in their fields of study, using strategies like Bergan's collaborative consultation model (Bergan, 1977, 1995). Next, the goal was to change behavior by building a project that integrated community voices from the beginning and past the end of the project. This step meant engaging with communities in several areas that were traditionally the exclusive purview of university faculty. Finally, there was a desire to change conditions for two populations: students with sensory impairments in rural and remote communities and professionals working in those communities. The communities themselves needed sustainable
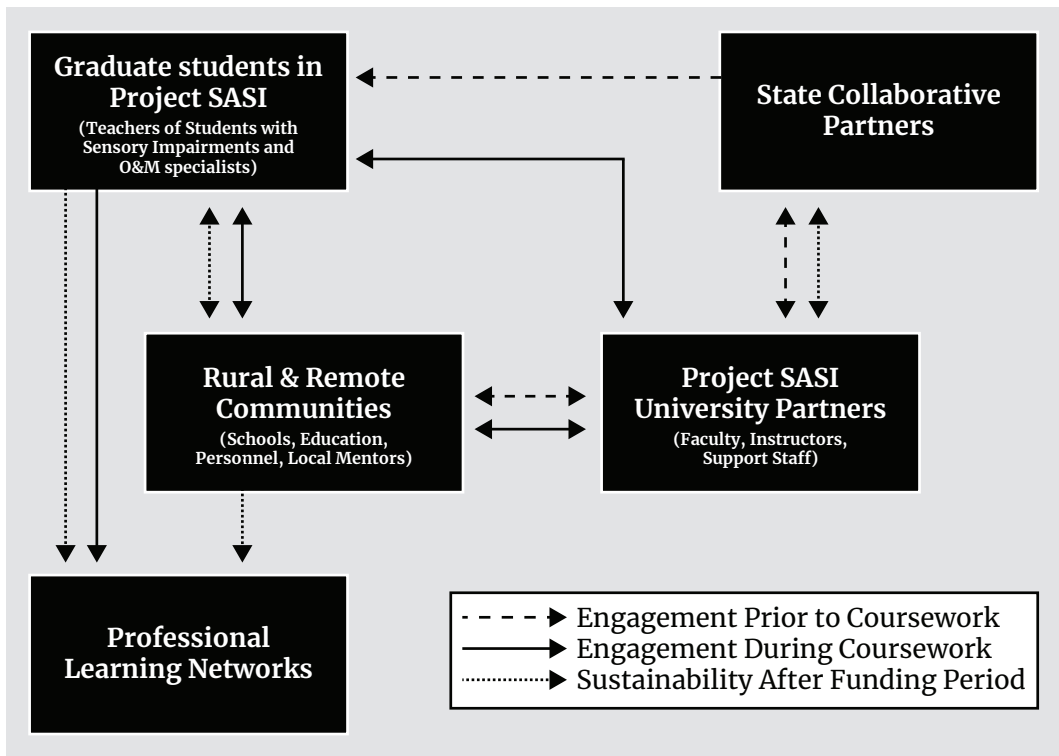
Figure 1. Community Engagement Model for Project SASI
Note. The figure depicts engagement relationships prior to and during coursework, as well as a sustainability plan for after funding. O&M = orientation and mobility.

solutions for their children with sensory impairments. The educators needed to feel integrated into their local communities and to develop rootedness in their professional learning networks with others working with children with sensory impairments (Bornfield et al., 1997; Davis, 2002).

Beyond these three leverage points, great value was found in Franz's definition of engaged scholarship as "focusing on the reciprocal relationship with a community that adds value to the community and the scholar's discipline" (2009, p. 35). For this project, the personnel shortage problem in rural and remote communities cannot be solved by universities alone. Engagement with local personnel was needed to recruit and support teacher candidates for this project. No amount of coursework can respond to the lack of personnel preparation programs that leads to a personnel shortage. Likewise, the rural and remote communities, even though they contain willing personnel, lack the resources and faculty to train educators to meet demands of children with sensory impairments since these children are a low incidence population compared to children of other disability areas.

With limited resources, it is not feasible for these rural and remote areas to maintain personnel preparation programs in each of these specialized areas. This reciprocal relationship was the core of Project SASI's mission as well as the driving force behind the creation of the project.

Graduate Student Engagement. The graduate students' learning can be understood through Butin's (2003, 2005) "four lenses" approach. The key to Butin's work is that it allows service–learning to be viewed through a "disentangling of the multiple and usually conflating goals" of the learning opportunity rather than as a "normative or . . . presumed vision of what service learning is/should be" (2005, p. 90). In this case, the graduate students' learning has multiple entangled goals: to become sustainable members of rural and remote communities, to better understand pedagogies for students with sensory impairments, and to engage professional networks that will serve their learning after the completion of the program, to name a few.

The key difference separating graduate students in this project from undergraduates involved in more common types of
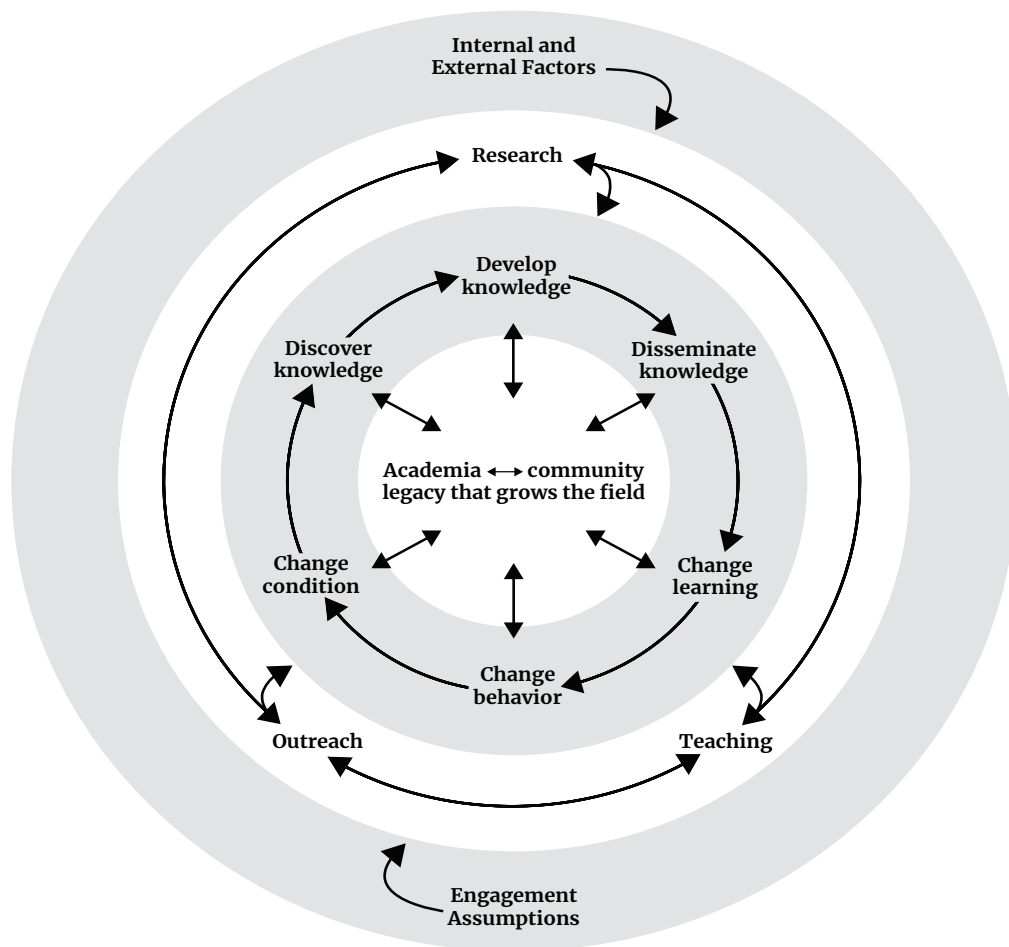
Figure 2: The Engaged Scholarship Model (Franz, 2009)
Note. The interior gray ring describes six leverage points where faculty members and communities can create engaged relationships.

service–learning, and this particular model of an engaged andragogy from more in–structor–driven service–learning pedago–gies, is that the graduate students are free to make meaning through the lens of their choice. For example, some students engage with rural and remote communities as a way to become better teachers of students from these communities. To Butin, that is the lens of a technical conceptualization of service–learning, and a perfectly acceptable way to approach community engagement activities. Likewise, some students frame their engagement with communities as a way of "lifting up" those communities and helping them accomplish goals, like caring for their citizens with sensory impairments, in ways that were not previously possible. This is what Butin would characterize as a cultural conceptualization of service–learn–ing, and it is just as valid a method as the technical approach.

Sustainability of the Project

A community project of this scale is not feasible for the simple purpose of provid–ing short-term solutions. Project SASI ex–plicitly recognized that the need for rural and remote students with sensory impair–ments to have trained, highly qualified instructors will be addressed beyond the end of the funding period. That is why the relationships between state partners, com–munities, and the university are important parts of the engagement model. Similarly, the graduate students in this program will need to address challenges throughout their careers while performing job functions in rural and remote locations. To facilitate

lifelong learning as well as serve students with the best possible knowledge, it was important that graduate students remain engaged after the end of their coursework. This engagement is also meant to combat attrition of trained professionals from rural and remote locations by providing them with ways to meet their professional development and peer relationship needs.

Description of the Project

This article discusses three ways Project SASI engaged communities in rural and remote regions. First, we discuss how Project SASI worked with community partners to form a strategy that became the basis for a federally funded grant. Then, we explain how the graduate students and communities connected with each other during the students' coursework and supplemental activities. Finally, we offer a discussion of how the sustainability strategy after the conclusion of grant funding focused on continued engagement between all members of the project, as well as relevant professional networks for the newly trained educators and communities being provided.

Project SASI can best be described according to the framework above, where the relationships before, during, and after coursework provided meaningful engagement between graduate students, communities, and the university. In this section, we provide a description of how the university and community partners met and engaged prior to coursework; how coursework during the project encouraged community engagement between the graduates, children with sensory impairments, and communities; and how plans for the postfunding period created sustainable connections between the university and community partners.

Engagement Prior to Coursework

Prior to the beginning of coursework for the first cohort of Project SASI students, several community engagement strategies helped shape the program. Since the core aspect of the recruitment strategy was to connect the graduate students to the regions they served throughout the program, it was considered advantageous to involve community partners from each potential participating state (e.g., state department of education personnel, state schools for the blind and/or deaf personnel, parent of a child with a sensory disability) directly in the grant-writing process from the beginning. Community partners (who later became identified as collaborative partners or CPs) were identified from each of the six collaborating states and were invited to participate in a grant development weekend. A Growing Graduate Programs internal initiative by the Texas Tech University Graduate School awarded to the academic partners included sponsorship of a 3-day collaborative retreat with the community partners from the six states, three university faculty, and one research assistant in winter 2011 to discuss the project initiatives, work on the grant objectives, and provide insight into the needs of each state. This funding allowed the project to fly in all of the community partners to the retreat, where the skeleton of the project was fleshed out for the first time. More importantly, this collaborative activity was the beginning of the consistent engagement that continued throughout the project.

Prior to the weekend retreat, supporting data was collected through needs assessments with all participating state community partners. Each state's needs were unique to its own particular demographics and geography. Data was collected on (1) current personnel preparation programs offered in each state, (2) current personnel in each sensory impairment area in each state, (3) numbers of students in each sensory impairment category served by each state, (4) expected personnel needs for students with sensory impairments in the next 3 years, and (5) expected personnel needs for those students who also have autism in the next 3 years.

The grant-writing retreat consisted of large-group and small-group activities between the academic partners and the community state partners. There was joint effort to establish each state's needs and then to involve the community state partners in the development of drafts of the different grant sections. The community state partners' input was included in the final grant proposal submission, particularly in the area of needs assessment. Their input was also included in grant sections addressing how they would assist with recruitment of graduate students (teachers), how to develop mentoring programs within each state, and how to evaluate the effects of training the graduate students on the outcomes for children with sensory impairments that they teach. The community state partners also contributed to discussions

about resources and budget.

The resultant framework included a grant where the community state partners that were designated as collaborative partners (CPs) in each state identified and recruited applicants through their state networks and target areas in the state where the needs were highest for these specialized personnel so that graduate students would be hired and remain in their local areas upon completion of their program. Then, local mentors (teachers of students with visual impairment, teachers of students with deaf-blindness, teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, orientation and mobility specialists) were identified to support graduate students in their internship and at least 1 year beyond the end of their program, to ensure ongoing connection to their local community. Knowing that there was support from the local or nearby community was an important way to keep the graduate students engaged after completion of the program as they started their new careers.

Project SASI had four stated objectives:

1. Identify, recruit, and train professionals from rural, remote, and high-need locations to increase the capacity to serve students with sensory impairments.

2. Provide specialized training in effective strategies for working with students with sensory impairments and autism spectrum disorder.

3. Provide a high-quality personnel preparation program to selected scholars via a hybrid program that utilizes distance education, face-to-face instruction, and local support.

4. Establish and maintain ongoing collaboration between Texas Tech University and each participating state to meet the current and future personnel needs for students with sensory impairments and autism.

As soon as the university partners received notice of grant funding, the state CPs were notified of the grant award and began the graduate student recruitment process in their respective states. In turn, CPs connected to state departments of education began their own distribution of information about the project. Recruitment letters, information about Project SASI, and applications were distributed throughout their state networks, and Project SASI soon received 58

applications for the two cohorts. The project directors who are faculty members at Texas Tech University independently evaluated the applications using a rubric they developed (see Figure 3) and then discussed those evaluations with each state's CP to select a final first cohort of 20 graduate students and a second cohort of 23 graduate students that would be best equipped to meet the needs of students with sensory impairments in rural and remote areas.

Community Engagement During Coursework

Project SASI graduate students engaged with rural and remote communities primarily during coursework. Since many of these graduate students already held ties to the region of need, they were familiar with much of the tacit knowledge required to live and thrive in that region. This familiarity allowed a focus on connecting them to resources specific to their field of study and the idea of working as a professional in that field while remaining rooted to the community. Most of them were also already expert teachers in some discipline, so coursework built on their prior pedagogical training. This platform allowed considerable portions of coursework to focus on building collaboration skills and connections. Beyond the graduate students themselves, ongoing engagement efforts took place between states, communities, and university partners. On multiple occasions this group was able to collectively address problems with the project or specific students in unique ways, and one of them will be detailed in the section below. A subcommittee of the Project Advisory Board rated the course syllabi in all four programs as evidence based at 100% using a rubric designed by the university faculty members.

Graduate Student/Community Engagement. Programs at Texas Tech University's College of Education feature trademark outcomes. A trademark outcome is a focus of the program that distinguishes its graduates from those of other programs. The trademark outcome for all graduate students in Project SASI programs was assessment of assistive technology for children with sensory disabilities and then the development and implementation of an instructional program in its use through collaborative consultation. The pedagogical steps to achieve this outcome required Project SASI graduate students to interact with their communities

SASI Application Rating Rubric

Name of applicant _____

City & state _____

Program _____

Collaborative Partner rating _____

Meets general education "highly qualified" status		Yes	No	
Complete application		Yes	No	
Letter of reference rating	Based on:	1	2	3
Letter of reference rating	Based on:	1	2	3
Letter of reference rating	Based on:	1	2	3
Essay rating	Based on:	1	2	3
Vita rating	Based on:	1	2	3
Overall rating	Based on:	Highly recommend	Recommend	Don't recommend

Figure 3: Project SASI Application Rating Rubric

through three phases of coursework. All of the four Project SASI personnel preparation programs used the model of a trademark outcome and three phases. This model was developed by the College of Education's dean and faculty members.

To illustrate this model, an example is given using the three phases of the Orientation and Mobility Program, one of the four sensory impairment programs included in Project SASI, that build toward the trade-mark outcome. In Phase 1, students used Bergan's (1977, 1995) collaborative consul-tation model to develop an in-service train-ing. At this point in coursework, Bergan's model was studied as a foundational way to integrate knowledge from other sources; in essence, to build a learning network. The in-service training module assignment began to acclimate participants to a role they were very likely to play in rural and remote communities: teacher and trainer of other teachers for issues surrounding sensory impairments.

Phase 2 of the program built upon the basic knowledge of collaboration and asked graduate students to begin to relate that to assistive technology decisions. Many indi-

vidual assignments focused around both of these ideas, but the important, final product of this phase was a completed University of Kentucky assistive technology evaluation. This process required graduate students to connect to local resources, schedule and plan a meeting of a team of professionals working with a child with a sensory impairment, conduct a needs assessment regarding the technology needs of this child, and then implement an assistive technology plan based on a recommendation of the team of professionals who worked with this student with a sensory impairment.

The final phase of the program occurred while graduate students were involved in their internships. Texas Tech University partnered with Granite State College to utilize their reflective analysis of student work (RASW) process. This process provided a structured way for orientation and mobility graduate students to reflect on how their lessons impacted student outcomes. The graduate students in the program used the process to assess and implement assistive technology interventions for a child with visual impairment. One important component of the RASW process was engaging with other professional resources. Project SASI graduate students were expected to take this collaboration to the next level and engage with others (e.g., other orientation and mobility specialists, general and special education teachers, teachers of students with visual impairments, therapists) in their professional learning communities to find solutions that improved student outcomes.

In addition to the assignments situated in the three phases, each program had multiple other areas where graduate students were simply asked to connect with their local community. For example, one course in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program asked graduate students to read and sign a book to a group of local students at a local bookstore or library. These experiences were usually accompanied by a reflection assignment, often posted to a discussion board that other graduate students in the courses could view. Thus, if the SASI graduate students encountered challenges or noticed a particularly excellent result during one of these outreach activities, they could share that experience with their fellow graduate students and receive thoughts or input. Other ways this peer network was built are described in the Sustainability Strategies section.

University/Community Engagement. During coursework, there were two primary methods of communication between communities, university partners, and CPs. The first was a recurring meeting primarily between the university partners and CPs. The second was the use of a mentor program, which is a recommended research–based strategy for teacher retention (Billingsley et al., 2009; Boe et al., 2008; Pogrund & Cowan, 2013). Communication with the mentors was sometimes challenging (lack of timely response from mentors, stress of having a mentor, etc.), but communication at the recurring meetings provided important opportunities to intervene in unique ways for graduate students and their students with sensory impairments.

Recurring Partners Meeting. The partners' meetings brought together CPs and university partners to discuss ongoing concerns and successes. A significant part of the meetings was brainstorming sessions, where state partners focused on a particular problem and how it might be resolved in line with that state's own rules and regulations. In several cases, the states were able to help each other in ways that the university partners could not. For example, a graduate student from one state was denied a position because that state did not have the state exams required for certification in the graduate student's area of study. The CPs were able to discuss this situation, and another state offered to allow the student to sit for a state examination in its state and then negotiate a reciprocity arrangement. This agreement led to the state in question now having a permanent solution to certification, as well as a solution for this particular graduate student.

Mentor Program. The mentor program was one area of Project SASI that showed several mixed results. Mentors were local experienced teachers of students with visual impairments, teachers of students with deafblindness, orientation and mobility specialists, teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, and, in some cases, the CPs. The use of mentors is well supported in the literature as a way to improve teacher retention (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) and to build a professional learning network. Thus, it was theoretically sound to include a mentor component in the project. Furthermore, it was hoped that local mentors would be able to provide tacit knowledge about working in a region to supple-

ment graduate students' own knowledge. In most cases, this support was precisely what happened, and the mentor program was a huge success. In other cases, however, mentors were unable to stay with graduate students for long enough to develop a significant relationship. In some of these cases, the mentor relationship created stress for the graduate students and CPs and caused difficulties for the program, usually related to lack of responsiveness on the part of one of the partners in the mentor relationship.

The mentors in Project SASI completed an online training module and participated in a webinar and a teleconference led by mentor-training experts. The mentors were provided a mentoring framework and the opportunity to ask questions at the training experiences. Many of the mentors were directly recruited from high-need regions, and several state-level CPs also participated as mentors. Efforts were made, where possible, to match graduate students to the mentors best suited to both their area of study and local region, but due to the relative scarcity of experienced trained professionals that inspired Project SASI, this ideal mentorship was not always possible. In a few cases, graduate students did not contact mentors or were unable to establish more than initial communications. In others, communication was robust, positive, and ongoing throughout the duration of the graduate student's participation in Project SASI.

Engagement After End of Funding Period

The intention of Project SASI was to continue to provide the "beneficial legacy" that sits at the center of Franz's (2009) model of engaged scholarship (p. 35). Though articles like this one are one way that the model suggests such a legacy can be left, the primary focus was on a change in conditions; that is, a change in the way professionals work with students with sensory impairments in rural and remote locations (Franz, 2009). To retain these newly trained professionals, it is necessary not only to build a connection between graduate students and their communities, but to connect those graduate students and communities to professional and peer networks. This way, the connections between these newly trained professionals and resources continue to grow as more individuals are trained to work with children with sensory disabilities. In addition to the plan for the graduate

students, a sustainability plan was created for the university partners and the states, which is briefly described below.

Graduate Students and Professional/Peer Networks. The Project SASI graduate students were tremendous resources to each other, and a desire to facilitate those connections as much as possible existed. This connection began by placing the graduate students in two cohorts and offering opportunities to interact with each other as time and distance allowed. An initial idea was to support an online forum exclusively for students, in addition to the normal in-class contacts. This support strategy received only lukewarm participation, but it was found that students had formed their own circles on several social media platforms (e.g., email, social media, the discussion section of their Blackboard courses). In fact, on an annual basis, only 70% of the graduate students rated the online support group as useful in building a community of learners. However, 80% of the graduate students did participate in the online support group a minimum of seven times per semester.

To assist with networking among the graduate students, two programs allocated funds for all of their graduate students to travel for an intensive weekend retreat that featured both workshop-style educational opportunities and a chance for students to display their own posters in a miniconference format. Although the majority of the coursework was provided via distance education, graduate students came together for face-to-face intensive weekends associated with some of their courses where they connected and bonded with others from their state and elsewhere. It was also found that live participation in videoconferencing led to connections between graduate students that lasted beyond the end of the program.

All graduate students shared one common course on children with multiple impairments, dealing specifically with cases where sensory impairments were comorbid with autism spectrum disorders. In this course, all graduate students were required to report a case study and comment extensively on the cases of others. This activity served to build a repository of at least 20 cases bound by similar rural settings, featuring students with autism, and being addressed by professionals at the same preparation level. This assignment not only facilitated better discussion than examples with well-established veteran practitioners,

but it also established connections between graduate students in different programs as they discussed the nuances of working in their regions.

Connecting graduate students to their professional learning networks improved over the course of the grant program. By the end of the program, several graduate students were funded for trips to national conferences. Most programs included a component that involved researching a professional learning network or joining a membership group, and all programs involved becoming familiar with the standards of practice from professional groups in the appropriate specialty area. As with most of the coursework, this familiarity was accomplished experientially, and graduate students were asked to apply these standards to cases on which they were working, and then reflect on how such standards shaped their practice.

University/Community Partners. Project SASI, on its own, could not accommodate all areas of need in the relevant states within the timeline of grant funding. Thus, it was very important that relationships be developed with the states to open the path for future graduate students, as well as maintain certified teacher presences in areas of need. Two primary sustainability agreements were put into place. The first was a series of memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between state departments of education and university partners, describing the ability of the university to continue to provide training and certification to students in that state and the guarantee that the state would continue to recognize those certifications. The second was another federally funded grant, allowing the project to continue (with a new title, Project CAT-SI: Collaboration and Assistive Technology for Students with Sensory Impairments: Addressing the Personnel Shortages in Rural, Remote and High-need Areas, and a focus on assistive technology) for four of the states. These actions were important accomplishments, but perhaps pale beside the connections with state and local leaders that formed the backbone of the project. Some of these leaders have now retired, but many are still with the second project and continue to identify potential graduate students, mentors, and areas of need.

Impact and Assessment

The presented data comes from several sources. First, qualitative data is available from personal reports of stakeholders involved in the processes above: the grant-writing team from the university, mentors, researchers, graduate students, and community partners. Second, documents were analyzed for information about project goals. Documents included end-of-year reports and a final overall project report on grant activities submitted to the funding agency, minutes from collaborative partner meetings, and mentor logs. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected in three surveys. One survey was sent to stakeholders (CPs, project advisory board members, etc.) partway through the project seeking formative data to use for project improvement. The second survey was administered to graduate students upon completion of their program and focused on satisfaction with their program and also addressed the intent to remain in the identified need area after certification. The third survey was sent to employers of program graduates.

These sources allowed triangulation of the data to evaluate this engagement model (see Table 1). This triangulation is important to offer complete data while avoiding confirmation bias in our results. The table included relates the data sources to the relevant pieces of the model.

Assessment of the Model

The model stressed five important connections: between university partners and CPs, between CPs and local community members (e.g., employers, mentors), between local community members and graduate students in Project SASI, between graduate students in Project SASI and university partners, and between graduate students in Project SASI and professional learning networks. This research was able to focus on three of these connections: university partners and collaborative partners, community partners and SASI graduate students, and SASI graduate students and university partners. Some data also exists on the connections between graduate students and professional learning networks. Similarly, more research is needed into the connections between CPs and local community members; there is anecdotal evidence that some of the most promising facets of the program happened when the connections between CPs and local community were high, but further data is needed to support this particular connection.

Table 1. Data Sources and Alignment With Community Engagement Model		
Data Source	**Participants**	**Aligned Area of Model**
Report on grant-writing workshop	Grant-writing team	Engagement between state and university partners prior to project beginning
Minutes and reports from collaborative partners and Project Advisory Board meetings	State partners, outside community stakeholders, university partners	Engagement between state and university partners and stakeholders during project
Mentor logs	Mentors, community partners, graduate students	Engagement between program graduate students and local community during project
Community-engaged assignments	University partners, graduate students	Engagement between program graduate students and local community during coursework
Survey 1: Stakeholder Survey	Stakeholders involved with the project	Formative evaluation based on stakeholder input during middle of project
Survey 2: Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey	SASI graduates from Cohort 1 and Cohort 2	Engagement between graduate students and community; engagement between graduate students and university partners intent to retain in field
Survey 3: Employers of Project SASI graduates	Employers of SASI graduates	Engagement between university partners and community

University Partners and Collaborative Partners. The collaboration between university partners and CPs was the most long-term relationship present in this model. The initial grant-writing activities, described in detail above, included state collaborative partners from the inception of the project, and those voices shaped the grant activities. The collaboration continued with the partner meetings, and these settings provided numerous adaptations that developed the program throughout the funding period. Each Project Advisory Board meeting (members were CPs, a parent of a child who was deafblind, and a school psychologist who specialized in children with autism) was followed by a meeting evaluation, and the overall feedback as to the meetings' effectiveness was positive, with one CP stating: "Having an agenda is definitely helpful, and the professors/grant coordinators really do stick to it. I appreciate all of our questions being answered, too, and the fact that they made sure all of the collaborative partners were able to talk."

The collaborative partners who responded to the Stakeholder Survey as a part of the formative evaluation process provided valuable feedback that reinforced that we were on the right track. For example, they said, "Excellent model of training that is definitely going to meet a significant need" and "Your documentation is the best I have seen from distance programs. The expectations of students were top notch, and therefore, well-rounded teachers are coming out of your program. Keep up the good work!" Finally, the collaboration has continued with MOUs of ongoing partnerships and a subsequent federal grant, based on the lessons learned and new need areas identified through the results of Project SASI. MOUs to sustain collaboration for 10 years beyond the grant period to meet personnel needs were developed with all state partners'

departments of education except for Texas and Mississippi. Texas had already provided grant funding for three of the personnel preparation programs through Region 17 Education Service Center and Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so no MOU was needed.

Community Partners and SASI Graduate Students. Data about the connection between SASI graduate students and the community partners comes from four sources: mentor logs, the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey, employer satisfaction surveys, and the community-engaged assignments. Of these sources, the mentor data was the most mixed. Some logs contained considerable detail of multiple visits and connections; others were sparse and indicated considerable communication problems. This data was mirrored in the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey; one student commented that "more vetting needs to be done for the [program] mentors" and another that they had trouble "know[ing] the requirements of [their] job . . . my mentor was not very helpful." On the other hand, one student had a "great mentor" that had "tons of experience in the field," and 68% of graduate students rated their mentor as having an "Excellent" level of expertise, the highest possible rating.

Of the 25 employers (of 38, a 65.8% response rate) that completed the Employer Satisfaction Survey, 96% stated the graduate was well prepared or sufficiently prepared for the first year of teaching in his or her new role. One employer commented, "TTU provides students with the knowledge to continue to develop skills in their area of focus. It is an excellent program!!" Another employer commented,

> We are thankful for the TTU program . . . and for the delivery of instruction that enables the participant to maintain a teaching job—with the mix of online classes and some on-site time at TTU. This program is extremely helpful for our needs in rural Idaho. Our teacher gained the skills and knowledge that she needs to serve our students.

The community-engaged assignments present much smaller pictures of engagement. In the deaf and hard of hearing curriculum, graduate students were nearly universally positive on a course assignment where they had to sign and read a book to a group of local students. In writings afterward, these students were often able to connect their learning to the needs of the broader community. Similar positive stories came from many internships: 79% of graduate students rated the quality of their internship as "Good" or "Excellent," and comments were supportive of the "very valuable . . . evaluation process used by intern supervisors" and the "strength [of] the . . . internship opportunity."

SASI Graduate Students and University Partners. The challenge for this connection was to go beyond the traditional role of faculty and student relationships; as graduate students struggled with problems, they needed to communicate them to the faculty, and then the faculty needed to address those issues through curriculum supplements, special attention, or collaboration efforts. Since much of this communication was informal, analysis of these connections is found on the data from the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey. This survey was taken by graduates of the program and thus gave responses from graduate students who completed all parts of the SASI experience. This timeframe allows graduate students to comment reflectively on their experience as a whole. Thirty-seven of the 38 graduate students completed the survey (97.49% return rate). For the item "Your overall rating of your graduate education experience at TTU," 88% responded that the program overall was excellent or good. For the item "What is your overall evaluation of how well the TTU personnel preparation program prepared you?" 95% responded they were well prepared or sufficiently prepared by the program for the first year of teaching in their new role.

Descriptive statistics from quantitative data suggest that SASI was very successful in meeting the educational needs of graduate students; 86% of graduate students rated the "Preparation for working with students with sensory impairments and autism" as "Good" or "Excellent" on a 5-point Likert-type scale, 91% of graduate students rated the "Preparation for working with students in your sensory impairment program" as "Good" or "Excellent," and 79% rated their preparation in instructional strategies for students with autism and sensory impairments as "Good" or "Excellent." Additional comments from graduate students indicated that their relationship with their professors contributed significantly to this result. One

graduate student commented, "The professors and support staff are easy to get hold of with questions and respond quickly." Another said, "The professors were very knowledgeable and available to answer questions and support learning through additional material or experiences."

Although graduate students were building feelings of connection to their local community, some felt disconnected from the community at the university. Several students commented on a desire for "more face-to-face" activities, while also acknowledging the limitations of the hybrid format. For example, one student, in response to a survey item about the weaknesses of the program, commented that she "enjoys face-to-face classes more than online . . . the same things [that were weaknesses, the online delivery] were what really made it possible for me to complete this program."

Next Steps and Future Research

The project deliberately set out to employ a robust framework for community engagement, integrating many separate aspects of engagement. Although this strategy was effective, it made it difficult to isolate individual engagement strategies. However, Project SASI did complete 5 years of the project and used carryover funds to continue during Year 6 with a no-cost extension. The project was completed in September 2017. Nineteen of the 20 graduate students of Cohort 1 completed their programs. One student dropped during Year 1. Of the 23 Cohort 2 graduate students, 21 completed their coursework. Two students dropped after taking some coursework. The SASI graduate students represented all six participating states and were enrolled in all four program areas of sensory impairments included in Project SASI. Forty graduate students successfully completed the Texas Tech Graduate Certificate in Sensory Impairments and Autism.

During Year 6, Cohort 1 and 2 former students were offered the opportunity to complete their master of education degree and/or work toward completion of the TTU Graduate Certificate in Deafblindness. Sixteen former graduate students took advantage of this offer; 14 students enrolled in the MEd program; five students were in the TTU Graduate Certificate in Deafblindness Program; and three enrolled in both programs. One student enrolled in the Orientation and Mobility Program. Of the Year 6 graduate students, four completed the TTU Graduate Certificate in Deafblindness; 11 completed the MEd program; two completed both programs. One student completed the Orientation and Mobility Program.

Further research on the individual strategies, such as incorporating community partners in the grant-development process, is needed to better understand the connections between community engagement and meeting personnel shortage needs in rural areas. Additionally, more research is needed on the sustainability aspects of the program. In particular, since many of the connections were built between graduate students in the program, program faculty, and community leaders, additional research is needed to study how connections are sustained when key individuals are no longer directly connected to the program.

Upon completion of the Texas Tech University Graduate School Certificate in Sensory Impairments and Autism, 37 (92.5%) of the newly trained professionals served 25% more students with sensory impairments and autism in their states. By the end of Year 5 of the grant, 45% of the graduates maintained employment in the area of their training for at least 3 years (data is still being collected regarding this performance measure). Since the graduates are employed in their area of specialization and in a previously identified area of need, the primary purpose of Project SASI has been achieved. One area that could be improved is the connection between some SASI graduate students and the state systems where they live. On the satisfaction survey, one graduate commented that "[this state's] Department of Education was very confusing, [I and] others have waited a long time for their certification through the state." Another graduate noticed the very real problem with licensure: "In [my state], the graduate certificate is not recognized, and we are having to take the [licensure test from a different state] to get the [State Teaching Standards Board] to accept [our] certificates."

Conclusion

Community engagement as a way to increase personnel in an area of personnel shortage to serve students with sensory impairments is an idea well worth explor-

ing, especially in rural and remote areas. As this model displays, the core of a successful engagement strategy is threefold: engaging community partners from the very beginning of a program or project, continuing to build connections between multiple stakeholders throughout the project, and having a sustainability plan in place at the end of the project. Further research is needed on which components of the engagement strategy are of greatest impact in alleviating personnel shortages, as well as how sustainability plans persist through changes in personnel.

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Laying a Foundation for the Fight Against Poverty: Developing a Locally Relevant Poverty Measure with Community-Based Research

Jenny Gnagey

Abstract

As community-based research (CBR) is gaining recognition as a high impact practice at colleges and universities across the country, it is increasingly important to develop a repertoire of best practices. This article describes a CBR project to estimate the incomes required for various families in a local community to satisfy their basic needs without relying on government assistance. Strengths and shortcomings of the project are evaluated based on two standards of best practice in CBR, one that focuses primarily on process and one that focuses primarily on results. The article concludes with next steps and several lessons learned that are broadly applicable to the field of CBR. Special attention is given to lessons that can help align and unite best practices for process and results.

Keywords: community-based research, CBR, poverty

Community-based research (CBR) is gaining recognition as a high impact practice at colleges and universities across the country (Kuh, 2008; Strand et al., 2003; Weinberg, 2003). CBR provides a unique opportunity to unite the three traditional academic missions of teaching, scholarship, and service, as well as develop students' skills for both critical thinking and active citizenship. Although CBR shares many features and benefits with traditional charity-oriented service-learning, it distinguishes itself by putting students, faculty, and community partners in the role of problem solver. It not only raises awareness of social issues but forces partnerships to critically consider and address them. In this way, CBR provides a powerful tool, effecting social change while also teaching the steps in the process of social change, a key ingredient for active citizenship (Strand et al., 2003).

This article is a case study of a CBR project undertaken by the nonprofit organization Cottages of Hope (COH) and an upper level labor economics class at Weber State University, both located in Ogden, Utah. COH provides financial literacy and workforce development programs to help families achieve greater levels of financial stability. Students used a variety of data sources to develop a locally relevant poverty measure: the Ogden Independent Living Standard. COH now uses this measure for benchmarking and goal setting with its clients, as well as for grant reporting and application purposes.

As discussed in Puma et al. (2009), the "detailed documentation and dissemination" of CBR case studies helps advance both the theory and practice of CBR. By providing such documentation as well as reflecting on the successes and shortcomings of the project and the connection between process and results, this case study contributes to the literature on best practice in CBR. The article is organized as follows: I first discuss the development of the partnership. Next is a description of the CBR project and its primary results. This is followed by a section

that identifies strengths and shortcomings, then a summary of lessons learned and next steps, as well as a discussion of implications for the field of CBR in general. The Conclusion summarizes progress and goals.

Partnership Development

In 2015, Ogden, Utah, was nationally recognized for having the lowest income inequality of any metropolitan statistical area in the United States (Goodman, 2015). However, this finding does not reflect a lack of poverty. In 2016, 73.9% of students in Ogden School District qualified for free or reduced-price lunch, the highest rate among all school districts in Utah (Utah State Board of Education, 2016). Cottages of Hope, an Ogden nonprofit, takes a unique approach to fighting poverty. Since its establishment in 2008, it has offered free financial literacy and job training programs to help families achieve greater levels of financial stability and break the cycle of poverty.

COH has had a close relationship with Weber State University for a number of years. Several faculty and administrators have held seats on its board, and COH has participated in class projects from time to time. I met the executive directors of COH in fall 2014. My experience working with a youth financial literacy program as an AmeriCorps volunteer provided common ground. The introductory meeting revealed many shared interests and objectives, and we decided to keep in touch.

I reached out to COH again in spring 2015. This meeting led to a deeper discussion of COH's mission and programs and planted the seed of the Ogden Independent Living Standard. Earlier the previous year, COH had begun to implement the evidence-based SparkPoint model of service delivery (https://uwba.org/sparkpoint/) used by multiple nonprofit organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. SparkPoint Centers focus on helping families with four main objectives:

1. Achieving a livable wage

2. Decreasing debt-to-income ratio below 40%

3. Obtaining a 650+ credit score

4. Reaching 3 to 6 months of personal savings

The last three objectives are straightforward calculations that can easily be derived for each household. However, determining the livable wage objective is a little more difficult. A livable wage implies that a household has enough income to pay for basic needs without assistance from outside resources (e.g., government, extended family). The amount required depends on family size and composition, local cost of living, and how one defines basic needs.

Existing poverty scales do not necessarily measure a livable wage. For example, federal poverty guidelines are based on the cost and average expenditure share of food from 1965. These guidelines do not vary by geographic region within the lower 48 states. Nevertheless, the concept of a livable wage is not new. Two well-known academic organizations have pioneered livable wage measures.

First, Diana Pearce at University of Washington developed the Self-Sufficiency Standard (SSS; http://selfsufficiencystandard.org) in 1996. Second, Amy K. Glasmeier at Massachusetts Institute of Technology developed her Living Wage Calculator (http://livingwage.mit.edu/pages/about) in 2004. Both standards estimate basic needs budgets that include housing, child care, food, transportation, healthcare, and miscellaneous expenses, as well as payroll taxes, federal and state income taxes, and selected credits (Nadeau, 2017; Pearce, 2015).

Over the years, the SSS has been calculated for all counties in 39 states with irregular updates on a state-by-state basis. The Living Wage Calculator estimates budgets for all counties in all 50 states with regular biannual updates. These standards differ to various extents based on the range of family types, assumptions about working parents and sources of health insurance, data sources used, and other small differences (Nadeau, 2017; Pearce, 2015).

The most recent version of Pearce's SSS for all counties in Utah is from 2001 (Pearce, 2001). At the time of my meeting with COH in 2015, the MIT Living Wage Calculator provided estimates for all Utah counties as recently as 2013. However, both existing measures provided estimates based on average cost of living at the county level. Although this is a great improvement over the federal poverty guidelines, the cost of living in Ogden, specifically housing costs, tends to be significantly lower than in sur-

rounding Weber County. This differential reflects a concentration of poverty within Ogden City and higher incomes in surrounding Weber County suburbs. In 2015, median annual household income was $56,000 in Weber County but only $41,000 in Ogden City (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Additionally, neither existing standard included minimal savings or entertainment budgets. (Newer versions of the SSS include emergency savings in the budget, but the budget estimates for Utah counties from 2001 did not; see Pearce, 2015.) Helping their clients develop a saving habit is a central goal for COH. The executive directors also remarked that their clients spend money on entertainment (particularly eating out) regardless of their income, and they felt any realistic and practical standard should have a minimal entertainment budget.

Due to greater familiarity with the SSS methodology, COH had been using the 2001 SSS for Weber County, adjusted for inflation with the Consumer Price Index, as the livable wage benchmark for its implementation of the SparkPoint model. However, COH ideally wanted a livable wage measure that better fit its unique geography, clientele, and program goals. With such a measure, it could help clients set more meaningful goals as well as have a better yardstick with which to evaluate its program.

Understanding and measuring poverty are important concepts in labor economics, and this seemed like an opportunity for a mutually beneficial CBR project involving a labor economics class and COH. I applied to our university's Center for Community Engaged Learning and got a labor economics course designated as a community-engaged learning (CEL) class. The newly designated CEL class was scheduled for spring semester 2016.

Our CBR Project

The project was initiated in an upper level labor economics class with 37 students during spring semester 2016. The students were predominantly, but not exclusively, economics majors. Most of the students were unaware of the meaning of the CEL designation at the time of registration. Although the class covered a standard labor economics curriculum over the course of the semester, we started by studying how economists measure poverty. This somewhat unusual starting point was conducive to the goals of our CEL project.

After studying the origins and drawbacks of the federal poverty line, I introduced my students to Pearce's work and her concept of a self-sufficiency standard. At the end of this introduction to poverty measurement, the executive directors of COH came to my class and gave a presentation on their idea of calculating a similar measure tailored specifically to the city of Ogden and the needs of their clientele.

After the kickoff presentation by COH, students were divided into nine groups of four to five. Following Pearce's methodology, specifically that used in her most recent report for the counties in Colorado (2015), each group was assigned one of the following budget categories:

- Housing
- Child care
- Food
- Transportation—car insurance
- Transportation—car use and maintenance
- Healthcare—insurance (including employer-sponsored insurance and insurance available through the government's healthcare marketplace, https://www.healthcare.gov)
- Healthcare—out-of-pocket costs
- Federal payroll taxes and state income taxes
- Federal income taxes

Miscellaneous expenses, entertainment, and savings were initially left out because we intended to estimate them as various percentages of total expenses.

The student groups were assigned to estimate the cost of their budget categories for 74 different family types that varied by the number of adults and children as well as the ages of the children. They were encouraged to use Pearce's (2015) report on Colorado as a starting point, but to tailor measures and data sources as much as possible to the locale of Ogden City. Students were required to submit a midterm report demonstrating the identification of appropriate local data sources. The midterm report was accompanied by a reflection on what they had learned so far.

Shortly after the midterm project report, I took my class on a field trip to the COH offices in downtown Ogden. None of them had been there before. We decided to take the city bus because I had asked my transportation group to also investigate the cost of public transportation, and a majority of the class had no experience with Ogden's public transportation system. Upon arrival at the COH offices, the executive directors gave my students a tour of their building and an overview of all the services they provide (financial literacy classes, help with résumé writing and job search, tax assistance, referral to local workforce development classes, and the beginning of their SparkPoint program). At the end of the field trip, students were encouraged to ask the COH directors about questions that had arisen in completing their midterm reports. We ended up having a discussion about the definition of "basic needs" and what that meant to the COH directors and their clients. Ultimately, they were looking for a budget that was frugal but also practical (included entertainment) and useful (included savings). They were looking not for a theoretical benchmark but for something that would actually be usable.

In addition to taking some small steps to advance our CEL project, I believe the field trip served several other purposes. Perhaps most important, it served to further develop the partnership between COH and the class, including me. It provided a venue for COH to give input on the research process and findings. It gave my students local knowledge so they could better understand resources available in the Ogden community, including those available at COH. It also provided an introduction to the public transportation system.

At the end of the semester, each student group submitted a final written report documenting data sources, methodology, and, of course, the estimated expenses for their budget category for all 74 family types. Each student also completed a final written reflection. In addition, the COH directors came to our campus for two full class periods in which each group gave oral presentations of their findings to COH and the class.

The final reports and oral presentations were the end products produced by the class. My original thought was to make a few simple estimates for miscellaneous expenses, entertainment, and savings myself, add those to the budget items already estimated, organize the separate reports into chapters, and deliver this as a final report to COH. However, midsemester, I had also applied for a grant from our campus Center for Community Engaged Learning to hire two students to help put these finishing touches on the report and integrate the separate group reports into a professional document. I received a grant and was able to hire two students from my class. They worked 10 hours per week over the summer, adding to, revising, and in some cases recalculating the original reports in order to produce a polished finished product.

Results

Our report, *The Ogden Independent Living Standard* (Gnagey et al., 2016), was delivered to COH in August 2016. An example of the budgets produced by our standard can be found in Table 1. The full report can be accessed on the COH website (http://www.cottagesofhope.org/the-ogden-independent-living-standard/).

Our report shows that the incomes Ogden families must earn in order to satisfy their basic needs are significantly higher than the corresponding federal poverty guidelines for their family sizes. For example, our study indicates that a single adult living alone would need an annual income of $21,999 to cover basic expenses, which is 185% of the 2016 federal poverty guidelines for a single individual. A family of four with two adults, one preschooler, and one school-age child would need an annual income of $51,993, which is 214% of the 2016 federal poverty guidelines for a family of four (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). These results underscore the shortcomings of the federal poverty guidelines and highlight the need for a more meaningful measure of income adequacy.

In a recent communication, COH (Jeremy Botelho, personal communication, December 5, 2016) said they began using the Ogden Independent Living Standard for goal setting and benchmarking with all of their new clients starting in October 2016. Currently COH is working on retroactively applying it to existing clients. They plan to use it as a goal-setting and benchmarking tool for internal evaluation as well as for demonstrating progress to external parties, including funders. This application of the Ogden Independent Living Standard has allowed COH to fully implement the

Table 1. Example Annual Family Budgets from the Ogden Independent Living Standard								
	One Adult		One Adult, One Preschooler		One Adult, One Preschooler, One Schoolager		Two Adults, One Preschooler, One Schoolager	
Monthly Costs	Costs	% of total Costs	Costs	% of total Costs	Costs	% of total Costs	Costs	% of total Costs
Housing	$7,104	39.1%	$9,096	30.7%	$9,096	23.4%	$9,096	19.5%
Childcare	$0	0.0%	$6,105	20.6%	$11,549	29.7%	$11,549	24.7%
Food	$3,028	16.7%	$4,425	14.9%	$6,660	17.1%	$8,867	19.0%
Car Insurance	$466	2.6%	$466	1.6%	$466	1.2%	$931	2.0%
Car Maintenance	$3,290	18.1%	$3,290	11.1%	$3,290	8.5%	$6,579	14.1%
Health Insurance	$1,406	7.7%	$2,592	8.8%	$3,412	8.8%	$3,412	7.3%
Out of Pocket Costs	$108	0.6%	$139	0.5%	$232	0.6%	$340	0.7%
Entertainment	$1,139	6.3%	$1,496	5.1%	$1,650	4.2%	$2,379	5.1%
Miscellaneous	$1,614	8.9%	$1,991	6.7%	$2,541	6.5%	$3,516	7.5%
Total Expenses	$18,155		$29,600		$38,896		$46,669	
Savings	$220		$317		$431		$520	
Federal and State Credits and Total Taxes								
Taxes Before Credits	$3,656		$5,517		$8,078		$9,164	
Earned Income Tax Credit	($0)		($1,192)		($280)		($0)	
Child and Additional Child Tax Credit	($0)		($1,000)		($2,000)		($2,000)	
Child Care Tax Credit	($0)		($780)		($1,200)		($1,200)	
Utah Tax Credit	($471)		($772)		($804)		($1,159)	
Total Taxes After Credits	$3,185		$1,773		$3,794		$4,805	
Independent Living Wage								
Hourly*	$10.58		$15.23		$20.73		$25.00**	
Monthly***	$1,833.25		$2,640.67		$3,593.42		$4,332.75	
Annual	$21,999		$31,688		$43,121		$51,993	

* Hourly wage is annual wage divided by 2080, or 40 hours a week.
** Two adult households can reduce hours worked or hourly wage by splitting work between both adults.
*** Monthly wage is annual wage divided by 12.
Note: percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Adapted from The Ogden Independent Living Standard, by J. Gnagey, D. Brinkerhoff, and M. Rodgers, 2016, Weber State University (http://www.cottagesofhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/The-Ogden-Independent-Living-Standard-Official.pdf), p. 11.

SparkPoint model of service delivery.

In spring semester 2017, a group of students in an upper level computer science class developed an online application for the Ogden Independent Living Standard. Users can enter the number and ages of their family members, and the app returns the independent living standard budget specific to their family type. The app also includes several customization tools such as choosing between employer-sponsored or government marketplace health insurance and choosing between car ownership or use of public transportation. The app can be accessed at http://cottagesofhope.org/weberstate/ontrack/form/index.html.

This application provides a user-friendly platform for disseminating the results of our CBR project not only to COH clients, but also to the broader Ogden community. Such dissemination is important for raising awareness of poverty throughout Ogden and also for helping the local community understand the value and output of campus-community partnerships. It has proved valuable for building trust and buy-in with the local community.

Strengths and Shortcomings

The following subsections discuss some of the strengths and shortcomings of this project. In order to structure this discussion, strengths and shortcomings are organized into five categories based on important aspects of CBR identified in the literature. The first four categories correspond to the four "critical areas" of CBR discussed in Strand et al. (2003): partnership development, research design and process, teaching and learning, and institutionalization of CBR in the campus community. These categories tend to highlight the CBR process. The fifth category is for the results of the project. Here I align my evaluation with the framework developed in Beckman et al. (2011). They use the term "output" to describe the direct result of a project, in this case the research report. "Outcome" is used to refer to medium-term results such as changes in policy or practice at partnering organizations. Finally, "impact" is defined as an effect on community well-being that results from the accumulation of outcomes, such as greater financial stability. These different types of results can be thought of on a time continuum with outputs as the shortest term elements and impacts as the long-term goals. Ideally, individual projects' outputs and outcomes should be designed to build toward long-term impact.

Strengths. This project had strengths that produced several positive results. The strengths are summarized in Table 2. Each strength is discussed below in greater detail.

In the critical area of partnership development, Strand et al. (2003) listed 10 principles for best practice. Although the partnership in this project exhibited a number of these 10 principles, I believe its greatest strength was the way the partnership was nurtured during the course of the project, particularly the class field trip to the COH offices. Although this trip was not intended to directly advance the completion of the Ogden Independent Living Standard, it went a long way toward building two well-recognized partnership features, understand-

Table 2. Strengths of This CBR Project

Category	Strength
Partnership development	Class field trip nurtured partnership.
Research design & process	Project addresses a community-identified need. Soliciting community partner and student input contributes to meaningful collaboration.
Teaching and learning	Soliciting student input encourages critical analysis and empowerment.
Institutionalization	Project report shared with campus-based Center for Community Engaged Learning. Project report is used by the community partner (output produced outcome).
Results	Poverty standard serves as a baseline measure for future impact evaluation.

ing and mutual respect, between my labor economics class and COH (CCPH Board of Directors, 2013; Fletcher et al., 2016; Strand et al., 2003; Torres, 2000). Additionally, due to the discussion about the meaning of basic needs that surfaced during the trip, our outing indirectly benefited the project itself.

Second, this project had several strengths in the area of research design and process. The CBR literature tends to encourage the involvement of all project stakeholders in decisions at every stage of the research process (CCPH Board of Directors, 2013; Enos & Morton, 2003; Puma et al., 2009; Strand et al., 2003; Torres, 2000). Such inclusive collaboration shows respect for the views and ideas of all stakeholders and helps produce a useful product. Although recognizing such inclusive involvement may be unrealistic, Strand et al. (2003) advised seeking stakeholder input at all stages to the extent possible but particularly in the origination of the research question and decisions about how the results will be used. Thus, our project originated from a community-identified need, and the use of the results was driven by COH. However, our project also involved both students and COH in other important decisions. Diana Pearce's work with her SSS and the MIT Living Wage Calculator were offered as examples, but both student and COH input were solicited regarding what expenses should be included in the Ogden standard. The goals for the Ogden Independent Living Standard differed slightly from those of both the SSS and the Living Wage Calculator. Thus the details of our standard were born out of periodic discussions between COH and my students and yielded several small deviations. As previously mentioned, our standard includes modest savings and entertainment budgets due to the COH mission and clientele. Seeking such input from students and COH contributes to the meaningful collaboration essential to high quality CBR.

Third, this CBR project had several strengths in the area of teaching and learning. In addition to being important for productive collaboration, the input sought from students in the development of our poverty standard aligns with a critical approach to community-engaged learning that has several specific and well-recognized pedagogical benefits (Hartley, 1999; Mitchell, 2008; Strand et al., 2003). Providing this input required students to think critically about the meaning and definition of poverty as a social construct. Completing the project also validated different types of knowledge. As a professor, I brought technical expertise on theories of poverty measurement; COH brought community- and client-specific knowledge; and students brought the practical perspectives of their own experiences as well as their acquired knowledge of local data sources on their respective budget categories. As a result, my students decided our standard should include car acquisition costs in addition to car use, maintenance, and insurance costs. Although acquisition expenses were excluded from the SSS and MIT Living Wage Calculator budgets (Nadeau, 2017; Pearce, 2015), my students felt this was an important cost based on their own experience. Valuing this experiential knowledge deemphasizes hierarchy between professors, community members, and students. Relaxing this hierarchy is one of the key elements of critical pedagogy in service-learning because it helps empower students to become their own agents for social change (Hartley, 1999; Mitchell, 2008; Strand et al., 2003). Appreciating experiential knowledge is an important skill for both the workplace and active citizenship.

The fourth critical area discussed in Strand et al. (2003) is the institutionalization of CBR on college campuses. Although the potential for an individual project to have influence at the institutional level is limited, I did spontaneously share our final report with the staff at our Center for Community Engaged Learning on campus. Our project was subsequently featured in a university presentation to encourage high impact practices. Although Strand et al. (2003) discussed the importance of establishing campus institutions to support individual CBR projects, this anecdote suggests it is important that the individual CBR projects support and provide feedback to campus institutions as well.

Finally, our project's results were strong for several reasons. It is often stated that the most important aspect of CBR is to produce a product that is useful to the community (Beckman et al., 2011; Strand et al., 2003). We produced a report that COH has used to improve their practice. COH uses our estimated family budgets for goal setting and benchmarking with their clients. This is an improvement from the outdated and less customized budgets they had been using previously. In the language of Beckman et al. (2011), we appropriately aligned our

output (report) to produce a desired outcome (change in practice at COH). Furthermore, this project had another particular strength in its establishment of a meaningful baseline measure for local poverty. In their discussion of the long-term community impact of CBR projects, Beckman et al. (2011) emphasized the importance of establishing metrics for key community parameters (e.g., poverty rates) at the outset in order to collect baseline data and measure progress over time. They argued that this is necessary for evaluating long-run community impact, but they acknowledged that many CBR projects skip this step, often jumping right away to interventions. By starting with the establishment of a poverty measure, this CBR project laid the foundation for meaningful future quantitative impact evaluation.

Shortcomings. This project also had a number of shortcomings that provide room for improvement. The shortcomings are summarized in Table 3 and are discussed below.

First, with respect to the development of the partnership, although the partners agreed on the short-term goals for the report and each partner's immediate needs were met, the long-term goals for the partnership were, and still remain, vague. Best practice suggests it would be preferable to set both short- and long-term goals for the partnership at the outset (Beckman et al., 2011; CCPH Board of Directors, 2013; Strand et al., 2003). Certainly in general terms, the end goal is lower levels of poverty and greater financial stability for COH's clients, as stated in COH's mission statement. An example of a specific and measurable goal would be an increase in the percentage of clients who achieve incomes that meet or exceed our standard within a given time period. With a long-term goal in place, we

can begin to think about the set of outputs and outcomes required to achieve the goal. It will be necessary to collect baseline data on COH clients' initial incomes, as well as their basic demographic data (family composition, race, gender, education, etc.), then monitor client incomes over the course of their work with COH and its programs. Once initial 1-year, 2-year, and 3-year success rates have been calculated, we can work with COH to identify practices that help increase success rates.

Second, although student and community partner input were actively sought in the construction of the standard, COH clients were not directly involved in the project. Again, the CBR literature suggests it would be best to solicit input from COH clients (CCPH Board of Directors, 2013; Enos & Morton, 2003; Puma et al., 2009; Strand et al., 2003; Torres, 2000). Although seeking COH client input before the development of our standard certainly would have offered advantages, there are also certain advantages to waiting until a standard has been developed. The idea of a living wage standard is somewhat abstract without seeing specific budget estimates. However, our report has done just this, and now there exists a set of COH clients who have had firsthand experience with our standard by trying to reach or exceed it. These clients have had their incomes compared directly to our estimated budgets. This puts them in a unique position to provide valuable feedback about our standard. In our future work, it will be important for students to talk with COH clients to get their feedback on their experience with the Ogden Independent Living Standard.

Third, this project had several shortcomings with respect to its value as a tool for teaching and learning. Perhaps the largest

Table 3. Shortcomings of This CBR Project	
Category	**Shortcoming**
Partnership development	Long-term goals for the partnership were vague.
Research design & process	Did not solicit input from COH clients.
Teaching and learning	Poor communication with students about postsemester project plans and results.
Institutionalization	Did not connect students to broader campus–community engagement infrastructure.
Results	No measured impact yet and no baseline data collected on COH clients.

drawback was that the final product, the report, was not entirely completed within the timeframe of the semester. As a result, I was not able to systematically distribute the final report to the original class of students or provide information about its use by COH. I think this was a missed opportunity for some important lessons in civic education. High quality civic education requires students to develop an understanding of how ideas turn into actions that bring about social change (Strand et al., 2003). Because most of my students stopped working on the project at the end of the semester, when the project was at an intermediate state, they never got to see the standard in its usable form, nor did they even receive confirmation of its completion. This lack of closure was compounded by the fact that the long-term goals of the project were vague. More detailed long-term goals and an opportunity to view the final report would have given students firsthand experience turning ideas into actions for social change. In the future, I plan to start a Facebook group for the project and provide some academic incentives for my students to join and post to the group. Not only will this provide a means for them to stay updated on the project after the class is completed, but some studies suggest that using social media in the classroom can increase student engagement (Junco et al., 2010; McCarthy, 2010). A more ambitious approach would be to partner with several colleagues who teach related upper level economics courses and provide students with a multisemester community engagement experience. The econometrics class might help COH carry out its program evaluation. The annual Honors Seminar on Economic Inequality could offer an opportunity to use the Ogden Independent Living Standard when comparing and contrasting problems of poverty and problems of inequality.

Fourth, in terms of institutionalizing CBR on campus, my course did little to integrate my students into the existing campus–community engagement infrastructure. Most notably, the large majority of students who took my labor economics class were not aware of its community engagement component at the time of registration because they did not understand the meaning of the course's CEL designation. Although my university provides little opportunity for individual faculty members to change the content of course information displayed at registration, I plan to take several actions next time the course is offered in order to increase awareness. I will make and post course flyers to advertise the class that briefly explain CEL designation and our community project. Flyers have been used previously in my department to successfully advertise courses. I will require my students to participate in the campus-wide Community Engagement Symposium where students create and present posters on the community-engaged projects they have worked on. I will also provide detailed information on the first day of class and in the course syllabus about CEL designation, our campus Center for Community Engaged Learning, and our university's Excellence in Community Engagement program. This program offers a special official transcript designation for students who complete a minimum of 300 hours of documented community engagement work during their bachelor's degree studies. I believe these steps would help students better understand the connection between their labor economics course and the community engagement infrastructure on our campus.

Finally, a significant shortcoming of the results of the project is a lack of measurable impact on poverty reduction thus far. Although Beckman et al. (2011) acknowledged that impact is typically a long-term phenomenon and may take several years to realize, we could have taken a few steps as part of our initial work to better position ourselves to eventually measure impact. Specifically, although we produced a report that led to a change in practice for the staff at COH, impact ultimately rests with the performance of COH's clients. However, in our initial stages, we did not collect any baseline data on these clients. Without baseline data, it is impossible to know whether the work of our partnership is having a positive, negative, or neutral impact. Given that the baseline measure of interest is perhaps the gap between COH clients' current incomes and the Ogden Independent Living Standard budgets for their family types, there is no reason such current income data could not have been collected during the time the standard was being developed. With this baseline data, the gaps between actual income and the corresponding Ogden Independent Living Standard budget could have been quickly calculated after our standard was finalized. In the future, priority will be given not only to updating our standard to reflect changing costs but also to organizing some basic data collection on COH's clients.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

In this section I discuss several lessons learned and describe next steps for this project. Although the lessons are derived from our specific project, the intention here is to focus on how these lessons can generalize to a broad range of CBR endeavors. Maintaining the structure of the discussions of strengths and shortcomings, I have organized the lessons learned and next steps into five categories: partnership development, research design and process, teaching and learning, institutionalization of CBR, and results. Special attention is given to lessons that can help align best practices for process and for results. The lessons learned are summarized in Table 4 and discussed in detail below.

First, in the area of partnership development, I have learned it is important to set both short- and long-term goals at the outset of the project. In order to align best practice for process and results, I recommend following Beckman et al. (2011), with short-term goals stated in terms of outputs and outcomes and long-term goals stated in terms of impact. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to outline the set of intermediate outputs and outcomes that will be necessary steps on the way to achieving the long-term impact goal. The CBR literature emphasizes the importance of flexibility on the part of both campus and community partners, and it is also important to acknowledge that an initial outline will inevitably evolve and be revised over time. However, I believe such an initial outline will help partners stay focused and increase the chances of eventually achieving measurable impact.

Additionally, from our class field trip to the COH offices, I have learned it is valuable to make time for activities that nurture the relationship, even if these activities are not directly related to the research project. Although our field trip was not directly related to our report, it helped to build understanding and mutual respect between my students and the COH staff. Not only did this help with motivation, it also provided a venue for some informal discussion about our standard that was ultimately useful to the project. As a professor I know semesters are short and class time is precious, and I was initially somewhat skeptical about using class time for this kind of activity. However, in retrospect, I believe it was both good for the project and a good learning experience for my students. I recommend that semester-long course-based CBR projects include one activity during the semester in which progress on the research project takes a back seat to partnership development and relationship building. Partnerships need rigorous short- and long-term goals to achieve long-run impact, but both partnerships and projects are enhanced when partners remain flexible and take time to nurture their relationship.

Next steps in the area of partnership development will prioritize setting both short- and long-term goals for the continuation of the project. The primary long-term goal is to increase the percentage of COH clients who achieve incomes that meet or exceed the Ogden Independent Living Standard. In addition to updating the standard in future years, achieving this long-term goal will require the intermediate step of helping COH implement a client intake process in which baseline income and family demographic data are collected. COH already monitors client incomes during the time they are receiving COH services, so the collection of baseline data should provide the data necessary to evaluate progress toward the long-

Table 4. Lessons Learned from This CBR Project	
Category	Lessons learned
Partnership development	Set both short-term outcome and long-term impact goals at the outset of the project.
Research design & process	Make time for occasional activities primarily focused on nurturing the partnership.
Teaching and learning	Ensure community input on defining impact goals.
Institutionalization	Talk with students about long-term project plans and give them an opportunity to stay connected.
Results	Take time at the beginning to establish both baseline measurement tools and baseline data.

term goal. We may also consider some additional long-term goals such as tracking the percentage of Ogden households that meet or exceed the standard, and/or tracking the percentage of Weber State University employees with household incomes at or above the standard. The university administration has recently expressed interest in the latter.

Second, in the area of research design and process, it is important to include community partners and students as well as members of the target population (in our case, COH clients) in the research process. The benefit of inclusivity in general is already well established in the CBR literature, but there is less consensus on the extent of inclusivity (CCPH Board of Directors, 2013; Enos & Morton, 2003; Puma et al., 2009; Strand et al., 2003; Torres, 2000). Strand et al. (2003) emphasized the importance of community participation in two research stages: developing the research question and deciding how the results will be used. In order to align process and results, I believe community involvement is also critical in identifying the long-run impact of interest. Community partners and their target populations are often best situated to describe the changes they want to see. Academic partners can then help gather, organize, and analyze information to evaluate progress toward those changes.

Next steps in the area of research design and process include soliciting input from COH clients regarding our standard. Specifically, we want to examine how the basic needs costs in our estimated budgets compare with actual basic needs expenditures of COH clients. Plans are in place to conduct a voluntary survey of COH clients to collect information on their actual expenditures within the basic needs categories. Prior to writing and conducting the survey, students will complete human subjects research training and apply for IRB approval.

Third, I have learned several lessons about how to help students connect the contributions they make in one semester to a larger ongoing community project. In addition to making sure they understand how their work during the semester will be used by the community partner, it is important to give them a bird's-eye view of the long-term goals of the project and the steps that will be carried out after the semester has finished. This can be discussed briefly in class and will improve the civic education value of the CBR project by giving students a better understanding of how ideas are turned into actions for social change. In close conjunction, I think it is also important to provide students with a means of staying connected with the project so they have the opportunity to watch the long-term results unfold. As discussed previously, possible venues for such a connection would be a project Facebook group or a multicourse partnership to facilitate community engagement across several semesters.

Immediate next steps in the area of teaching and learning include explicitly discussing long-term goals in class and creating a project Facebook group. Long-term steps include initiating discussions with the instructors of econometrics and the annual Honors Seminar on Economic Inequality to explore the possibility of collaborating to create a multisemester community engagement experience for students.

Fourth, although Strand et al. (2003) emphasized the importance of establishing campus institutions to support individual CBR projects, it is equally important that individual CBR projects support these campus institutions. At a minimum, this means sharing project outputs and other results with these institutions. I would suggest establishing some formal structure to facilitate this type of communication between individual projects and their supporting institutions. However, I would not recommend making project reporting mandatory, because this extra work for faculty members may discourage them from collaborating with the institutions on campus designed to support them. Rather, I would suggest providing some incentives for faculty to submit project reports. If funding is available, minigrants for future work on the project could encourage project reporting. In the absence of funding, a university could establish competitive awards for excellence in community engagement based on project reports submitted. If these awards were looked upon favorably by rank and tenure committees, this practice could also provide a valuable incentive for project reporting.

Next steps in the area of institutionalization of CBR include several strategies to better connect my students with the existing community engagement infrastructure on campus. First, I will require my students to attend and present in our annual campuswide Community Engagement Symposium, where students create and present posters on community engagement projects

in which they have been involved. Second, through discussions in class and a description in my syllabus, I will encourage students to participate in our university's Excellence in Community Engagement program. This program offers a special official transcript designation for students who complete a minimum of 300 hours of documented community engagement work during their bachelor's degree studies. As mentioned briefly above, the university administration has recently shown interest in using the Ogden Independent Living Standard to evaluate the household incomes of university employees. Applying this standard would also support the institutionalization of CBR on campus.

Finally, in order to achieve long-term community impact, it is important both to establish high quality measurement tools and to collect baseline data on the target population at the outset. Too often in CBR, projects jump right to interventions without taking time to think about how to measure the impact of interest and without laying a foundation for such measurement tools (Beckman et al., 2011). Although other CBR projects may be better suited for using existing measurement tools (e.g., the federal poverty line) as opposed to developing their own, our project provides an important reminder that existing metrics cannot be taken for granted, and it is worthwhile to take time at the beginning to think about what the research project is trying to measure and ensure that such measurement is feasible. Without meaningful metrics and baseline data, eventual quantitative evaluation of impact will be impossible.

Next steps in the area of achieving long-term community impact include actually collecting initial income data from COH clients upon program entry. After helping COH develop the client intake process to collect baseline income and other demographic data (discussed above), the intake process will need to be consistently implemented. COH already monitors client incomes during the period they receive services. When this monitoring is combined with the baseline income and demographic data, success rates (percentage of clients reaching the Ogden Independent Living Standard) over time can be measured. Additionally, processes for anonymizing and sharing data will need to be developed so that client information remains confidential. With these steps in place, rigorous long-term assessment of COH services and client outcomes can be conducted.

Conclusion

This case study described the CBR project that developed the Ogden Independent Living Standard and reflected on its strengths and shortcomings. These reflections considered both processes and results. Finally, I discussed several lessons learned and next steps with a particular focus on linking processes to results. The lessons are broadly applicable to the field of CBR and contribute to the literature on best practice. They can help enhance both the experience and impact of a broad range of CBR projects.

The project itself is evolving and ongoing. Plans are currently in place to update the standard (as costs change over time) and to seek COH client input on the accuracy of our estimated expenditures. Additional discussions about long-term goals and measuring program impact over time are also taking place. These steps bring us closer to achieving the goal of long-term community impact.

About the Author

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Tracings of Trauma: Engaging Learners and Challenging Veteran Stigma Through Collaborative Research-based Theater

Katinka Hooyer, Leslie Ruffalo, and Zeno Franco

Abstract

Military veterans are stereotyped in the media as either broken human beings or invincible heroes, often creating implicit bias and affecting medical providers' ability to establish trusting relationships. Interactive learning methods can challenge stigma and create empathic connections with veterans in a manner that conveys sensitivity. Community-engaged theater has been successfully used in health education to transfer knowledge on both emotional and cognitive levels. This article reports on a research-based theater intervention, *Tracings of Trauma*, codesigned by veterans and aimed at orienting medical/allied health students to the unique experiences of combat veterans. Early stage assessment demonstrated statistically significant improvement in students' self-perceived awareness of stigma and their ability to talk to veterans and empathize with veterans' experiences. Results suggest that interactive, performance-driven dissemination can provide deeper learning experiences regarding stigmatized groups who experience trauma. Evaluating long-term impact on practice will be critical in linking this intervention to clinical outcomes.

Keywords: veterans, research-based theater, stigma, engaged learning, performance ethnography, veteran mental health, trauma

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Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the dominant narrative our society uses to describe the effects of war (Badger, 2014; Chandrasekaran, 2014; Wood, 2012. Although initially intended to ensure that veterans suffering the effects of combat and other traumatic military experiences received the care they deserved (Young, 1995), the PTSD diagnosis sometimes devolves into shorthand for "the crazy veteran." PTSD is used to explain a range of behaviors from veteran-involved shootings (Ortiz, 2016; Philipps, 2016) to disruptions of peaceful public activities (Fox News, 2016). Stereotypes of veterans in media and the ways in which these representations allow the civilian world to compartmentalize the military experience (Katzenberg, 2018) leave many veterans feeling a lack of common ground with the general public (Conan, 2010; Zucchino & Cloud, 2015), civilian health care providers (Lypson & Ross, 2016), and bureaucracies of care, such as Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers (Connelly, 2014).

Societal perceptions of veterans, and veterans' perceptions of being an "outsider" group, can lead to suboptimal health care (Sharp et al., 2015) and health care access problems (Curry & Zatzick, 2014) as a result of assumptions made between health care providers and the veterans they seek to serve. One key issue is that veterans who experience stigma may perceive it to be present even when it is not, in both civilian and VA-based health care. The issues with veteran stigma are similar to those experienced by traditional minority groups (Blair et al., 2011). To mitigate this issue, medical and allied health schools need to increase their efforts to train students about the lived experience of veterans (Hinojosa et al.,

2010), just as these institutions often do for patients of color (Anderson, 2008), sexual minorities (Potter et al., 2016), or stigmatized groups such as the homeless and sex workers (Asgary et al., 2016; Balon et al., 2015). A few efforts have taken place in this arena, providing veterans' perspectives to teach students about the physical and mental injuries of this population (Fussell, 2016; Lypson et al., 2014; Lypson et al., 2016). However, these efforts are infrequent in medical student education, with few curricula addressing lived experience (Manen, 1990; Turner & Bruner, 1986), stories of the veteran stigma (Goffman, 1963), and veterans' personal struggles to reenter civilian life after military service (Sayer et al., 2014). Stigma is a process of stereotyping where negative labels (e.g., "dangerous") are attached to a category (e.g., posttraumatic stress disorder) distinguishing a group of people (e.g., veterans) as unacceptable. This results in a cycle of discrimination, loss of status, and social exclusion that leads to increased stigma that further removes its victims from being accepted by society (Goffman, 1963).

Use of theater in knowledge translation and transfer to promote new understanding and empathy in clinical education is one powerful way to bring to life the concerns of the "other" (Eisenberg et al., 2015; Kirklin, 2001; Michalak et al., 2014; Watkins, 1998). Theater-focused interventions have been used with physicians, nurses, and allied health (Gillespie & Brown, 1997; Kontos & Naglie, 2007; Kontos et al., 2010). These training modalities are thought to work in part by eliciting a deep emotional response from those who observe or participate in such immersive interventions (Colantonio et al., 2008; Delonie & Graham, 2003; Shapiro & Hunt, 2003), thereby developing ethical responsibility (Rossiter, 2012) and inclusiveness (Johnston, 2010). The present study fills a gap in medical and allied health training through translating veterans' lived experience into a theater-based education tool and stigma intervention.

For this project, the research-based theater method performance ethnography was used for its ability to disrupt stereotypes and nurture empathy (Leavy, 2015), reveal the experiences of the oppressed (Moreira, 2005), and convey rich contextual experiences that enable a deeper understanding of the human condition (Saldaña, 2011). Performance ethnography translates qualitative data from interviews, observations, and document analysis into dramatic scripts, linking historical and social processes to individual experiences, promoting critical self-reflection and raised consciousness that can challenge dominant worldviews (Denzin, 2006). Through its power to create an emotional impact and invoke the imagination, performance ethnography induces audience reflection and critical discussion on individuals' experiences of stigma surrounding experiences of prejudice and discrimination (Goldstein, 2013).

Selections of veteran interviews from an ethnography on combat veterans' experience with PTSD (Hooyer, 2015) provided the raw data for the teaching tool *Tracings of Trauma.* It was through this original research that veterans conveyed the pressing need to educate health care providers on the unique experiences of military veterans who have lived through war and combat, particularly in a society where they feel stigmatized as either "crazy vets" (Shane, 2013) or "broken heroes" (Philipps, 2015).

Background

Purpose of Study

Theater is successfully used in the fields of mental health (e.g., Twardzicki, 2008) and cancer research (Gray et al., 2000) as a tool to communicate the often hidden and emotionally charged experiences of patients with stigmatized illness. To our knowledge, this method has not been used to teach about the sensitive topic of war trauma and veteran mental health. In practicing this method, qualitative content can closely recreate social context while interactive dialogue offers multisensory experiences that can promote emotional responses (Saldaña, 1999) and insight into others' lives (Carless & Douglas, 2017). *Tracings of Trauma* aims to engage learners as participant actors to provide a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of diverse patient experiences.

The aim of the study was to assess the intervention's ability to change students' attitudes and beliefs regarding military and war experiences. We hypothesized that an interactive theater-based approach would challenge personal assumptions, bridge cultural gaps between veterans and their civilian health care providers, and enhance empathic connections between student clinicians and their patients.

Project Overview and Context

The intervention was designed to orient medical and allied health students to the unique experiences of military combat veterans. The choice of a theater–based methodology was grounded in the capacity of live, interactive performance to engage learners on an emotional level. Learner participation was accomplished through the reading of excerpts of veteran experiences from a script in a round–robin format. The interactive reading weaves the story of a researcher doing fieldwork with combat veterans and the verbatim scripted experiences of soldiers training for combat, going to war, and returning home. The sessions lasted 45–60 minutes, with 15–25 learners sitting in a circle. The session began with a brief introduction (3–5 minutes) that gave the backstory of the script, the source of the narratives, and directions for participation. The facilitator then passed out 51 "field notes" containing excerpts from raw interview data with veterans from Author 1's research. The ritual of passing out field notes allowed learners time to read each of their field notes and reflect momentarily on their content. Before starting, learners were asked to consider how their own field notes differed from or paralleled their peers' during the session, but also to consider any personal commonalities with veterans' sentiments revealed in the interactive performance.

Acting as the lead character, the facilitator read through the script, calling off the numbered field notes for learners to recite. The following excerpt illustrates the methodology.

> Narrator: As an anthropologist I have to be constantly aware how my thoughts, and feelings, might affect my interpretation and influence my analysis. My feelings are, in a sense, just a reflection of how others in my culture and in my community feel. I learned how to react through observing all of you. Field note #9.

> Learner: (Field note # 9) Before people learn I'm gay it's "Thank you for your service." After they learn I'm gay they say I shouldn't have been there at all.

> Narrator: Field note #10.

> Learner: (Field note #10) My friend just straight up asked me, "Is it ok if you drink with us and stuff?" I was like "Yeah." And she said "Well, you are a big dude and you are like a veteran and I don't know if you are going to go crazy." As if I was going to lose my mind and start pounding on girls or something like that . . . I was like, "Its fine, I can have a drink."

> Narrator: Field note #11.

> Learner: (Field note #11) I am proud of my service but there are situations where I just don't tell people because being a vet is equal to having PTSD in most civilian eyes.

The researcher's story (i.e., reflections and surplus text from fieldwork) bridges the transitions between topics and veteran excerpts (Hooyer, 2017). The performance is accompanied by slide projections of tracings Author 1 made of photographs and military honors from veterans' deployments.

The full performance took an average of 25 minutes. At the close students were asked to take a retrospective pre–post survey (see Methods section). This was followed by a facilitated discussion where students first took a couple of minutes to reflect inwardly on any unfolding emotional reactions to the diversity of veteran experiences that the performance evoked. Students were asked if any of the excerpts evoked an emotional or visceral response, were challenging to read or hear, or if they could relate to any of the field notes. The discussions lasted 15–30 minutes, depending on the class time available for the activity, and were guided by input from facilitators with extensive backgrounds in veteran issues who are involved in formal community–academic partnerships in veteran health (all three authors, as well as others named in the Acknowledgments). The original research that informed the intervention was approved by the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Institutional Review Board, and the intervention was approved by the Medical College of Wisconsin Institutional Review Board.

Community Engagement and Collaborative Design

Community partnerships with local veteran

organizations informed the entire design of this intervention. These partnerships included a nonprofit, veteran–led service agency and a major federal institution with ties to local veterans. These partnerships are still active after 8 years. These agencies assisted in introducing Author 1 to individual veterans in ways that ensured appropriate trust and rapport, an integral step to the community engagement in research approach (Michener et al., 2012), as combat veterans often experience mental health–related stigma and can be distrustful of civilians. This distrust is compounded by the large gaps in cultural values, practices, and experience between military and civilian worlds (Hooyer, 2015). Although the informal researcher–to–agency connections were important in the initial phases, the work was carried out in conversation between the researcher and individual veterans who dedicated themselves to every phase of the project. This method contrasts somewhat with formalized community–based participatory approaches that often work through agency relationships for the duration of a project (Franco et al., 2015). Once the veteran participants were identified, they took part in Author 1's original research, and some continued to assist in the design of the script and development of the evaluation (see below).

To maintain the authenticity of veterans' voices, Author 1 collaborated with veterans to accurately convey the diversity of war experiences in a way that was sensitive and respectful of the conflicting horror and beauty of military service. Veterans reviewed the narratives for diversity and accurate representation. Notably, veterans wanted to remain anonymous after sharing these intimate experiences and declined authorship for the intervention and this article, contrasting somewhat with a traditional view of community partner inclusion in collaborative academic artifacts.

To assess the initial impact of the *Tracings of Trauma* performance in higher education, Author 1 codesigned a retrospective pre–post survey with three veterans (who took part in the original research) and three medical education experts. Veteran collaborators met with Author 1 to discuss their most pressing concerns regarding their experiences with health care providers, and these concerns were translated into survey questions with input from medical education experts. The evaluation tool was approved by the veteran collaborators and focused on their desired outcomes: (1) challenging students' existing assumptions and stereotypes that are predominant in the media; (2) developing empathic understanding for combat veterans beyond students' personal politics surrounding war; (3) creating stronger social/emotional connections with future providers to potentially enhance future clinical encounters; and (4) bridging cultural gaps between military and civilian worlds that are the source of stereotypes and misunderstanding.

Method

Study Setting

The study took place at one urban public research university and one private medical school in the Midwest. The public university houses one of the state's largest collaborations of health sciences, nursing, and public health and has over 27,000 students from 92 countries. The private medical school is home to a national institute dedicated to transforming medical education and is focused on academic–community medicine. Notably, both institutions hold Carnegie Foundation community engagement classifications. Professors were recruited via email to department chairs in social work, nursing, medical humanities, and occupational therapy, and flyers were placed in faculty lounges and mailboxes. However, ultimately our established relationships with academic members in a veterans' health partnership facilitated recruitment of professors who incorporated the session into their curriculum. The social work and occupational therapy sessions were performed in the university's art gallery; medical student sessions took place in traditional classroom settings.

Data Collection

A survey included four Likert-type items (5 = *strongly agree* to 1 = *strongly disagree*) and three open–ended questions regarding the content and form of the one–time intervention. The Likert-type items were offered as a retrospective pre- and postassessment to measure attitudes before and after the performance (Klatt & Taylor-Powell, 2005). The survey, measuring changes in knowledge, attitude, beliefs, and human connection, was administered electronically through Survey Monkey and was delivered immediately after the performance to avoid

the influence of postsession discussion. One class of occupational therapy students ($n = 16$) used paper surveys, and a member of the research team entered data by hand. Students were also asked to answer demographic questions.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis. Because the data obtained were based on Likert-type items that are technically ordinal in nature, we first performed a chi-square test for each item in order to assess change between the posttest rating and the retrospective pretest rating (i.e., how the participant reflectively rated their attitudes prior to the intervention). Next, because Likert-type data can also be viewed as forced options superimposed on a continuum of attitudes, and because it is often easier to interpret change using mean difference scores, we also performed paired t tests on these items. Results of both tests are presented, but we focus our discussion on the t tests.

Qualitative Data Analysis. The qualitative method of conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) was used to code the text from open-ended questions. This type of coding allows categories to emerge from the data in order to make sense of a phenomenon that is not well understood; in this instance, emotional and cognitive reactions to reciting narratives of military veterans. Survey data from these questions were reviewed three times to establish categories and then organize these categories into dominant themes. To establish reliability of themes, a second coder conducted an informal cross-check and inquiries by reviewing the text and emerging themes to confirm findings (Barbour, 2001). No concerns were raised regarding observer drift.

Results

Quantitative Analysis

A total of 143 students participated in the learning intervention over five sessions (see Table 1). A majority of the students were female (69%), and most students were in their 20s (88%). Medical students represented the majority of learners (60%). Many students indicated that they had previously participated in other educational offerings on veteran issues (70%). Across all offerings, only three students were veterans (2%). The mean age for learners was 26.18 years.

Paired-sample t tests revealed statistically significant differences in attitudes and beliefs on all four Likert-scale items (see Table 2), demonstrating improvement in students' self-perceptions about their ability to connect emotionally and socially with military veterans. The largest effect was in the variable of connection, illustrating the performance's ability to bridge the shared and common human experiences of loss, hope, love, and social suffering. Students also self-reported an increased confidence in their ability to comfortably talk with veterans about their military service. Preassessment data indicated a high level of empathy with the sacrifices that veterans made in their service ($M = 3.99$), and students were able to better empathize with these sacrifices after the intervention ($M = 4.37$). Results for most items showed increases, but the item addressing assumptions showed a reduction in assumptions made toward veterans after the intervention.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to explore for potential differences in mean scores by educational program (social work, medicine, occupational therapy), gender, and age category at retrospective pretest, posttest, and for mean difference for each outcome variable. No significant differences between learners from the different programs or by gender were found. Age was collected as years, but categorized for analysis into early 20s (24 years or less), late 20s (25–29 years), or 30+ (30–59 years) to reflect the distribution of the data obtained and facilitate analysis. Those in their early 20s reported being significantly less comfortable talking to a veteran than the learners from the older 20s group, $F(2,139) = 4.06$, p = .0194, difference between means = 0.40. Small sample size for the 30+ category makes pairwise comparisons between the youngest and oldest groups unreliable.

Level of Veteran Interaction. Importantly, but not surprisingly, a number of differences were found between learners with different levels of exposure to veterans. An ANOVA performed on the item "I have many assumptions about veterans" at retrospective pre shows no variation by the level of learner's interaction with veterans. However, postintervention scores for assumptions varied significantly by level of learner to veteran interaction, $F(3,135) = 3.87$, $p = 0.0108$. A post hoc Tukey test

Table 1. Student Demographics		
Characteristic	*n* = 143	%
Gender*		
Female	99	69.72
Male	43	30.28
Age		
Early 20s	65	45.45
Late 20s	61	42.66
30+	17	11.89
Program		
Social work	25	17.48
Medicine	86	60.14
Occupational therapy	32	22.38
Veteran status*		
Veteran	3	2.11
Nonveteran	139	97.89
Veteran interactions per month		
0 days	50	34.97
1–5 days	67	46.85
6–20 days	9	6.29
21–30 days	17	11.89
Education in veterans' issues		
Yes	100	69.93
No	43	30.07

*n = 142 due to a participant declining to respond

showed that the no interaction level (zero days per month) was significantly lower on the assumption score than the intensive interaction level (21–30 days per month), $p < .05$. Notably, visual inspection of the box plots showed that although those in the two lower interaction levels (zero days and 1–5 days per month) reported fewer assumptions after the intervention, those with higher level interaction (6–20 days and 21–30 days per month) reported that they had *more* assumptions. This may reflect the ability of the retrospective pre–post design to reduce assumptions about veterans in the uninitiated while simultaneously allowing those with greater exposure to develop a deeper appreciation of the assumptions they held about veterans prior to the intervention.

An ANOVA performed on feelings of connectedness to veterans at retrospective pretest found that learners varied significantly by level of veteran interaction, $F(3,138) = 2.92$, $p = 0.0363$. A post hoc Tukey test showed that the no interaction group was significantly lower on feelings of connectedness compared to those with intensive interaction, $p < .05$. However, there were no significant differences by level of learner to veteran interaction for feelings of connectedness at posttest, $p < .05$.

An ANOVA performed on feelings of empathy toward veterans at retrospective pretest found that learners varied significantly by level of veteran interaction, $F(3,138) = 2.69$, $p = 0.0490$. A post hoc Tukey test showed that the no interaction group scored significantly lower on feelings of empathy com-

Table 2. Assessment of Attitudes Before and After the *Tracings of Trauma* Performance						
Variable	Retrospective pretest mean (*median*)	Posttest mean (*median*)	Mean difference[a]	Mean of paired differences (*SD*)	Paired *t* (*df*)	*p* value[b]
I can see *connections* between experiences of vets and issues in my own life.	2.96 (3)	3.54 (4)	+0.57	0.60 (*1.09*)	6.43 (138)	<.0001
I would feel comfortable *talking* to a veteran about their service.	3.52 (4)	3.93 (4)	+0.40	0.37 (*0.73*)	5.90 (138)	<.0001
I can *empathize* with the sacrifices that veterans have made in their service.	3.99 (4)	4.37 (5)	+0.38	0.44 (*0.77*)	6.70 (138)	<.0001
I have many *assumptions* about veterans' experiences.	3.30 (3)	2.91 (3)	–0.37	–0.28 (*1.10*)	3.02 (138)	<.0031

[a] *Mean differences presented to illustrate degree of change based on the assumption that Likert categories offered are superimposed on a continuum of attitudes. Medians are also provided, given that these data can also be viewed as ordinal.*
[b] *p values for Wilcoxon signed rank (nonparametric equivalent of paired t test) and paired t tests were <.01 for all items; paired t statistics are reported here for ease of interpretation. For clarity, positive/negative signs reflect direction of actual change in mean difference from retrospective pre to post, not signs from t tests.*

pared to those with intensive interaction, $p < .05$. However, there were no significant differences by level of learner–to–veteran interaction for feelings of empathy at post-test, $p < .05$.

An ANOVA performed on willingness to talk to veterans at retrospective pretest found that learners varied significantly by level of veteran interaction, $F(3,138) = 2.89$, $p = 0.0377$. A post hoc Tukey test showed that the no interaction and the little interaction groups scored significantly lower on willingness to talk to veterans compared to those with intensive interaction, $p < .05$. In contrast to other tests, variability in comfort in talking with veterans persisted postint-ervention, $F(3,135) = 3.28$, $p = 0.0231$. A post hoc Tukey test showed that the no interaction group was still significantly less willing to talk to a veteran compared to those with intensive interaction, $p < .05$. However, the mean scores for all groups increased significantly, and visual analysis of the results showed that those with low interaction levels at posttest scored very close to the original mean of the high veteran interaction group at pretest; all groups noted more comfort in talking to a veteran at posttest.

Overall, this pattern of results across the learner–to–veteran interaction levels suggests that exposure to this intervention makes even those learners with low prior levels of veteran interaction more comfortable in engaging with veterans.

The sample size was based on what was obtainable using reasonable methods and connections with instructors who were willing to engage their classes in this intervention. Because of the lack of estimates of mean differences and standard deviations at the beginning of the process, an a priori power calculation was not conducted. In order to provide some guidance on appropriate sample size for future replication, we also provide the retrospective pre–post mean difference and standard deviations of the difference for each outcome variable in Table 2. These values suggest that minimum samples required to obtain 80% power for a two-side, paired t test with a *p* value

< 0.05 would range from 27 pairs (for the empathize with veterans item) to 123 pairs (for the assumptions about veterans item).

Qualitative Analysis

The survey included three open-ended items related to session delivery and content. For the purposes of this analysis, we focus on one question related to self-reflection (see Table 3): "What was the most profound thing you learned?" Response to the item was voluntary, but evoked responses from 124 students (87%). Qualitative analysis revealed three dominant themes and one subtheme: (1) a new awareness of veterans' experiences of service, trauma, and returning home after deployment (33%); (2) the broad range of veteran experiences (27%); and (3) the impact of health-related stigma (24%). One significant subtheme related to patient care emerged separately from the main themes in this data set: the realization that the students' own perceptions influence their actions and in turn can have an impact on veterans' health (9%).

Discussion

This project aimed to orient medical and allied health students to the unique experiences, perspectives, and postservice integration challenges of military combat veterans. This was accomplished through a collaborative research-based theater performance in which learners participated in reading excerpts of veteran interviews from a script in a round-robin format. After each session learners were asked to participate in a retrospective pre–post survey with Likert-type and open-ended questions administered through Survey Monkey or on paper.

In our quantitative analysis, we found that students experienced improvements in their ability to relate with military veterans in all four of the variables we studied: (1) connecting experiences, (2) comfort in talking with veterans, (3) empathizing with veterans' sacrifices, and (4) reducing assumptions about veterans' experiences. These results aligned on multiple levels with the project goals set out by our veteran community partners to (1) bridge cultural gaps in understanding, (2) challenge student assumptions, (3) empathize despite political views, and (4) create stronger emotional connections.

These preliminary findings are interesting in that a high percentage (70%) of students indicated they had previous education on veteran-related issues; even so, our results showed a significant change in students' attitudes regarding military culture and veterans' experiences. Additionally, a majority of students had monthly interactions with veterans (65%). Notably, those students with the two lower interaction levels (0 days and 1–5 days per month) reported fewer assumptions postintervention, and those with higher level interaction (6–20 days and 21–30 days per month) reported that they had more assumptions. This may point to the capacity of the intervention to reduce assumptions about veterans in the students with low contact, while concurrently allowing those with greater exposure to develop a deeper appreciation of the assumptions they held about veterans prior to the intervention.

Given that our intervention was still able to evoke change within a group of students previously exposed to veteran-related issues and who also had personal interactions with veterans, these results suggest that performance-based strategies can change stereotyping perspectives through teaching lived experience and emotionally laden content. This is consistent with prior studies that identified performing arts as an effective learning tool to reduce stigma around mental illness, further extending such findings to the veteran population.

Qualitative findings from one open-ended reflexive question verified and expanded these quantitative results. The dominant themes of veteran diversity, stigma, and new perspectives aligned with quantitative variables. Students described ways in which their assumptions about veterans were challenged during the learning session, contributing to a new awareness of the broad range of veteran perspectives and military experiences. This expanded awareness contributed to confronting existing stigmas as reported by the quantitative findings. Students' comments also underscored changes in their ability to put themselves in the shoes of veterans they might provide services to in the future. This was noted through reflexive remarks made by the students about their own attitudes and knowledge gaps, and how these might adversely impact their ability to provide high quality care to veterans in future clinical interactions.

Table 3. Themes and Subthemes Emerging From the Question "What Was the Most Profound Thing You Learned Today?"	
Theme	Representative quote
Diversity of veteran experience	"That there is no one stereotypical veteran experience. Everyone seems to take something different away from their military service. . . ." *Male, 27, medical student, 0 days veteran interaction per month*
Veteran experience of stigma	"The most profound thing I learned today would have to be how others treat veterans just by making assumptions about a person when they hear that 'that person is a veteran.' It's almost like they forget they're a person and stereotype a veteran into how the public portrays them as people who suffer from PTSD, anger, social instability, and other psychological problems." *Female, 24, medical student, 1–5 days veteran interaction per month*
New awareness of veteran perspectives	"I learned about the thought processes veterans may have that I never thought about before, such as keeping one's memories as their own, words not being enough, feeling wronged by the government." *Female, 24, occupational therapy, 0 days veteran interaction per month*
Evoking reflexivity	"The most profound thing I learned was that I tend to group the veteran experience together, instead of thinking of the individuality of each experience. Additionally, I learned about how hesitant some veterans can be to share certain issues or feelings with healthcare providers because of the individual biases of health care practitioners. I really need to consider this more, as I am going into the health care field and I strive to serve my clients in the best way possible." *Female, 23, occupational therapy, 1–5 days veteran interaction per month*

Limitations

These findings may or may not translate to practice or demonstrate long-term effect on behaviors. In fact, research on stigma shows that changes in attitudes and beliefs do not translate to changes in practice, but that personal interactions do (Corrigan et al., 2000). One of the programmatic limitations of this project is that no veterans participated directly in the intervention.

A second limitation, related to the research design, involved the survey delivery. Retrospective pre–post surveys were delivered just before the postperformance discussion specifically to assess the impact of the performance. Possibly, these postperformance conversations influenced students further through diving deeper into issues that the performance raised. Structured discussions on how practice might be enhanced through what was learned in the session might further ground future application in the real world, but this was not evaluated in the current study.

Third, methodological limitations related to social desirability bias and self-report might have skewed the findings since a number of the questions were value-based. Students may have responded with how they aspired to view their inner world rather than honestly evaluating their beliefs and attitudes.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

We suspect that some of the ways the procedures were handled increased the impact of the intervention, but these components need to be isolated for future research. Students expressed that they were able to authentically relate and connect to veterans through the verbatim reading of veteran-produced quotes. These quotes were specifically chosen as a conduit to the common and shared human emotions of love, loss, grief, loneliness, and hope. Comments by students on session delivery on the retrospective pre–post surveys and facilitator observations allowed us to glean important insights regarding the overall quality of the intervention and inform next steps.

We made five key observations: (1) Students need to feel that they can confidently interact with combat veterans, and the postsession discussion must address practical tools and best practices that guide the learner. (2) Some students felt uncomfortable when reciting the narratives, reducing the dramatic impact of the intervention; consequently, the emotional maturity level of the learner should be considered in this type of activity. (3) Physical space and acoustics are critical in providing an effective learning environment (e.g., use of microphones, smaller groups, and smaller private rooms). (4) Having veterans available for postperformance discussion could improve the learning experience. (5) Students may be left in a state of emotional astonishment, especially those who have experienced trauma or war conditions personally.

As next steps, we are developing a leave-behind clinic pocket card dealing with military-specific trauma-informed care to provide students with concrete actions they can implement in clinical encounters, and we are also involving veterans in postperformance discussion. We will also implement a presession introduction email to explain the performance and its content for those who served in the military or experienced war. The challenge continually is to provide enough time, at least 30 minutes, for a facilitator who has expertise in veteran issues, military culture, and/or trauma to debrief and for participants to engage in reflective discussion after the intervention. We observed that smaller groups of students (15) sitting in a circle, with the ability to make eye contact, contributed to more in-depth postintervention discussion.

The project will be sustained through packaging and publishing *Tracings of Trauma* as a learning tool, so others can utilize it and evaluate its impact with other types of learners. To assess whether the intervention can influence future behavior in clinical encounters, we are speaking with academic leaders to develop a strategy for tracking impact over time. Evaluating the long-term impact on practice will be critical in linking this intervention to clinical outcomes.

Conclusion

Medical and allied health schools train students about the lived experience of various minorities, including patients of color, sexual minorities, and stigmatized groups, but few efforts have focused on the unique experiences of military veterans. Theater has successfully been used to translate the experiences of stigmatized populations and promote new understanding and empathy in education. This early stage assessment suggests that performance ethnography may fill a gap in medical and allied health training through translating veterans' lived experience into a theater-based education tool and stigma intervention. To our knowledge, this is the first collaboratively designed, research-based theater intervention on veterans' mental health that (1) uses raw interview excerpts and (2) involves audience participation. Our findings demonstrate that this approach has the potential to challenge existing assumptions about veterans and, in the short term, to positively impact practice.

This intervention resulted in reported change in the four key outcome variables of interest regardless of program type, age, gender, and level of personal contact with veterans. Our experience with this intervention suggests that this style of intervention could be generalized to a range of other complex topics for professional audiences and that some of the unique elements of research-based theater or performance may differentially impact some types of learners. Of course, future research will be needed to focus on the specific aspects of these types of interventions that produce change, and how those impacts may vary across learner types. Our sense is that the content of the script and learner participation in reciting the words of veterans informs our main finding that the intervention established an emotional connection to a group of people whose life experiences differ from those of the students. It is this emotional connec-

tion and understanding that veterans often describe as missing, yet so crucial, in their transition back to civilian life and in reestablishing their role in society.

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Acknowledgments

Conflicts of Interest

We have no conflicts of interest to report that would bias the outcomes of this research.

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Advancing Participant-Oriented Research Models in Research-Intensive Universities: A Case Study of Community Collaboration for Students With Autism

Cheryl A. Wright and Marissa L. Diener

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to advance the importance and value of participant-oriented research (POR) at research universities. We highlight a case study of community collaboration as it relates to a strengths-based educational model for students with autism. This evidence-based program's success centers on the inclusion of students, parents, and community partners in design, delivery, and evaluation. Bench science and experimental designs may be complemented by the inclusion of POR to address complex social issues.

Keywords: autism, participant-oriented research, community involvement, strengths, campus community partnerships

The goal of this article is to highlight the strengths and applications of participant-oriented research (POR) and indicate how this community-engaged scholarship is relevant and important in research-intensive universities to solve complex community and social issues such as the underemployment and low rates of higher education entry for those on the autism spectrum. We propose that community-engaged scholarship represents a critical bridge of connection between university research activity and community-based needs and priorities (Furco, 2016).

POR facilitates interactions with community partners and stakeholders, family networks, and targeted populations for critical input on interventions, programs, and services that are designed with and for them in the immediate time horizon and for longer range policy outcomes. As others have argued, it is timely and relevant to acknowledge in faculty reward systems this viable research methodology, which transcends the standard "service" dimension of the academic mission and offers a pragmatic and progressive approach to creating a robust reciprocation through university and community connections (Saltmarsh, 2017).

We further examine the promise of the POR model by presenting our own scholarship as a case study in which community collaborators are involved in the research focus, design, curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation. Our scholarship engages those with autism, their families, and their priorities for addressing the high unemployment and low college enrollment rates in this underserved group.

One issue that any advocate of POR must confront is the reception in a research university setting in view of incentives for faculty to follow a pathway of traditional research that may discourage the intensive "ground work" and longer time frames necessary for POR (Foster, 2010; Wenger et al., 2012). In addition, many research universities present attitudes, traditions, and constraints that actively discourage involving community participants in research. In this regard, we agree with Crow and Dabars (2015), who have offered a proposal for a new American research university model in which they emphasize the need for a "maximization of societal impact" and a call for a reengagement of the university to serve the needs of people served by the knowledge enterprise. Although research universities represent a "gold standard" for successful

research endeavors, Crow and Dabars (2015) have expressed concerns about the viability of the traditional research-focused model into the near future when a trend of disinvestment from state or legislative funding sources presents challenges for many research-intensive institutions:

> To an alarming extent, the American research university is captive to a set of institutional constraints that no longer aligns with the changing needs of our society. Despite the critical niche that research universities occupy in the knowledge economy, their preponderant commitment to discovery and innovation, carried out largely in isolation from the socioeconomic challenges faced by most Americans, will render these institutions increasingly incapable of contributing decisively to the collective good. (p. 56)

One way to address this challenge and to respond to this changing landscape is to reconsider research approaches that capture a greater connection to community needs and social impact. The emergence of POR represents an approach to building important bridges with individuals, family networks, and community partners by developing programs that meet their needs, while also supporting the inclusion of the participants in program development and implementation of research activities.

This article has three distinct goals: (1) identify the unique contributions of POR that complement basic research models, (2) provide an example of our research that involves students with autism as well as family and community members as codesigners and participatory researchers, and (3) present insights for future research through considering more inclusiveness of members of the autism community in the research process.

Although research may reference "community-based" programs, this terminology often indicates research in the community without stakeholder participation in identifying research questions or performing the research process. Research can occur in the community (community-based), but this often does not entail the direct involvement of the community stakeholders being researched. In other words, this unidirectional process can be disconnected from the priorities and needs of the community (Stahmer et al., 2017). The bidirectional approach of participatory research can help to build effective programs that match the priorities of communities as well as meet the needs of faculty for knowledge production.

Participant-Oriented Research (POR)

Participant-oriented research methods involve commitment to an inclusive process with individuals whose real-life, meaningful experiences are critical to examining research and social problems (Robertson, 2010; Stanton, 2008). POR reflects an orientation to research that "focuses on relationships between academic and community partners, with principles of colearning, mutual benefits, and long-term commitment, and incorporates community theories, participation, and practices into the research efforts" (Wallerstein & Duran, 2006, p. 312). Through it, power of knowledge is shared between the community and researchers (Spiel et al., 2017). The approach also promotes social change strategies developed with researchers and community participants to design practical, beneficial programs primarily for underserved groups such as individuals with autism.

One goal of POR is to give members of marginalized groups a voice in the research process. It incorporates participants' everyday experiential knowledge to build solutions to complex social problems. They bring their experiences, knowledge, and abilities into the research process and provide unique perspectives and insights (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). The combined views of academic professionals and community research partners are critical assets to research. Investment in the knowledge and abilities of those on the "inside" and what we can learn from them is critically important. Without leadership and input from within the autism community, research efforts may misrepresent it. It is not possible to learn about the unique needs and desires of autistic people from nonautistic people. The process enables community coresearchers to take equal ownership of the research and to question traditional interpretations of educational approaches and curriculum strategies as well as design future research agendas (Jacquez et al., 2016).

Few researchers in the autism field are engaged in this type of participatory,

community-engaged research, although it is strongly promoted as an essential approach by multiple agencies, including the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC, 2017). Despite a call to action going back a decade or more from those with autism and their families for inclusion in the research process, few published studies use this approach (Wright et al., 2014). One exception in relation to participatory research and autism is the organization Academic Autistic Spectrum Partnership in Research and Education (AASPIRE, https://aaspire.org). AASPIRE is an excellent example of a collective effort, an academic community partnership to bring "together people from the three communities: the academic community, the autistic community, and the community of people who provide support and services to autistics" (Nicolaidis et al., 2011). In general, there is the call to consider the rights of adults with disabilities in the research process (Coons & Watson, 2013). This approach highlights the respect for families, individuals with disabilities, and other interested stakeholders, and this inclusion of stakeholders in meaningful research is ethically important and can provide a positive impact on families and communities. Additionally, the neurodiversity movement, particularly for individuals with autism, focuses on the "difference" versus "deficit" label associated with much of the primary research in autism. New efforts are increasingly focused on strengths-based approaches rather than on impairments or deficits. Despite calls to action for POR approaches, barriers make these approaches challenging to implement. Below, we discuss some of the barriers to the POR approach.

Barriers to the POR Approach in Autism

One of the challenges to the inclusion of this research approach in the field of autism is that it involves a demanding and lengthy communication and relationship-building process. This can be particularly challenging in autism where communication difficulties are a part of the condition. However, our experience has been that using a variety of creative communication strategies (videos, storytelling, etc.) can elicit responses from our partners with autism reflecting that they are eager to contribute their ideas on research focus, program development, and evaluation. In our program, academics and participants meet, interact, and develop research program ideas together.

Although interventions associated with autism often remain grounded in the biomedical paradigm, many individuals with autism are challenging this view (Robertson, 2010; Robison, 2012). Some individuals with autism contend that research approaches focused on cures are dehumanizing and harmful and a greater focus on strengths-based approaches is needed. Some also argue that many traditional research agendas fail to create interventions that address their real-life concerns such as unemployment and access to higher education. Conventional research is driven by research questions that matter, but to whom? Understanding participants' experiences with the desirability and challenges of an intervention is as important as understanding whether the intervention group is statistically significantly different from the control group (Christ, 2014). We argue that both approaches have benefit and equal merit, despite the emphasis on experimental design and randomized controlled trials; they complement one another, and both are necessary to avoid methodological singularity (Christ, 2014). Although federal funding tends to prioritize the biomedical approach, we have successfully addressed the need for funding by using foundations, corporate partnerships, and local government agencies who see the benefit in supporting the populations with whom they engage on a daily basis.

Another challenge is the traditional separation of research, teaching, and service with emphasis placed solely on research, without an acknowledgment that these dimensions of academic life are often intertwined with a participatory, community-engaged approach. These issues present challenges but can be addressed, as exemplified in our approach, which is described in greater detail below.

Case Study Example: POR Autism Research

In comparison to our autism research, most interventions and programs for those with autism are deficit-oriented; this deficit perspective may inadvertently send the message that individuals with autism need to be "fixed," and they themselves are the problem, rather than the idea that the structures, services, and policies they encounter provide barriers to their full participation and success (Robertson, 2010; Robison, 2012). In contrast, our participant-oriented ap-

proach is strengths focused. In collaboration with our community partners, the mission of our scholarship is to develop an educational technology program for competency and skills in response to the high rates of unemployment in youth with autism. Another long-term goal of our scholarship is to address the underemployment and barriers to higher education for youth on the autism spectrum. To address these issues, we developed an educational technology program that teaches students with autism 3D modeling skills (Diener, Wright, Wright, & Anderson, 2015).The program focuses on the visual–spatial abilities of some on the autism spectrum to demonstrate skill and ability through 3D modeling (Wright et al., 2011). The specifics of our program are addressed elsewhere (Diener et al., 2015).

In this article, we highlight the strength of our community engagement in developing our scholarship. First, our research team is interdisciplinary across eight colleges at our university (Social & Behavioral Science, Nursing, Education, Health, Medicine, Business, Fine Arts, and Engineering), and we have begun working with other higher education institutions in our state. This broad, interdisciplinary perspective is necessary to address complex social challenges from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, our research team includes undergraduate students, faculty, and staff on the autism spectrum. These inclusive, diverse perspectives have guided and strengthened the evolution and development of our scholarship.

Most importantly, the participant-oriented inclusion of students with autism, along with their families and community partners, moves our research closer to a community-engaged endeavor and helps to build a stronger science that is translational and sustainable. In addition to students, families, and university personnel, our collaborators include schools (public, private, and charter schools), disability employment agencies, vocational rehabilitation services, and various business partners from 3D design fields (architecture, construction, navigation) and technology companies.

This time-intensive participatory research creates better interventions because it includes input from our students with autism, their families, and these community partners. The inclusion of stakeholders in our research helps to facilitate the effectiveness and sustainability of our intervention. Our program has been in existence for almost a decade due to the inclusion of stakeholders who are most invested in the outcomes and services provided. With this approach, participants play an essential role in the development of scholarship that is designed by and for those it impacts (see Figure 1).

Extended family members, including grandparents and siblings, have also played an important role in determining the focus, direction, and approach in our scholarship (Diener et al., 2015; Wright et al., 2012). Our research team has placed a priority on developing these relationships where those researched become coresearchers and contribute their ideas and input into the research questions, program development, and evaluation. This approach provided a more inclusive and comprehensive research process for engaging in socially relevant research that has impact on participants' lives. We have established a relationship of trust and respect with stakeholders that values their contributions.

Impact of Our POR Research

Traditionally, indicators of research impact involve peer-reviewed journal publications and books, letters from experts in the field, research grants from peer-reviewed funding agencies, and citation counts, which focus on the knowledge base among academics within a discipline. Traditional models are focused on impact on the field of study but not necessarily on the participants in the research. Furthermore, as others have argued, when addressing complex social problems in the real world, each situation and community is likely to have unique aspects that require an element of inquiry and discovery, leading to new knowledge (Lynton, 2016). The flow of knowledge is in both directions, from the university to the community and from the community to the university (Lynton, 2016). This type of new knowledge is less likely to be recognized in traditional faculty reward structures. The most significant impact and relevance of our research is focused on the direct impact on communities, including the families and students served by our program. Our inclusion of those with autism and their families is one of the most critical impact dimensions of our research.

The youth we work with are not intellectually challenged; they are challenged by social communication, making them a difficult population to assess with conventional pre–post evaluation measures. Instead, data
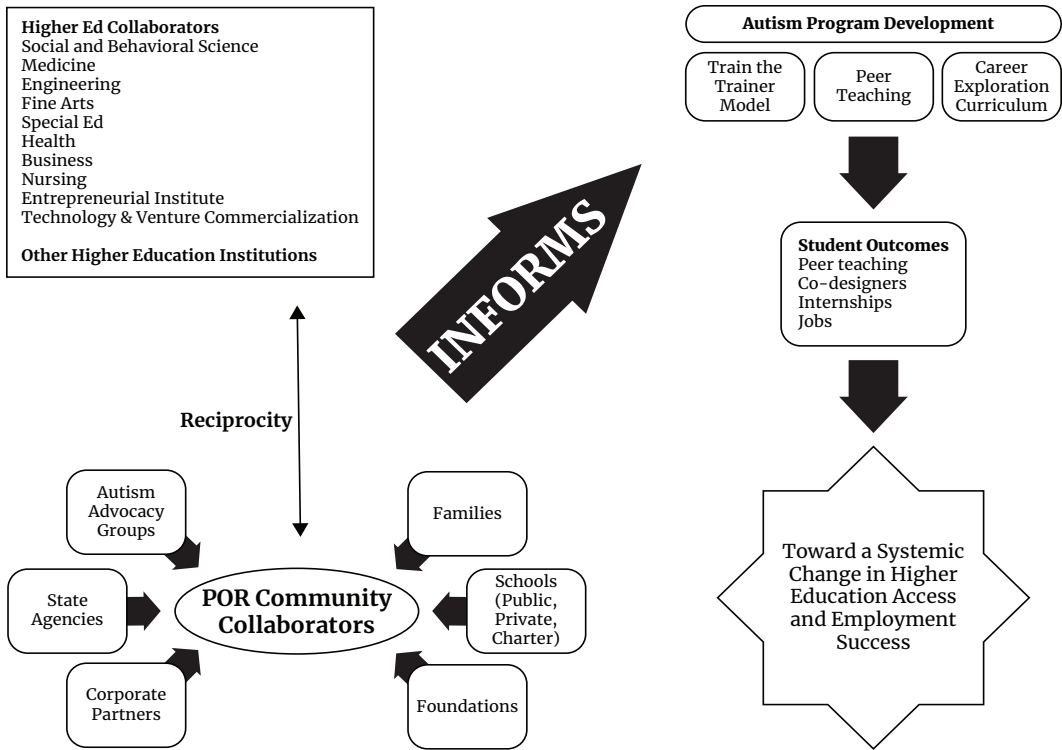
Figure 1: Case Study of Participant-Oriented Research Model

evaluating the program have come from multiple community sources, including focus groups, individual interviews, surveys, observations, and more innovative assessments, including student video evaluations and story narratives for our students with autism. Our research demonstrates that the students developed a sense of accomplishment based on their competence in their 3D modeling skills (Wright et al., 2011; Wright et al., 2012). Students gained confidence and reframed their abilities in this skill- and strengths-based program. Because the program involved family members who witnessed the development of competence, parents, grandparents, and siblings were also able to change their perceptions of the students (Diener et al., 2015; Wright et al., 2011; Wright et al., 2012). Thus, the program positively impacted both students in the program and the expectations of their family members. Although the initial focus of the program was vocational, parents emphasized the importance of the social engagement that occurred (Wright et al., 2011). The focus on social engagement came from the input of parents, who recognized the role that social engagement played; we might not have identified social engagement as an important outcome without the continuous collaboration with family members.

Our peer-to-peer teaching model is also an innovative component of our program (Wright et al., 2019). We have worked with 11 students in paid peer positions across multiple sites. This is an empowering experience for students and is unique in autism and peer-teaching research in that most peer teaching involves neurotypical students teaching students with autism. The peer-to-peer teaching model represents structural changes, in that it provides opportunities for students to gain work experience in the field. In addition, we have a mentoring/expert model where we involve local 3D modeling experts (e.g., architects, construction managers, gaming professionals) to work with our students, providing potential employer/employee education and exposure to autism issues in the workplace.

Our research is also unique in its inclusion of youth with autism as codesigners and evaluators in the development of our technology-based 3D modeling curriculum. These products, although often overlooked in faculty reward systems, are critical to the sustainability of the program, and reflect the role of community partners in demonstrating the impact of the program on real-world teaching practices. In addition to traditional scholarly products, we have hired our students with autism to codevelop

curriculum activities around career exploration themes based on their interests. The students have created the designs associated with our curriculum manuals. These curriculum manuals are constructed around the interests of our students with the input of industry partners' expertise. Our curriculum has been reviewed, evaluated, and revised based on feedback by our local community partners in architecture, gaming, theater, and landscape and interior design.

We have also developed a virtual reality game with our students with autism as codesigners and coevaluators in collaboration with an interdisciplinary team across fine arts, engineering, and social science. To our knowledge, it is the only VR game developed with and for those on the autism spectrum.

POR System-Level Impacts

In addition to the impact on the students, their extended families, and our community partners, POR research also has great promise for system changes. For example, our recently funded research grant, "Developing Tech Talent: Building Utah's Neurodiverse Workforce," focuses on system change for greater higher education access and success for employability in high-demand tech fields that usually require postsecondary degrees. In addition to our university collaborators, our partners include a charter high school for students with autism, a disability employment agency, vocational rehabilitation services, advocacy groups, technology councils, and other state universities (see Figure 1). We are also focused on developing educational materials for higher education (faculty, staff) and employers and coworkers for awareness and acceptance of people with neurodiverse abilities. This series of educational programs is similarly focused on educating the technology community about autism so they can reduce some of the barriers to employment in their workplaces. We educate them about how their employees might be involved in our program through mentoring, career coaching, internships, and potential job placement. This program has the potential to be replicated in other institutions of higher education and partnering companies that are interested in employing individuals on the autism spectrum (with a focus on their unique skills and abilities). This focus expands our most recent research on "insider views" of the challenges of employment through interviews with individuals on the spectrum and supervisors who work with employees with autism (Diener et al., 2020).

POR Sustainability

POR research also has great promise for sustainability for interventions. We have developed a train the trainer model to teach local instructors how to implement our program with fidelity. This model will allow us to scale our program to serve more students and families in more communities. We have trained 10 professionals to implement our program with fidelity. The training starts with an on-site orientation meeting, online training, program implementation and replication (with on-site training), follow-up consultation, and program oversight for quality control.

Entrepreneurship: Creative Funding for POR

This project was selected as a research project for the development of a business plan at our university entrepreneur center. We work with an interdisciplinary group of graduate students (business administration, bioengineering, and finance) to develop and continue to revise a sustainability plan (that includes tuition, scholarships, and agency reimbursement for students with autism). This is an exciting academic venture that applies an entirely different perspective on research. It requires more attention than traditional research to functions such as marketing and business proposals. This plan resulted in the development of the social entrepreneurship startup NeuroVersity (https://neurov.com). NeuroVersity is a trademark registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (2015). In recognition of research overhead costs, a percentage of our income from product sales is set aside for the university, although we are still in the product development stage and not yet revenue generating. This social enterprise has provided graduate student funding and summer employment for our graduate and undergraduate students. We have also secured funding from foundations, advocacy groups, state economic development sources, and industry partners as well as reimbursement for skill training from state disability agencies.

Future Developments

Working with a broad range of stakeholders

can be frustrating because of the inherent delays, compromises, and unforeseen obstacles to progress. However, overcoming these challenges has led to the creation of an innovative educational program valued and sustained by students, families, and community partners. Actively engaging the people we hoped to develop educational programming for has resulted in scholarship that benefits those involved and best serves their strengths and abilities. As our students have transitioned into adulthood, another primary concern has surfaced in the low higher education enrollment rates of students with autism. Our most recent research addresses this important issue.

The POR approach can be a time–consuming and difficult process involving a continuous feedback loop with participants and community partners, and it presents many obstacles to overcome. These obstacles include coordination of meetings, inclusion of stakeholders, communication, time, and competing agendas, resources, and missions, as well as the university reward system that focuses on the impact on academics, rather than on the community.

Some researchers emphasize the ethical approach of involving those you are learning from in the research process (Coons & Watson, 2013). Students on the autism spectrum are the primary stakeholders and most invested in the outcomes. By not including them we marginalize their important role in the research process and may stigmatize them further. Individuals with disabilities are the experts on their own experiences, although these individuals have been largely omitted from research and program development (Coons & Watson, 2013).

A participant–oriented methodological approach has transformed our research perspective and our research agenda, which has as a priority the inclusion of students with autism, their families, and our community partners. In addition to employment issues, students, parents, and industry partners were also interested in access to higher education. Additionally, health care of individuals with autism has been identified as an important issue to our community researchers; thus, our future research will address the needs of youth with autism in the health care setting. This exemplifies how multiple stakeholders, rather than faculty acting unilaterally, determine research questions and goals so that the outcomes are personally meaningful to those involved and to the community.

Summary

The scholarship described here has developed over a period of nearly 10 years. The POR approach is a long, intensive process that involves inviting community partners, students, and families as coresearchers and codesigners. Their voices have enabled scholarship that complements traditional research on individuals with autism. The scholarship described here has empowered students on the autism spectrum and has directly addressed community needs. The voices of our community offer a rich and in–depth examination that can only be captured by intimate research approaches such as POR. POR approaches can also help build community–university relationships that are essential to the survival of higher education. Community partners see firsthand the role that the university plays in improving the quality of life for students with autism while also cocreating knowledge that complements basic research models.

Our research presents insights for future research in the consideration of more inclusiveness of members of the autism community in the research process. By serving as the facilitator of the collaboration, the university can help to drive system change that is sustainable, long term, and relevant to community partners. The knowledge created by this partnership takes both traditional and nontraditional forms that are meaningful to the academy and have direct application to individuals with autism, their families, and the community.

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Coughlin, S. S., Smith, S. A., & Fernández, M. E. (Eds.). (2017). *Handbook of community-based participatory research.* Oxford University Press. 304 pp.

Review by Rosemary Adaji

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) has gained ground in health promotion efforts, particularly those focused on addressing inequities in disadvantaged populations. However, many researchers in the field have yet to fully explore the strengths and insights that CBPR offers for framing and optimizing health solutions. I found the *Handbook of Community-Based Participatory Research* to be a useful resource for guiding such explorations. It provides thoughtful discussion of an extensive range of contexts with evidence-based examples of how health researchers can shift their lenses from an outsider's view to more collaborative approaches to inquiry that promise to increase the value of research products for all partners. The book is edited by Stephen Coughlin, Selina Smith, and Maria Fernández, who have done a laudable job of organizing contributions from several leading researchers into 17 chapters, each expressing the multidimensional nature of collaborations that implement CBPR.

The book focuses on the application of the CBPR framework in public health settings, addressing issues of health disparities and inequities. The first three chapters provide a general overview of the concept and the processes and challenges involved in utilizing CBPR. In Chapter 1, the authors describe CBPR as research driven by equitable partnerships of all parties involved (i.e., academic researchers, organizational representatives, and relevant community members; p. 1). CBPR incorporates strengths and insights from all partners to frame the health problem being investigated and develop sustainable solutions or interventions. This chapter emphasizes the principle of shared decision making between researchers and community members as a major strength of CBPR in addressing health disparities. The authors also note that a shared decision-making process is an important first step that researchers must take in order to establish and sustain trust throughout the re-search process. Overall this chapter provides a concise, easy-to-understand introduction to the CBPR process.

Chapter 2 discusses various methodological considerations for CBPR and evaluation studies specifically addressing issues related to measurement, bias, and validity. Study designs highlighted in this chapter include focus groups, interventions, quasi-experimental designs, and frameworks for dissemination and implementation research (e.g., RE-AIM framework). The authors also make a clear distinction between community-placed research—in which members are not equitable partners—and CBPR, which occurs across a continuum of community-engaged research performed by true collaborative partnerships, further reinforcing the importance of the principle of shared decision making highlighted in Chapter 1.

Chapter 3 provides a nice follow-up to the methodology discussions highlighted in the second chapter. In this chapter the authors note that CBPR is a process of using specific research methods and methodology in community research. These methods involve activities like approaching communities, participating in community activities, and building community trust. As the authors note, such procedures are often not considered adequately rigorous when assessed against standards of traditional forms of scientific research. As a result, individuals engaged in such work often face challenges that the authors discuss in three domains: challenges in the ethical review process, challenges for promotion and tenure, and challenges in implementing specific phases of a CBPR project. The authors conclude with recommendations that encourage more publications detailing the context and processes of CBPR implementation to advance collective understanding of how best to evaluate CBPR methods.

For the remainder of the book, contributions focus on the application of CBPR in diverse settings to address public health concerns,

beginning with Chapter 4, which focuses on the significance of place, location, and distance and their roles in contextualizing health problems. I did not find this chapter an easy read because it contained unfamiliar technical terms, which may pose a challenge for others, including individuals who are new to the field. Ethical issues are the focus of Chapter 5. In terms of the flow of the volume, it might have been more appropriate to include this chapter before Chapter 4. Addressing ethical considerations of CBPR immediately after Chapter 3's discussion of methodological challenges would have better rounded out the volume's introduction and general overview of CBPR. With the exception of Chapter 5, other chapters were explicit in providing information and examples of how CBPR has been used to reduce health disparities and promote health. In Chapter 6, the authors discuss the importance of working with faith-based organizations (FBOs) in order to build community members' readiness and capacity for CBPR collaborations. This is important because values and belief systems play an important role in shaping individuals' lifestyles, which in turn affects their health. The authors note that FBOs are useful in enhancing sustainable evidence-based health interventions.

It was particularly interesting to see discussions about ethnic, minority, and immigrant groups in Chapters 7 and 8. Traditional approaches to research tend to ignore the insights that diverse groups bring from their distinctive cultures. As a result, there is a gap in the understanding of social determinant factors affecting health in these groups. The two chapters provide case studies of the application of CBPR methodologies with Asian American and Native American groups, and with Latino immigrant populations. Considering issues of representativeness and generalizability in research, especially in the United States, these examples provide evidence-based practices that have real-world impact, as well as guidelines for considerations from which traditional researchers can gain insights when conducting research that incorporates diverse groups of participants.

The authors of Chapters 9 through 15 contribute useful discussions about utilizing CBPR approaches to address the prevention of specific diseases or health concerns: cardiovascular diseases and diabetes mellitus, infant mortality, colorectal cancer, breast and cervical cancer screening, environmental exposures, HIV, and social exposures like interpersonal violence. These chapters typically open by giving context to the burden of the disease and risk factors, highlighting existing preventive or intervention measures, then providing explanations of how CBPR methodology can be incorporated to address the problems, supported by evidence-based case studies. In addition, each case study gives a detailed description of the process of engaging the diverse partners/stakeholders who are involved, as well as challenges encountered and how they were overcome. The strengths and results of equitable partnerships and shared decision-making echo throughout. Overall, the flow of content made these chapters an easy read.

One major improvement in the advancement of health care research is the introduction of the translational approach—the concept of improving the understanding and application of research findings from clinical science to practice-based research in order to improve public health. In Chapter 16, the authors note that the lack of positive relationships between academic community centers and potential community partners poses a barrier to the effective translation of research to practice. However, they highlight a program, the Clinical and Translational Science Awards program, a U.S. National Institutes of Health initiative that supports activities that engage communities in health studies and clinical research. They suggest that researchers may find it worthwhile to investigate the benefits of this program and how it can support their work, noting that it promises "paradigm-shifting community-engaged, translational research aimed at improving health and alleviating suffering in diverse communities" (p. 251).

Finally, in the concluding 17th chapter, Steven Coughlin highlights important trends evident throughout the book. He summarizes key points from each chapter, reiterating the overall strengths and insights described in Chapter 1 that CBPR offers in promoting sustainable evidence-based approaches to health promotion. In addition, he identifies gray areas and possible future directions for CBPR. This was a good way to end the book, inciting the reader's curiosity to want to further explore its potential.

With prevailing conversations about health

promotion and disease prevention research requiring transdisciplinary collaborations, CBPR approaches introduce a new paradigm that adds value to the conversation. This theme was evident throughout the book. It is particularly useful to see how much emphasis is placed on equitable collaborations and the benefits of academic researchers' shifting their views from individuals as research subjects to partners who can improve the efficacy of the research products and processes through democratization of knowledge production. Chapter 11 outlines an example of how the efficacy of an intervention for reducing racial disparities in colorectal cancer screening was enhanced using the CBPR framework. The example nicely showcases the advantage of using the bottom-up approach where the participation of community members is embedded in each research component, from identifying the health concern through the dissemination of research findings. This is just one of many examples of successful evidence-based CBPR referenced in the book, and the concise visualization of the distinction between top-down and bottom-up approaches offered in this chapter (p. 175) makes it a worthy mention.

As a nascent scholar in the field of epidemiology, with a keen interest in CBPR approaches, I have a sincere appreciation for this book. I recommend this book as an introductory read for any practitioner who is interested in population health research. Even though the book comprises contributions from several authors, they seem to be in unison in the way they present their topics and several issues that they highlight as important to note in the work of CBPR. The editors deserve credit for having crafted such an even volume. More importantly, the authors come from varying backgrounds. Therefore, the call for a paradigm shift in thinking about health disparities research is not a reflection of a bias expressed from a specific standpoint, but rather represents views grounded in evidence from work done in transdisciplinary settings. It was

also helpful to see examples of challenges and opportunities that may be faced by researchers engaged in CBPR, and those who may be considering a career that incorporates this framework specifically, with regard to promotion and career advancement.

There are a couple ways in which the *Handbook of Community-Based Participatory Research* might have been improved. From the title of the book, for example, it is not evident that the content caters exclusively to the public health audience. Considering that it is a handbook and that CBPR applies in other fields, it might have been useful for the editors to explicitly state this focus in the title so that it would more effectively attract scholars and practitioners of public health. Second, the case studies may have emphasized racial health disparities at a cost of better attending to other dimensions of disparities like socioeconomic status and location (although Chapter 4 offers some insights on disparities in geographical contexts). Health disparities and inequities transcend racial and ethnic diversities. For example, if one assesses disaggregated data, one will find that disparities can occur at various structural levels in any population. Therefore, defining disparities and disadvantaged populations primarily in terms of race/ethnicity somewhat limits the story of the strength of CBPR. Even so, this critique does not detract from the book's solid conceptualization of how the CBPR framework can be translated depending on the areas of interest and the lessons learned from the case studies.

Overall, this book is a worthwhile read, and in addition to being a particularly useful resource for public health researchers and community members challenged by health disparities, it should also be incorporated in academia as either a required or supplemental reading for programs that teach health promotion, disease prevention, and systems thinking.

About the Reviewer

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Hartman, E., Kiely, R., Boettcher, C., & Friedrichs, J. (2018). *Community-based global learning: The theory and practice of ethical engagement at home and abroad.* **Stylus Publishing. 288 pp.**

Review by Alan H. Bloomgarden and Kirk Lange

This latest offering from Eric Hartman and his colleagues documents and extends the comprehensive and thoughtfully critical treatment of ethical challenges to responsible, reciprocal, and just community engagement emerging from this important subfield of community engagement scholarship. Crucially, however, *Community-Based Global Learning* carries the reader forward, past purposeful critique to more reflexive, reciprocal/solidaristic practice that is theoretically grounded and informed by now many years of practice/praxis. The volume leverages a mix of scholarly work (surveying the field and highlighting relevant theoretical frameworks), applied case studies, and practitioner guidance. In doing so, it pulls forward not only individual readers, but the field as a whole, by bringing two inconsistently connected subfields—community engagement and international education—into new productive conversation. This approach breaks down the binaries that are reflected as much in our respective offices and titles as in our institutions' frequent curricular and cocurricular distinctions between "the global" and "the local," something we will return to below. We increasingly find these divides to obscure the commonalities and intersections in our work to prepare students and colleagues for building responsible, ethical, and reciprocal collaborations in local contexts everywhere, and to neglect the urgency to design programs that encourage critical self- and structural analyses that formally examine history, power, and identity in both contexts.

Community-Based Global Learning has become not only a resource for us, but a conduit to advance conversations that dialogically connect our pedagogies, programs, and praxis. Reading the volume, for example, reminded us of how difficult yet essential it is to intentionally and effectively balance the cautionary with the constructive in our work. In his first year teaching a leadership development course for undergraduate interns serving as course and partnership liaisons to community agencies, one of us recalls making the well-intentioned yet ultimately flawed choice to bluntly challenge students to rethink their conceptual framework for community entry as built upon assumptions of benevolence, virtue, and assistance by distributing Ivan Illich's (1968/1994) widely employed cautionary tract "To Hell With Good Intentions." Although broadly useful as a way to open up critical conversation about these matters (and one recommended by this volume's authors too), no one who has employed this text with undergraduate service-learners will be surprised to hear that, absent ready and thoughtful responses to the question of "now what?", this critique can leave students deflated, frightened to leave campus, and unequipped to overcome the existential challenges of entering new spaces to apply themselves to social change, even as they may emerge with new or enriched and valuable critical lenses.

By contrast, the other of us finds the cautions that the volume offers to be essential preparatory work for students getting ready to enter communities across gaps of power and "culture." The principles and practices of "critical service-learning" and "critical global citizenship," such as self-reflexivity and cultural humility, that Hartman et al. emphasize, are crucial because they work against messages—and, indeed, an industry—that too often reinforces assumptions

that good intentions are enough. Of course, differentials of power and privilege, and the possibilities for further instantiating those, clearly exist in the domestic context. But when political borders are crossed and students and institutions become implicated in the U.S. role in the world, there are particular implications. As the authors note, global learning, in both study abroad and service-learning, has often been critiqued for being instrumentalized (e.g., for promoting national interests abroad, for credentialing students) and neocolonial. When global service-learning programs imply that good intentions and a U.S. education are enough to effect change across borders, they introduce opportunities to reify power differentials that echo practices of U.S. exceptionalism. So one of us remains more frequently concerned with putting the brakes on than worried about freaking students out. Our own encounter with the challenge of balancing caution with encouragement in this work has positioned us to truly welcome *Community-Based Global Learning* as a focal point and contribution to an emerging field of integrated critique and practical responses to historically challenging preparatory work, program design, and productive postexperience reflection.

Community-Based Global Learning invites us to think through the ways our subfields within experiential learning, and the positioning/positionality of our students vis-à-vis local and global (nondomestic) communities, create possibilities for nearby and distant learning and engagement. Importantly, by surveying the theories and practices of our subfields and their intersections, Hartman et al. provide shared terrain for thinking together. Even by explicitly analogizing our subfields in name—community-based learning (CBL) and community-based global learning (CBGL)—the authors provide common vocabularies and understandings. In turn, this creates new openings for us to communicate with colleagues about the commonality of our work and to provide a foundation for shared projects within our institutions. Perhaps most significantly, CBGL signals to our subfields, our students, and our colleagues that work with communities is always *local*, whether the community is nearby or distant. So, too, can we recognize that local communities have extralocal—often global—connections through economic, cultural, technological, and other processes that influence but do not fully determine local context. This ana-

lytic can also help students as they prepare to learn from and engage with those communities.

As directors of sister experiential learning programs at Mount Holyoke College, we worked closely together for several years, across our respective domains as facilitators of local and international experiential learning collaborations, to deepen our institution's practices for preparing students for global citizenship. In that time, we served as thought leaders and lead implementers for a faculty–staff team designing and beginning to assess learning from student pathways that connect curricular and cocurricular learning and engagement in international and domestic settings, under the umbrella of Mount Holyoke's Global/Local initiatives. Our efforts focused upon two things. First, we worked to build the educational scaffolding (curricular and cocurricular) to facilitate meaningful and developmentally appropriate sequences for fostering global and local engagement that are legible, navigable, and accessible, not only by the most self-initiated of our students, but also by the broader student population. We have presented about these emerging initiatives with colleagues from Smith College and the global education nonprofit Omprakash at national gatherings (Bloomgarden et al., 2019; Lange et al., 2013). Second, we worked steadily to enhance the delivery of research-informed early academic/preinternship preparatory guidance, planning, and skills development, and postinternship/advanced experiential integrative analytic and reflective practices by our offices, by other programs, and, most important, by faculty in classrooms and student advising efforts.

Among other benefits from reading this volume, we have reaped very practical learnings. Foremost, and especially thanks to the analyses grounded in the well-constructed literature reviews in Chapters 1 and 2, "Defining Community-Based Global Learning" and "Seeking Global Citizenship," we now have both more sophisticated and more specific, well-defined terms and learning objectives on which we can build curricular frameworks and student development assessment strategies for these global/local trajectories. A new course on which we collaborated during spring 2019 built upon these efforts further. This course, Engaging for Social Impact, was conceived to enhance student preparation

for global/local learning and engagement, and it employs these and other principles, best practices, and resources from this growing body of research-based pragmatic guidance.

Here is one immediate example. Chapter 2's exploration of the idea of what it takes to conceptualize oneself as a "global citizen" includes the exhortation that "CBGL practice . . . compels educators, practitioners, and theorists to join in this dialogue with our students. . . . As they interrogate their personal biographies, so should we" (p. 39). This is partly about ensuring our approach to programming as practitioners is, and remains, reflexive and responsive to ever-evolving conditions, concerns, and aspirations of our students and partners. But as the authors imply, it is also a pedagogical strategy with enormous potential. In the first meeting of our Engaging for Social Impact course, launched in partnership with Omprakash to prepare a cohort of students for upcoming summer and year-long local and international internships, we engaged as instructors in an interactive, modeling discussion of our biographies. We did this with intentionality together as coinstructors to explicitly encourage students to explore identity and biography with each other. The exercise created a supportive context for students to follow with their own candid and productive self-reflection and exchanges with each other that were unusually rich, provided strong grounding for practices of introspection and interrogation of motives and histories as part of thinking about community entry, and have served in the long run to inform and enhance class discussion dynamics.

This book also more generally advances what we see to be the longer term project of the subfield of community engagement scholarship: to reframe the conceptualization of global citizenship education from very northern and perhaps even North American–centric origins, imbued with ideas of expansive "exposure" and "horizon broadening" through international cultural exchange and travel. The book moves readers toward a breakdown and dissolution of dichotomies including here/there, north/south, us/them, and of course, global/local. It's surprising, for example, to take a fresh look through the conceptualization of their philosophical approach as "fair trade learning." Where and how are, or could be, our local approaches to engaging partners for service and learning conceptualized in the justice and equity frameworks of fair trade? How do we move from thinking about the "disruption" that we seek to facilitate from community engagement as realizations of analogous yet parallel analyses concerning global and local phenomena, toward creating fluid, integrative understandings of global processes as linked, interconnected? One of the benefits from this integrative approach could be better interrogation of globalization, in both its expansive and diverse effects and manifestations, and its monistic, pervasive effects.

The authors provide both strong theoretical grounding rooted in significant professional experience, and valuable practical advice in Chapters 5 and 6, focusing respectively on "Community-Driven Partnerships" and "Immersive Community-Based Global Learning Program Design." Like them, we too are both attracted to and compelled by the concept of "Free Trade Learning" (FTL). Among the many strengths of FTL, as the authors point out (p. 128), is that the framework moves from high-level principles to concrete guidelines for practice (including a rubric). Through the GlobalSL meetings and other venues, the authors and their collaborators have been helping establish an array of good practice guidelines—from ethical practice in short-term health placements to the position against orphanages, as well as principles such as "cultural humility" and reflexivity. (As one would expect, the authors also rightly give credit to the significant number of allied organizations, thinkers, and movements doing this work.) This book is highly effective at consolidating these ideas and staking out multiple guideposts for the (sub)field(s).

We also appreciate the invitation in the volume's closing chapter to think of CBGL as not "reforming," but rather "preforming." The idea is to see higher education as a space for prefigurative (political) work to imagine and enact new possibilities (with organizations like Omprakash and Amizade as exemplars), rather than just labor against practices and structures that we understand to be nonemancipatory (e.g., orphanage tourism, nonaccreditation of experiential learning). However, we would also argue that the critiques and labor *against* remain crucial in decolonizing the U.S. academy. This is partly a matter of understanding where and how practices and programs of study for students challenge historically

colonial narratives and extensively neoliberal and commercial relations across the socioeconomic divides separating students, campuses, and destination communities. We also encourage maintaining focus upon critiquing the very ideas about where knowledge is created and by whom, and recognizing they are still deeply informed by historically elitist, racialized, and frequently exclusionary understandings that shape practices of reward and recognition within the academy.

As a guide through this and other knotty challenges that remain, and that will emerge, within our work together, we are grateful for *Community-Based Global Learning*. We hope it will also provide a touchstone to support and provoke conversations on other campuses and even with community partners. We look forward to the wider conversations in our subfields that can foster an expanded community of practice and a broadened learning community that work toward frameworks and modes that are progressively more ethical, reciprocal, and emancipatory.

About the Reviewers

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Shumer, R. (Ed.). (2017). *Where's the wisdom in service-learning?* Information Age Publishing. 204 pp.

Review by Monica M. Kowal

I n *Where's the Wisdom in Service-Learning?*, Robert Shumer and a dozen or so of his colleagues share with readers, through personal accounts, the wisdom garnered during their early experiences as service-learning practitioners. The purpose of this volume, as stated in the opening chapter, is to share their collective wisdom with the next generation of professionals in the field so that we might "apply this wisdom to ensure that service learning is a viable program and a thriving initiative that will continue to accomplish its goals of social change and community improvement" (p. viii).

The challenge in writing a collection that aims to serve as a beacon for future practitioners is the sheer volume of wisdom—in the form of rigorous research and applied practice—that has been generated since the time about which the authors are writing. The majority of the case studies within this text reflect on programs launched in the mid to late 1960s. The authors do little to take into account that, since their heyday of launching service-learning initiatives, more than 50 peer-reviewed journals have been established within a wide variety of disciplines that either focus entirely upon or give intellectual space to service-learning as a pedagogical practice, a field of research, and a global movement. Additionally, hundreds of higher education institutions and K–12 school districts now embrace the practice of service-learning within their programs. There are hundreds of books on the topic and dozens of organizations and associations that support service-learning and related community engagement practices. In short, a great deal of wisdom has been generated over the past 50 years, and the field is continuously changing in ways that reflect new generations, new academic cultures, and changing communities.

Suffice to say, I was skeptical about how one more book dedicated to the reflections of service-learning's "early pioneers" (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hoppe & Speck, 2004; Stanton et al.,1999) could compare to the plethora of current literature on the subjects of service-learning pedagogy, civic engagement, and the institutionalization of community engagement. Although there are moments of illumination nestled within these narratives, this compendium of reflections may be best understood as a historic record of the philosophy, strategies, and values of the authors. As Shumer states in the opening paragraph, the book was inspired by "the realization that many of us are getting a lot older and that our ability to live, to share, and to interact is diminishing and/or declining" (p.vii).

Although the format and focus of each chapter varies according to the author— some are short memoirs about their introduction to service-learning, others are essentially annotated vitae of the author's career—there are several consistent themes throughout. First, each author talks about how they "stumbled" into service-learning, usually as a result of being a college student or recent graduate looking for work and finding opportunities that mixed their developing and deepening involvement with the civil rights movement. Second, each author spends significant space outlining their resume during the early part of the service-learning movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Third, each of them describes how their service-learning initiatives thrived at a time when local, state, and federal governments were investing significant funding into programs that utilized service-learning (or service-learning-like) programs. Fourth, very few of the authors cite any sources published after 2010.

The first chapter chronicles the history and precursors of service-learning—lore that any of us who do research in service-learning or contribute to the field through writing journal articles or books are already familiar with: Dewey, Gramsci, Tocqueville, Kolb, Oak Ridge, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Southern Regional Training Board, the Association for Experiential

Education (AEE), Campus Compact, and the Corporation for National and Community Service are all present. The problem, however, is that this definitive history of service-learning ends in 2007. Has no wisdom been generated in these past 13 years that could have contributed to the "wisdom" therein? Indeed, much of the narrative is significantly dated, which poses challenges in that the authors and the editor fail to include the missing link: What is it about this compendium of wisdom that still informs current practice? What in current practice suggests roots in these early years of the field?

Following this retelling of the field's history, each chapter is written by an individual contributor who begins by explaining at what point in time and during what life experience they adopted service-learning as a practice in their academic work. Although there is certainly value in each of these vignettes (for example, Chapter 11, "The Wisdom of Bobby Hackett," on the Bonner program, and Chapter 8, in which Terry Pickeral gives salient advice for building networks and finding advocates for service-learning in local and state governments), there is a lack of uniformity in their purpose. One would expect a consistent thread that binds the chapters together, but what lies herein amounts to a tapestry of disjointed narratives framed and colored by the varying perspectives of each individual author. Even more so, there is some indication that—along with no recommended structure for each reflection—very little was done in terms of editing and feedback for revision (the use of the word "Negro" is but one glaring example) that would have contextualized these narratives and offered some acknowledgment that the United States is now a very different place. Not only are the narratives dated in terms of their reference to the field, many of them are also outdated in that they fail to associate the challenges that racial division, political unrest, and systemic poverty played in the formation of the field to date, and indeed in their respective authors' formation as service-learning practitioners at that time.

One example appears in the third chapter, in which William Ramsay, former dean of labor and vice president of student life at Berea College, relates the wisdom he garnered at various "work colleges" that had a labor requirement for all students. This labor requirement was evidently meant to equalize across the socioeconomic divide between privileged students and those who came from far more meager means. Twice Ramsay relays stories that he frames as laboratory experiences for wealthier students, but in his lack of critical reflection he fails to see how systems of oppression can be perpetuated (and in this case, were perpetuated) even in the most well-conceived educational experiences. In one instance, Ramsay tells of a student who, in responding to visitors asking why the poor students serve as janitors while the wealthier students work in community outreach, says: "You don't understand! The work of the student who is cleaning my residence hall is doing community service. If he didn't do his job, I couldn't do mine" (p. 60). The second instance comes when Ramsay tells of another student who, when assigned to the bathroom cleaning crew, protests her assignment, claiming that at home she had "servants who did such things." The student later observed that the other girls took pride in their work (apparently chatting joyously about the effectiveness of certain cleaning products and methods). "She went back to college and worked enthusiastically," Ramsay writes, "eventually becoming the student manager of all the cleaning crews. She said it changed her life" (p. 65).

I'm sure it did.

Chapter 5, penned by Timothy K. Stanton of the Haas Center at Stanford University, begins with promise but, like the other chapters, concludes with the sharp timbre of displeasure with where he sees the field is heading. Stanton briefly reflects on his genesis as a community organizer—not unlike most White college students who were thrust into their developmental years amid remarkable civil unrest in the United States—and touches on the ongoing debate over the means and ends of college education. Stanton posits that there is still a divide between the traditional view of "college" versus educating for the "real world." His recollection of having a professor disapprove of using social issues as fodder for a writing assignment still rings true today. As much latitude as we give students today to use their personal experiences and political issues as acceptable material for essays, are there still ways in which we continue to use curriculum, student learning outcomes, and other forms of evidence of learning to create proverbial straight-cut ditches of all these free, meandering brooks (Thoreau,

2009, p. 42)? Despite this early experience, Stanton persevered and ascended in status within the field by helping Stanford University develop its Center for Public Service and contributing to the establishment of Campus Compact. It is ironic, then, that he concludes his chapter by lamenting the "pedagogification" of service-learning, arguing that the process "favors the academy's value of student development over community development goals" (p. 90). He further claims that he and colleagues from this era have come to wonder whether current practitioners and scholars are more concerned with

> taking steps on a career ladder developing in higher education, rather than as institutional community organizers and change agents sitting in institutional margins with feet in both campuses and communities, which is how many of the field's so-called early pioneers viewed themselves. (p. 90)

It is difficult to ignore the subtext here: I built the ladder, but how dare the next generation of scholars and practitioners endeavor to climb it.

In Chapter 6, Jane Szutu Permaul chronicles her time at the University of California–Los Angeles before segueing into a call for more public policy and policy research connecting the work of service-learning in higher education to local, state, and federal policies. Although Permaul's argument is not fully fleshed out, one can guess what she is stating. Given that over the past 30-plus years many public universities have spent a great deal of time constructing experiential learning programs and requiring their students to participate in them—service-learning being one such type of experience—it would make sense that state departments of higher education would invest in policy research about the need for such programs and their impact on the broader community. Similarly, Chapter 7 by James Kielsmeier offers an outline of his career, including the creation of the National Youth Leadership Council, and ends with a heartfelt plea to reinstate federal funding for Learn and Serve America, the federal program that funded service-learning for more than one million students in K–12 schools, community-based organizations, and higher education institutions for 21 years until it was eliminated by the House Appropriations Committee in 2011.

In Chapter 8, Terry Pickeral, former executive director of the National Center for Learning and Citizenship at the Education Commission of the States, echoes Permaul's stance that as considerable growth and adoption of service-learning have taken place in secondary and higher education, more effort should be made to create and adopt policies at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure that these practices are sustained and continue to positively impact students and communities. Chapter 10 by Cathryn Berger Kaye outlines how, when faced with a lack of curricular resources for using service-learning, she developed her own to great success. And Chapter 11 by Bobby Hackett chronicles his ascension to overseeing one of the most successful and sustainable civic engagement programs in the United States, the Bonner Scholars Program, and makes concrete and achievable recommendations for "fully realizing higher education's potential for preparing civic leaders and playing an active role in community problem solving" (p. 166). In the final chapter, Shumer states: "There was no master plan. Only a series of chance occurrences that connected people with a feel and sense of what it means to serve others and to learn from those service experiences" (p. 176)—those who went from "happenstance to happening."

Unfortunately, those of us who are active and deeply committed to sustaining this work today know that we can no longer wait upon chance to enact change. The field is in a different phase than it was 50 years ago. The world is in a different state than it was 50 years ago. Our students are different than students were 50 years ago. Wisdom alone cannot be used as a finish line. Perhaps the most useful piece of wisdom that emanates from this volume is the need to, as Terry Pickeral states,

> cultivate the next generation of advocates ensuring long-term and large-scale implementation and sustainability. Too often, we rely on the initial champions . . . and fail to move beyond them. This is a delicate dance, but a necessary one if service-learning is to thrive in our schools and communities. (p. 124)

Hear, hear, my friend. Hear, hear.

About the Reviewer

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