

# [Introduction and historical experiences of the community](https://assignbuster.com/introduction-and-historical-experiences-of-the-community/)

IntroductionCommunity-based participatory research (CBPR)as an investigative approach is gaining prominence in the field of research. Allport(1947) defines CBPR as a collaborative approach on the social, structural andthe physical environment whereby the community members, organizationalrepresentatives, and researchers are equitable partners in all aspects of the researchprocess. Kahl (1953) emphasized that CBPR seeks to understand critical issuesof a community by engaging the community in research directed to address theirsocial concerns. This paper reviews the historical context of CBPR with a focuson the contributions of different researchers on the development of thisproblem-solving orientation. Basicprinciples of CBPRIn the works of Deshler & Selener (1991), theCBPR approach is founded on nine principles. ·      Itrecognizes the community as a unit of identity: this principle emphasizes on the significance of a community as the identification mark for the people and theimportance of this identification as a starting point of CBPR (Deshler &Selener, 1991).

·      Itbuilds on the strengths and resources of the community: this principle stipulates that members of communities have a wealth ofknowledge and experiences from their cultural and historical lens Deshler &Selener (1991). Therefore, instead of trying to understand the communityproblems and challenges from a deficit mentality, understanding the cultural, local and historical experiences of the community can provide important insiderinformation that is not attainable by a scientific researcher.·      Itpromotes co-learning among research partners: thisprinciple emphasizes the importance of creating a reciprocating relationship amongpartners in order to engage all parties in the exchange of knowledge, skills, and capacity.

This helps the partners toappreciate that each partner brings a wealth of information and experiencesbeneficial to the partnership process.·      Itfocuses to achieve a balance between research and action that are of mutualbenefit to science and community: this principle emphasizeson the need of establishing relationships that are of mutual benefit to allpartners. It stresses the significance of contributions needed from allpartners and integration of this knowledge for the benefit of all partners.·      Facilitatesa collaborative and equitable partnership in all phases of the research process: due to the inequalities between a research and the community partners, thisprinciple stresses on the need for a shared accountability in decision-makingprocess across all stages of a research process. It also echoes on theimportance of addressing the imbalances through trustful and mutuallyrespectful relationships focused on anempowering process that leads to information sharing and joint decision-making.

·      Itputs emphasis on the relevance of community-defined problems: this principle focuses on a research approach to community problems withrelevant, timely and inclusive data. ·      Itemploys a cyclical and iterative process to develop and maintain community and researchpartnerships: this principle states that the partnershipsshould be iterative in nature and that there is need to review each stage of aresearch process where necessary. This principle ensures that all engagementsare captured and the action taken is appropriate for all partners involved.·      Itdisseminates the knowledge learned from the CBPR to all partners involved: this principle stresses the importance of sharing research findings in arespectful and accessible way with the community and other stakeholders. ·      Itrequires a long-term commitment from all partners: this principle highlights the importance of keeping an eye on thesustainability and enforcement of the findings of the CBPR process. ParticipantsAnd Historical Achievements In Action ResearchKurtLewin 1940s: Developed The Field TheoryIn 1946, Lewin coined the term action researchand created a field theory rule (Kahl, 1953). In his theory, Lewin focused oninterpersonal conflict, individual personalities, and situational variables (Price, Lewin, & Cartwright, 1951).

Lewin & Cartwright (1975) furtherestablished that behavior is the result of individual interaction with theenvironment so the physical and social field people find themselves ininfluences their psychological state.  Inother words, a person behavior is a function of the environment that exists atthe time of occurrence (Lewin & Cartwright, 1975). Furthermore, the field theory also found thatan analysis of a situation could only start when the situation is representedas a whole; this means that the entire situation must be considered foranalysis (Lewin & Cartwright, 1975). This theory was furthered by Argyris(1997) arguing that a person’s life consists of multiple distinct spacesincluding the total field, the goal and the forces that push the person towards the goal.

This theory also includes thatthe idea that every person has a different experience for a situation whichalso means that the dynamic field is constantly changing. Nonetheless, Argyris(1997) emphasized that every part of the total field is important and must beaccounted for no matter how pointless it may seem to be. Field theory defined action research as aprocess of creating knowledge about an organization while trying to change it(Allport, 1947). According to Price et. al. (1951), the field theory advocated for workplace democracy where workers affected bythe organizational problems were engaged in the decision-makingprocess to find a practical solution.

The field theory found that involving workersin decision-making could increase productivity and the works of Price et al.(1951) who argued that involving the community in addressing their own problemscould create a systematic and rigorous inquiry seconded this (Price et al., 1951). PauloFreire 1970-1980s: Developed The Problem-Solving Method Of EducationAccording to Betz (1979), Freire’srevolutionary pedagogy is founded on a deep love and humility before the poorand oppressed people and respect to their common sense. Freire education themefocused on the local people’s knowledge (Dicker, 1990). Consequently, Hochheimer(1992) viewed education as a bridge between participants in a dialogue thatfeatures a reflexive, reciprocal and socially relevant exchange rather than aunilateral action of one individual for the benefit of the other. In an educational context, the educator should recede into the background as a merefacilitator (Dicker, 1990). Ball (1992) reviewed Freire’s model andconceived teaching as enacting a clear authority rather than being authoritarian.

He also argued that ateacher is not neutral but should intervene in educational situations to helplearners overcome the challenges and learn to think critically (Ball, 1992). Freiredisputed the idea of reducing learners to the status of passive objects to beacted upon by teachers through banking form of education to community membersparticipating in the inquiry. According to Dicker (1990), banking education isa means of domination by the capitalist class. A goodeducation system involves creating the pedagogical conditions for genuinedialogue (Freire, 1997).

He, therefore, developed a ‘ Problem-posing Method’ ofeducation whereby educators become co-investigators of knowledge instead of imposingtheir views on learners (Freire, 1997). Day (1995) points that theproblem-Solving method invites the oppressed to explore their reality as a transformablesituation rather than an inescapable stasis. This way, it is possible forlearners to think of a new and different reality that can lead to socialtransformation (Day, 1995). RobertChambers’ 1980-1990s: Advocated For Rapid Rural Appraisal In 1983, Robert Chambers coined the term rapidrural appraisal (RRA) in attempt to describe the techniques that could reversethe learning methods to allow people to learn directly (Chambers, 1983). Thisapproach owed much to the Freirean theme that argued that poor and oppressedpeople should be enabled to analyze their own reality (Parsons, 1984).

In 1985, the first international conferencewas held in Thailand to share experiences relating to rapid rural appraisal. Thisconference was followed by a rapid usage of methods that allowed rural peopleto examine their own problems, set their goals and monitoring their ownachievements (Reeve, 1995). According to Chambers (1983), participatory rural appraisal brought decentralization andempowerment. This paradigm devolved resources and discretion while at the sametime turned back the inward and upward flows of resources and people (Chambers, 1994). Equally, the poor and oppressed were able totake control of their lives and secure a better livelihood. Because ofdecentralization and empowerment, the local communities were able to exploitdiverse complexities of their own problems and adapt to the rapid change (Salas& Tillmann, 1998). By the mid-1990s, rapid rural appraisal (RRA) had beenreplaced by other terms like participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatorylearning and action (PLA) all focusing on the local people’s capabilities(Cantrell et al., 1993).

ConclusionAction research has gone through multiplerevolutions from the time it was coined by Lewin in the mid-1940s. The firstmilestone by Lewin was the development of the field theory rule, which statesthat behavior is a function of the current field at the time of occurrence. Italso states that analysis of a conditionbegins with the situation represented as a whole. In the mid-1970s, Freiredeveloped the second milestone known as the problem-solving method of education. In this method, Freire pointed that educatorsshould be co-investigators of knowledge and should not impose their views onlearners. This model invites the oppressed to explore their reality as atransformable situation rather than an unthinkable situation.

Lastly, Robertchambers developed rapid rural appraisal seeking to bring aboutdecentralization and empowerment of the local communities. With a participatory rural appraisal, communities areable to exploit the diverse complexities of their own problems and adapt to therapid change.