



IJIDI: Book Review

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Methods for Community-Based Research: Advancing Educational Justice and Epistemic Rights by María Paula Ghiso (of Teachers College, Columbia University, USA) and Gerald Campano (of University of Pennsylvania, USA) is a timely and essential guide for researchers committed to promoting educational justice through collaborative inquiry in community-based contexts. The authors, renowned scholars in literacy studies and critical ethnography, draw upon over a decade of community-based partnership to provide ethical and practical guidance for conducting research that centers the epistemic rights and interests of cultural/heritage-based communities.

Methods for Community-Based Research reports on the innovative methodology the authors created for community-based research in heritage-based local communities over time. Chock-full of their best practices over a decade-long participatory research project, Ghiso and Campano established their Community-Based Research in Education (CBRE) model in a cultural/heritage-based community in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (United States). The book's nine chapters explain CBRE's decolonized approach to centering communities in participatory research as a means for community members to create, interrogate, and narrate their experiences and initiatives regarding what research looks like and what it means for their community to be a learning space and place.

This book is a meticulously crafted roadmap for reimagining the research process as a tool for advancing epistemic justice. This text is essential for library and information science practitioners and scholars who seek to work with community groups to enhance information services, create impactful programs, and engage in meaningful research. Ghiso and Campano challenge conventional notions of who constitutes a researcher, emphasizing that those often relegated to the position of "research subjects" - namely, students, families, and communities of color - possess the knowledge, right, and capacity to actively shape investigations and interventions aimed at fostering more equitable educational environments.

Essentially, *Methods for Community-Based Research* is a manifesto that challenges the long-held roles of researchers and learners in a community. Its nine chapters explain the new paradigm that the CBRE method offers, with reflective questions at the end of each chapter for readers to reflect upon their own responses to the narrative of the text. The book prioritizes ways in which community members are the experts in asking the questions to be explored and teaching what research is.

Chapter One explains that CBRE's purpose is to transform the service aspect of community-based research. Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework and steps for operationalizing the CBRE.

Chapter Three unpacks the role of the scholar in community-based partnerships. Ghiso and Campano explain that there is no static template for community-based research, primarily when centering local knowledge and heritage. Instead, the CBRE model introduces a framework of virtues that researchers can consider when reflecting on their intentions and objectives for partnering with community groups. Those virtues, critical empathy, epistemic pluralism, and solidarity, are the paradigms through which scholars can build relationships with community members when negotiating power dynamics. Ghiso and Campano acknowledge that scholars have a complicit positionality as representatives of inherently inequitable power systems in higher education. The authors remind us that their model, the CBRE, "is about people thinking and researching together across social and institutional boundaries to generate knowledge about collective educational flourishing" (p. 47).

Chapter Four opens with a vignette of Campano's critical inquiry about a research experience with his Filipino grandfather to collect family history. Campano reflects on the complexity of simultaneously possessing the agency of being a researcher and a grandson. He shares how the double agency is connected to ethical considerations, "acknowledging how others have shaped and edified our own selves, [which] ought to be a primary methodological concern that drives collaborative inquiry" (p. 54). The ethics of CBRE challenge "extractivist methodologies" (p. 55) to champion trust-building and reciprocity in building community relationships *over time*. Ghiso and Campano posit that CBRE is operationalized by a network of relationships that aim for equitable social and intellectual dynamics. CBRE's foundational ethic is the methodology as a practice of love that "embraces multiplicity and difference" (p. 64) and is thusly operationalized as a pedagogy of epistemic justice.

While Chapter Four provides wisdom for solidifying one's agency for community-based partnering in educational contexts, Chapter Five explains how to bring one's agency into a collaborative space. In this chapter, the authors share candid truths about a critical aspect of community-based research requisite for scholars: generosity. Ghiso and Campano articulate the generosity required for authentic community building: supporting local businesses, attending lunches, and visiting community anchors such as schools, churches, libraries, and clinics. The authors discussed the importance of putting community culture, ways of being, and *voice*, at the center of setting research agendas. Such consideration includes collaboratively arranging meetings at the convenience of community members' schedules and lifestyles, even if it includes weekends. To build consensus, researchers can learn local norms and move in sync with the community's rhythm and culture while understanding its boundaries.

In Chapter Five, Ghiso and Campano describe collaborative practices driven by scholars stepping out of the way to center contributions from families, community leaders, activists, and elders. Ghiso and Campano provide evidence to substantiate how the community leads research with the questions they seek to understand and answer. Centering community ways of being is epistemic activism that keeps researchers 'in their lane' to honor how the community has structured itself regarding relationships and organizational dynamics.

Chapter Six covers the importance of collaboratively-driven research questions, data collection, and analysis. Chapter Seven is an intriguing journey into Ghiso and Campano's reportage of collaborative research dissemination. Resplendent with colorful figures of flyers, posters, presentation slides, and participant-created photos, Chapter Seven highlights the power of CBRE as a storytelling modality for sharing community-based research outcomes. The chapter closes with reflective questions for readers to consider how their research audience plays a role in its dissemination.

Through richly detailed examples from their longstanding partnership across boundaries of race, language, immigration status, and institutional affiliation, the authors illuminate the complexities, tensions, and transformative possibilities inherent in community-based research. They outline

fundamental principles, practices, and provocations for navigating all facets of the research process, from conceptualization and data collection to analysis and dissemination, in ways that honor the expertise and priorities of community collaborators.

The closing chapters of the books, Chapters Eight and Nine, discuss the impact of the CBRE method, highlighting knowledge from Ghiso and Campano's community participants. Participants explain to readers what community-based research means and how the CBRE method has impacted their lives.

At the heart of this work is a commitment to recentering the voices, experiences, and wisdom of cultural/heritage-based communities within educational research and interventions. Ghiso and Campano foreground power, positionality, and ethics issues in research collaborations, underscoring the necessity of approaches premised on reciprocity, mutual learning, and a collective commitment to challenging inequities. Through their examples and analysis, the authors model a humble and reflexive stance, acknowledging the challenges and complexities that inevitably arise in CBR while affirming its potential to generate new insights and catalyze meaningful change. By highlighting the agentic capabilities and epistemic rights of community members, Ghiso and Campano offer a powerful counter-narrative to dominant models of research that often reproduce rather than challenge existing inequalities.

A rare blend of theoretical sophistication, ethical nuance, and practical wisdom characterizes Ghiso and Campano's writing. They engage readers in a thoughtful and sometimes provocative dialogue about the possibilities and pitfalls of community-based research, drawing upon a wide-ranging literature across education, anthropology, and critical theory. Throughout the book, the authors balance conceptual rigor and accessibility, making the work valuable for seasoned researchers and those new to community-based methodologies. Their use of vivid examples and reflexive analysis brings the principles and challenges of CBRE to life, offering readers a roadmap for navigating the complexities of cultural/heritage-based community work while remaining grounded in a commitment to epistemic justice.

A primary strength of this book lies in its potential to shift the landscape of educational research by centering the voices, expertise, and epistemic rights of cultural/heritage-based communities. Ghiso and Campano provide a much-needed corrective to dominant models of research that often perpetuate inequalities, offering instead a vision of inquiry as a collaborative endeavor to promote justice and challenge inequities. The book's emphasis on community-based research's practical and ethical dimensions, rich examples, and reflexive analysis make it an invaluable resource for researchers across disciplines committed to conducting rigorous and socially responsible work.

If the book has a weakness, it is the weight of its ambitions and the challenges of flipping the script of community members' banked ideas about research. Ghiso and Campano set a high bar for the deep, long-term collaboration they advocate for. Given time constraints, funding, and current-day institutional and geopolitical pressures, it may be challenging for some researchers to replicate the CBRE. Another challenge may be changing the mindset of community members who may have decolonized ideas about how to engage in research but may also still hold entrenched ideas about the actual work required to operationalize a research agenda. However, even in acknowledging these challenges, the authors offer a compelling vision of the possibilities that can emerge when researchers are willing to reimagine their roles and relationships in pursuing epistemic justice in community-based research.

Methods for Community-Based Research is essential for any scholar committed to conducting research that promotes social justice in educational contexts and challenges inequities. For LIS scholars, the CBRE model can be instrumental in fortifying one's agency for research in local contexts to ensure that the librarian's presence is inclusive rather than disruptive. Librarians, archivists, and LIS scholars can use the CBRE model to better situate themselves for building mutually supportive relationships with community

groups, constituents, and stakeholders. Ghiso and Campano offer a roadmap for reimagining the research process as a collaborative endeavor rooted in the epistemic rights and interests of cultural/heritage-based communities.

While the book may be aimed at researchers from LIS's sister field of education, its insights and principles are incredibly relevant for cultural heritage informatics LIS scholars, archivists, and researchers across disciplines committed to conducting rigorous and socially responsible community-based research. *Methods for Community-Based Research* is a work that can potentially transform how we conduct research with community members, aiming toward an equitable knowledge-sharing environment that empowers residents to stake their claim in the information legacies of their homes, neighborhoods, and towns.

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