The Path to Partnership: A New Model for Understanding University-Community Partnerships

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The Path to Partnership: A New Model for Understanding University-Community Partnerships

Eric Gass, MS

Introduction

There have been several attempts by different teams of researchers to define the characteristics of community-campus partnerships. The primary focus of this article is to look at the essential dimensions community-campus partnerships. The dimensions that each research group has developed will be presented. Following that, a new model will be proposed, integrating the dimensions that have been identified across the existing models. After the presentation of the new model, each dimension within the model will be defined, the five essential dimensions of partnership will be elaborated upon, and the interrelationships among the dimensions will be outlined.

Encompassing this work is the concept of social capital. Robert Putnam defined social capital as "...social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1996). Social capital is most powerful when it is embedded in networks of social reciprocal relations (Putnam, 2000). Putnam further defines different types of social capital: bridging and bonding social capital. Bonding social capital refers social groups, fraternal organizations, and activity-based groups. This type of social capital focuses on internal benefits for the participants involved. Although these are social networks, the networks are between individuals inside the organization. Thus, the larger community is not receiving direct benefit from bonding social capital (Putnam, 2000). Bridging social capital refers to networks that serve to provide "...linkages to external assets and for information diffusion" (Putnam, 2000). It is bridging social capital that university-community partnerships seek to build. Networks between the university and community organizations that produce mutually beneficial outcomes for the participants of the partnership and the community as a whole could be seen as creating social capital.

Principles of Community-Campus Partnerships

The first set of dimensions are outlined in a review article of published studies discussing community-based research in which partnerships attempted to address an issue (Israel et al., 1998). The key dimensions of community-based research as defined by Israel (Israel et al., 1998) are:

1. [The university] [r]ecognizes the community as a unit of identity
2. Builds on strengths and resources within the community
3. Facilitates collaborative partnerships in all phases of the research
4. Integrates knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners
5. Promotes co-learning and empowering process that attends to social inequalities
6. Involves a cyclical and iterative process
7. Addresses health from both positive and ecological perspectives
8. Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners

Lasker (Lasker et al., 2001) uses the term "synergy" to describe partnerships. Lacking a definition of "the mechanism that enables partnerships to accomplish more than individuals and organizations..." and "seeking a pathway through which partnership functioning influences partnership effectiveness," synergy is the concept that attempts to fill the void (Lasker et al., 2001). The combined perspectives, resources, and skills of each organization in the partnership create synergy, which then creates a new entity that is greater than the individual components (Lasker et al., 2001). The determinants of partnership synergy as outlined by the authors are shown in the following table.

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Table 1: Determinants of Partnership Synergy

Resources	Money; space, equipment, goods; skills and expertise; information; connections to people; organizations, and groups; endorsements; convening power
Partner Characteristics	Heterogeneity; level of involvement
Relationships Among Partners	Trust; respect; conflict; power differentials
Partnership Characteristics	Leadership; administration and management; governance; efficiency
External Environment	Community characteristics; public and organizational policies

Source: Lasker et al., 2001

Seifer and Maurana (2000) surveyed the board and members of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, from which the professional membership organization outlined their principles of partnership. The group settled on the following nine principles:

1. Partners have agreed upon mission, values, goals, and measurable outcomes for the partnership
2. The relationship between partners is characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness and commitment
3. The partnership builds upon identified strengths and assets, but also addresses areas that need improvement
4. The partnership balances the power among partners and enables resources among partners to be shared
5. There is a clear, open, and accessible communication between partners, making it an ongoing priority to listen to each need, develop a common language, and validate/clarify the meaning of terms
6. Roles, norms, and processes for the partnership are established with the input and agreement of all partners
7. There is feedback to, among and from all stakeholders in the partnership, with the goal of continuously improving the partnership and its outcomes
8. Partners share the credit for the partnerships accomplishments
9. Partnerships take time to develop and evolve over time

Following their review of the above principles of partnership, the authors provided an example of these principles in practice between an academic medical school and two community-based agencies. At the beginning of the partnership, the medical school developed a template document, with each of the aforementioned principles serving as a heading for each section (Seifer and Maurana, 2000). The document outlined the purpose of the partnership, goals and objectives, and a timeline of activities. Each of the partner's responsibilities were documented, as well as the cash and in-kind contributions of each partner (Seifer and Maurana, 2000). The expected benefits for each partner were also documented, to remind all partners of the anticipated outcomes and purpose of the project. Finally, a recognition plan was developed, through which publicity of the partnership would be managed (Seifer and Maurana, 2000). Thus, the document served as a strategy for the functioning of the partnership.

The next model to be discussed was developed by Roussos and Fawcett (2000) and based on a review of collaborative partnerships that attempt to improve community health. Seven dimensions were identified, each with several characteristics that define the dimension. The seven dimensions are listed below on the left, with the characteristics listed on the right.

Table 2: Factors and Broader Conditions That Affect Capacity

Have a clear mission and vision	Full participation of all partners; generate support and awareness for the partnership; reduce conflicting agendas and opposition; identify allies; minimize distractions from appropriate partnership actions
Action planning for community and systems change	Identify what needs changing; increased membership in the partnership; greater sustainability
Developing and supporting leadership	Organization and management of partnership activities; management and administration of resources; cultural competence
Documentation and ongoing feedback on progress	Document progress; celebrate accomplishments; identify barriers to progress; redirection to more effective activities
Technical assistance and support	
Securing financial resources	Sustainability; increase capacity to influence community-level outcomes
Making outcomes matter	Promotion increases financial support; regular reports to stakeholders, funders, the media, and local government

Source: Roussos and Fawcett 2000

One key issue raised by the authors is the context of the partnership, including historical experiences of partners in previous collaborations and the risks and responsibilities that go with the partnership (Roussos and Fawcett, 2000). If the resources are available, and a positive history of collaboration exists between one or more organizations, the

chances of a partnership being productive and mutually beneficial would be greater than a situation where one or more of the partners are skeptical of the situation or each other. This also relates to mutual trust between partners, reducing the fear that an organization may "get burned" by the partnership.

The final model to be reviewed of characteristics of effective partnerships was developed by Holland (2004). The seven characteristics are outlined below:

1. Joint exploration of goals and interests
2. Creation of a mutually rewarding agenda
3. Emphasis on positive consequences for each partner
4. Identification of opportunities for early successes
5. Focus on knowledge exchange, shared learning, and capacity building
6. Attention to communication, cultivation of trust
7. Commitment to continuous assessment of the partnership, as well as outcomes

These five models reviewed above reflect some of the most comprehensive attempts to define the concepts of partnerships. One thing missing from the models is consistency. While there is generally some overlap, not all of the models included the same concepts across the board. For example, both Holland (2004) and Seifer and Maurana (2000) discuss communication and trust explicitly, Lasker et al. (2001) does not explicitly address communication, while Israel et al. (1998) discussed neither. Israel et al. (1998) states that a partnership is cyclical and iterative, while Seifer and Maurana (2002) describe a feedback process between partners. Other models do not touch on the cyclical nature of partnerships. Although several of the models discuss dissemination and mutually rewarding outcomes, it is not clear if these are related. Roussos and Fawcett (2000) tie the two together with their concept of Making Outcomes Matter, yet their focus is on funders. Seifer and Maurana (2000) link feedback to outcomes of the partnership, but do not relate outcomes to resources. Thus, the flow and linkages between dimensions of a community-campus partnership differs depending on the model. In the next

section, a new model of core dimensions will be developed, merging the different models outlined above. The model will not attempt to create a new list of partnership dimensions. Instead, the model will be presented as a flowchart, focusing on integration of the work previously discussed and highlighting the linkages between dimensions. The model will be grounded in the context of university engagement and the perspective of asset-based communities, as both entities merge to form partnerships that create social capital.

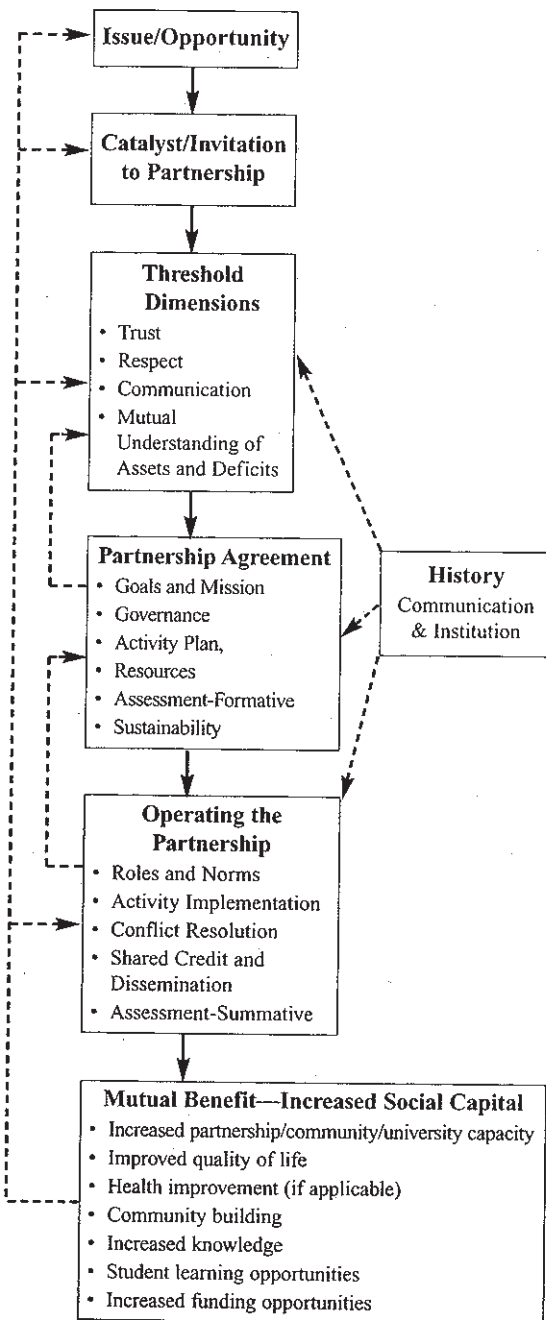## Model of University-Community Partnerships

Figure 1 presents the new model of university-community partnerships. In one way or another, most partnerships come together to address change (Silka, 1999). The partnership might attempt to improve the quality of life in a neighborhood, improve the health of a particular population, provide engaged-learning opportunities for students, or test new curricula in elementary schools. Thus, regardless of what the partnership addresses, the first key point of partnership is that there is some issue in the community that has been identified. Secondly, some person or organization in the community or within the university must determine that the issue is worth pursuing, but that their respective organization lacks the capacity or resources to go it alone, and thus, seeks a partner. Also, it is possible that the catalyst to partnership is a funding source that requires a partnership to be eligible for a grant. Either way, a decision is made that the most effective way to address an issue is through a university-community partnership.

Once the partner organizations have agreed to explore working together, it is proposed that several dimensions of the relationship will be addressed early for the partnership to successfully advance. These dimensions are: Trust and Respect, Communication, and Mutual Understanding of Assets and Deficits. It is proposed that a minimum threshold of trust and respect between individuals and organizations be achieved for the partnership to move on. Partnerships bring together diverse people with different types of expertise, so trusting each

other to be competent and respecting what everyone brings to the table is important. Trust and respect can grow through communication. Honesty is important in communicating, especially when each organization discusses what assets and deficits it possesses. If each organization were perfect, there would be no need for partnership because it would have the capacity to effectively "go it alone." Willingness to identify and share assets and honestly communicate deficits will bring trust and respect. At this point, once each organization has achieved a threshold level of trust and respect for their fellow partners, established open communication, and shared their assets and deficits, the organizations can form a partnership agreement.

In formally agreeing to move forward as a university-community partnership, it is proposed that another set of dimensions will be addressed in the partnership agreement. They are: Goals and Mission, Governance, Resources, Activity Plan, Activity Assessment, and Sustainability Plan. As opposed to the previous set of dimensions, where trust and respect for the other partners and the willingness to communicate are internally determined by each partner organization, the dimensions of the partnership agreement are mutually agreed upon. Thus, the partners negotiate and agree on the goals and mission of the partnership. Theoretically, this should happen first; without having clear goals or a mission, the partnership will lack direction. The goals and mission are to be referred back to throughout the life of the partnership to ensure the partnership is on course. Next, a governance structure must be established. The partners agree upon the individuals charged with leading the partnership and what process will be used to make decisions. Also, part of governance is the allocation of resources. The leaders of the partnership decide where to seek funds and how they will be spent. The partnership will also have some sort of activity in mind, usually an intervention in the community. As the activity is being developed, an assessment of that activity may also be created, to prove that change has occurred due to the impact of the activity. Finally, if the partnership has a finite life-cycle

Figure 1: The Path to University-Community Partnership

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r - - → ┌─────────────────────┐
|       │   Issue/Opportunity │
|       └─────────────────────┘
|                 │
|                 ▼
L - - → ┌─────────────────────┐
|       │  Catalyst/Invitation│
|       │    to Partnership   │
|       └─────────────────────┘
|                 │
|                 ▼
|       ┌─────────────────────┐
|       │      Threshold      │
|       │     Dimensions      │
|       │  • Trust            │
|       │  • Respect          │
| - - → │  • Communication    │
|       │  • Mutual           │
|       │    Understanding of │
|       │    Assets and Deficits│
|       └─────────────────────┘
|
|       ┌─────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────┐
|       │ Partnership Agreement│       │     History      │
L - - → │  • Goals and Mission │       │  Communication   │
|       │  • Governance        │       │  & Institution   │
|       │  • Activity Plan,    │       └──────────────────┘
|       │  • Resources         │
|       │  • Assessment-Formative│
|       │  • Sustainability    │
|       └─────────────────────┘
|                 │
|                 ▼
|       ┌─────────────────────┐
|       │   Operating the     │
|       │   Partnership       │
| - - → │  • Roles and Norms  │
|       │  • Activity Implementation│
|       │  • Conflict Resolution│
|       │  • Shared Credit and │
|       │    Dissemination     │
|       │  • Assessment-Summative│
|       └─────────────────────┘
|                 │
|                 ▼
|       ┌───────────────────────────────────────┐
|       │ Mutual Benefit—Increased Social Capital│
| - - → │ • Increased partnership/community/university capacity│
        │ • Improved quality of life            │
        │ • Health improvement (if applicable)  │
        │ • Community building                  │
        │ • Increased knowledge                 │
        │ • Student learning opportunities      │
        │ • Increased funding opportunities     │
        └───────────────────────────────────────┘
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due to grant funding, a sustainability plan can be developed early in the partnership, so that when the time comes to seek new funding or make a change in the goals and mission, a plan is already in place. Now that the partners have negotiated and agreed upon a strategy, it is time to operate the partnership.

In order to accomplish the goals and mission, it is proposed that the partnership will address the following dimensions as it matures: Roles and Norms, Activity Implementation, Conflict Resolution, Shared Credit and Dissemination, and Partnership Assessment. Over time, the partners will understand each other's operating norms. Each organization has a personality and style of doing work. Learning and adapting to each other's norms as time goes on will lead to achieving goals and sustainability. From this, informal roles may emerge which could not be predicted while the partnership agreement was in the early stages of development. Also, the partnership must successfully implement and assess the program it developed in the planning stages.

Conflicts may arise over time and having a way to successfully deal with problematic issues will lead to sustainability and smooth operations. Having a plan to publish, advertise, and generally disseminate information to key stakeholders will ensure that the community and university administration learn about partnership successes. Funders will also want progress reports about how their dollars are being spent. Thus, documentation and dissemination is key. Finally, periodically assessing the internal workings of the partnership will help with communication, conflict issues, assessment of goals and mission, and sustainability issues surrounding the partnership.

In the end, the anticipated outcome of all of these dimensions will be a partnership that is mutually beneficial to community organizations, the university, and the residents of the community. If university-community partnerships follow the plan outlined above, positive change can come about in a community, trust and communication among institutions and diverse populations can increase, and social capital can be created, resulting in rich

social networks and that did not exist prior to the partnership. This process may take years to accomplish, so the chronology of events is unique to each partnership. It should be noted that all of these dimensions of partnership are interdependent, and that while there is a chronology, what takes place early in the partnership has ramifications for events or outcomes that may happen years later. In describing what I think are the five most important dimensions of partnership; I will underscore the interdependence of these other dimensions by including them in the justification.

1. Trust/Respect. It is essential that the university trusts their community partners and treat them as equals in the partnership. Community organizations are the local experts and the source of many services and resources in neighborhoods. If the university does not trust the community organization to have the skills and knowledge to participate in a partnership, it will not be successful. Conversely, community organizations should determine if the university has the community's interests in mind. If the university is indifferent to the community's needs and is only seeking subjects for a study, an alert community organization will not see any value in participating. Also, the community and its organizations have assets that the university may not understand. Thus, it is essential that both the university and community work together to mutually identify the assets each partner will utilize. It is much easier for the university to understand the community from a deficit model. The popular press and academic journals are readily able to point out what communities lack (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). However, a more effective way to build trust and respect between partners is to identify what is there. Churches, grassroots clubs, small businesses, schools, and service organizations are already doing things to attempt to help the community, but they may lack the capacity to impact long-term change. By identifying what is already there, it becomes easier to see what is missing (Maurana, Beck, and Newton, 1998). In addition, the university

can show community organizations that their assets are available to the public. The university could open up its libraries and other facilities to the community, provide faculty and staff support, and integrate the campus into the larger community. Boundaries will be broken down and both sides will see each other in a qualitatively different light if trust and respect are to be developed.

Once the trust and respect among partner organizations has been solidified and the assets present among the partners have been identified, the partnership can move forward comfortably with identifying activities to implement in the community. To be respectful of the community, cultural sensitivity is important. Community organizations have the ability to communicate properly with constituents. The university can maintain a presence in the community by hiring a local resident to serve as a liaison or project director (Lieberman, Miller, and Kohl, 2000). This person can be seen a resource that has community knowledge and respect as well as facilitate the flow of university resources to the community. It will increase trust by showing that the university is "here to stay" and show respect by understanding that the community needs one of their own to effectively achieve the goals and mission of the partnership.

Rohe (2004) makes the point that theories of social capital and network development assume that trust will be an outcome of community engagement and social networks. The model proposed in this paper places trust early in the development of the university-community partnership. Thus, if the dimension of trust is established early so that the partnership (i.e. social network) can be effective in developing the activities necessary for social capital to be created, trust becomes a foundation of social capital, not an outcome.

2. Communication. The second factor in partnership success and sustainability is communication. A consistent flow of information between the organizations on all aspects of the operation will benefit the partnership. Specifically, three areas of

communication are important: Identifying the goals and mission of the partnership, developing roles and norms of operating the partnership, and resolving potential conflicts between the partners.

The process of identifying the goals and mission of the partnership is a direct result of the issue identification and asset identification process outlined in earlier sections. The goals and mission of a partnership should provide mutual benefit for both the university and community. For example, Rothman, Lourie, Dyer, and Gass (2000) developed a partnership between the Temple University School of Nursing and local public housing developments. One of the goals of the partnership was to increase access to quality healthcare for public housing residents. Through the study of emergency room visits, it was discovered that most residents did not have health insurance. Through an advocacy and educational plan that was developed and implemented by Temple university nursing students, residents, and local organizations, the number of public housing residents that obtained some form of health insurance increased by 20 percent in just one year after participating in the program. Thus, through communicating with each other, a problem was identified, goals were developed, a program implemented, and outcomes obtained that benefited both Temple University and public housing residents. Nursing students were exposed to an underserved population and learned to identify community resources while public housing residents increased their access to quality healthcare by obtaining insurance.

The second aspect of communication is learning the norms of each partner in terms of operations, culture, and preferred style of doing business. Each community, regardless of how it is defined, be it geographically or culturally, has its own norms of functioning, as do academic institutions (Huppert, 2000). Norms are also a component of social capital, as defined by Putnam (1996). Not learning and understanding these norms can be the determinant between a successful or unsuccessful partnership

(Bernal, Shellman, and Reid, 2004). Listening is part of communication. Listening to the community's stories can be just as valuable as implementing a scientific assessment of community assets and deficits in terms of learning about norms (Huppert, 2000).

Establishing roles for partnership operations is a natural outgrowth of understanding community and organizational norms. Once each partner learns how to communicate with each other, and reciprocally understands each other's norms, the partners can establish their roles to carry out the activities of the partnership. Ferraiolo and Freedman (2003) found that when roles for the partnership were not established early in the relationship, the partnership usually does not recover and is ineffective. However, in successful partnerships, as the relationship becomes more comfortable for all parties, roles will emerge.

As is the case with interpersonal relationships, conflicts between partners may occur. In order for the partnership to be effective and sustainable, disagreements are resolved through communication. During the planning stages, the partner organizations may draft some form of voting procedure to resolve conflicts, or the issue may be resolved through simple conversation and bargaining. Either way, minimal conflict is necessary for partnerships to be successful.

In sum, communication across all aspects of the partnership, be it planning the goals and mission of the partners, learning each other's norms and establishing roles, or resolving conflicts, is important for success and longevity. Communication is also an essential component in the creation of social capital. In order for rich social networks to be developed, communication between individuals and organizations is needed. Thus, communication, combined with trust, which constitute two of the three Threshold Dimensions in the proposed model, create a two-pronged foundation for social capital to be created.

3. Governance. One of the most oft mentioned sources of success or failure of university-community

partnerships is governance (Mitchell and Shortell, 2000; Levy, Baldyga, and Jurkowski, 2003). The inherent difference between university hierarchy and the structure of community organizations creates a challenge for partnership management (Jackson and Meyers, 2000). Universities tend to function slowly, with committee meetings, multiple levels of authority, and political interests involved in the process. Community organizations tend to be less hierarchical, more informal and responsive to the needs of their constituents. Thus, the merging of the two organizational styles may produce conflict in how the partnership is managed.

Specific to partnership governance are the allocation of resources and the implementation of activities. When a partnership has come to the mutual decision to take action in the community, resources must be secured. Because of the university's detailed and automated financial systems, funding agencies are more apt to award partnership grant dollars to the university. This creates a shift in the balance of power where the community organization is dependent upon the university for money. Evidence from the literature shows that when grant dollars are split between partners, the university is more likely to receive money to pay for salaries, rent and utilities, and major office equipment while community organization are more likely to receive money for refreshments and other small scale expenses (Wolff and Maurana, 2001). Thus, for a partnership to be successful, a mutually acceptable resource allocation plan should be established in the governance process of the grant.

Another key issue of governance is activity implementation. Specifically, how the partnership will oversee the work it does in the community. This also ties back to partner roles discussed earlier. The community can be placed in charge of activity implementation and management and have veto power over any program planned by the university in their neighborhood. As the governance structure is developed, equal representation of all partners is needed. Establishing an advisory board that has

leaders from community organizations and residents that would be considered the "participants" in the program will ensure that governance of the partnership is representative of all parties involved and that community norms are understood.

4. Assessment. The fourth key element to successful and sustainable partnerships is assessment. Assessment can take two forms: An activity assessment to measure impact of partnership activity and an assessment of partnership functioning.

An activity assessment is essential for understanding if the partnership is achieving the mission and goals that were identified in the planning process. Qualitative focus groups of community members, quantitative surveys of behavioral change, counts of increased use of a service, or epidemiological data are all ways to assess effectiveness. For example, if a partnership was going to attempt to decrease the number of non-compliant diabetic patients through an educational program, assessing the number of consistent attendees and monitoring their diet and insulin compliance over time will show if the education intervention was successful. The assessment must also be relevant to all partners. The university might prefer statistically significant results that show the specific intervention was responsible for some change in the behavior of the subjects. The community organization may simply want to see more people eating healthier foods. Thus, the assessment should be established early through communication during the activity-planning phase to ensure that all partners will have results that are useful to them.

Partnership functioning assessment is a form of quality control. Internal assessment is used to look for efficiency issues, communication issues, reanalysis of goals and mission, potential conflicts and the general health of the partnership. This type of assessment could take place at agreed upon intervals, such as quarterly or semi annually. While the focus of partnership evaluation may seem to seek out problems or areas needing change, it should also be seen as a time to celebrate success,

such as good outcome assessments (Huppert, 2000). This will maintain morale and help with sustainability by showing that the work is noticed and appreciated.

Governance and Assessment are two areas community professionals such as social workers, non-profit executives, and teachers of community leaders can focus their attention, in terms of contributions to partnerships. As pointed out in the section on Governance, partnership funding is often skewed to the university partner (Wolff and Maurana, 2001). One could also argue that the entire university-community partnership process is skewed toward the university, with Principal Investigators often required to have university appointments. Thus, community practitioners and those that educate and train them could incorporate the following topics into college degree programs or continuing education programs:

A) **Leadership**—Developing the skills and tools necessary to justify serving as a principal investigator on grants, effectively manage a diverse group working together on a partnership, and identify and recruit community agencies to approach the university as a coalition seeking partnership, reversing the traditional directionality of the partnership invitation.

B) **Finances**—Train small non-profit agencies and social work students in detailed accounting practices. Learn Oracle or other accounting software that increases the organizational capacity to handle large grants. By handling grant money, a community organization balances the power of resources between themselves and the university.

C) **Analytical Skill**—Learning advanced statistics and software, such as SPSS, that can be utilized to produce assessment results and outcome studies. Anecdotally, one of the main university contributions to a partnership is research skill. By having the expertise in-house, community practitioners can ensure that outcome analyses will be relevant to their needs and money that would normally flow to the university for research skill can be reallocated to something else, such as computer technical support, faculty time, or graduate student assistantship salary.

D) **Providing Organizational Services**—A quick search of the Internet produces millions of websites offering tools and paid consultant services that can be used to assess the internal workings of an organization. However, community workers and students that are trained in quality control and internal assessment techniques can take on that role for the partnership, freeing up resources to be allocated elsewhere. Taking the lead on the internal assessment again, balances the power in the partnership by ensuring that the community's perspective is represented. It also shows other partners and funders that community agencies have the capacity to be more than just guest speakers at a program or a financial pass-through.

Thus, increasing community worker's capacity as leaders, financial managers, statisticians, and organizational analysts can assist in balancing the power, governance structure, resource allocation, and assessment decisions of university-community partnerships and fulfill several of the dimensions in the proposed model that traditionally have fallen on universities.

5. Dissemination. The final key element necessary for a successful, sustainable partnership is a dissemination plan. Dissemination is directly derived from the assessment of the partnership in that it informs key stakeholders of the progress of the partnership. These key stakeholders are: The community, the academy, and funders.

Utilizing resources like newspapers, newsletters, public meetings, or churches to spread the word about the work of the partnership will serve to generate interest in the activity and validate the work of community organizations. Also, from the university perspective, publicizing the success of the partnership will enhance trust and respect for the university

in the community. By showing that the university is committed to the project, neighborhood, and issue, it can lead to future opportunities to work in the community.

Disseminating the outcomes of a partnership in the academic community serves multiple purposes. First, it provides legitimacy to community-based participatory research in the larger academic audience. Secondly, internal to the university itself, utilizing community partnership for academic advancement is key in fulfilling the university's mission of service (Holland, 1997). Faculty seeking tenure can point to their publication record, showing that working with the community is indeed a worthy academic endeavor, and that peer review and methodological rigor are a part of the process. Thus, dissemination of partnership activities within the academy can serve as a catalyst for change within the university.

Finally, dissemination to funders is important to sustainability. Most funders require periodic progress reports. Thus, effectively writing a report that explains how the goals and mission of the partnership have been accomplished, what future steps need to be taken to ensure that the goals are met, and that long-term support for the partnership would be a good investment. Funders reputations are also at stake when a partnership is supported. Foundations or government agencies want proof that their money is being used for successful programs. Writing good progress reports, as well as publicity in the community and scholarly work in the academic world, will serve to satisfy current funders, as well as potentially attract new funders, which will sustain the partnership.

Dissemination can also be seen as the tangible outcome, or the commodity, of social capital. Operationalizing the construct of social capital can mean different things to different individuals or organizations. It may not be a conscious concept in the minds of the partnership participants, but both formative and summative assessments produce that data by which social capital can be commidified.

Thus, beyond the construction of bridging networks or university-community partnerships, dissemination can document the creation of social capital.

In looking at the model proposed in this paper, the Threshold Dimensions can be referred to as the foundation of social capital. Next, the Partnership Agreement Dimensions can be seen as formalizing the social network that will produce the social capital. Finally, the Operating the Partnership Dimensions can be seen the social network in action, with Dissemination being utilized to document significant changes among the target population, increased organizational capacity, and mutual benefit for all partners involved in the social network. As stated earlier, when social capital is stated in these terms, trust is not an outcome, but a foundation of social capital. Increased capacity, knowledge, improved health, better prepared students, and any of the other possible tangible outcomes of partnership is where social capital is created. Utilizing tools for dissemination, in both the popular media or academic arena, can make the concept of social capital concrete and real, not only for academics, but for the practitioners at the grassroots level, who live and work in the community on a daily basis.

Conclusion

The purpose of proposing this model is to build upon the work of Maurana, Israel, Lasker, Holland and others, who have done an excellent job of identifying the necessary dimensions of community-campus partnerships. Their work is the foundation of this model. However, more work and research must occur. The Milwaukee Idea group has issued a challenge to experts in the field to develop indicators of partnership success (Burkardt, Holland, Percy, and Zimpher, 2004). Other's point out that traditional assessment tools and methodologies do not adequately measure partnerships (Weiss, Anderson, and Lasker, 2002). This attempt to assign a chronology or process to university-community partnership formation and operation is

novel and preliminary. Future research should attempt to better understand the process of partnership formation, such as understanding the catalyst or partner-searching process, researching how community norms are communicated and learned, and how to ensure equality in resource allocation and management.

The proposed model is not only a theoretical ideal of university-community partnerships, but can be used as a tool to educate community practitioners and university faculty and staff. Each of the dimensions listed in this model are not only constructs of partnership, but skills needed to create and manage a partnership. The concepts of building trust and respect, conducting needs assessments, interpersonal and professional communication, leadership, statistical techniques, conflict resolution, and dissemination could be developed into educational modules for a professional seminar, a certificate program in non-profit management, or continuing social-work education program.

As federal funds and programs are continuously cut, community-based organizations will have to shoulder a bigger load of social services and community education that is provided in this country. Understanding how to work with universities to increase capacity, maximize resources, tap into expertise, and create social capital will serve community organizations well in the future.

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