Representation of Minorities in Research: A View from the Community

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A quick Introduction
Historical & Cultural context: Bhutanese - Nepali

Bhutan is slightly bigger than Maryland
Bhutanese-Nepali Background

- Heritage: Nepali descent, settled in Bhutan, later expelled, over a decade of resettlement in U.S.
- Hierarchical society and family
- Respect for elders is very important; have more authority in family
- Refugees have very diverse experience
- Predominantly Hindu – governs clothing, food, communication
- Large, multi-generational households are common
- Mental health issues stigmatized – high rate of suicide among refugee communities in U.S.
- Safe topics: family, food, work, education
- Building trust is key, if you want to know them
Community coping with Mental Illness

- Prevalence of behavioral health issues (mental health disorders, anxiety, depression, PTSD) (Dr. Kue & pyakuel)
- Other physical & somatic pain manifestations
- Post migration adjustment issues
- Cultural and linguistic barrier
- Logistic and transportation barrier
- Fear toward authority and people in power and positions
- Domestic violence, alcohol and substance abuse increasing
- One of the highest suicide rate (24/100,000: CDC 2011/14)
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"Bhutanese refugees" – google scholar – result 2.5k
“scholarly articles”
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Epidemiology of Mental Health, Suicide and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders among Bhutanese Refugees in Ohio, 2014

- Surendra Bir Adhikari, PhD MedSoc
- Kelly Yotebieng, MPH
- Jhuma N. Acharya, MA
- Jaclyn Kirsch, MSW
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1. Involvement of the community in the process; ownership
   ✓ ethics/review committees
   ✓ data collection
   ✓ writing, review

2. Why & What you want to research?
   ✓ Why the community need to participate?

3. How do want to support the community: research /post research responsibility/ethics
   ✓ Access to community has to go through community board or members
   ✓ Interviews are better to have in groups
   ✓ Learning language or cultural awareness is significant
   ✓ Needs to avoid long-distance survey approach to research
   ✓ Findings have to be shared with community and need to seek feedback.
Thanks!