



Empowering Community Researchers' Voices: Lessons from ARISE Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) in Bangladesh

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Introduction

- Inequalities in knowledge production disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities (John & Rempala, 2024).
- Socioeconomic, gender, and institutional hierarchies contribute to epistemological inequalities, impacting research relationships and knowledge creation (Hammett et al., 2024; Mikkonen et al., 2017)
- The ARISE project challenges this by using CBPR to empower communities to co-produce knowledge, particularly focusing on health and wellbeing systems.

Methods

Recruitment: 11 community researchers (8 women, 3 men), selected for their marginalization and willingness to participate.

Activities: Data collection, co-analysis, validation, networking, active participation in interventions and dissemination in collaboration with stakeholders.

Tools: Case studies, group discussions, and observations documented the experiences and diversity of viewpoints.

Results

- The community researchers were primarily young women from varied backgrounds, including those facing early marriage, school dropouts, physical disabilities, or minority status.
- Researchers gained technical, methodological, and soft skills, including public speaking.
- Their involvement facilitated greater access to hard-to-reach participants and helped bridge gaps between community members, stakeholders, and researchers.

Key Figure: Display participation diversity and skill development



Discussion

- Active participation of marginalized groups in research shifts traditional power dynamics and fosters more inclusive knowledge production.
- Their involvement enabled the research team to gain deeper insights into complex community health structures.
- Marginalized groups contributed to the development of community-driven solutions, enhancing the impact of the research.

Conclusion

Empowering community voices through CBPR leads to more sustainable health solutions, reduces hierarchy in research, and strengthens stakeholder accountability. This model demonstrates the value of local knowledge in shaping advocacy structure, policy and research outcomes.

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Reference

Hammett, D., Hoogendoorn, G., & Masutha, M. (2024). 'Whispered in corridors': Intra-national politics and practices of knowledge production in South African Human Geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 49(3), e12640. John, L., & Rempala, K. (2024). The ethics of knowledge production and the problem of global knowledge inequality. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01914537241239096>. Mikkonen, E., Laitinen, M., & Hill, C. (2017). Hierarchies of knowledge: Analyzing inequalities within the social work ethnographic research process as ethical notions in knowledge production. *Qualitative Social Work*, 16(4), 515-532.

