

Xavier University of Louisiana
College of Pharmacy's
Center for Minority Health & Health
Disparities, Research and Education

Third Annual Health Disparities
Conference

Folakemi T. Oedina, PhD

Presented at the Xavier University of Louisiana College of Pharmacy's 3rd Annual Health Disparities Conference – April 19-21, 2009
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Using Community-Based Learning as a Tool to Address Disparities

Folakemi T. Odedina, PhD, B.Pharm

Member & Visiting Professor

H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center

Professor & Director of Research

Florida A&M University

Adjunct Clinical Faculty

University of Florida

US Fulbright Scholar (2006/07)

US Department of State

Folakemi T. Odedina, PhD

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the theoretical foundation of Community Based Learning;
- Identify the six strategies of Community Based Learning; and
- Discuss how Community Based Learning can be used to effectively address health disparities.

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Sources of Health Disparities ...

- Potential sources of disparity in health care (IOM, 2003) :
 - individual
 - personal
 - provider
 - Institutional / health systems levels

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Background

Community Based Learning

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I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.

—Albert Einstein

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Community-Based Learning: Theoretical Foundation

- Knowledge is constructed and influenced by social interaction.
- Memory—the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information—is influenced by experience, prior learning, and practice.
- The motivation to learn is affected by personal judgments about one's abilities and the perceived importance and attainability of the learning goal.
- Individuals learn in different ways.
- Barriers to learning can be mitigated by protective factors.
- Effective learning environments intentionally connect all of the systems that affect young people's lives—home, school and community.

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- **Engages learners** through community-based problem solving.
- Draws on **learner experiences** and **encounters** with members of the surrounding community.
- **Communities** as the **source and focus** of learning.
- Encourages **coherent investigative** and **problem-solving skills**, which complement and refine standards-based skills.
- **Continuum** of community involvement.

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CBL Strategies

- **academically based community service**
 - mission of universities connected with host communities, e.g. revitalizing the community
- **Civic education**
 - connect students' academic learning with civic involvement
- **Environmental education**
 - Learning constructed based on native surroundings
- **Place-based learning**
 - context for learning based on history, environment, culture, and economy
- **Service learning**
 - integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.
- **Work-based learning**
 - mentoring relationship, role model situation, or informational interaction—to learn about careers.

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CBL Advantages ...

- Learners acquire, practice, and apply subject matter knowledge and skills.
- A pedagogy of engagement is created.
- Learners build a sense of connection to the communities.
- Address issues and concerns that affect communities.

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Addressing Personal Sources of Health Disparities Using CBL

Lessons from the field

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Community Health Promotion and Education:

- **Course:** PharmD course – Health Care & Behavior
- **Goal:** Building a healthy nation ... pharmacists' role in promoting health and preventing disease.
- **Activity:** Students provided education on a health promotion or disease prevention activity in the community.

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Course Activity

- Learners worked in groups of five.
- ... a community site they are comfortable with e.g., barbershop, beauty salon, massage parlor, church, mechanic garage, car wash, fish market, etc.
- ... a health promotion or disease prevention activity.
- Obtain resources (from local organizations, Internet, recent literature, books, expert consultations, etc.)
- Develop educational materials that will be placed at your site (partnering with health orgs)

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- educational materials placed at conspicuous place at site
- provide appropriate details to individuals working at the site about encouraging customers to pick up the educational materials
- a group member must be at the site for at least one hour daily to encourage discussion and educate about activity.
- community project must be at the site for at least four weeks.
- poster presentation of community project

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Examples of community activities ...

- **Teenage Pregnancy** at McGuinn Dormitory (girls)
- **Sexually Transmitted Diseases** at FAMU Foote Hilyer Administration Building
- **Child Safety** at New Beginnings Day Care Center, FAMU
- **Diabetes** at the local YMCA
- **Immunization** at Leon County Public Library
- **Osteoporosis** at Heritage Health Care Center
- **Voting** at FAMU Bookstore
- **Drinking and driving** at Tallahassee Community College
- **Hypertension** at Hair and Nail Salon
- **Skin Cancer** at the local YMCA

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TA Observation

- Sometimes, when visiting a project site, I would have the occasion to be there while someone was asking a question. One time in particular I went to visit a project that was located in a community center. The project was about Nutrition and was geared towards children. The community site was definitely a good choice because there were lots of children attending after school programs at the site. When I got to the project site, I was extremely pleased to see the students talking to children who ranged in ages from five to ten. There was one little boy off to the side attempting to fill out a crossword puzzle that was related to nutrition. He would periodically run up to look at the students' poster board to find an answer to one of the questions in his puzzle. Once he was finished he hurried to get in front of the other kids who were still finding answers to announce he was finished and was ready for his prize; he wanted his apple and banana. He was smiling, the students were smiling, and I was smiling.

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Student Reflection

- “The impact that our community project had was very obvious. It was great to be able to educate these teenagers and to help them be safe. But the ultimate satisfaction was when these students would inquire When are you coming back? It felt good to know that I had possibly helped someone else along the way; it made us all feel like role models.”

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Community Response ...

- a group of students who presented “Preventing Skin Cancer” at a gym were asked by a community participant to present at an annual memorial walk for his brother who died of skin cancer.
- The “Alcohol and Driving” presentation at a high school was so visual that it attracted record numbers of high school students.
- The “Day Rape Drug” presentation was very well presented and got the most feedback from participants.
- **Soul Food restaurant backlash!**

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Poster judges ...

- “As an alumnus from Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy, I felt pride in observing the students ability to not only define, but to use problem-solving skills for these disease states and health problems.”
- “I felt that their ability to go into the Tallahassee community to face real-life health epidemics was both a rewarding and challenging assignment.”
- “The most outstanding thought I carry is the pride of accomplishment I saw in each group member and how well deserved it was.”

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Administrator Feedback ...

- “They were truly happy about the work that they had done. You could hear it in their voices, see it in their faces, and definitely witness it in the results that they displayed with their community projects. Many students were asked to come back to their project sites to continue to talk to people about their project.”

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■ Other CBL Health Initiatives

- Self Health Promotion with a challenge to end at least one unhealthy behavior
- Cultural Competency: Address the Assumptions
- Community-centered research on health disparities
- Health education at “Family Reunions”
- Case studies of personal experiences

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■ Discussion & Questions

■ References ...

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