

**A Qualitative Evaluation to Examine the Impact of a Participatory Action Research
Intervention in Mexico**

BY

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THESIS

Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in Disability and Human Development
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Chicago, 2014

Chicago, Illinois

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COEPO	Consejo Estatal de Población Jalisco [Jalisco's Population State Board]
CONALEP	Colegio Nacional de Educación Profesional Técnica [National College of Technical Occupational Education]
CRM	Concerns Report Method
CTB	Community Tool Box
DRS	Department of a Rehabilitation Services
FEDEJAL	Federación Jalisciense del Medio Oeste [Federation of small business owners and regional clubs from the Mexican State of Jalisco in the United States]
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Geografía [National Institute of Statistics and Geography]
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PI	Principal Investigator
PWD	People With Disabilities
UAVI	Unit to Prevent Domestic Violence
UIC	University of Illinois at Chicago

ABSTRACT

Recently, community interventions have increased the use of strategies that emphasize community development involving capacity building, advocacy, social change, and empowerment. Although community interventions intend to ameliorate social and economic inequalities, there is a lack of research to evaluate the outcomes of Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR approaches have demonstrated to be a helpful tool to address and identify community issues, weaknesses, and strengths. The PAR approach described in this case study of *Juanacatlán Renace* (Juanacatlán Reborn), provided a process for the community of Juanacatlán to come together and identify main issues, resources, and supports. The community members were actively involved in the analysis of contextual issues meaningful to them, and took actions to address some of their most pressing needs. This study collected qualitative data and was conducted with semi-structured interviews. The findings suggest multiple activities and organized actions that were taken at multiple levels in areas like health, social services, and education. This study discusses the potential implications of using PAR methodology as it was executed in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. Participatory methodologies like the one described in this study provide opportunities to enhance community development through the implementation of services and development projects that are likely to have an impact on community members.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Traditionally, community interventions have been focused on developing, implementing, and evaluating health promotion and prevention programs (Brunk & Goepfinger, 1990; Mulroy & Lauber, 2004; Strachan, Wright, & Hancock, 2007). Early community interventions failed to address or recognize inequality and to promote community development. Recently, community interventions have increased the use of strategies that emphasize community development involving capacity building, advocacy, social change and empowerment (Ohmer & Korr, 2006; Strachan et al., 2007).

Rothman, Erlinch, and Tropman (1995) categorizes community intervention into three approaches: (1) locality development, (2) social planning, and (3) social action. Rothman et al. (1995) defined locality development as a community-based strategy used to involve community members in developing goals and encourage them to take an active role in solving issues. Social planning was conceptualized by Rothman as a process of problem solving regarding the most pressing social problems with the help of professionals to create a formal plan in order to deliver goods and services. The third category, social action, acknowledges the existence of a disadvantaged group of people that need to be organized to demand social changes and promote equal treatment or the allocation of resources. Rothman found that in practice, these community intervention approaches often overlap and are used in different combined forms, such as development and action, action and planning, and planning and development (Rothman et al., 1995).

Trickett, Espino, and Hawe (2011) assert that community intervention has been used increasingly in fields of study such as public health, health promotion, community psychology and

prevention science. The forms in which community interventions have been implemented have varied widely across these fields.

One methodology for community intervention is Participatory Action Research (PAR). The use of PAR has increased over the last 10 years in social and health science research. This increase is due to the potential of PAR approaches to improve the relationship between research and practice, address social justice issues and empower people to take ownership over their social reality (Cargo & Mercer, 2008). PAR approaches have been successful in addressing and identifying community issues, weaknesses, and strengths.

Selener (1997, p. 17) define Participatory Action Research (PAR) as “a process through which members of an oppressed group or community identify a problem, collect and analyze information, and act upon the problem in order to find solutions and promote social and political transformation”. The PAR approach integrates the research process with active collaboration and participation of the underprivileged in order to promote transformative actions.

Balcazar, Keys, Kaplan, and Suarez-Balcazar (1998) indicate that PAR is an effective research strategy to promote the active participation of consumers in the identification of their own needs and in the search for solutions to address their needs and improve their social conditions. Participatory research represents a distinct set of practices or approaches to generate knowledge, including a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods (e.g., participant observation, personal interviews, focus groups, and participatory needs assessment surveys) (Balcazar et al., 1998). PAR has the potential to generate scientific knowledge with the involvement of the people most affected by the issue being studied.

The roots of PAR were influenced by the critical education tradition developed by Paulo Freire (1970), the research methods in anthropology by White (1955), community development by

Falls Borda (1984), and the utilization-focused action research tradition of Kurt Lewin (1946, cited by Balcazar et al., 1998). These theories and methods intend to produce scientific knowledge to improve the life conditions of people involved in the research process.

Several scholars have reviewed PAR to identify general principles of the approach. Some of the definitions arising from these reviews are summarized here:

- PAR involves a collaboration process between the researcher and the participants. In this approach, the researcher takes the role of a facilitator instead of an expert (Balcazar et al., 1998; Cargo & Mercer, 2008; Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Suarez-Balcazar, Balcazar, Quiros, Chavez, & Quiros, 1995). Participants have an active role in the research process because researchers recognize the value of their local knowledge.
- PAR directly involves local people in the research process to obtain a more authentic and precise knowledge of their social reality. A basic assumption of PAR is that the community already has a rich popular knowledge base and is capable of generating knowledge necessary to guide actions for its own benefit (Selener, 1997).
- PAR engages people in a reflective process of constructing their own reality. Through a process of analysis, people acknowledge their needs and strengths (Koch, Selim, & Kralik, 2002; Suarez-Balcazar, Martinez, & Casa-Byots, 2005). This analysis process raises awareness among participants about their own resources and limitations.
- PAR attempts to empower and engage individuals to support social change efforts (Cargo & Mercer, 2008). Therefore, it is assumed that people involved in the research process take charge of their own problems and find solutions with their own resources. It also facilitates ownership of the research and intervention, adoption of innovations, and aims at empowering individuals and improving social conditions (Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte,

& Suarez-Balcazar, 2009). Balcazar, Keys, and Suarez-Balcazar (2001) state that empowerment refers to “both individual determination over one’s own life and democratic participation in one’s community” (p. 59). The cornerstone of PAR is to empower people that are living in underserved conditions. PAR assists the organization and implementation of potential solutions on concerns by individuals from the community in order to facilitate the empowerment process by community members. Freire (1974) stated that developing critical consciousness, and being aware of needs, concerns, strengths and resources, makes it more likely that people will address their own issues and take control of their lives. The process of empowerment can be achieved through the generation and acquisition of knowledge by a PAR program.

- PAR is driven by values of social and environmental justice. It can help to enhance social conditions and the quality of life of marginalized, underserved, and vulnerable people (Cargo & Mercer, 2008; Suarez-Balcazar, Martinez, & Casas-Byots, 2005). PAR has the potential to address issues of power and control for marginalized groups in society. The PAR approach seeks to make a difference by helping individuals and the community develops accountability and maximizes their own resources.

B. **Review of Relevant Research and Theory**

1. **Participatory action research approach**

The PAR approach has been used successfully to assess needs within communities. Garcia-Iriarte, Kramer, Kramer, and Hammel (2009) met with a self-advocacy organization run by and for people with intellectual disabilities called “People First” in order to help them set up the interests and goals of their self-advocacy group. The researchers attended meetings, events and outings in the community for over 15 months to create a significant partnership. Furthermore, this

time helped the researchers understand the group's history, the meaning of belonging to this group and the cultural similarities of this particular group.

The methods used in this project to develop capacity for advocacy were: focus groups, participatory engagement and reflexivity. All methods were adjusted to ensure accessibility and facilitate participation of People First members. Researchers found that their PAR project generated several tools and knowledge that were meaningful to the self-advocacy. Furthermore, this PAR project led the group to meet their goals.

Suarez-Balcazar, Martinez, et al. (2005) used PAR to identify the service needs of Hispanic immigrant populations and to establish action agendas to meet their identified needs. Researchers utilized a methodology called the Concerns Report Method (CRM), a systematic process designed to go beyond needs assessment and promote social change. The CRM is a participatory action strategy aimed at identifying issues, brainstorming solutions, and taking action from the perspective of the community members. To identify community needs and values, researchers held three focus groups with the community, conducted face-to-face interviews with leaders and stakeholders, and performed a literature review. The results were included in a brief report and shared at community public events. These were the scenarios that allowed interested participants to discuss the identified concerns and suggest possible solutions and, subsequently, take action. According to the authors, this project increased the capacity of this minority group to take an active role in decisions that affect their quality of life from their own perspective. Moreover, it provided knowledge that was culturally appropriate and oriented toward addressing the Hispanic population's needs.

Suarez-Balcazar et al. (1995) implemented a participatory intervention-research model to promote community development in Golfito, a small rural town in Costa Rica. The intervention-

research process performed in Golfito included the following: involvement of the community and research team consolidation, a community needs assessment using the Concerns Report Method, and planning and implementation of small, preventive self-help actions. This case illustrated a community needs-assessment process adapted to encourage community organizing and promote self-help primary prevention efforts to address concerns identified by community residents. The research process facilitated the process of empowerment experienced by residents of Golfito. Residents started organizing efforts and took actions to solve problems that were affecting the health of the community members.

Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, and Suarez-Balcazar (2009) conducted a participatory action research to identify the needs in a group of Colombian immigrants residing in Chicago. The methodology used in this study to identify issues was also the Concerns Report Method (CRM). The coordinating group implemented the CRM's five phases: (1) they developed a matrix with relevant items for the Colombian community with the purpose of including them in the concerns survey; (2) they distributed the survey in two formats (paper and on-line) in order to reach a large number of Colombian immigrants; (3) during a two hour public forum, the Colombian community discussed the concerns and strengths identified to develop potential solutions and plan for next steps; (4) the participants established four action planning committees: a Health Committee, an Immigration Committee, a Social Network and Colombian Organization Committee, and a Small Business Development Committee; and (5) they created a Coordinating Committee to oversee the activities of all the committees. The purpose of this project was to identify their collective concerns, generate ideas for enhancement, and implement self-help actions to address some of the group's most pressing needs. The participatory methodology appears to have effectively mobilized individuals and facilitate social change.

There are multiple research projects that have implemented the PAR approach: working with people with disabilities on promoting businesses accessibility in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in minority communities (Kaplan, Hernandez, Balcazar, Keys, & McCollough, 2001), creating and executing a peer-mentoring model for individuals with Violently-Acquired Spinal Cord Injuries (Hernandez, Hayes, Balcazar, & Keys, 2001), developing and implementing a model to empower individuals with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (Taylor, Braveman, & Hammel, 2004), and empowering Latinos with disabilities to deal with the problems of independent living and disability rights (Balcazar, Keys, & Suarez-Balcazar, 2001).

Moreover, the existing literature supports PAR as an effective approach to assess and improve health needs. A five-year PAR program by Koch, Selim, and Kralik (2002) was conducted to improve practice setting and healthcare supports. Researchers conducted three inquiries. The first investigated the development, implementation and evaluation of a best-practice model for the prevention of nursing workplace violence in the community. The second encouraged collaboration of nurses in reviewing wound-management practices. The third explored research evidence to improve wound-management practices and develop strategies to resolve identified problems. Researchers concluded that the process inherent in PAR facilitated reflection and reconstruction of experiences that can improve people's lives, either at an individual or community level, or both.

In general, the literature suggests that PAR approaches can be used to build a group's capacity for self-advocacy in a manner that helps foster the improvement of life conditions. Hence, implementing empowerment methodologies such as PAR are useful to organize community efforts to identify needs and solve problems in underserved populations. Ultimately, the PAR process can provide research participants with a sense of control over their lives and lead to an empowerment process to promote social change.

2. **Concerns report method as a participatory action research approach**

The methodology used for this study was the Concerns Report Method (CRM), a participatory action-oriented strategy designed to identify issues, brainstorm solutions, and take action from the perspective of community members (Balcazar et al., 2009). There is ample evidence to support the role of the CRM as a PAR strategy, since CRM uses a concern survey which involves community members in the decision-making process early on, thereby increasing their likelihood of getting actively involved and staying involved. The method is a reliable, systematic, and simple way to tap into information about the community (CTB, 2012). “The process assumes that solutions to health and community problems might be more easily adopted by consumers when they are coming from community residents themselves and are not imposed on them by outsiders” (Suarez-Balcazar, Martinez, et al., 2005, p. 53).

The CRM is a systematic participatory process for setting agendas for community change from the perspective of those who share a common predicament (Balcazar et al., 2009). One of the key premises of participatory research is that social issues originate in the community and are better understood, analyzed, and solved when the process comes from the community members (Balcazar et al., 1998 & 2001). Therefore, it is necessary that the community be involved in the process to secure their input in deciding what issues are the most relevant (CTB, 2012). Including the citizens as partners in the research process is fundamental to ensuring that the research is responsive to their needs and values. In addition, that collaborative effort can improve the quality and applicability of the research (Balcazar, Garate-Serafini, & Keys, 2004).

In the research process, community members play an active role in the creation of the concerns survey. The purpose of the concerns survey is to reflect and identify primary community needs. The survey should be distributed to as many local people as possible. The survey results are

then analyzed, shared, and discussed with the community members in public forums. In these meetings, community members create a plan of action that addresses the identified concerns and strengths. This type of action is consistent with Selener's (1997, p. 12) assertion that "one of the major goals of PAR is to solve problems at the community level".

The validity and reliability of the CRM have been established. Research suggests that there are overall high ratings of helpfulness, completeness and representativeness of the CRM and that it is useful in measuring the needs of citizens with disabilities (Fawcett, Suarez de Balcazar, Whang-Ramos, Seekin, Bradford, & Mathews, 1988). Schriener and Fawcett (1988) found high rates of validity and reliability for a concern survey developed by low-income families (as cited in Balcazar et al., 2009). Fawcett et al. (1988) performed a test-retest reliability to assess whether the CRM produced similar results on repeated measurements. The CRM was highly consistent across time points, with approximately 90% of the importance ratings and 80% of the satisfaction ratings varying by one rating point or less. Taken together, this research suggests that the CRM is a valid and reliable methodology for assessing community concerns. A Spearman rank correlation between responses of 405 subjects to the same survey items on a survey developed by people with disabilities at 18-month intervals suggests that scores were highly consistent ($r_s = .94$, $z = 10.85$, $p < .001$) (as cited in Balcazar et al., 2009).

3. **Project background**

Juanacatlán is a small rural community near the city of Guadalajara, in the east-central part of the state of Jalisco, México. This rural community has a population of 13,218 persons, 6,675 men and 6,543 women and around 57.69% of the residents are younger than 29 years old (COEPO, 2010). Overall, 97.51% of Juanacatlán inhabitants are catholic and 4.27% of

the households depend financially on their relatives living in the United States for the past five years (COEPO, 2010).

Juanacatlán's educational services consist of a total of 31 schools, one public library and two teachers in special education (INEGI, 2010). The percent of illiterate individuals over 15 years of age is 4.60% (COEPO, 2010). Approximately 66.15% of local residents are covered by health insurance services (INEGI, 2010).

Juanacatlán's economy is mainly based on manufacturing. However, 41.89% of the municipality area is used for agricultural farming with the primary crops being maize/corn and sorghum (INEGI, 2005).

The Santiago River is one of the longest rivers in Mexico, and it runs adjacent to the length of the town of Juanacatlán. The river has been increasingly polluted for the past forty years. One of the industrial corridors of Guadalajara is located near the river, so the industrial waste is dumped directly into the Santiago River without any type of treatment to filter out contaminants. The Santiago River has a natural waterfall of about 25 feet high at its juncture with the town of Juanacatlán. Given the Santiago River's high levels of pollutants the waterfall has become a main source of air borne toxins and other chemicals producing a mist that releases a very strong odor. This effect is worse in the summer when the temperature rises.

The Santiago River is one of the most serious health threats for the residents of Juanacatlán. It has led to an increase in respiratory diseases, heart disease, cancer, and chronic stress, among others conditions (IMDEC, 2007). The environmental impact of living next to a toxic river that contains multiple heavy metals and immune-depressing chemical substances has produced multiple systemic disorders of the respiratory and neurological systems among the population. The incidence of some rare types of cancers in the locality is at least twice as high as other areas within

the state. A few active leaders of the community have documented their complains about the river for the past two decades with the hope of securing support from the appropriate governmental entities. In recent years, local residents grew skeptical that there would never be relief from their government.

Believing that the local, state and federal governments were not taking their health-related issues seriously, the community began to organize itself for action in 2009. The lack of action or remedy from the authorities contributed to the creation of a cohesive movement among residents of the municipality. This movement facilitated the initiative that is the subject of this study.

Juanacatlán Renace (Juanacatlán Reborn) was an initiative that involved collaboration from multiple agencies seeking to work with the community to address the needs of the town of Juanacatlán. The Federation of small business owners and regional clubs from the Mexican State of Jalisco in the United States (FEDEJAL), the “Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán” (a Chicago-based club of immigrants from the town of Juanacatlán), the Government of the State of Jalisco, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), the Necahual Foundation (a Chicago-based charity created to promote youth development efforts in Guadalajara), and the Municipality of Juanacatlán teamed up to create a transnational program focused on identifying community strengths, weaknesses and addressing needs identified by the community. Consultants from UIC introduced CRM as the participatory needs assessment methodology to identify the current community needs and use its findings to promote social change. This initiative illustrates a PAR approach that involved collaboration from multiple agencies to address the community needs of Juanacatlán. *Juanacatlán Renace* promoted community involvement, government participation and the collaboration from local, state and international institutions. This initiative was an important first step to creating awareness, learning, outreach, and to begin the community empowerment process.

4. **Case study: Concern report method methodological phases**

Juanacatlán Renace was a work plan among multiple agencies with the purpose of identifying the most important community needs and promoting action from community members to address the needs of the town. The *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative was started by immigrants living in the Chicago area.

The following is a brief description of the CRM phases implemented in Juanacatlán.

a. **Development of the collaborative partnership**

The first step needed to develop the initiative work plan was to identify the most important community needs and promote action from community members to address the needs of the town of Juanacatlán. Therefore, a group of community leaders and members from Juanacatlán collaborated to develop a survey in order to identify community needs, concerns, strengths and values. The methodology guidance was provided by UIC Hispanic researcher and a Chicago state employer from the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).

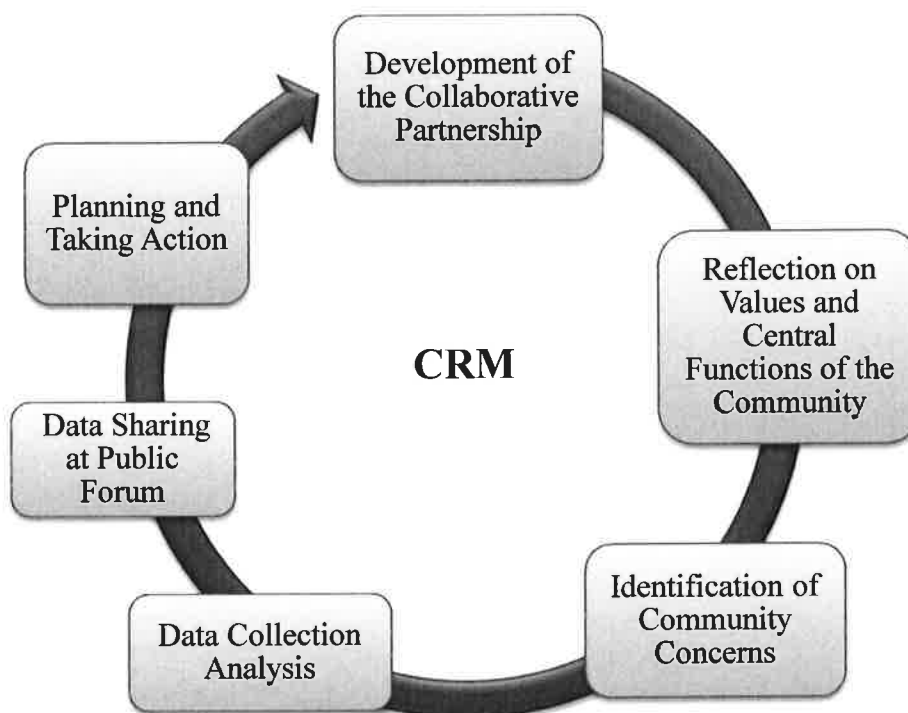
The initiative's general coordinator was the former president of the Federation of small business owners and regional clubs from the Mexican State of Jalisco in the United States (FEDEJAL) who is from Juanacatlán and lives in Chicago. He introduced Juanacatlán's community leaders to the coordinating support group from the U.S. The community leaders board was comprised of seven Mexican community members (six men and one woman); two farmers, two long time citizens of Juanacatlán, a housewife, a park ranger and the mayor of Juanacatlán.

The coordinating support team comprised of a Hispanic consultant from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) who has experience implementing PAR approach; a Hispanic physician whose family is from Juanacatlán and is currently working for the Illinois Department of Human Services- Department of Rehabilitation Services (DHS-DRS) and the president of FEDEJAL who

is also a community leader from Juanacatlán, Jalisco. All team members were native Spanish speakers and Hispanic, so language and cultural differences were minimal. Further, special care was taken to become aware of potential cultural differences.

Partners held meetings at FEDEJAL in the U.S. and in Juanacatlán. Following principles of university-community partnerships, the collaboration was based on trust and mutual respect, open communication, reciprocal learning, and respect for diversity and different points of view (Suarez-Balcazar, Harper, & Lewis, 2005). Based on these principles, the community leaders, residents, and members of a community-based organization took an active role in the research team. Therefore, the research agenda was developed in collaboration and was guided by the needs expressed by the community, rather than the needs of the researcher (Suarez-Balcazar, Davis, Ferrari, Nyden, Olson, Alvarez, Molloy, & Toro, 2004). The community development process followed the steps from the CRM described below.

Figure 1. Describes the main phases of the CRM performed at Juanacatlán.



As can be seen in the figure, the process is cyclical and can be affected by contextual factors at any time.

b. **Reflection on values and central functions of the community**

This phase requires the development of a matrix that allows the formulation of specific items for the concerns survey (Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, & Suarez Balcazar, 2009). It is important that community members collaborate and contribute in deciding what issues are most important (CTB, 2012). Involving citizens as partners in the research process is fundamental to ensuring that the research is responsive to their needs and values (See Balcazar, Taylor, &

Kielhofner, 2004). A group of community leaders from Juanacatlán met with researchers to identify relevant community functions and values. This small group of leaders reflected different interests, values, ages, experiences and community geographic locations. They helped to generate the guiding framework for the development of the concerns survey. The group included a political candidate from the party that has been promoting the cleaning and sanitizing of the river agenda, the Parish priest, a long-time farmer from the township, and a former mayor. This group held an initial meeting to discuss the research process and identify potential participants for the next phase. The meeting also allowed community leaders to ask questions about the process in order to facilitate understanding of the tasks and resources that were going to be required.

c. **Identification of community concerns**

Based on the table of values and community functions created during the first phase, a team of 12 community leaders and community representatives participated in the development of a preliminary list of survey items. The team included two young people from the town, two farmers, two workers, a doctor, the town mayor, two retirees, a teacher, and the political candidate from the green party. The final draft survey was piloted and tested with the help of five community volunteers. This pilot helped modify and clarify questions to insure proper interpretation. The final survey had a total of 53 items. A demographic section included 15 questions and was at the beginning of the survey. These questions included age, gender, marital status, education level, and types of disabilities in the household. The survey was created in Spanish. The survey included two types of questions for each issue. The first question asked about the importance of a particular issue (“How importance is it for you that...”). The second question asked about the respondent’s satisfaction with the issue (“How satisfied are you with...”). Both

questions were rated on a 5-point scale, where 1 indicated *not important* or *not satisfied* and 5 indicated *very important* or *very satisfied*.

d. **Data collection**

Once the survey was created, the state government of Jalisco printed the survey. Juanacatlán former mayor asked support from “El Salto” High School and the National College of Technical Occupational Education (CONALEP) to collect the data. A group of 30 students from the CONALEP canvassed door-to-door to collect the concerns surveys. The students collected the data as part of their community service required to graduate from the school. The former mayor supported the initiative, and facilitated the transportation during the collection data phase. The data collection was held over a period of 1 month and a half. Only citizens living in the municipality of Juanacatlán were asked to respond the survey.

A total of 1,228 people responded the survey. The average age of the respondents were 44 years. Participants were 60% female and 40% male. Families in this community have an average of 3.7 sons and most of them have a university education (25%). An 11% of the respondents reported to have a type a disability on themselves or in a family member. A 53% of the participants have family members at the United States of America, the main reason for them to migrate to this country were work and they reside mainly at California (64%) and Chicago (18%). More than half of the participants (58%) are homeowners and work full time (84%). An 8% of those who responded the survey worked as agricultural worker and 7% were students.

Overall, 59% of the participants stated their health status as regular and 11% as bad. Half of the respondents have medical insurance and 58% of them have public coverage. In the last years 64% went to the doctor at least once and 30% attended to emergencies service, 25% stated to have

asthma and 28% diabetes. A 24% of the participants mentioned to have impairments due their health status.

The following Table I has the list of community strengths and concerns in Juanacatlán. Strengths were items that had high ratings in both importance and satisfaction, while concerns were rated high in importance but low in terms of satisfaction (CTB, 2012). The most common identified strengths included feel proud of being a Juanacatlán citizen, preserve the traditions and culture of Juanacatlán, be an active member of the community, conserve and protect Juanacatlán's grassland area, and crime detection and prevention. The most common identified concerns were the creation of good quality employments in the community, demand to the government to penalize companies and/or individuals that pollute, develop a project to produce local crafts, increase the opportunities to attend the university, better ideas of production and manufacture, the opportunity to have a cheap and decent house, and have public transportation in the community. These results were the topics targeted for action by community members.

TABLE I
STRENGTHS AND CONCERNS OF JUANACATLÁN COMMUNITY

Issues	Percentage Level of Importance	Percentage Level of Satisfaction
Strengths of Juanacatlán Community		
Feel proud of being a Juanacatlán citizen	82.7%	85.6%
Preserve the traditions and culture of Juanacatlán	85.9%	80.9%
Be an active member of the community	89.9%	76.3%
Conserve and protect Juanacatlán's grassland area	84.0%	80.8%
Crime detection and prevention	89.4%	75.6%
Concerns of Juanacatlán Community		
Creation of good quality employments in the community	84.2%	56.3%
Demand to the government to penalize companies and/or individuals that pollute	89.8%	66.0%
Develop a project to produce local crafts	87.8%	64.6%
Increase the opportunities to attend the university	83.0%	58.6%
Better ideas of production and manufacture	88.2%	66.6%
Opportunity to have a cheap and decent house	83.3%	60.5%
Have public transportation in the community	83.0%	61.0%

Note: Percentages indicate the level of importance and satisfaction in a scale from 1 to 100.

e. **Brain storming of ideas and solutions**

Community presentation and data sharing at public forum. The results of the survey were summarized in a brief report and shared at a community public forum held in Juanacatlán's downtown plaza. This report was also posted in Juanacatlán's Mayoral report. Furthermore, there was a representative from the state government of Jalisco.

A fundamental goal of the Concern Report process is to provide accurate information about issues and alternatives from people affected by the issues (Fawcett, Glenn, Balcazar, Suarez-

Balcazar, Mathews, Paine-Andrews, Seekins, & Smith, 1994). After the results were published, action committees were created in order to address the issues. In addition, suggestions for alternatives to maintain or increase the strengths and minimize the main concerns that were identified were discussed at town hall meetings, including meetings at city hall.

Some of the proposals included: The need to increase the promotion of community social activities that enhance community traditions such as celebrating family day to strengthen Juanacatlán families, provide opportunities such as field trips for children to visit museums in Guadalajara, organize soccer tournaments, conduct exposure to the arts by holding the traditional religious play on Christmas. They also proposed to increase community services. This includes, creating a unit that works to prevent violence against children, early intervention workshops to improve development from infancy and handcrafting classes. In reference to activities that build community capacity, participants proposed to distribute environmental information on the status of the river's condition in order to increase awareness among the population about the river's pollution and the health risks that it poses, and the group nominated a leader who would focus on improving the economic conditions in the fields.

f. **Planning and taking action**

The Concern Report process increases knowledge and critical consciousness by promoting critical awareness of common concerns and possibilities for change (Fawcett et al., 1994). The strategies developed to improve community conditions involved brainstorming/thinking, planning, doing and reflecting. Rather than being a static, linear process, these phases create a cyclical process of praxis (action and reflection) that provided opportunities for change (Garcia-Iriarte, Kramer, Kramer, & Hammel, 2008).

Community leaders used the survey results for planning and taking actions. The future plans of the leaders include to prioritize action and work together to achieve the same goal, take more time and effort in the project activities, work in elementary schools to identify vulnerable children, create a community committee in order to build an multipurpose center for the community where they could hold community meetings more frequently. The community leaders thought it important to disseminate the results among the population as soon as possible.

5. **Evaluation of community interventions**

The Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach attempts to address community-identified social problems, and seeks to promote social change (Letiecq & Schmalzbauer, 2012). Although, community interventions intend to ameliorate social and economic inequalities there is a lack of research to evaluate the outcomes of PAR. Rapport, Snooks, Evans, and Tee (2008) found a gap in the literature in regards to measuring the outcomes of community interventions that encourage a “bottom-up” approach.

Posavac (2011) asserts that “there is only one overall purpose for program evaluation activities: contributing to the provision of quality services to people in need. Without feedback, human service programs (indeed, any activity) cannot be carried out effectively” (p. 13). In the 1970’s program evaluation emerged as a professional practice after decades of large-scale social experimentation and government intervention (Patton, 1996). Current economic challenges where there is not enough money to cover needs and to solve social problems, spawned the need to assess community interventions and collect data that informs what things are worth doing.

Patton defined program evaluation as “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming” (1996, p. 23).

Therefore, program evaluation is a tool to understand and determine the relationship among outcomes and intervention activities.

According to Posavac (2011) the most often used program evaluations involve need assessments, examine the program implementation, and establish the outcomes and impacts of an intervention. There are several reasons to perform a program evaluation. An evaluation can help make informed decisions about whether or not a program should stop or continue. An evaluation can improve a program to increase efficiency and enhance outcomes. Furthermore, quantifying program outcomes will endorse the need for the program and establishes the real impact on the community from the intervention.

In 2008, the Unite Way of America explained the benefits of measuring program outcomes for non-profit organizations: (1) determine benefits from the program, (2) identify the extent of achievement experienced from program activities, (3) utilize the gathered information to improve program effectiveness, and (4) communicate the information of its effectiveness with many audiences (Hendricks, Plantz, & Pritchard, 2008). Therefore, the process of evaluating a community intervention can help to acknowledge the program's impact at an individual or community level. Moreover, the evaluation results can support stakeholders at the time of decision making in regards to the current or future status of a community intervention. Finally, as Patton (1996) mentioned, an evaluation has the power to reduce the uncertainty of action when stakeholders, through an evaluation can also enhance their control over the intervention and maximize resources.

As mentioned before, during the past several decades social science methods were utilized to monitor and evaluate the quality of services (Posavac, 2011). Ohmer and her colleague (2006)

found out in a systematic review of the literature from 1985 to 2001 that the research performed on community organizations has been mainly qualitative.

According to Taylor and Bodgan (1998), in the 1990's there was an increased acceptance of using qualitative methods for program evaluation. Qualitative methodology produces descriptive data or nonnumerical information (Posavac, 2011; Taylor et al., 1998). Qualitative methods are focus on understanding how people experience their world (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, researchers frequently use qualitative methods when performing a program evaluation. Patton states: "Qualitative methods are often used in evaluations because they tell the program's story by capturing and communicating the participant's stories" (Patton, 2002, p.10). Qualitative researchers are interested in interpreting and understanding program participants' experience and getting a sense of their unique perspective. Awareness of how participants experienced and perceived the program is crucial to describing how the program was implemented and its outcomes.

Another characteristic of qualitative inquiry is that the main instrument for data collection and analysis is the researcher (Merriam, 2009). Patton (2002) describes three ways to collect data as a qualitative researcher: interviews, observations, and document reviews. Similarly, qualitative evaluation uses the same methods to gather information in order to explain the program and the program's impact on the participants (Posavac, 2011). Interviews as a qualitative measure technique guide the data collection using open-ended and semi-structured questions (Mertens, 2010). These types of interviews provide the opportunity for interviewees to communicate with their own words, and express an idea in more detail about their perceptions and experiences. Direct observations are essential for the evaluator to develop an understanding of the program. The gathered information from observations consists of detailed descriptions of people's activities,

including the context within which the observation was made (Patton, 2002). Documents review refer to written materials, pictures before and after the program, and another documents from program records. Evaluators usually analyze the content of the materials and gather evidence to back up their interpretations and conclusions.

Posavac (2011) recommends qualitative evaluators to personally observe the entity being evaluated, write down direct observations from program's activities, engage in dialogues with people involved in the program such as participants and staff, and examine program documents and other materials. The quality of the data collected might depend on the researcher keeping an open mind to the possibility that findings may be very different from what was expected.

There are many different types of "theoretical traditions" (Patton, 2002), "approaches" to doing qualitative research. I have chosen to conduct a series of semi-structured interviews with key participants in the PAR initiative in Juanacatlán in order to identify the most relevant actions and outcomes resulting from the process. I targeted key informants who have a personal involvement in leading some aspect of the action process in the community. In addition I also collected observations, pictures and reviewed documents related to the process.

C. **Purpose and Research Questions**

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach described in this case study of *Juanacatlán Renace*, provided a process for the community of Juanacatlán to come together and identify main issues, resources and supports. The community members were actively involved in the analysis of contextual issues meaningful to them, and took actions to address some of their most pressing needs.

The purpose of this study was to examine the process, outcomes and sustainability of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) performed at Juanacatlán. Furthermore, this study aims to

determine what are the potential implications regarding the PAR approach executed in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative, to help community members take ownership of the issues that affect their well-being and take an active role to solve them. The information gathered in this study will be used to determine the implications of PAR as an empowerment approach to enhance people's lives.

The following research questions were addressed: 1) What specific changes happened as a result of *Juanacatlán Renace*?; 2) What is the impact of *Juanacatlán Renace* as it pertains to community members?; and 3) What is the current status of *Juanacatlán Renace*? How has it evolved to sustain its focus?

II. METHOD

A. Participants

A total of 11 community leaders participated actively in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. The former president of the Federation of small business owner and the regional clubs from the Mexican State of Jalisco in the United States (FEDEJAL) facilitated the identification and contact of the participants and provided the setting to perform the semi-structure interviews. The names and contact information of these participants were given to the principal investigator (PI) to conduct the initial contact to schedule meetings to discuss the study. Twelve community leaders were interviewed but only 11 met the inclusion criteria.

1. Selection criteria

Participants were 11 community leaders from *Juanacatlán Renace* Individuals were selected on the basis of their active involvement in the various action committees and their participation in planning and implementing the actions and community-change efforts.

Inclusion criteria. The set of participants included community members of Juanacatlán that were involved in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. Participants must have played a role either at the organizational level, or during the implementation processes. Participants were older than 18 years of age and able to consent and participate in the semi-structured interview.

Exclusion criteria. Individuals who were not familiar with or knowledgeable about the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative were excluded from the study. Participants were excluded if they did not play an active role as leaders in *Juanacatlán Renace*.

B. Measures and Procedures

Data was collected by the Principal Investigator (PI). The main method used to collect data was the semi-structure interview process. The semi-structure interviews were conducted in person,

and were audio recorded and transcribed. A copy of the questions is included in Appendix A (English version) and B (Spanish version). A consent form in Spanish was provided to explain participants' rights, risks, and benefits as a research participant. The consent form was collected before the semi-structure interviews began. The semi-structured interview questionnaire was developed in English and Spanish by the principal investigator and the faculty sponsor, both are bilingual (Spanish-English) and had received formal academic language training.

Participants included 11 community leaders that were actively involved in the initiative *Juanacatlán Renace* in order to collect feedback about the PAR process and the community actions taken as a result of its implementation. The participation in this research was totally voluntary. There wasn't any type of compensation to participate in this research. Participants were free to refuse to answer any questions they did not want to answer. No subject identifiers were maintained with the collected data.

Participant's names and phone numbers were replaced with a code. Participants were given a unique ID number. The purpose of this ID number was to link to the record that was entered into the computer. Therefore, participants retained privacy because the data cannot be linked to a particular participant.

The interviews were conducted with each participant individually. This took place in a private setting where the only people in the room were the principal investigator and the interviewee. The participants were interviewed for approximately 17 up to 60 minutes. A total of 11 semi-structured interviews were performed.

Fieldwork for this study was conducted in the town of Juanacatlán, Jalisco, México. The researcher visited the different associations and project's facilities. Pictures of relevant projects performed by this initiative were also taken. Data from written documents and online material

available such as newspaper articles, photographs, Juanacatlán Renace initiative outcomes report, Necahual annual reports and Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán website were also collected. Furthermore, the PI gathered information from direct observations of different project's facilities.

1. **Content analysis**

The PI analyzed the content of the written and online materials, pictures and observations to support their interpretations and conclusions. Further for the purpose of this research, 11 semi-structured interviews were analyzed. The PI ran the qualitative analysis for the semi-structured interviews. The PI identified and organized themes across the interviews, with particular attention paid to themes which were in line with the study objectives.

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed following qualitative analyzes procedures. Data analysis primarily consisted in bringing together the interview transcripts, letting themes and categories emerge for simplifying and articulating data to the point of saturation (some data ended up fitting in existing themes and different concepts were collapsed into one theme). The PI double-checked the transcriptions with the audio-recorded interviews. In order to increase reliability, another native Spanish speaker checked that the audio-recorded interviews coincided with the transcriptions.

To increase content validity, a summary of the interview transcriptions were presented to 36% of the participants in order to check for accuracy and completeness of the information collected. This procedure is called "member checks," which verifies the accuracy of the findings with the participants (Mertens, 2010). It was important to make sure the research faithfully captures the experiences, worldview and opinions of participants.

C. **Research Design**

The data collected in this study were used to provide a summary of the community organizing and the outcomes of the community efforts. These data were also used to assess the community intervention impact, get feedback from community members and disseminate the findings. Due to the nature of data collection and the purpose of this research, this study used a qualitative research approach, specifically an action-research design.

III. RESULTS

The results of this study are presented in four main categories: overview of key findings from the semi-structure interviews, summary of main projects accomplishments, documents review, and direct observations. Overview of key findings from the semi-structure interviews, and summary of main projects accomplishments include 11 transcribed and analyzed semi-structures interviews of community leaders that were actively involved in the initiative *Juanacatlán Renace*. Documents review include the review of data from written materials and online material available such as newspaper articles, photographs, *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative outcomes report, Necahual Mexico A.C. annual reports and Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán website. Direct observations include notes and pictures of different *Juanacatlán Renace* project's facilities to support the initiative outcomes.

A. **Overview of Key Findings From the Semi-Structure Interviews**

Eleven community leaders were interviewed about their role in the initiative *Juanacatlán Renace*. They were six women and five men. Seven participants have lived in Juanacatlán less than 15 years, five have been living there between 15 to 35 years, and only one participant has been living there for over 50 years. The participants' occupations were a social worker, a teacher, two non-profit organization presidents, a former Juanacatlán mayor, a horticulturist, a lawyer, a psychologist, a cattle rancher, and a businessman. All participants were native Spanish speakers and Mexicans.

Participants interviewed were involved in different stages of the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. Five of them collaborated during the initiative's early phase that involved identifying community leaders, organizing the initial meetings to develop the survey in order to assess the community strengths, weaknesses, concerns, and values. Furthermore, these participants helped in

organizing the town's people and creating strategies to collect the survey data. Four participants started their involvement in the initiative after the assessment results were published. They helped to establish a non-for profit association that promotes social development programs and events to reinforce the town traditions and values. Moreover, they led projects to improve Juanacatlán's public spaces and a nursing home facility. These four participants continue engaged in the initiative's events and projects until today. However, only two of the 11 participants have been involved in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative since the beginning and as of today.

The main reasons cited by respondents for their participation include: the invitation received from the initiative's general coordinator inviting them to actively participate in the activities spawned by the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative, their willingness to collaborate in addressing Juanacatlán's needs, and their desire to be part of the solutions that would promote change to improve their community.

For instance one participant said: "*Decidí involucrarme en la iniciativa de Juanacatlán Renace porque se me hizo muy interesante su misión, de tratar de ayudar a la población sin interés alguno, porque lo que se hace es totalmente gratuito no hay ninguna ganancia económica, solamente tienes la ganancia de satisfacción de saber que tu pueblo y su gente está bien*". ["I decided to be involved in *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative because I found its mission very interesting, trying to help people with no interest, because what has been done is totally free, there is no an economic gain, but you gain the satisfaction of knowing your hometown and people are doing well".]

Respondents stated that they liked the following aspects about the initiative *Juanacatlán Renace*: The opportunity to share and acknowledged that they have much in common such as the same needs and that they had the opportunity to accept and take responsibility to work together in

order to address their needs. Participants also liked that this initiative started a collaborative process among community members, state and local government, the catholic church, and, school districts in working collaboratively to improve community living conditions. Moreover, among other things, what participants liked the most was that immigrants from Juanacatlán started the initiative because of their concerns about their hometown regardless of the fact that they did not reside in Juanacatlán.

To illustrate, one participant mentioned: “*Juanacatlán Renace es un proyecto altruista, de amor a la comunidad, un proyecto que busca que las personas del pueblo estén bien*”. [“*Juanacatlán Renace* is an altruist project, a project of love toward one’s hometown community, a project that seeks community members well-being”].

Participants recognized the things they disliked the most about the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative such as during the initiative’s early stages, meetings were too long and community members were expecting to receive a benefit for their involvement and participation. Some projects failed due to lack of community participation. Also, many community members were apathetic and were of the belief that government must address all their problems and needs. Another aspect participants disliked was that economic resources became scarcer due to political issues. Therefore, they had economic limitations impacting their ability to organize more events and increase the services they had established such as violence prevention and psychological services.

As one participant said: “*Al principio había mucha desconfianza y negativismo, no era fácil convencer a las personas para que participaran*”. [“During the early stages, there was a lot of mistrust and negativity, it was difficult to convince people to participate”].

Participants identified obstacles that prevented more progress in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative such as community members' mindset because they used to think that the government must solve all of the community problems. Other community members were waiting to receive something in exchange for their participation. Hence, in the initiative early stages was difficult to overcome community members' apathy, conformism, and distrust on the project. However, during the early meetings with the general coordinator, the UIC consultant, and a DRS employee leaders talked about the potential that community members had to meet their own needs and encourage community members to get involved in the initiative. Another barrier was the leadership, since people from different political parties were involved and their desire to take the initiative political credits made controversial their participation because the initiative was apolitical.

Most of the participants expressed that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative is a good project that has been evolving overtime creating great interest in the community. They acknowledge that the initiative is a learning process focused on identifying the community's needs, all while seeking the most viable solutions.

For example a participant mentioned: "*Sigo creyendo que Juanacatlán Renace es una buena iniciativa, que se aprende mucho con el paso del tiempo ves como mejorar las cosas o si en su momento se hubiera hecho algo distinto hubiéramos obtenido un mejor resultado, pero sigo teniendo la idea de que es un buen proyecto*". ["I still believe *Juanacatlán Renace* is a great initiative, it's a great learning opportunity, you learn how to improve things or if we had done something different at the time we might have obtained a better result, but I still believe that it is a good project".]

Respondents considered that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative met its objectives; maybe not all but it met its key goals. Participants recognized there is still much to do for the community, but what has been proposed has been accomplished.

To clarify, one participant stated: “*Si se han cumplido los objetivos, pero la misión no se ha cumplido, también se han establecido nuevos objetivos. Este es un movimiento de por vida, es una manera de vivir, es ser responsable de mi mismo, de mi familia y de mi comunidad, para crear una mejor sociedad*”. [“The objectives have been met, but the mission goes on, and new goal need to be set. This is a movement for life, a way of life, to be responsible for myself, my family and my community, in order to create a better society”].]

Participants proposed the involvement of as many family members as possible to increase the participation of more community members in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. They also made suggestions about how to improve the initiative’s impact. For instance, through multiple advertisements of the events, wide dissemination of the project information, and frequent meetings with structured objectives.

Participants stated that the level of community members’ involvement in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative was satisfactory. There was enough participation and support from community members to continue offering services and executing cultural and recreational events.

Another participant said: “*Necesitamos organizarnos más, esta fue una prueba piloto y tenemos que tomar esta experiencia y mejorarla y gestionar mas recursos*”. [“We need to improve our organization, this initiative was a pilot test and we need to learn from this experience, improve it and obtain more resources”].]

As mentioned by several participants, some of the changes that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative did for the town of Juanacatlán were: now people are aware that immigrants living in the

Chicago area are working to improve the quality of life in the municipality of Juanacatlán. Further, now there is a community-based service delivery approach that focuses on promoting social development, while fostering empowerment and self-help initiatives.

As one participant said: “*Juanacatlán Renace trajo a restablecer valores de responsabilidad ciudadana*”. [“The *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative restored civic responsibility values”].]

Finally, all participants expressed their willingness to continue their involvement in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative and they are ready to contribute in what ever way they can. Overall, participants would like to continue seeking economic and human resources to continue the growth and development of their hometown.

B. Summary of Main Projects Accomplishments

After the semi-structured interviews were analyzed, the data confirmed that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative was started by immigrants living in the Chicago area. The initiative’s general coordinator was the former president of FEDEJAL who is from Juanacatlán and lives in Chicago. At that time, the *Juanacatlán Renace* general coordinator had good relationships with the local and state government, and with Juanacatlán community leaders to start the initiative. He gathered funding from immigrants living in the Chicago area and the Mexican government, and brought together human resources in order to start *Juanacatlán Renace*.

To illustrate, one participant said: “*Mi papel fue hacer que sucediera Juanacatlán Renace, juntar las energías, juntar conocimientos, y buscar recursos para ayudar el desarrollo de nuestra comunidad de origen*”. [“My role was to make *Juanacatlán Renace* happen, gathering energies, gathering knowledge, and getting resources to help the development of our hometown”].]

According to the interviews, after the CRM results were analyzed and published, community members came together to suggest some alternatives to address the main concerns and increase the strengths that were identified. Therefore, the need to create a non-for profit association came out. The main objective of this association was to increase community social services and promote activities that enhance community traditions. Community leaders decided to create a non-for profit association called “Necahual Mexico A.C.”. Actually, Necahual mission was to help children and family members who live in vulnerable environments and to provide educational, cultural, and recreational activities. Necahual operates with funds donated by immigrants living in the Chicago area. This association does not receive any economic resource from the government neither belongs to any political party. The next step to assure the sustainability of Necahual association was to get economic donations in Mexico to continue its mission.

As stated by participants, the activities performed by Necahual were: annual field trips for children to “*Trompo Magico*” museum and to Guadalajara’s park zoo; soccer tournaments; religious plays in December; Christmas celebrations; mini Olympic games event (relay races, basketball games, soccer games, high jump); family’s day celebration (parent educational conferences, and traditional games for parents to spend time parents with their children); children’s day celebration (share a cake, break piñatas, clown show, moonwalks); and handcraft classes. The handcraft classes failed due to lack of participation. Necahual also created a social service delivery unit to prevent domestic violence (UAVI acronym in Spanish “*Unidad de Atención a la Violencia Intrafamiliar*”) that unit provides at no-cost, preventive, legal services, and psychological therapies. UAVI offers domestic violence and bullying prevention classes and facilitates parent education trainings in the local schools. Furthermore, in the Necahual facility there are some spaces to give therapy to children and family members that are living under violence conditions.

In December 2013, Necahual received a donation from a computer manufacturing company to deliver 50 Christmas presents to children that were in treatment at UAVI or children who needed it the most. There were 50 children that received toys from the company staff.

Participants indicated that in the Chicago area, there were four groups of immigrants from Juanacatlán doing events during the year to generate economic resources to improve Juanacatlán community development. After the *Juanacatlán Renace* needs assessment results were published, *Juanacatlán Renace* general coordinator and the four groups decided to come together and form only one group called “Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán”, since each group was working separately.

A UIC consultant recommended that the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán develop their statutes, logo, and slogan during an advocacy training sessions with members from FEDEJAL. This way, the immigrants could make explicit and formalize their efforts to help their hometown and strengthen the relationship with their community and family members. Therefore, the Club created their statutes, logo, and slogan “United at the distance” (“*Unidos a la distancia*” in Spanish).

The Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán was originally created 40 years ago in Chicago but its presidents retired and the Club stopped doing the social events. The *Juanacatlán Renace* general coordinator informed members about a Mexican government program called 3X1, and how the clubs could benefit from it. The 3X1 is a program created by the Mexican federal government to support immigrants’ effort to improve the living conditions in their hometowns. This program involves the participation of the federal, state, and local governments, and hometown associations to facilitate communities’ development and productive projects. In the 3X1 program, for each dollar donated by an immigrant, each layer of government will donated a dollar, so 1 dollar donation can potentially become 4. The 3X1 program’s objectives are to benefit communities with high level of poverty, to promote social development-community projects, to reinforce civil

society and government partnerships and strengthen Mexican immigrants relationship with their hometown (SEDESOL, 2014).

The activities performed with the purpose to raise funds by the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán are: an annual gala dance, a raffle, and a traditional Mexican dance. The Club also organizes a yearly family picnic but this event is free of cost. The picnic focuses only on sharing time with families and children, (breaking piñatas, parents and children bag race, playing traditional games, etc.) in order to integrate their Mexican roots in the American society. Further, the Club in order to promote the richness of Mexican culture in Chicago has a no-cost annual event called “Jalisco in Evanston” with traditional music, dance, and food.

Participants mentioned that before the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán joined the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative, the Club only helped the town nursing home for elderly people. After the unification, the Club started to benefit from the federal government 3X1 program and expanded their mission to meet different community needs. The Club donated to the nursing home a 16 passengers mini-bus accessible for people with disabilities, five home hospital beds, home appliances and furniture (a microwave, a washer, a juice extractor, a refrigerator, and a dinning room table with chairs), built an elevator inside the nursing home, installed new doors in the rooms, made the bathroom safe and accessible, repaired the kitchen drain and the gas line, and upgraded the nursing home electricity. Furthermore, the Club supported the nursing home with funds to start a project about organic vegetables. The project consists of harvesting organic vegetables in partnership with the CONALEP (a local technical school). The CONALEP students are helping residents grow the vegetables as part of a school course. The profits generated by the vegetables sales are going to help the nursing home.

Moreover, interviews findings showed that the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán supported the town's church providing resources to remodel the Juanacatlán funeral home and the multiple-use community center. In 2012, Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán staff traveled to choose students who needed university scholarships the most (based on financial need). The Club donated seven scholarships to students that for lack of economic resources were at risk to abandoning their university studies. In 2013, the Club only awarded three scholarships due to the local government lack of support. Further, the Club contributed to the Juanacatlán fire department with firefighter professional equipment (boots, pants, jackets, firefighter face masks), and donated an ambulance to the town hospital that provides low-cost health services.

As claimed by participants, the *Juanacatlán Renace* general coordinator also organized community key leaders to find a way to maximize the town's resources and meet more needs. The general coordinator obtained the support from the president of Juanacatlán's food bank. This is a non-profit food distribution association that provides meals and refreshments in Necahual's events. Through the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative combined with the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán and the 3X1 program, they collected the funds needed to improve the food bank facilities. Now, the food bank delivers food bags to poor families and provides supplies to the town's nursing home.

Participants mentioned the collaboration with the initiative of the town's Catholic priest disseminating the events information in the Church during the mass celebrations. This helped build credibility among the population.

Another community need that resulted from the survey needs assessment was to decrease the river pollution and its health risks. Hence, the former mayor sought support from state and federal governments, and the national water commission, with the purpose of getting resources to decrease the Santiago river's pollution. Participants informed that unfortunately a child drowned

in the Santiago River due to the high levels of pollutants. This event was widely publicized in the local and Guadalajara newspapers. Therefore, the former mayor and community members took advantage of this sorrowful event to lobby the state government to build a treatment plant to clean the water. Finally, in 2011 an industrial wastewater filtration treatment plant was inaugurated (Periódico del Sur, 2011).

The interview outcomes suggest that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative is an ongoing transnational process. The initiative is a process in frequent change, since once some objectives are accomplished, the need to address new challenges are developed in the process. Table II briefly illustrates the activities spawned by the *Juanacatlán Renace*. The table shows activities performed during the period of time of 2010 to 2012 compared with 2013 to 2014.

For example, a participant said: “*Se hubiera logrado más si se contara con el apoyo del ayuntamiento o del gobierno estatal, porque con el apoyo hubiéramos metido cada año proyectos al 3X1, hubiera rendido mas el dinero*”. [“We would have achieved more if we had had the support from the local and state government, because we had made more with our money if our projects had benefited annually with the 3X1 program”.]

TABLE II
SUSTAINABILITY OF ACTIVITIES SPAWNED BY *JUANACATLÁN RENACE* INITIATIVE

2010-2012	2013-2014
<p>Necahual Mexico A.C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Christmas Celebration • 1 Catholic religious play • 2 Annual Field trips for Children • Mini Olympic games • Soccer Tournament • Family's Day celebration • UAVI delivered 72 psychological services 	<p>Necahual Mexico A.C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Christmas Celebration • 50 Christmas presents to Children • 2 Annual Field trips for Children • Family's Day celebration • Children's Day Celebration • UAVI delivered 175 psychological services
<p>Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual gala dance ▪ Annual traditional Mexican Dance ▪ Annual Raffle ▪ Annual Picnic ▪ Cultural Event "Jalisco en Evanston" • In Juanacatlán <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town Nursing Home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 16 passengers accessible bus ○ Provided with home appliances and furniture ○ Built an Elevator ○ Repaired the kitchen drain, the gas line and the electricity ▪ Church's Funeral home ▪ Multiple-Use Community Center ▪ Ambulance to town Public Hospital ▪ Juanacatlán Food Bank Installation ▪ 7 University Student's scholarships 	<p>Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual gala dance ▪ Annual traditional Mexican Dance ▪ Annual Raffle ▪ Annual Picnic ▪ Cultural Event "Jalisco en Evanston" • In Juanacatlán <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town Nursing Home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Donated 5 hospital beds ○ Installed new doors for the rooms ○ Made the bathroom safe and accessible ○ Funded the Organic Harvest Project ▪ Donated 3 University Students scholarships ▪ Fire Department Equipment
<p>Juanacatlán Food bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals and refreshments in Necahual's events • Supplies the town Nursing home with food 	<p>Juanacatlán Food bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals and refreshments in Necahual's events • Supplies the town Nursing home with food
<p>National Water Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water filtration Treatment plant 	

The interviews findings suggest that Necahual Mexico A.C. and the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán have a structured work plan to continue their activities through fundraising events and donations from immigrants.

The following Table III summarizes community concerns identified with the CRM in Juanacatlán that were addressed by the activities generated by *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. Overall, the activities implemented by this initiative promoted social development, reduced health risks, and increased community services.

TABLE III
COMMUNITY CONCERNS SATISFIED BY JUANACATLÁN RENACE INITIATIVE

Concern	Actions	Outcomes
Preserve the traditions and culture of Juanacatlán	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas Celebrations • Catholic religious play • Annual Field trips for Children • Family's Day celebration • Children's Day Celebration 	Increase the promotion of community social activities that enhance community traditions
Increase the opportunities to attend the university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University students scholarships 	Financial aid to students that for lack of economic resources were in risk to abandoning their university studies
Demand the government to penalize companies and/or individuals that pollute the river	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water filtration Treatment plant 	Decrease the Santiago river's pollution and its health risks

C. Documents Review

Necahual Mexico A.C. annual report indicated that in 2011, UAVI provided 27 psychological services to community members; in 2012 were 45 services; in 2013 were 70 services; and in 2014 through June have had 70 thus far. Hence, the initiative general coordinator sought the support from the University of Guadalajara to have clinical psychologists doing their internship program at Necahual. Currently, the University of Guadalajara is collaborating with 3 clinical psychologists to cover the growing demand for services.

Online materials available, such as an article from *La Jornada* –a well-known national Mexican newspaper– informed that after the former major and community members lobbied the state government to build a treatment plant to clean the water, on March 2011 the Governor of the state of Jalisco inaugurated the first industrial waste water filtration treatment plant with an investment of over a quarter of a million dollars (*Periódico del Sur*, 2011). Since the plant started operating, the water quality in the river has improved considerably. However, the State of Jalisco's Water Commission Lab conducted a follow up analyzes of the water quality on January 2012 at the level adjacent to the town of Juanacatlán to determine the quality of the river water and found that although there was an improvement, the river water continues to be seriously polluted and the levels of contaminants exceed the acceptable limits for human utilization nor will these levels promote the preservation or capacity to sustain aquatic life (CEA, 2012).

To illustrate one participant said: “Se logró que se construyera una planta de tratamiento de aguas, de hecho fue insuficiente pero si alcanzar a sanear un poco la contaminación del rio Santiago”. [“The building of one water treatment plant was an accomplishment, in fact it was insufficient to clean the water but at least it improved the Santiago river's pollution”.]

Furthermore, on July 2014 the new president of Mexico Enrique Peña Nieto, inaugurated construction of the nation's largest water treatment plant near the Santiago river, called “*Agua Prieta*”. This plant can process 8,500 liters of sewage per second. The water quality after the treatment process generated by “*Agua Prieta*” will have sufficient quality for use in agriculture (La Jornada, 2014). This new water treatment plant will improve significantly the water quality in the Santiago river.

The Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán maintains a website updated with pictures and information of the projects performed at Juanacatlán by the Club. The Club also uses a website to advertise the fund-raising activities done in Chicago (<http://www.facebook.com/public/Clubproobrasjuanacatlan-En-Chicago>).

D. **Direct Observations**

The researcher had the opportunity to visit the church’s funeral home, the multiple-use community center, the town nursing home, Necahual Mexico A.C. building and the spaces where UAVI delivers psychological services. The researcher collected notes and pictures of all of the *Juanacatlán Renace* project’s facilities.

The researcher’s direct observations confirmed that the projects and events executed by Necahual Mexico A.C. and the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán have been concluded successfully. The researcher was also able to ascertain the projects implemented by the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán, like the ambulance donated to the town public hospital, the church’s funeral home remodeling, and the donations and reparations to the town nursing home.

IV. DISCUSSION

The *Juanacatlán Renace* Initiative was a project funded and started by immigrants from Juanacatlán living in the Chicago area. The initial coordinating team integrated by FEDEJAL former president, a UIC consultant, and a DRS employee helped to build trust and made clear the methodology to develop a work plan to identify community needs, weaknesses, strengths and concerns.

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) performed at Juanacatlán was a process through which community members collected data, identified community needs, and took an active role to tackle community needs. In this case, the Concern Report Method (CRM) was an effective tool to identify community needs. The CRM results generated civic involvement to address identified community needs. Consequently with the assessment results, “Necahual Mexico A.C.” a non-profit organization was funded in Juanacatlán with the purpose of providing community social services and endorsing community traditions.

“Necahual Mexico A.C.” through the UAVI program, has provided psychological therapy to children and family members who face domestic violence. The psychological services in Necahual have had an increment annually higher than 50%. There is an estimate for this year to serve 105 community members. The University of Guadalajara is collaborating with Necahual with three clinical psychologies doing their internship program in the town. Necahual with this extra support will be able to meet the increased demand for psychological services. Furthermore, Necahual continues to perform cultural and recreational events such as field trips for children, Christmas celebration, family’s day celebration, and children’s day celebration.

In addition, the *Juanacatlán Renace* Initiative has functioned as a facilitator for immigrants living in Chicago to come together to enhance Juanacatlán’s community development. The

development of projects with higher impact was the result of the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán unification. The Club was able to support different agencies such as the town's nursing home, the church funeral room, the multi-purpose community center, the town's food bank, scholarships for university students that were at risk of abandoning their studies due to the lack of financial resources, the fire department, and the town's hospital. The Club continues their mission and projects even though the current state government stopped supporting the Club's projects.

The CONALEP and the Juanacatlán's food bank continue supporting the town's nursing home. The CONALEP contributes with students to produce organic vegetables that are sold in order to raise funds for the nursing home's future needs. The Juanacatlán Food Bank supplies the nursing home with groceries from its pantries.

As expected, the results showed the PAR process performed in Juanacatlán spawned an agenda to deliver goods and services to the community. Moreover, PAR generated a collaborative partnership from multiple institutions (UIC, DRS, FEDEJAL, Federal, State and Local Mexican Government, Necahual Mexico, Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán, University of Guadalajara, Local Food Bank, CONALEP) that worked together with community members to improve their lives, either at an individual level or community level. Fortunately, the lack of current government support has not stopped the efforts from immigrants and Juanacatlán community members to continue their mission to improve the community social conditions.

The *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative outcomes illustrate a case of community capacity building since until recently, the community has overcome the obstacles that interfere with community progress such as the lack of support from the federal and state Mexican government. The collaborative partnership generated from the PAR process has allowed to achieve sustainable results in the community. Further, the PAR process facilitated the creation of "Necahual Mexico

A.C.” and the strengthening of the Club Pro-Obras Juanacatlán. It is important to note that both institutions continue organizing community efforts to solve problems and create opportunities for social change in Juanacatlán.

The *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative findings illustrates a case in which leadership was a key piece to facilitate community development. The former president of FEDEJAL already was a respected leader in Juanacatlán. He also had a long-term relationship with the state governor of Jalisco and the Mayor of Juanacatlán. Moreover, he as president of FEDEJAL in Chicago, has a relationship with Mexican business owners and immigrants from Juanacatlán. Therefore, he was a facilitator to obtain community involvement, government participation and the collaboration from local, state and international institutions.

Finally, the genuine willingness to help their hometown from the initiative general coordinator, immigrants and community volunteers created a transparent process to build trust and credibility with respect to the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative. Participants involved in the initiative did not receive any economic compensation. The accomplishments were documented and published through social media, newspapers, videos, and pictures.

A. **Conclusions**

Many of the findings from this study coincided with what was identified in the literature about PAR approaches as facilitator of the empowerment process experienced by residents and immigrants of Juanacatlán. The findings from this research suggest that the process of PAR was an effective methodology to acknowledge community needs and boost community resources. Juanacatlán community members and immigrants living in the Chicago area took ownership of their hometown issues, and worked together to improve community social conditions. In this case, findings suggest that the Concern Report Method (CRM) was an effective tool to identify

community issues, resources and supports. The CRM was the initial phase that inspired a social change process.

The data showed that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative promoted community involvement, government participation and the collaboration from local, state and international institutions. This initiative was an important first step to create awareness, learning, outreach, and to begin the community empowerment process. The PAR process performed at Juanacatlán introduced an ideology of collaboration, and citizen responsibility. Further, PAR highlighted the responsibility of each institution with regards to the development of the Juanacatlán community.

The data collected in this study illustrates how *Juanacatlán Renace* was a transnational initiative that facilitated the union of immigrants living in the Chicago area and Juanacatlán community members. The *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative was an example of shared responsibility over community needs and teamwork among different layers of the Mexican government, immigrants, local and international educational institutions, the Catholic Church, Juanacatlán community members, and non-profit associations. The residents of Juanacatlán and immigrants from Juanacatlán living in the Chicago area organized efforts and took actions in order to address the most pressing needs that were affecting community well-being.

The empowerment process is linked to increasing the knowledge of community members. In this case, the knowledge includes an understanding of the relevant social context of the community, the goals that were attained, the resources utilized, and the ways in which future goals could be met (Bennet & Chapman, 2010). *Juanacatlán Renace* has a high probability of continuing to meet the needs of the Juanacatlán population and strengthen their future.

Moreover, the information in this study shows that PAR approach performed in the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative has the potential to generate knowledge with the involvement of the

people living in marginalized conditions. Minority groups likely benefit using the PAR approach to develop meaningful services and goods that improve their life conditions. The PAR approach has the potential to increase the capacity of a minority group to take an active role in decisions that affect their quality of life and advocate for services needed according to their own perspective.

B. **Implications for Disability Studies**

PAR methodologies increase the likelihood for community's to benefit, since community members' participation is not limited to identifying the issues, but particularly it focuses on the commitment to participate actively in a role to solve them (Balcazar et al., 1998). PAR approaches might facilitate the process of empowerment of People With Disabilities (PWD), to assist the process of identifying their needs and implement community services to address some of their unmet needs.

Another implication for people with disabilities is to encourage them to work together to develop an agenda that promotes community social development with the purpose of pressuring local, state and federal governments to follow their recommendations. The empowerment process (Freire, 1974) states that when people are aware of needs, possibilities, and resources, they are more likely to take an active role with a sense of control over their live. Therefore, organized efforts from community members may lead government agencies to take some actions to address identified problems. Participatory methodologies like the one described in this research provides opportunities to enhance community development through the implementation of services and community initiatives that are likely to have an impact on people with disabilities.

Moreover, the literature highlighted the need of research that link research and practice (Cargo & Mercer, 2008). PAR approaches have the potential to improve that relationship since participants play an active role to identify the most pressing needs, weaknesses, strengths and

concerns. Based on the literature, it is expected that people engaged in the process of problem identification and problem solving increase their sense of ownership and self-determination develops to form actions that lead to change (Suarez-Balcazar, Martinez, et al., 2005). PWD have personal understanding and valuable knowledge of their needs and their social reality, they can generate ideas for possible solutions to meet their needs that are case specific. Additionally, PWD can come together to discuss their issues, resources, and acknowledge their social situation in order to spawn efforts to improve their quality of life and increase the control over their own lives.

The results of this study will be used to recommend the development of collaborative partnerships among PWD living in underserved conditions and governmental institutions to address the top needs identified by PWD and eventually improve their social conditions.

C. **Limitations**

There are at least three limitations to this study that require consideration. First, this study was focused on how Juanacatlán community leaders experienced the process of PAR. It was focus on the leader's unique perspective on how the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative was implemented and its outcomes. However, it would be advisable to assess the experience from community members that were not involved in the initiative. Future research may try to focus on understanding the perceptions, experiences or opinions of the impact that the *Juanacatlán Renace* initiative had on the residents of Juanacatlán. Further, future research should attempt to help evaluators to identify the cause of changes in community members and increase the power of the evaluation to demonstrate that the initiative really helped to improve people's live, either at an individual, or community level or both.

A second limitation of this study concerns the capacity to generalize the findings to other populations because of the unique characteristics of the population involved in *Juanacatlán*

Renace initiative. Juanacatlán is a small rural community and the majority of Juanacatlán inhabitants are Catholic. Juanacatlán population is a conservative community with strong family values such as taking care of, and supporting each other. Therefore, this particular Hispanic population involved in this research study has cultural differences when compared to the population in the United States. Further research is needed to assure that PAR methodologies work effectively when applied within diverse communities.

Finally, the principal investigator (PI) was the only one who conducted the qualitative analysis, so it is possible she may have some personal bias in the interpretation of the results. However, this is an accepted fact in qualitative inquires where the investigator becomes part of the narrative. As Patton (2002) pointed out, closeness does not mean bias and lost of perspective, since distance do not guarantees objectivity. In qualitative research, the researcher is supposed to immerse in the real world to capture a sense of participants' environments. Perhaps in a future study someone else could replicate the follow-up evaluation of the Juanacatlán experience as the community continues its process of development.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Semi-Structure Interview in English

Semi-Structure Interview for Juanacatlán Renace Project

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Occupation: _____ Date: _____

1. How long have you been living in Juanacatlán?
2. How did you participate in the Juanacatlán Renace project? What was your role?
 - a. What did you specifically do?
 - b. How long did you do it?
3. In what phases of the project did you participate?
4. What were the objectives of your project?
5. Why did you get involved in the project?
6. What were the main accomplishments of the project?
7. What were the top 3 things you like the most about the project?

APPENDIX A (continued)

8. What were the top 3 things you dislike the most about the project?
9. What obstacles do you think prevent more progress?
10. How do you think these obstacles can be eliminated?
11. What means or circumstances helped attain the project initiatives?
12. Besides the resources utilized in the project, what other resources do you think are needed?
13. Do you think there was enough community participation/support for your project?
14. Is there anything else that could have been done in the project if there was more participation?
15. Have your thoughts about the project changed at any point since its beginning?
16. Do you think the project completed its objectives?
17. How did the project change Juanacatlán?
18. Overall, what did this project do for the town of Juanacatlán?

APPENDIX A (continued)

19. What do you think is necessary in order to get more members of the community involved in projects like these?
20. Do you think the challenges or obstacles were addressed adequately? Why yes or why not?
21. What do you think about the level of participation of the community in Juanacatlán Renace?
22. Community experience: What are the perceptions or opinions over the impact of the project on the community?
23. How much time and energy did your participation in the project demand of you?
24. Did your participation affect you negatively in any way?
25. Could you have put more time and effort towards the project?
26. Do you plan on continuing your participation in the project? If so, in what way?
27. What are the next steps in order to continue the project?
28. What suggestions do you have in order to improve the project?
29. Any other comments?

APPENDIX B

Semi-Structure Interview in Spanish

Entrevista Semi-Estructurada de Seguimiento del Proyecto Juanacatlán Renace

Edad: _____ Género: _____ Ocupación: _____ Fecha: _____

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo tiene viviendo en Juanacatlán?
2. ¿Cuál fue su participación en el proyecto de Juanacatlán Renace? ¿Qué rol desempeño?
 - a. Específicamente, ¿Qué fue lo que usted hizo?
 - b. ¿Cuánto tiempo lo hizo?
3. ¿En qué fases del proyecto participo?
4. ¿Cuáles eran los objetivos de su proyecto?
5. ¿Por qué se involucró en el proyecto?
6. ¿Cuáles son los principales logros de este proyecto?
7. ¿Cuáles son las tres cosas que más le gustaron del proyecto?

APPENDIX B (continued)

8. ¿Cuáles son las tres cosas que menos le gustaron del proyecto?
9. ¿Qué obstáculos considera usted que impidieron más progreso?
10. ¿Cómo cree usted que se pueden remover estos obstáculos?
11. ¿Qué recursos o circunstancias han favorecido el logro de las iniciativas del proyecto?
12. ¿Además de los recursos recibidos, qué otros recursos/apoyos cree usted que se necesitan?
13. ¿Cree usted que hubo suficiente participación/apoyo hacia su proyecto?
14. ¿Qué cree usted que se pudo haber hecho más si hubiera existido una mayor participación?
15. ¿Ha cambiado su manera de pensar respecto al proyecto desde el inicio del mismo?
16. ¿Cree usted que el proyecto ha cumplido sus objetivos?
17. ¿Cómo el proyecto cambio Juanacatlán?
18. En general, ¿qué fue lo que hizo este proyecto por el pueblo de Juanacatlán?
19. ¿Qué cree usted que se necesita para involucrar más miembros de la comunidad en proyectos como este?

APPENDIX B (continued)

20. ¿Usted cree que las dificultades u obstáculos fueron manejados adecuadamente? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no?
21. ¿Qué piensa acerca del nivel de participación de la comunidad en Juanacatlán Renace?
22. De acuerdo a la experiencia de la comunidad: ¿Cuáles son las percepciones u opiniones sobre el impacto que tuvo el proyecto en la comunidad?
23. ¿Qué tanto tiempo o energía le demandó su participación en el proyecto?
24. ¿Le afectó negativamente su participación?
25. ¿Pudo usted haber invertido más tiempo y esfuerzo en el proyecto?
26. ¿Piensa usted continuar participando en el proyecto y de qué forma?
27. ¿Cuáles son los siguientes pasos para continuar el proyecto?
28. ¿Qué sugerencias tiene para mejorar el proyecto?
29. ¿Tiene algún otro comentario?

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS)
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (MC 672)
203 Administrative Office Building
1737 West Polk Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612-7227

Approval Notice Amendment to Research Protocol and/or Consent Document – Expedited Review UIC Amendment # 1

March 20, 2014

Maria De Lurdes Arellano
Disability and Human Development
Disability and Human Development
1640 W Roosevelt, M/C 626
Chicago, IL 60612
Phone: (312) 413-1806 / Fax: (312) 413-1804

RE: Protocol # 2014-0091
“A Qualitative Evaluation to Examine the Impact of a Participatory Action Research Intervention in Mexico”

Dear Ms. Arellano:

Members of Institutional Review Board (IRB) #2 have reviewed this amendment to your research and/or consent form under expedited procedures for minor changes to previously approved research allowed by Federal regulations [45 CFR 46.110(b)(2) and/or 21 CFR 56.110(b)(2)]. The amendment to your research was determined to be acceptable and may now be implemented.

Please note the following information about your approved amendment:

Amendment Approval Date: March 18, 2014

Amendment:
Summary: UIC Amendment #1 dated March 10, 2014 (received 3/11/14) is an investigator-initiated amendment to submit the IRB-equivalent approval letter to conduct research in Mexico from the Research Center and Higher Studies in Social Anthropology (dated March 7, 2014).

Approved Subject Enrollment #: 12

Performance Sites: UIC, Federacion Jalisciense del Medio Oeste, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores (CIESAS)

Please note the Review History of this submission:

Receipt Date	Submission Type	Review Process	Review Date	Review Action
03/11/2014	Amendment	Expedited	03/18/2014	Approved

APPENDIX C (continued)

Page 2 of 2

Please be sure to:

→ Use your research protocol number (2014-0091) on any documents or correspondence with the IRB concerning your research protocol.

→ Review and comply with all requirements on the enclosure,

"UIC Investigator Responsibilities, Protection of Human Research Subjects"

(<http://tiger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/policies/0924.pdf>)

Please note that the UIC IRB #2 has the right to ask further questions, seek additional information, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Please be aware that if the scope of work in the grant/project changes, the protocol must be amended and approved by the UIC IRB before the initiation of the change.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the OPRS at (312) 996-1711 or me at (312) 355-1404. Please send any correspondence about this protocol to OPRS at 203 AOB, M/C 672.

Sincerely,



Sheilah R. Graham, MPH

IRB Coordinator, IRB # 2

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects

cc: Fabricio Balcazar, Faculty Sponsor, M/C 626
Tamar Heller, Disability and Human Development, M/C 626

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VITA

Name: Maria de Lourdes Rubí Arellano

Education

2011 – 2014	University of Illinois at Chicago Master of Science in Disability and Human Development	Chicago, IL
2003-2008	University of Guadalajara Bachelor of Arts in Psychology	Jalisco, México

Work Experience

2014-Present	Bilingual Community Outreach Specialist	Rockford, IL
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Outreach and Referral Program at Vocational Rehabilitation Management of Rockford, Inc.

Executive Director: Marco Lenis, MS

Help mostly Hispanic and youth with disabilities who wish to work, in the transition to employment, training or college. In cooperation with Illinois Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services.

2013-2014	Graduate Research Assistant	Chicago, IL
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Transition Model for Students with Disabilities in the Chicago Area Project

At University of Illinois at Chicago

Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research

Principal Investigator: Fabricio Balcázar, Ph.D

Project Director: Jessica Awsumb, MS

The development of Parent/Guardian Education Series to explain the process of transition to parents of students with disabilities, and enhance the students' preparation for life after graduation. The translation to Spanish of official forms from CPS to improve the transition process in Hispanic population.

- 2012 Graduate Research Assistant Chicago, IL
- Jobs for Youth: A Partnership to Promote Employment of Inner-City Youth with Disabilities*
 At University of Illinois at Chicago
 Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research
 Principal Investigator: Fabricio Balcázar, Ph.D
 Project Director: Shawn Dimpfl, MS
- This project proposes a partnership whose main purpose is to enhance the opportunities of inner-city minority youth with disabilities (ages 16 to 24) to access college and find jobs.
- 2011 Graduate Research Assistant Chicago, IL
- Transition Model for Students with Disabilities in the Chicago Area Project*
 At University of Illinois at Chicago
 Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research
 Principal Investigator: Fabricio Balcázar, Ph.D
 Project Director: Joanna Keel, Med
- The Development and implementation of trainings for transition specialists from the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services, to improve the transition outcomes of youth with disabilities in Chicago Public Schools.
- 2009 Sciences Penal and Criminology Institute Jalisco, México
- Select personnel for the city police and perform personality assessments.
- 2008 Home called "Born to Win" Jalisco, México
- Help children with disabilities like language problems, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and behavior problems to do activities of the daily living.
- 2007 Hospital Civil of Guadalajara "Fray Antonio Alcalde" Jalisco, México
- Identify and prevent disabilities. Perform neurodevelopment assessments in children with epilepsy, autistic disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Languages

Spanish and English

Skills

- Computer Skills: Microsoft Office Programs (Word, Power Point, Excell) and SPSS (Statistics analysis and data program)

Roundtable Discussions and Symposia

Awsumb, J., Balcázar, F., Dimpfl, S., Cariño, S., Oberoi, A., & **Arellano, M.** (2012, October). Multiagency collaboration for the successful transition of students with disabilities. Symposium presented at the 35th Midwestern Ecological Conference. Hickory Corners, MI.

Arellano, M., Goldberg, D., Dimpfl, S., & Balcazar, F. (2013, May) Strategies to facilitate individuals with disabilities to enter the workforce. Poster presented at 2013 Midwestern Psychological Association Society for Community Research and Action Conference. Chicago, IL.

Arellano, M., Sanchez, J., Balcazar, F., Alvarado, F., & Turner, C. (2013, November). Systems Change in Interagency Collaboration: Facilitating Successful Future Outcomes for Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities. Roundtable presented at the 36th Midwestern Ecological Conference. Chicago, IL.

Awards

2008	Outstanding Academic Performance by the University of Guadalajara
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