Chapter 9
A Community Psychological Perspective of Social Innovation

ABSTRACT

The objectives of this chapter are to identify the patterns of community psychology research and to clarify the application of community psychology principles within the social innovation field. Community psychology discussions in social innovation research can be traced back to the 1960s whilst there is only a minimal presence of the same to be found after 2003. Fairweather's experimental social innovation and dissemination (ESID) model places social innovation in the community psychology research landscape. Two main knowledge clusters can be found in community psychology research. The first knowledge cluster focuses on applications of the ESID model and fidelity adaptation in social programme design and development. The second cluster focuses on phases of the ESID model and its applicability in social policy development. The social change created by the ESID approach is evident through social reform outcomes confirming that such social innovations are micro-level contributions of social reform facilitating meso-level social change.

INTRODUCTION

The community psychology perspective of social innovation is based on humanitarian and multidisciplinary values. It proposes a scientific approach for addressing social problems at the community level. The field of community psychology is rooted in community mental health research (Townley, Brown, and Sylvestre 2018). Pioneering community psychology scholars first looked at the challenges of people living with serious mental illness in the community (Nelson, Kloos, and Ornelas 2014). Modern community psychology research looks beyond this and seeks to better address a wide range of social, environmental, political and economic issues (Eccleston and Perkins 2019). Hence, modern research in this field is focused on social settings and systems and institutions that influence communities by making them healthier or putting them at risk. Community psychologists and scholars aim to optimize the well-being of communities and individuals with innovative interventions that are designed in consideration of related disciplines and through collaboration with affected community members (Moritsugu, Vera, Wong, and Duffy 2019).

The field of community psychology has a clear set of values, well-developed theories, a wide focus of research and action strategies to examine the many ways that social systems can preserve social injustice, oppression and hardship. This helps to devise solutions for social change and the betterment and well-being of communities. What distinguishes community psychology from traditional applied science is its systematic and transdisciplinary approach to questioning individual, social and societal issues, as further bolstered by scientific methods of practice (Stark 2019). This is reflected in the four key principles of the community psychology literature, as noted in Figure 1 below (SCRA 2019).

The need for explicit attention to and respect for diversity among people and settings is a major principle of community psychology. Through an ecological focus, it emphasizes that human competencies and problems are best understood by viewing people as within their social, cultural, economic, geographic and historical contexts. Community psychology research and practice encourage active collaboration among researchers, practitioners and community members, and the use of multiple methodologies. Research and actions are aimed at serving targeted communities by building on their needs and preferences and by actively involving them in the design of strategies and

15 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/a-community-psychological-perspective-of-social-innovation/267360

Related Content

Game Theory for Wireless Network Resource Management
Sungwook Kim (2018). *Game Theory: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 383-399).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/game-theory-for-wireless-network-resource-management/183119

Cloud-Based IoT System Control Problems
(2017). *Game Theory Solutions for the Internet of Things: Emerging Research and Opportunities (pp. 13-77).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/cloud-based-iot-system-control-problems/175162

Moving Toward a Third Generation of Medical Education: Integrating Transformational Learning Principles in Health Professions Education
Wendy M. Green (2019). *Handbook of Research on Transdisciplinary Knowledge Generation (pp. 88-101).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/moving-toward-a-third-generation-of-medical-education/226185

Demystifying Unlearning and Innovation in Higher Education Institutions
Isabel Martins, Ana Martinsand Orlando P. Pereira (2019). *Handbook of Research on Transdisciplinary Knowledge Generation (pp. 185-200).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/demystifying-unlearning-and-innovation-in-higher-education-institutions/226192

Intuitionistic Fuzzy Filters for Noise Removal in Images
C. Radhika, R. Parvathiand N. Karthikeyani Visalakshi (2016). *Handbook of Research on Generalized and Hybrid Set Structures and Applications for Soft Computing (pp. 53-64).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/intuitionistic-fuzzy-filters-for-noise-removal-in-images/148001