Editorial notes

Dear Community Development Readers,

I am pleased to share with you our third collection for 2022. I again offer thanks to our editorial team: Our managing editor, Dr. Sofia Kotsiri; our associate editors Drs. Brien Ashdown, Bryan Hains, Kristina Hains, and Matthew Mars; and, our book reviews editor, Dr. Anne Silvis. This third issue contains eight pieces which epitomize comprehensive theory, methods, and practice. The articles in this issue build upon important frameworks and areas such as community capitals, social innovation, and inclusive community development.

Borron, Lamm, and Atkins provide readers with a new diagnostic instrument for assessing personal agency in communities. The instrument and its applications are rooted in the community capitals framework (Emery & Flora, 2006). Their quantitative assessment also provides necessary critical reflections on what constitutes “community” as a unit of analysis. The article complements their previous validation of a perceptions of community scale, which also ties to the community capitals framework (Lamm et al., 2021). Our editorial team welcomes more articles like these that provide researchers and practitioners with additional tools to bolster the good work of community development, and we also welcome articles that critique the methods employed across the field as well (e.g. Falkenstein et al., 2022).

Over the past two decades, Community Development has only featured six articles that included the phrase ‘inclusive community development.” In his published address to the Community Development Society, David Lamie wrote, “Now more than ever, this planet needs truly inclusive community development efforts that tolerate, embrace – even celebrate – difference” (Lamie, 2016, p. 2). His address spoke to both scholars and practitioners; however, much more work needs to be published to pursue this aim and ground inclusive community development work in research-based theory to inform future policy and practice.

This collection features five articles leveraging quantitative and qualitative approaches that speak directly to inclusive community development, with Gyan and Mfoafom’Carthy’s article actually including the phrase. Gyan and M’Carthy’s article focuses on women and gender empowerment in community development work in Ghana. They directly address important phenomenon such as patriarchy, colonialism, and neoliberalism as barriers to women’s participation in communities in their article. Also in Ghana, Frimpong-Manso and Appiah-Kubi’s article notes successes and failures in community development approaches when working with challenged communities in urban Ghanian slums. In a third Ghanian context, Biney discusses the role of adult educators in fostering a self-help spirit in communities, focusing on inclusivity, partnerships, networks, attitudes, and action. Zal and colleagues write about community capital changes among Malaysian Negritos spotting patterns in shifts through a longitudinal panel study. Nguyen and
colleagues offer an article on agricultural disparity and social inequality concerning farmers in Vietnam. Their article excellently speaks to implications for governance and practice.

Finally, two articles focus on social innovation, an important tool for community development work (Talmage, 2021). Castelo and colleagues provide a robust study on social innovation in São Vicente, Brazil. They undertake an innovative qualitative approach using observations, interviews, and field diaries to explore multiple facets of social innovation. The article discusses needs regarding formalizing and professionalizing community processes, while also addressing issues around financial reliance on public entities. Finally, the collection includes a practice piece from Hill, Hains, Hains, and Hustedde on social innovation in Kentucky. They discuss the Bonding with Beats program, which uniquely uses drumming to teach emotional and social coping strategies. I look forward to more practice pieces like this in Community Development.

This grouping of articles provides insights for inclusive, informed, and rigorous community development scholarship and practice. I hope to review and showcase more articles regarding inclusive community development work tied to modern-day theory, research, and practice. Our editorial team welcomes a proposal for a special or thematic issue on the matter as well. Thanks for this issue go to our readers, reviewers, editors, authors, and all others involved.

Cordially,

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