

Psychology of Community: Theory, Research, and Practice

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Where Are We Today?

- Community psychology has not looked at community as a whole.
- Community describes the human ecology.
- 40 years or so later, community psychology needs to focus on the psychology of community.



Psychology of Community

- Is the study and practice of individuals' interactions with a community and among the communities in their lives.
- Is the study of the evolution of community as a result of social, political, technological, and global changes.



What is Community?

- A set of relationships based on a sense of membership, individual and collective influence, shared emotional connections, and meeting of common needs that come about by being together.



Potential Types of Community

- Residential
- Faith-based
- Virtual
- Identity-based
- Experience-based
- Organization-based



Components of the Psychology of Community

- Perceptions
- Behaviors
- Structures
- Capacity
- Culture
- Context



Perceptions

- Sense of community (meeting needs, influence, membership, emotional connection)
- Negative sense of community, alienation, and marginalization
- Collective efficacy and powerlessness



Behaviors

- Instrumental and emotional support that reflects caring
- Relations-bonding, bridging, and linking
- Discrimination that leads to marginalization and oppression
- Collective action and CONTROL that can lead to real change



Structures

- Social organization
 - Leadership
 - Decision making
 - Caring
- Institutions-formal and informal
 - Meet community needs
 - Maintain community



Capacity

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Resources
- Relations



Culture

- Language and communication
- Forms of expression
- Symbols
- Values
- Roles
- Traditions



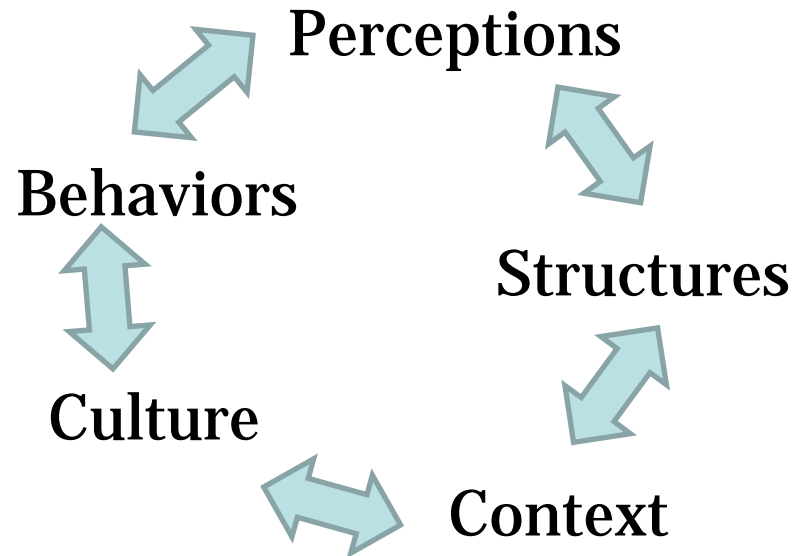
Context

- History
- Economic, political, and larger systemic influences
- Mobility
- Relationships with other communities and larger systems



Dynamics of Community Change

Components of the Psychology of Community



Levers of Change



Practice of Community

- Community as the intervention
- Community change initiatives
- Public policy of community
- Politics of community



Community as Intervention and Treatment

- Self help groups
- Therapeutic community environments



Community Change Initiatives

- Changes in institutional and government policies and practices
- Promoting collective action and control by community residents
- Connecting people and larger systems



Policy of Community

How do institutional and government policy contribute to:

- Collective meeting of needs
- Individual and collective control
- Sense of membership
- Shared emotional connection
- Bridging and linking connections



Politics of Community

- From division to inclusion
- Building community through power and building power through building community
- Conflict leads to change and community



Why a Psychology of Community?

To transform and develop communities based on:

- Caring
- Change
- Justice and Equity

