



Review About Community Development

MALAYSIA CONTEXT

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Local governments and non-governments across the world have started programme to aid their communities in term of various aspects. Community development not only concerns the physical realms of the community, but also the social, cultural, economic, political and environmental aspects as well. Many programs from government and even non-government sector were implemented for the communities for better quality of life. In Malaysia, community development has been the underlying policy since independence and emphasis on people participation in activities either government sector or non-government sector. The success of community project gives an impact towards improving the quality of life in term of economic, social and physical aspect. The development of any community is boosted by people's participation and their readiness to take action and achieve progress. When community has a power over their lives throughout participation then will lead to empowerment. For empowerment to occur, the community must have confidence in their ability to manage their own affairs and increase their level of democratic participation. Community members must develop a belief that they actually can collectively control their lives. They need to have a sense of their own history and society; overcome the problems and have possibilities to see the opportunities.

Many organizations bodies have embarked on programmes to improve community lives. The role of local governments in community development is critical to ensure programmes fulfill community needs and satisfaction as well. It is important to note that is debate how far community development projects initiated by government can have the autonomy necessary for the independent action required for community development practice among community development worker. Community development work is distinguished by the loyalty of the community development worker to the community she or he works with and for. The relation and communication between community development work and the government or organization are complex and need to be understand the nature of relationship to some extent are important and needed.

Community development requires efforts by the government and communities as well. In some countries, people believe that developmental programmes are the responsibility of the government. Project provided by the government should involve the people and commitment by them that allowed sustainability of programme especially when community participate in identifying their need, planning, implementation and evaluation in that programmes. Projects provided by local government even non-government as offer and medium for opportunities to develop and empower communities to achieve their quality of life.

Therefore, there is some important crucial things that we need to focus in order to perform the community development projects, which is the competency of community workers. In Malaysia, there are many ways in which community development can be conducted through community development works include:

- Paid workers in specific community development positions - these people might come either from outsider or within the community. They obtain their position

through knowledge and experience. Increasingly such workers are required to have formal academic qualifications.

- Unpaid workers, who are part of the community and from the ground up – these people devote most of their time to community activities and are respected as part of the community.
- People employed in other occupations who undertake some community development activities as part of their job description.

The term of competency has come into use to describe desired levels of skills in professional work. Competency is determined by examining the process in which workers is involved, the skills available to fulfill a task and the choice of skills made by the worker, rather than by simply measuring the result or output of the intervention. The competency should be emphasized by the professional bodies and government bureaucrats in community development filed whereby as indicator for community development works analyses their own actions and skills, and encourage clarity about their outcomes in their work. Competency must be seen in the context of their skills and knowledge used for empowerment. They will also need to understand for empowerment with many dimensions, can be fulfilled in a number of ways and requires a wide range of knowledge and skills.

The current climate of community development in practice and project for community should be more pressure on professionalism, competent and strategic in activities. The professionalism covers the knowledge and skills, the sense of having specific commitments and attitudes. Beside that, community development should take the process to be empowered. It draws on views of what power actually is, how power can be gained and maintained and how people can be maximized their potential as human. By increasing community empowerment, which involves change in structures, resources, behavior and skills has become a central part of development policies and strategies in Malaysia. It is important for community development practitioners to understand the approaches and elements of community empowerment by the context. There are several approaches to strategy development which is the practitioners need to be able to develop and implement strategy plans. They also need to be aware of some issues in strategy development in order to have impact on community better life changes.

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