

Community Psychology at Orewa Beach: A Complement to Anthropological and Ethnographic Approaches

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ABSTRACT Understanding the elements that contribute to a community's wellbeing, and in turn, the development of a sense of community is one of the key tasks in community psychology. Investigating the challenges and opportunities that either contribute or hinder a sense of community and development is an ongoing process. In applied anthropology and community psychology, the people and place are obviously central. Community psychology is concerned with the design and application of intervention strategies, especially those pivotal to enhancing the wellbeing of the community as a whole. Social change and improving the interests of the people is fundamental to the discipline. Applied anthropology, in using ethnography as a tool for investigation and research creates a climate in which intervention is possible, although typically, knowledge is sought for descriptive purposes. To design strategies for intervention, it is necessary to investigate a range of community variables, identify the core issues and problems, and determine where the existing strengths reside within a community. By using the identified strengths, and empowering people toward instigating action, optimal intervention strategies may produce lasting and rewarding results for community members. Likewise, identifying weaknesses has the potential to turn problems into opportunities.