

Preface

Community development and well-being are intrinsically linked, influencing and shaping each other in a dynamic, ongoing relationship. Community development, broadly defined, encompasses improving a community's social, economic, and environmental conditions. On the other hand, well-being refers to the overall state of individuals and communities, encompassing physical, mental, social, and spiritual health, as well as feelings of happiness, life satisfaction, and purpose. Community engagement, capacity building, community participation, and empowerment are the key elements of community development that will lead to well-being. These key concepts are essential for promoting community well-being in relevant, meaningful, and long-term ways for the intended beneficiaries. Community development is organising or assisting community groups in identifying their priority social issues, planning and implementing social action and change strategies, and gaining increased self-reliance and decision-making power because of their experiences.

Research is essential in community development, as the scientific outcome is important in revealing a particular community's current state. Community development researchers play a crucial role in collecting genuine data from the ground. Studies about ethnic minorities, especially in rural areas, require great experience, expertise and dedication. Thus, the papers listed in this issue significantly contribute to the key developmental issues of various communities.

This special issue highlights ten research articles from diverse perspectives. Social issues within communities are found to be an everlasting phenomenon that needs ongoing research and understanding. Economic development agendas, such as tourism, cultural commodification, and financial literacy, are important drivers of community development. The papers reveal that the communities are eager for development. However, the development is intended to be more balanced and sustainable by emphasising social and environmental aspects. This special issue also provides an awareness and knowledge of the distinctive characteristics of the communities studied. The values of these communities are also to be understood and embedded in the broader communities. The government's role in focusing on existing policies, along with the cooperation of other stakeholders, is vital for enhancing community participation, ultimately contributing to community empowerment.

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