Building Community Capacity: A Collaboration Engagement Framework

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Overview

- Social organization
  - Building community capacity
    - Leveraging toward resilience
    - Network structure and process
      - Nexus of formal and informal networks

- A collaboration engagement framework
  - Performance-based indicators
  - Implications for prevention science
    - Collaborations that make a difference
Social Organization

Networks, Social Capital, and Community Capacity
Figure 1. Social Organizational Processes, Social Structure, and Individual/Family Results

Social Structure
- Informal networks
- Formal networks
- Network effect levels

Social Organizational Processes
- Information
- Reciprocity
- Trust

Community Capacity
- Shared responsibility
- Collective competence

Social Capital
- Information
- Reciprocity
- Trust
Social Organization Theory: Definition of Social Organization

- Values, norms, processes, and behavior patterns within a community that organize, facilitate, and constrain interactions among community members.

- Process by which communities achieve desired results for individuals and families, including ability to demonstrate resiliency.

- Includes networks of people, exchanges and reciprocity in relationships, accepted standards of social support, and social controls that regulate behavior and interaction.
Social Organization Theory Model

- Our approach, however,
  - Shifts social organization theory from single plane of explanation on disorganization and delinquency
  - Moves the theory toward a more layered approach to communities
  - Presents the theory as having a more fundamental role in explaining broader family system phenomena
Social Organization
Structure and Process

Differentiation of structure from process

- Structure pertains to configuration and composition
- Process involves operations and methods of working
- Process occurs within structural frameworks
- Processes provide linkage between social structure and effects on families
Social Organization Theory: Process

- Main focus is on process
  - Networks
  - Social Capital
  - Community Capacity

- Relationships between them
  - Networks provide context for the development of social capital, and for building community capacity
Social Organization Theory: Networks

- Primary ways through which community life is enacted
- Informal networks comprise web of relationships with friends, neighbors, work associates
- Formal networks associated with agencies and organizations
- Voluntary and obligatory relationships
Social Organization Theory: Networks

- Network effects levels
  - Action element of our framework
  - Nexus of informal and formal networks
  - First level-within a network
  - Second level-between like networks
  - Third level-between dissimilar networks

- Network configurations provide leverage for achieving results through generation of social capital and production of community capacity
Social Organization Theory: Social Capital

- Information, reciprocity, and trust
  - Aggregate of resources (information, opportunities, and instrumental support)
- Arise from reciprocal social relationships
- Results from participation in formal and informal settings
- Social capital observed in actions of civic groups, faith communities, and any number of community-based groups
- Increases odds of achieving results otherwise not attained
Social Organization Theory: Community Capacity

- Shared responsibility
  - For general welfare of the community and its individual members
  - Sentiments

- Collective competence
  - Taking collective action, confronting situations

- Assumptions
  - Concern directed at community as a whole and at particular elements, action is beyond expression of positive sentiments, action is proactive and reactive, action targeted at threats and at normative situations
Social Organization Theory: Family and Community Results

- Consequences of effective social organization
- Desired results (examples, safety, health and well-being, family resilience)
- Results not owned by any particular group but valued across community
- Identified results assist to determine leverage points for change
- Moves theory from interesting framework to theory of action
Social Organization: Summary

- Need for theorizing that connects families and communities
- Social organization provides linkage framework
- Theory focused on action and community change

- There are leverage points that can be mobilized to support families and communities
- Consequent set of considerations for professionals
  - Program developers
  - Program and community researchers
A Collaboration Engagement Framework

Social Organization Effects
Levels: Within and Between Organizations
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Figure 1. Social Organizational Processes, Social Structure, and Individual/Family Results
Overview and Assumptions

- Located in the formal network dimension of social organization approach
- Elaborates structure, function, and processes of formal networks and their collaborations
- Pivot point is partnership and collaboration
- Assumptions: Effective collaborations strengthen informal networks, thereby enhancing individual, family, and community well-being
- Essential dimensions of collaboration
  - Amenable for placement in a program performance or indicator assessment tool
Indicators of Effective Partnerships and Collaboration

Ø Premise: For effective community-building to occur, organizations must not only effectively collaborate but must also first possess certain internal characteristics

Ø Indicators derived from the literature and our work with community-based programs

Ø Indicators are amenable to change and variation; they are not mutually exclusive

Ø Each can be answered by: “Not met”, “Partially met”, or “Fully met”; followed by discussion on whether indicator is a priority, what led to “fully met”, what has prevented indicator being “met”, and what is happening toward moving indicator toward being
Within Organization Elements

- Community integration (CI)
- Operations and decisions (OD)
- Personnel efficacy (PE)
- Evaluation practices (EP)
Community Integration

- Community is partner in delivering programs and services (paid and volunteers)
- Community members seen mainly as having assets rather than only having needs
- Organization seeks input from community on its effectiveness
- Organization has identified primary customers and where they live
- Multiple issues and concerns of customers intentionally addressed
- Programs demonstrated to be relevant to customer needs
- Methods of informing community about programs and services effective
- Program results reported out to key constituents in the community
Operations and Decisions

- Program is outreach oriented and delivered in communities
- Programs/services readily available to primary customers
- Program has guidelines on internal operations
- Organization intentional about continuous program improvement
- Organization has system for reaching decisions
- Directors and staff participate in program planning
- Program planning results oriented/not activity oriented
- Nature of the intervention is clearly understood
- Intervention activities and expected results aligned
- Referral system in place and demonstrated effective
- Action plan for sustaining programs and services
Personnel Efficacy

- System in place to track staff training, retraining, and cross-training
- Training and professional development opportunities available
- Staff participate in education and training opportunities
- Standards developed for staff competencies
- Staff meet on regular basis to discuss program issues
Evaluation Practices

- Program activities monitored
- Administrative processes and implementation monitored
- Agency establishes and monitors desired program results
- Methods of program delivery are evaluated
- Effects of programs and services formally assessed and evaluated
- Initial program planning has evaluation component
Between Organization Elements

- Community focus
- Partnership planning
- Partnership operations
- Evaluation and assessment
Community Oriented

- Community is aware of the collaboration and supports it
- Community feels supported by the collaboration
- Collaboration designed to mobilize the community
- Partners openly communicate about community issues and how they will be addressed
- Collaboration communicates its processes and successes to customer groups in community
- Collaboration understands the community, including its needs, concerns, assets, and opportunities
- Political climate is “friendly” to issues the collaboration addresses
- No known political or cultural issues that will jeopardize the partnership
Partnership Planning

- Partners have developed and support a common mission.
- There are partnership goals, in addition to goals of individual organizations.
- Responsibility for resource development is determined and agreed upon.
- Partnership members have built an interdependent approach to their work.
- History of partners in collaboration is known, including successes and difficulties.
- Past difficulties between partners addressed/resolved.
- Collaboration includes diverse organizations.
- Collaboration intentional about what it takes to sustain.
- Sustainability plan is periodically revisited.
Partnership Operations

Collaborator roles are defined and collaborators understand respective roles.

Roles are subject to revision.

Decision-making processes agreed upon regarding membership, leadership, and resource use.

Agency representatives can make decisions on behalf of their organizations.

Leadership is results-oriented and action-oriented.

Overall collaboration also oriented toward results and action.
Evaluation and Assessment

- Collaboration collects information to assess its effectiveness
- Collaboration periodically revisits its mission, goals, desired results, and activities
- Collaboration results are reported out to key constituents
Prevention Science

Implications

- Social organization theory portrays multiple levels in communities
  - Suggests leverage points
  - Avenues of change toward resilience
- Building community capacity requires engines
  - Collaborative partnerships a primary one
- Collaboration requires intentionality and intensity
  - Program indicators are action-oriented
  - Provide parts of a roadmap that gives direction to a collection of agencies and organizations
Building Community Capacity

- Ultimately about resilience of individuals, families, and communities
- The key is mobilizing communities to solve problems and to enhance community assets
  - Promoting sense of shared responsibility
  - Promoting collective competence
  - Supporting informal networks of social care
  - Engineering formal networks (collaborations) to strengthen networks of friends, associates, colleagues, and neighbors
- Community change occurs when informal networks are activated and mobilized
Social Organization References


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