

The global development of applied community studies: Comparison and evaluation of trends in psychology, sociology, social work and other community sciences

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Abstract

The Global Community Studies Project is an ambitious analysis of the development in 105 countries of 12 applied social research disciplines, including community-focused psychology, sociology and social work. Results include that these professional fields and indigenous training resources are lacking or weakest in the countries where they are most needed, that a history and culture of political activism supports the growth of local applied community research, but that foreign aid funding tends to displace or inhibit local growth of applied community sciences. It is important to know which countries need the most assistance developing their own applied community studies research and training infrastructure in different sectors and disciplines.

Keywords: Increasing Globalism, Inequality, and Political Division

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Introduction

Should community psychology, or any applied discipline of social research and practice, be located where it can do the most good? The question seems to be a simple one with an obvious answer. After all, don't we tend to study and work with local populations and organizations that need our skills and other resources the most and whose knowledge and experience we most want to learn from in order to correct injustice –i.e., the most disadvantaged (however one chooses to define it) communities in our midst? One of Murray Levine's five ecological principles of community psychology practice is that "to be effective, help has to be located strategically to the manifestation of the problem" (Levine et al., 2005, p. 151)– i.e., we must work inside the settings and systems we want to change and in close proximity to and collaboration with those we want to help. The serious economic, political, environmental and social problems that are out of sight and mind of most applied community scholars in more economically developed countries are in desperate need of community-level understanding and solutions in places that may lack sufficient training and other resources to provide the indigenous researchers and professionals needed to address them. Yet as the world shrinks with globalization and community psychology, sociology, social work and other applied disciplines spread internationally, they still tend to be strongest where they are least needed and weakest or completely absent almost everywhere they are most desperately needed. That is the critical premise I plan to lay out in this paper along with describing a project aiming to respond to that conundrum.

Three clear and strong trends –each one decades in the making, but gaining strength in recent years– now threaten individual and community wellbeing in the United States and globally, and whatever work we do to promote it. The first of these trends is globalization, or increasing international mobility of trade, labor and other migrants, communication (and thus, ideas). The second is economic and social inequality, which predates globalization, but has been exacerbated by it and by rapid developments in technology and automation. As complex as both of those trends are, the third may be even more complicated. The U.S. and many other countries have experienced growing political divisiveness between, for lack of better labels, progressive social democrats and anti-government conservatives. Political conflict has been with us forever, but what is new are the realignments in response to the first two trends. Both traditional Conservatism and Liberalism have internal splits on issues of globalization and nationalism and can make for strange bedfellows, with economic free traders (seeking reduced costs and increased profits) joining political globalists (seeking to spread rights

and opportunities internationally, and so reduce poverty and inequality abroad) and both left and right wings embracing nationalism (for greater domestic opportunities, income equality, and for some to reduce global North imperialism and for others a response based on xenophobia).

With those worsening tensions as background, I will describe an international project whose ambitious goal is to improve our understanding of how, where, and to what extent each of 12 applied community studies disciplines has developed in over 100 countries, representing over 94% of the world's population. The project aims to identify both the conditions and barriers for the emergence and growth of each discipline. While the main goal is to support the development of indigenous fields of professionally-trained, community-based research and action, especially where they are most needed, another benefit may be to offer tentative bridging solutions to some of the widening domestic and global tensions identified above. If community psychology and other applied community-focused disciplines are able to grow in diverse, low-resourced as well as wealthy countries around the globe, in response to social and economic problems, they may provide solutions that emphasize collective action and wellness while respecting individual rights and difference; greater equality while encouraging the values of local freedom and human dignity; and global solidarity among diverse oppressed peoples against the alarming trend toward xenophobic anti-immigrant, populist-nationalist nostalgia for a time that never really was so great for all, but only for the rich and powerful (like Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan).

As community psychologists, we have the opportunity to play a critical role in working with the other locally-focused applied disciplines such as community development, social work, public health, and education. Our multi-level ecological perspective, our rigorous but practical and culturally sensitive methods, and our embrace of values in general and in particular our celebration of diversity and non-hegemonic, anti-colonial "glocalism" (thinking globally, but acting locally). None of those is unique among the applied social sciences, but the total package may be. As Dutta (2016) argued, community psychology must "prioritize the local" by using globalization to "decenter" the field through more reciprocal, nonhierarchical relations between the core and peripheries of both content and agents of knowledge production. Both the point of departure for this paper and its conclusion, however, is that for over 50 years, as community psychology has steadily spread to about 40 countries throughout the world (Perkins, 2009), it tends to develop latest, weakest, or not at all in the very countries and regions that need it the most (Hanitio & Perkins, 2017).

I first saw a version of the following analogy of the world population as a village of 100 inhabitants from Dr. Bill Partridge, who had spent most of his career as the lead anthropologist for the World Bank on Latin America. (He was a strong critic of the World Bank, which is why he finally left it to direct our masters program in Community Development and Action.) It was his retirement in 2007 that spurred me to continue our Program's Field School in Intercultural Education (Robinson & Perkins, 2009), after he started it in Ecuador and Isaac Prilleltensky ran it for a summer in Argentina, I obtained funding from our College and the U.S. Department of Education Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad program and organized Field Schools in Guangxi Autonomous Region of Southern China and Cape Town, South Africa (Karakos et al. 2016; Perkins et al. 2017). These experiences and other international collaborations convinced me of the importance of collaborative international research for our students, for my own work, and I would argue, for our field.

Anyway, I had forgotten about the world village analogy when in 2009, I received another version of it from the late folk-activist legend Pete Seeger. I have tried to validate and update those numbers and you can now find similar versions of this on the internet. To give some perspective, consider this popular analogy: If you could fit the entire population of the world into a village of 100 people, maintaining the proportions of all the people living on Earth, that village would consist of: just 4 from the U.S., 9 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 60 Asians, 17 Africans, less than 10 Europeans. There would be: 18 White people and 82 non-Whites, 31 Christians and 69 non-Christians. Twenty of the 100 people in the world "village" would possess 90% of the wealth and most of those would be among the 15 from North America & Europe. Half would live in poverty and 1/3 of ALL deaths would be due to poverty; most of those deaths would be children under five years old. 34 would be starving, malnourished, or overweight. Eleven lack access to clean, safe water. One would die (over 1 million people in the real world die each week) and two would give birth during the year. Dozens live in substandard housing (if they have any regular shelter at all)! Only 7 would have a college education; 17 would be illiterate. Forty would have an Internet connection, but only the wealthiest few own a computer. If you have never personally experienced the horror of war, the solitude of prison, the pain of torture, are not close to death from starvation, then you are better off than 500 million people. Life expectancy in the U.S. is 79 and in Chile is 82. In Chad, it is less than 50. In the U.S. 90% of youth finish high school. In Chile almost 80% do (OECD, 2014). In Niger, only 4% of boys & 1% of girls! Per capita GDP in the U.S. is almost \$60 thousand per year. In Chile it is US\$14 thousand. In Malawi it is \$295 and in South Sudan \$233 dollars!

The current conflicts and famine in Nigeria, East Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan), and Yemen threaten to kill millions of people (see Lazarus et al., 2006, for a review of community psychology across the African continent).

So the vital questions motivating this whole program of research are: What can be done so that everyone in this global village can survive and thrive? What can community psychology, community sociology, community social work, and other applied community research disciplines contribute?

History of Globalization of Community Psychology

First, allow me to offer some historical perspective. There is some dispute over when and where the field of community psychology began. I want to be careful to avoid the parochial ego-centrism that afflicts most Americans. I freely acknowledge that elements of political and other applied social psychologies emerged in a variety of countries in Europe, North and South America prior to 1965, including in Chile as in the U.S. with a community mental health focus, as a critical reaction to the limitations of traditional psychiatric and clinical psychological services for addressing the growing psychosocial needs of the population (Alfaro, 2000; Krause, 2002). But I have not found a specific reference to “community psychology,” per se, until 1959, when psychologist William Rhodes first offered a course by that name at Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee in the U.S. (The long history of community psychology at Peabody is why I happily agreed when I was recruited in 2000 to leave my program in Environment and Behavior within a multi-disciplinary Department of Family and Consumer Studies at the University of Utah and go to Peabody –by then having merged with Vanderbilt University and become its College of Education and Human Development– to help reinvent their longstanding program in community and “transactional-ecological” psychology as a new interdisciplinary Program in Community Research and Action and lead it into the future. But that is getting ahead of the story.) The first conference that adopted an explicit focus on training in community psychology was the famous Swampscott Conference near Boston, USA, in 1965. That marked the beginning of community psychology as a recognized subdiscipline, and it soon became Division 27 of the American Psychological Association (APA) and spread to Canada and Europe. In fact, the first textbook on community psychology that I have found was published in the United Kingdom (Bender, 1976). Also in 1977, Donata Francescato, who learned about community psychology from my Peabody colleague Paul Dokecki, published the first Community Psychology book in continental Europe and an article on new roles for community psychologists appeared in Norway (Grinde, 1977).

Starting around 1980, community psychology had developed enough in Latin America to appear in important articles by Maritza Montero, Irma Serrano Garcia, and others. One of my goals in visiting Chile is to learn more about the history and current state of Community Psychology in Chile. For example, I hope to learn what the first Chilean article on community psychology was and in what were the early community psychologists in Chile interested?

In 1987, the first 1st Biennial Conference on Community Research and Action was held in the U.S., but it was not until a year later that the Society for Community Research and Action was created to allow some independence from the APA. In 1989, the lead author of my own community psychology (CP) textbook, Murray Levine, edited a special section of the *American Journal of Community Psychology* on the beginnings of community psychology in Asia, including in Hong Kong, Thailand, India, and China, which forever seems to be starting to develop its own field of community psychology (Yang & Perkins, 2012), but it has yet to take root firmly, about which I will say more toward the end of this paper.

More recent milestones for international community psychology have occurred in 1996 when the Biennial European Conferences on Community Psychology began; in 2001 with the publication of the first African textbook in Community Psychology edited by Mohamed Seedat, Norman Duncan, and Sandy Lazarus; in 2006 when the Biennial International Conferences on Community Psychology began in San Juan, Puerto Rico, followed by Lisbon in 2008, Puebla, Mexico in 2010, Barcelona in 2012, Fortaleza, Brazil in 2014; Durban, South Africa in 2016, and Santiago, in 2018. In 2007, an important volume on *International Community Psychology* was edited by Stephanie Reich, Manuel Riemer, Isaac Prilleltensky, and Maritza Montero. In 2009, I edited a special issue of the *American Journal of Community Psychology* for the purpose of highlighting examples of community psychology research from around the world. And in 2016, with Manuel Garcia-Ramirez, Isabel Menezes, Irma Serrano-Garcia and Melissa Strompolis, I edited another special issue of the free online *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice* on research, advocacy and training in community psychology and public policy in international contexts.

The global growth of community psychology in terms of the recent proliferation of journals devoted to the field is perhaps even more impressive. The first journals in the field were the *Journal of Community Psychology* and *American Journal of Community Psychology*, both started in 1973. Although both of those concentrated fairly exclusively on American work until 1989, after that they began to include occasional articles from authors outside the U.S. and since 2000, publish international research much more frequently. It is worth noting that the traditional community psychology

journals are also ranked highly as social work journals, which I particularly appreciate for its potential for making CP more interdisciplinary. Some of the next journals relevant to CP in the late 1970s and early 1980s included the *Japanese Journal of Social Psychiatry*, *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*, *Critical Social Policy* (UK), and *Psychology in Society* (South Africa). But the real spread of explicitly CP and applied social psychology journals began in 1991 and 1992 with the *Revista Psicología Comunitaria de la Universidad de Chile*, the *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* in the UK; and two from Spain in that period are *Revista de Psicología Social Aplicada* and *Intervencion Psicosocial: Revista Sobre Igualdad y Calidad de Vida*, which in 2011 dropped its subtitle, began publishing articles in both English as well as Spanish, and created a new international editorial board, including yours truly as an Associate Editor, despite my embarrassingly limited Spanish. In 2005, the Italian journal, *Psicologia di Comunità* was created; in 2010, the *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*; and in 2015, *Community Psychology in Global Perspective*.

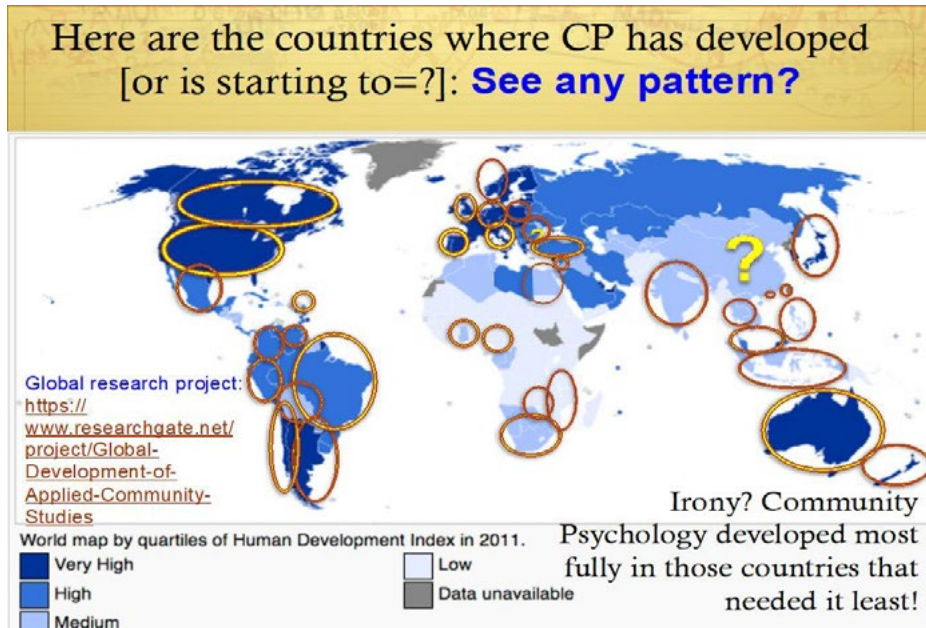
In some countries, the spread of community psychology was fostered by foreigners studying at U.S. universities starting in late 1960s and early '70s and continuing to the present. I already mentioned that Donata Francescato at the University of Rome studied with Paul Dokecki when they were both at the University of Houston. Irma Serrano-Garcia, Emerita at the Universidad de Puerto Rico did her Ph.D. in the top-ranked Psychology Department at the University Michigan (back when it had CP). Art Venio studied at the University of California at San Francisco and brought CP back to Australia. Sheung-Tak Cheng studied with Murray Levine and my brother David Perkins at the State University of New York at Buffalo and returned to Hong Kong. More recently, Carolina Muñoz Proto received a Ph.D. in Critical Social/Personality Psychology from the City University of New York before returning to teach in Chile. Mona Amer was born in Detroit and studied clinical and community psychology at Yale, but moved to Cairo and helped start the first CP program in Egypt. Our program at Vanderbilt has enrolled students from Cameroon, South Africa, Australia, Scotland, China, Bulgaria, Canada, Jamaica, India, and Turkey, and hosted visiting students and scholars from Italy, China, and Australia. Several, including two Fulbright Fellows from China and my recent doctoral graduate Nikolay Mihaylov, along with American Ron Harvey, a DePaul University graduate, are now working to create CP in China and Bulgaria, respectively. But CP developed in many countries mostly independently of

American influence, which is appropriate and very “CP” in the value it places on local control, context and diversity.

I argue that what the world needs is not just further development of indigenously-defined community psychology, but even more, the development and spread of interdisciplinary community studies. CP in much of the world, including the U.S. in my opinion, remains too tied to individualistic psychology. Complicated social, mental and physical health, political-economic, cultural and environmental problems require interdisciplinary solutions. CP in the U.S. and Canada was originally dominated by community mental health (CMH) concerns, but is now becoming more interdisciplinary & about developing, implementing & evaluating prevention and other participatory programs & policies. CP in Australia and New Zealand has followed North America to a great extent but has focused more on immigrant and other intercultural-indigenous relations and diversity issues, which are particularly important there. CP in Europe and the rest of the world varies in each country, with some focused more on clinical/community mental health, others applied developmental psychology, and many with no CP. CP in Latin America tends to be more related to social psychology, but (like CP in South Africa) is also more explicitly political due to a history of political oppression (Montero & Diaz, 2007), much of it sadly supported by the U.S. For that I offer my sincere apologies!

The 2009 special journal issue I edited on the development and challenges of international community psychology showed there was a lot of growth and exciting work in our field to be aware and proud of. But there were also two noticeable gaps. One was a lack of cross-cultural, international comparative collaborations to enhance mutual learning, share ideas, methods, and intervention practices. Direct comparative data studies from multiple countries are rare –international publications and conferences are great, but we need more international collaboration. Contexts may be different, but different contexts can inform one another– the key is to not assume the generalizability of community needs and conditions. The other gap had to do with where in the world Community Psychology had NOT yet developed. Even though our field is present on all continents, it is missing in many places where it could have a great impact.

Map 1. Global Growth and Distribution of Community Psychology



Map 1 shows the countries where Community Psychology has developed [or is starting to] displayed on a world map of the UN Human Development Index, in which the darker shaded countries have greater life expectancy, average years of schooling, and income per person. See any pattern? While not surprising, I still find it ironic and unfortunate that Community Psychology has NOT developed where it could do the most good—countries that would benefit the most from empowering community development, education, and health promotion research and interventions.

The Global Community Studies Project: Predicting the Emergence of 12 Applied Community-focused Research and Professional Disciplines in 105 Countries.

The above observation is what led me to start the ambitious Global Community Studies Project, which is assessing and analyzing in 105 countries the current state (and to the extent possible, the history) and global development of not only Community Psychology, but because many other applied, local community-focused disciplines may effectively supplant the work of community psychologists where they are few or nonexistent, we must consider whether, why, how, and how much other applied community studies disciplines have developed in those countries to address many of the

same problems. Hence, we are measuring and analyzing virtually all applied locally-focused community studies disciplines –12 in all– including also Community Sociology, Community Social Work, Community Development, Development Economics, and Liberation Theology/faith-based community development studies. In addition to those, reported here, the Project also measures Applied/Development Anthropology, community Public Health, community-focused Urban Planning/Geography, community-level Public Administration/Policy Studies, Popular Education, and interdisciplinary Community Research and Action.

We also have a variety of social and economic indicators as predictor variables, such as a database of past nonviolent grassroots activism, current and historical political rights and civil liberties indicators and perceptions of well-being and levels of civic engagement for most of those countries, UN Human Development Index, GINI [income inequality] coefficient, GDP and GDP per capita, development aid from OECD countries, educational infrastructure, population size and rank all with an eye toward exploring conditions for the development of the various fields and doing comparative case studies of particular countries or regions.

We are using the internet, published sources, and key informants to identify indigenous professional associations or conferences, data on undergraduate and graduate courses or programs, research and practice articles and journals in each of the above fields in 105 countries and counting. It is important to know which countries may need what kinds of assistance developing their own indigenous applied community studies research and training infrastructure in different sectors and disciplines.

A motivating challenge is the observation we have already been able to confirm that these professional fields and training resources tend to be lacking or weakest where they are most needed as evidenced by the Human Development Index. And that is more true of community psychology, perhaps due to its historical ties to traditional academic and scientific disciplinary institutions of psychology, than it is of fields like community development, which has always been more applied and interdisciplinary. It is important and helpful to know which countries may need the most assistance developing their own applied community studies research and training infrastructure in different sectors/disciplines. Let me stress again that this is about how countries and, within countries, regions –especially those with the greatest needs and fewest resources– can develop indigenous fields of community-focused research and intervention, and which disciplines may be most needed and most likely to develop.

The project analyzing the global growth of applied community studies disciplines investigates how nations address questions of local development (broadly defined) differently and what accounts for those differences –specifically, the fields that are used to train the social (health, education), economic, and physical development workforce within the country. We are particularly interested in how the prevalence of applied

community studies in a country relates to the history of colonization, civil liberties, and nonviolent organizing and the current level of inequality and human development.

Study 1: Predicting the National Strength of Community Psychology and Community Development

Let me now briefly review one of the first empirical studies published from this project and then I will touch on a couple papers that are in preparation. Felicia Hanitio completed her undergraduate honors thesis under my supervision as part of this project. A version of that thesis was published in the *American Journal of Community Psychology* (Hanitio & Perkins, 2017).

We begin with the question: What are the conditions for growth of Community Psychology in a given country? In 1996, Maritza Montero compared community psychology's growth in Latin America and the U.S. and, despite different contexts, she noted that in both countries, community psychology developed in response to three conditions:

1. Limitations of mainstream scientific and applied psychology
2. A liberalizing social climate in society
3. The big difference is the 3rd condition: in U.S., liberal government supported community psychology development; in Latin America, community psychology was both quelled and stimulated by authoritarian governments (Montero, 1996). To those we add 3 more criteria for "fertile ground" for community psychology:
4. A liberal education system that encourages critical reflection;
5. A public that engages in activism/questions authority;
6. A strong civil society.

The initial purpose of this mixed-method study was to try to test those criteria suggested by Montero and us. We wondered if, at the international level, the historical degree and success of nonviolent grassroots social activism in the culture or society would predict the emergence and strength of Community Psychology; and for comparative purposes, would it also predict other professionalized applied community studies disciplines, using the example of Community Development, both in the context of other country-level and international influences?

We began by reading and tracking the histories of community psychology and community development globally as applied research disciplines. Some possible

links we hypothesized included the role of civil liberties and institutions and a history of nonviolent grassroots social and political action in the development of formalized community-based research. Like Montero’s observations regarding the form of national government, we saw two possible intersecting paths: According to resource mobilization and other social movement theories, societal civil liberties and grassroots activism may support the growth of community-based research as a tool for movement and action planning and evaluation. Alternatively, community psychology and community development may be spurred in reaction to government repression of civil liberties and grassroots activity, as in Latin America. Our third proposed promotive factor, a liberal education system that encourages critical reflection, was not included in the quantitative analysis of this study, but was a consideration in our case studies, and we have begun to look at education-system support, infrastructure, and colonial influence more systematically in subsequent analyses and an in-progress paper. Other macrosystemic factors include the size of a country’s population and the current level of social and economic development or need.

Figure 1. A Theoretical Framework for the Development of Community-Based Research (CBR) Disciplines.

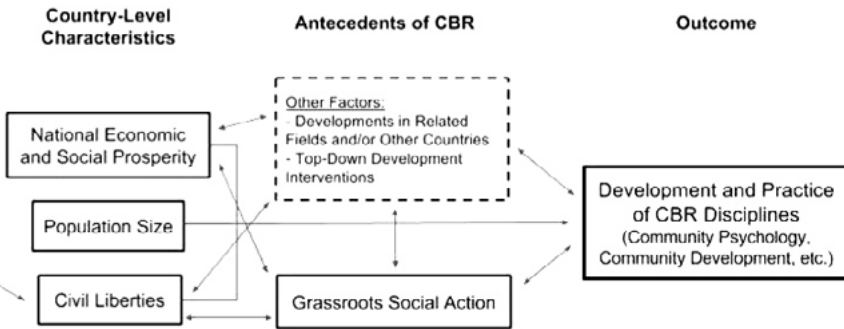


Figure 1 of Study 1 (Hanitio & Perkins, 2017) shows the theoretical framework we propose and test in which national socio-economic development, country population, civil liberties (as measured by the Freedom House annual international survey), and over and above their influences, we were especially interested in the impact of historical nonviolent grassroots activism (as tabulated by the Global Nonviolent Action Database at my undergrad alma mater, Swarthmore College, with over a thousand nonviolent action campaigns from more than 200 countries) and whether they all predict the emergence and growth of community psychology and community development as fields. In addition, we present two brief case studies contrasting countries that developed either community psychology or community development, but not both, focusing qualitatively

on understanding those factors but also histories of colonial influence, developments in related fields which may have either supplanted the need for those disciplines or provided a gap to fill, and national or international policy trends.

Study 1 Results

Part 1 of this study includes correlations for 97 countries and a multivariate analysis of the 91 Countries with complete data. The zero-order correlations between various country-level predictors and the strength of formalized Community Psychology and Community Development. You will notice that, although slightly over a quarter of the variance in community psychology was shared by community development, as you might expect, the two fields were equally related to country population, but, as suggested by the pattern visible in Map 1, unlike community development, community psychology is clearly strongest in more developed countries, in terms of the Human Development Index of life expectancy, average years of schooling, and average income. Again, our field is lacking in the countries that need it the most. Regarding two of the key criteria we have suggested adding to those by Montero, both community development but especially community psychology were also significantly more likely to be present and stronger in countries with greater civil liberties, and those with a history of successful non-violent action.

We also wondered whether HDI's nonsignificant linear relationship with the status of community development as a profession and applied research field in a given country might obscure a curvilinear relationship. So we divided countries into the UN Development Program's standard low, medium, high and very high HDI quartiles, and Figure 2 shows that there is a significant curvilinear pattern for community development, but a somewhat perplexing one. I expected development research and professional activity might be strongest in low and high-resource countries and lowest in moderate-resource countries, and there is some evidence for that in the three highest quartiles. But, similar to the gap I pointed to for community psychology, the poorest countries perhaps cannot even afford to develop much of their own indigenous community development professional training and organizations.

Fig. 2 Distribution of Community Development (CD) Strength rating across Human Development Index Quartiles

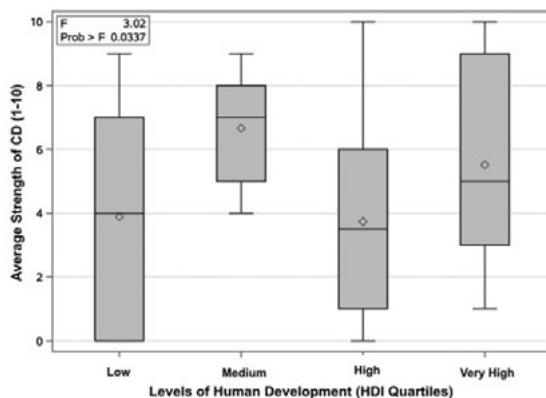


Fig. 2 Distribution of Community Development (CD) Strength ratings across Human Development Index Quartiles. This figure illustrates a possible cubic relationship between HDI and the current strength, on a scale of 1–10, of formalized CD. Quartiles (Low = 0.549 or below, Medium = 0.550–0.599, High = 0.600–0.799, Very High = 0.800 or above) were obtained from the UNDP (2013) HDI tables

Table 3 Hierarchical multiple regressions^a predicting strength of community psychology (CP) and community development (CD) across 91^b countries

Variable	R ² increment	Final beta	Final t value
Equation 1 (Predicting CP)			
Population size	.044 (<i>p</i> < .05)	.145	1.61 (ns)
HDI	.247 (<i>p</i> < .0001)	.211	2.05 (<i>p</i> < .05)
Civil liberties	.101 (<i>p</i> < .0005)	.310	2.89 (<i>p</i> < .005)
Adjusted nonviolent action	.041 (<i>p</i> < .025)	.252	2.48 (<i>p</i> < .025)
Adjusted R ² = .406, F(4, 86) = 16.36, <i>p</i> < .0001			
Equation 2 (Predicting CD)			
Population size	.039 (<i>p</i> < .10 ^c)	.124	1.14 (ns)
HDI	.027 (ns)	-.075	-.61 (ns)
Civil liberties	.065 (<i>p</i> < .025)	.228	1.76 (<i>p</i> < .10 ^c)
Adjusted nonviolent action	.044 (<i>p</i> < .05)	.263	2.15 (<i>p</i> < .05)
Adjusted R ² = .137, F(4, 86) = 4.58, <i>p</i> < .0025			
Equation 3 (Predicting CD, no HDI)			
Population size	.039 (<i>p</i> < .10 ^c)	.126	1.16 (ns)
Civil liberties	.092 (<i>p</i> < .005)	.190	1.69 (<i>p</i> < .10 ^c)
Adjusted nonviolent action	.041 (<i>p</i> < .05)	.249	2.08 (<i>p</i> < .05)
Adjusted R ² = .144, F(3, 87) = 6.03, <i>p</i> < .001			

^aAll regression terms were linear.

^bSix countries had missing values in one or more of the measures included; thus, the adjusted *n* for our regression analysis was 91.

^cThese are nonsignificant at a strictly $\alpha = .05$ level, but α can be relaxed slightly here to .10 in order to increase the predictive value of the entire model and to decrease bias in the primary predictor of interest, nonviolent action (grassroots activism).

Table 3 presents the multivariate models in which we see that size doesn't matter, so to speak, but that civil liberties and a history and culture of successful political activism predict both community psychology and community development as professional fields and that social and economic development significantly predicts community psychology, but linearly not community development.

To summarize, both main hypotheses were confirmed: For community psychology, all variables in the model (population size, HDI, civil liberties, nonviolent grassroots action) are positively related to the strength of community psychology in a given country. For community development, all but HDI are positively related to the strength of community development in a given country. Nonlinearly, medium and very high HDI are significantly related to community development. In addition, nonviolent grassroots activism predicted the strength of both community psychology and community development disciplines above and beyond the influence of other predictors.

The qualitative part of this mixed-method study were two brief Case Studies of community psychology and community development in Chile and Ghana. The guiding questions were: in addition to shedding light on how the predictors in quantitative analysis may operate historically in different countries and continents, what other contextual influences (e.g. top-down international development efforts, developments in other disciplines, or ideological influences from neighboring or hegemonic countries) might help to explain the differences between a country high in community psychology and low in community development versus one low in community psychology and high in community development?

We selected those two countries for brief case studies based on their contrasting respective strengths in community psychology and community development: Chile has developed strength in Community Psychology, as evidenced by its hosting the 2018 International Conference on Community Psychology, but has little formal training or research in Community Development. Ghana is just the opposite. We also wanted to isolate influences of neighboring countries, so the fact that one is in South America and the other in Africa was a plus. They each had contrasting historical narratives of colonial influences and response. We found plenty of literature on the relevant disciplines in each country. Their Civil Liberties scores were similar, but Chile has a history of more grassroots activism. On average according to their HDI scores, Chile is more socially and economically developed than Ghana (which falls into the second HDI quartile, which had the highest mean scores for the community development field), but Chile also has more income inequality (with a Gini of 52.1 compared to Ghana's 42.8).

The main lessons from our case study comparison were that as a more applied practice-oriented field, community development has been more strongly promoted by government and international organizational resources and policies in Ghana, which also has more severe development challenges to address. Colonial and postcolonial history also played a role in fostering the different fields in each country. In Ghana, community psychology was introduced by two faculty who trained at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada. But community development “has a much longer...practice-based history in Ghana. One of the earliest forms of organized (community development) was...instituted by the British colonial government in 1948, in the form of mass literacy education and self-help initiatives aimed at facilitating modernization... These policies built upon earlier expressions of informal (community development) carried out by religious missionaries” (Hanitio & Perkins, 2017, p. 212). And Cruz and Sonn (2011) critically remind us that colonialism still infects our cultures, which are continually shaped by insidious, ongoing social and political processes that are intertwined within the globalized history of power and marginalization and that community psychology should work through our research, teaching, and applications to (de)colonize culture via deeper critical thinking, reflexivity and emancipatory action. In Chile, civil society and especially a deep history of grassroots political activity played an important role in establishing norms of collective community action as well as community psychology, which supports our theoretically proposed conditions for the development of our field.

Some of the contributions to the literature of this mixed-method study are 1. that it is the first empirical study to address the question of conditions for the establishment and growth of community-based applied research disciplines internationally, beyond just one country, region or continent. 2. It is also the first to quantitatively measure the strength of community studies disciplines globally and at the national level. 3. We proposed and found general confirmation for a new framework for the development of community psychology and community-based research more generally. 4. We conclude that there are multiple pathways to the development of community studies disciplines, but that a history of civil liberties and grassroots activism are especially important for community psychology, and that colonial and contemporary government and international influences, indigenous responses, and serious but not overwhelming development needs are especially important for the growth of community development as a field. And 5. our data confirmed the major challenge to community psychology of not being well or at all established in the countries with the greatest poverty and human development needs.

There are many future directions this project may take. Improvements in the measures, especially of the strength of community studies disciplines, but also of civil

society, civil liberties, and grassroots social movement activity is one goal. Additional countries have been added to the database and we are conducting in-depth case studies of China, Jamaica, and other countries. But the main additional directions have to do with analyzing the 10 other applied community studies disciplines, including transdisciplinary community studies (which is less common outside North America), and testing the many other predictor variables or influences we are collecting, and digging deeper into both longitudinal quantitative analyses and qualitative historical and comparative case studies of other countries to better understand causal relationships. For example, although we were mainly interested in community psychology and community development as outgrowths of social and political activism and change, we can also turn that around and investigate whether there is any evidence for community psychology and other community studies disciplines (as practical and public knowledge generation, dissemination, and advocacy tools) ever leading to social change at the societal level and which disciplines have been most effective in improving various social development indicators and overall quality of life in different countries. The database may be used for future analyses, not only of how historical, social, and economic factors influence the growth of different applied community studies disciplines, but also which disciplines have been most effective in improving various social development indicators and overall quality of life in different countries.

The methodological limitations of this research must be acknowledged: the selection of countries was nonrandom: we included 84 countries with populations over 10 million, but 13 additional smaller countries were added early in the project simply because I was aware of community psychologists in those countries and did not want to leave them out of the study. This may have led to some bias in the average strength of community psychology being higher than a complete or random sample would have provided. Still, the sample included countries with 96% of the world's population. A likely greater limitation is the untested validity of the new and fairly crude strength of discipline scale and our primary reliance on information on professional organizations and conferences, articles and journals, and academic courses and programs available on the internet. There were also translation challenges. We used coders familiar with the language where we could. Many sites included their own English pages, but those were often limited, and so we were forced to also rely on Google Translate with back translation checks, especially for many of the less common languages.

Future research we hope to engage in based on this study includes finding more current measures of social action, which in this study was historical, so we can try to predict grassroots activism as well as we can predict community studies. We are already testing similar models' ability to predict other community studies disciplines.

We must do longitudinal and deeper historical research to better understand causal relationships. And given social activism's role in predicting both Community Psychology and Community Development, we hope to also consider whether and how those and other community disciplines may contribute to social change at the country level.

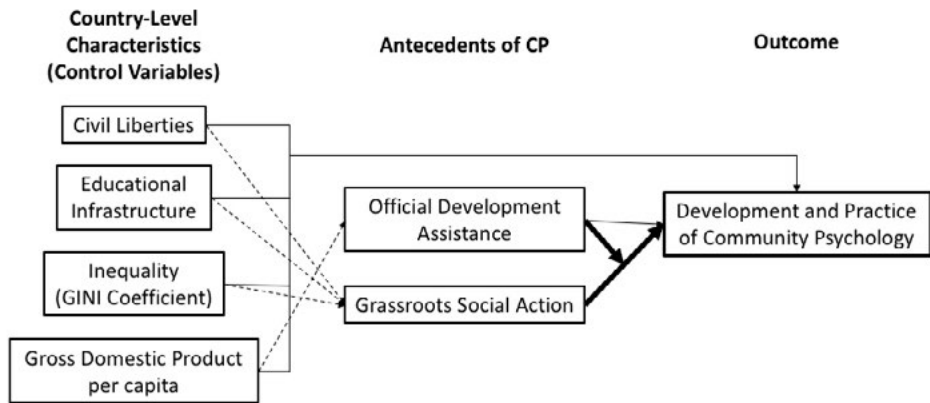
Study 2: Effects of Foreign Aid on Community Studies in Aid-receiving Countries

Another forthcoming paper by students Dominique Lyew, Eunice Sohn, and me looks at the effects of foreign aid received, GDP per capita, income inequality, tertiary educational infrastructure, civil liberties, and a history of grassroots political activism on the presence and strength of Community Psychology and five other applied community studies, including Community Sociology, Community Social Work, Community Development, Development Economics, and Liberation Theology (or faith-based community development studies).

We have already found that nonviolent grassroots action is positively correlated with the strength of community psychology and community development as disciplines (Hanitio & Perkins, 2017). Local action groups' understanding of indigenous needs can help to improve development projects (Finsterbusch & Van Wicklin, 1987) and other work conducted by community psychologists and other applied researchers. Past literature on how foreign aid and nonviolent grassroots social and political activism may be related to the development of community studies suggests that foreign aid provides resources for development projects that should spur the growth of community psychology and other applied disciplines to help plan and evaluate them. What may surprise some is that, contrary to the goals of donors, foreign aid has been repeatedly found to have a negative impact on the economy, political institutions, governance, and independence (Bräutigam & Knack, 2004; Dutta, Leeson, & Williamson, 2013; Pronk, 2011). And high aid levels also undermine the effectiveness of local grassroots organizations (Makoba, 2002; Uvin & Miller, 1996).

Figure 2 shows our theoretical model predicting aid-receiving countries' level of community psychology development based on political, educational, and economic indicators and the level of foreign aid and past grassroots social and political activism. The bold arrows indicate the interaction effect we tested.

Figure 2. Theoretical Model Predicting a Country's Level of Community Psychology Development



Hypotheses.

Thus our hypotheses are:

1. There is a negative correlation between development aid and the strength of community psychology.
1. There is a positive correlation between nonviolent grassroots activism and the strength of community psychology.
1. The relationship between nonviolent grassroots activism and the strength of community psychology will be moderated by development aid. In other words, when development aid is low, there will be a positive relationship between nonviolent action and the strength of community psychology, but when development aid is high, this relationship will not be significant

Methods

Sample. The sample of this study consisted of just those 67 countries in our database that receive foreign aid. But that consists of 72.6% of the entire world population.

Procedures. Data were collected as part of the Global Development of Applied Community Studies (GDACS) dataset described in more detail in Hanitio & Perkins (2017).

Measures. The *strength of community psychology* and each of five other applied *community studies disciplines* is based on the 10-point GDACS scale, including professional organizations or conferences, relevant graduate and undergraduate courses and programs, and publications and journals. *Foreign aid* is based on Official Development Assistance (ODA) per capita from OECD database. *Nonviolent grassroots activism*: is adapted from ratings from the Global Nonviolent Action database at Swarthmore College.

Control variables included gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, educational infrastructure (the number of tertiary institutions in the country), income inequality (GINI), and a civil liberties measure from an annual international survey by Freedom House containing 15 indicators in four categories: Freedom of Expression and Belief, Associational and Organizational Rights, Rule of Law, and Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights.

Study 2 Results

The noteworthy correlations in Table 1 of Study 2 include the significant relationships all control and independent variables had with both CP and the Average of Community Studies disciplines, with the exception of Educational Infrastructure. This shows that the strength of community disciplines is not simply a function of how many universities a country has; in fact, surprisingly, the two are not even significantly related. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported: foreign aid is negatively related to the strength of both community psychology and the average of all six community studies disciplines. And nonviolent action was positively related to the strength of community psychology as expected.

Table 1: *Zero-Order Pearson Correlations between Country Level Predictors and the Strength of Community Psychology (CP) and the Average of (CP), Community Sociology, Community Development, Community Social Work, Development Economics, and Liberation Theology.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. GDP per capita	--	.524	ns	.520	.296	-.397	.428	.249
2. Educational Infrastructure		--	ns	.505	ns	ns	ns	ns
3. GINI			--	.362	ns	ns	.436	.320
4. Civil Liberties				--	.327	ns	.450	.324
5. Non violent grassroots action					--	ns	.458	.533
6. Foreign Aid per capita						--	-.332	-.350
7. Community Psychology							--	.740
8. Community Studies Average								--

Multiple Regressions Predicting Strength of Community Psychology. Hierarchical regression analysis showed a significant predictive effect of national income inequality (or Gini coefficient) on the emergence and growth of community psychology. The field tends to be strongest in more unequal societies, which supports the idea that students may gravitate toward CP in part to address problems of inequality. The negative association of foreign aid and

CP did not diminish at all even after controlling for all the other predictors.

Table 2. *Hierarchical Multiple Regressions Predicting Strength of Community Psychology* (n=67 countries)

Independent Variables:	Final betas: Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
GDP per capita	.165		.094
Education infrastructure	.007	.070	-.011
GINI	.305**	.307*	.361**
Civil liberties	.146	.172	.188
Grassroots action	.253*	.281*	.144
Foreign Aid per capita	-.182	-.224*	-.338**
Aid × grassroots action			-.259*
Adjusted=	.3938,	R ² =.3867,	R ² =.427
	F(6,60)= 8.15, p<.0001	F(5,61)=9.32, p<.0001	F(7, 59) = 8.024, p<.001

The interaction effect of foreign aid and nonviolent action was significant (see Figure 3). The nonviolent action-community psychology linkage exists in low aid levels (simple slope = 3.25, $p < .01$), but was nonsignificant in high aid levels. The results support the hypothesis and show that the presence of foreign aid weakens the positive relationship between nonviolent action and the strength of CP. When the presence of foreign aid is low, nonviolent action is predictive of the strength of CP over and above the influence of GDP per capita, civil liberties, educational infrastructure, and inequality (GINI). On the other hand, the relationship between nonviolent action and the strength of CP becomes non-significant under the strong presence of ODA. The results align with the current literature on the pressures from large donors hurting the effectiveness of community-level organizations and reducing the demand for applied community studies in aid-receiving countries. This implies that the current aid system needs restructuring.

Figure 3. Simple slope for the interaction effect of nonviolent action and development aid on the strength of community psychology.

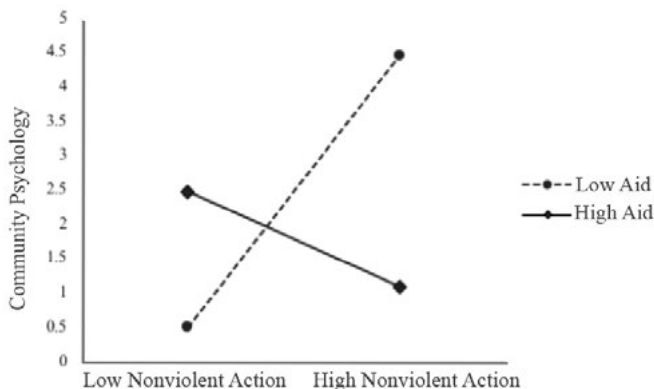


Table 3 shows two prediction models, with and without GDP per capita, for the average of six applied community disciplines. Nonviolent political activism was significantly related, as expected, and foreign aid was also confirmed to be negatively related to the status of community studies fields in these aid-receiving countries, even after controlling for the influence of all other variables.

Table 3. Hierarchical Multiple Regressions Predicting Strength of the Average of Six Community Disciplines

Independent Variables:	Final betas: Model 1	Model 2
GDP per capita	-.037	
Educational Infrastructure	-.028	-.043
GINI	.211	.211
Civil liberties	.098	.093
Non violent action	.410***	.405***
Official Development Aid per capita	-.258*	-.247*
	Adjusted R ² = .3361, F(6,60)= 6.57, p<.001	R ² = .3465, F(5,61)= 7.99 p<.0001

Discussion

In this study, we concluded that grassroots activism facilitates, while foreign aid seems to inhibit, community psychology and other applied community studies. Furthermore, when aid is low, countries with high political action levels developed community psychology more than those with low levels of activism. But in countries receiving more aid, activism wasn't enough to foster the development of community psychology. In future research, we hope to further explore these problems associated with foreign aid systems and how to improve them so that they support the development of community psychology and other community disciplines.

Finally, a brief summary of some of the student theses from the project provides a sense of some of the kinds of research one can do by analyzing country-level data or doing an in-depth qualitative case study of a single country. Dominique Lyew's thesis analyzed the growth of all applied community studies disciplines in the post-colonial context of her home country of Jamaica. An undergraduate honors thesis was completed on Northern and Southern European differences in development as a present-day empirical test of Max Weber's classic Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism theory. Another honors thesis in progress is looking at the relationships between societal income inequality and wellness problems, as Richard Wilkinson and many others have robustly found, but the thesis will look at it in the context of the state of community-focused development economics disciplines in each country.

And the last paper from the Project I will mention is a case study paper I am working on with two Chinese colleagues and two students and relates to the prospects for community psychology in China in the context of other applied community studies disciplines. I have been especially interested in the growth prospects for community psychology in China, where in 2017 I was a visiting professor for the third time. My CP textbook (Levine, Perkins & Perkins, 2005) has been translated into Chinese and was recently published there. As I wrote in the new Preface to the Chinese edition, it is right and important that China, representing almost one fifth of the world's population, should become more aware of the ideas, research, and applications of community psychology from other countries and develop its own brand of community psychology, "with Chinese characteristics," in response to its particular urban and rural community issues, and its many unique local social, cultural, and political contexts.

So how does China currently fare on the six conditions for community psychology development? 1) Psychology in China has never fully recovered from the wars of the 1930s and '40s and the revolutionary period from 1949 through the mid-1970s and so is currently too limited to provide enough critics and students; but if any country

has a critical mass population of students and faculty to draw on it is China. 2) The social climate has been liberalizing for many years now. 3) The Communist Party in China mainly quells dissent and controls the population, including universities and professional organizations. 4) The education system has become more liberal, but only encourages critical reflection at the individual rather than system level, and is geared more toward economic than social or “community” development, although there is plenty of attention to centralized planning, public health (given major crises), and social services. It is more liberal than the Communist Party, but much less than Western academia. 5) Public activism and questioning authority are very difficult in China and some would say culturally uncommon, but given the level of state control, I do not think it is cultural as there are occasional signs of activism and resistance, both individually and collectively. 6) Civil society presents a mixed picture in China: it was suppressed for over 50 years. Then in the early to mid-2000s group membership social capital, sense of community and political participation all showed strength (Xu et al. 2010). And the new national community education policy, which is a main focus for my Chinese community scholar colleagues, is encouraging (Ng & Madyaningrum, 2014); but open and fair elections, even at the local level, have again disappeared. Community psychologists globally must be ready to collaborate and support the development of the field in China. My experience suggests that there is a thirst for such collaboration in China and it would be warmly welcomed (Yang & Perkins, 2012).

That development may occur within academic departments and institutes of psychology, or it may be more likely to occur through interdisciplinary collaboration in China, as it has begun to occur in every other country. According to our data, Chinese psychologists should connect with education (Zhang & Perkins, 2016), public health, social work, development economics, public administration and policy studies, urban and regional planning and geography, and applied anthropology (Maton et al. 2006; Perkins & Schensul, 2017).

Let me conclude where I began –the potential for the globalization of indigenously– defined and developed community psychology and other applied community studies to help societies resolve, in dialectical fashion, the political divisions and inequality sown by economic globalization, migration, and nationalist reactions to both, not just in the U.S. but happening throughout the globe. Community studies disciplines help resolve political and ideological differences by appealing to both Liberals and Conservatives because they promote local control and decentralized community social, economic, physical, and political capital. They provide a balance to the over-emphasis of many societies, including our own, on individual rights and wellness by drawing attention and resources to collective rights and wellness. This is where we in the West

may learn from the global East and South, which tend to be more collectivist societies, culturally and politically. Diversity is another value that has risen in my international collaborations: it is something communities in the US, Canada, South Africa, and many other countries have struggled with throughout our history, but with migration, it seems to have affected China and Europe even more perhaps because it is relatively newer (Palmer et al, 2011; Perkins et al, 2011). A “glocal” orientation toward community work serves to both connect with global movements for social justice while providing a hands-on outlet for collective, contextually-sensitive, local, rather than populist-nationalist, response. Finally, international comparative research helps collaborators from each country learn from each other and see values of equality versus liberty in new ways. For example, while my Chinese colleagues have learned a lot about the pros and cons of life in a politically freer society, both they and I, and also colleagues in Italy and South Africa, have observed how inequality has worsened in each of our countries despite the many political and economic differences, which has given us international common cause for xenophilia over xenophobia.

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