

Forging Local Community Workers: An Investigation on the Factors Affecting Involvement and Retention

Yu-Cheng Chang

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Sociology, National Dong Hwa
University

Abstract

This study investigated why individuals want to be community workers and how they maintain their practices. The conclusions presented herein are based on 20 interviews, participant observation, and secondary data. Social factors at different levels inspire individuals to value some aspects of the community and to better their community. Community workers often see their community service as part of their self-actualization. As they continue to engage in community service, community workers develop their identities as community workers, and the capital required for their service accumulates. Some types of capital are location-specific, which produces a lock-in effect that inspires community workers to continue engaging in community service.

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