DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ON CREATING A FAIRER SOCIETY

BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development

IFZAL AHMAD *and* M. REZAUL ISLAM

BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ON CREATING A FAIRER SOCIETY

A fair society is one that is just, inclusive and embracing of all without any barriers to participation based on sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, ethnicity, age, class, ability or any other social difference. One where there is access to healthcare and education, technology, justice, strong institutions, peace and security, social protection, decent work and housing. But how can research truly contribute to creating global equity and diversity without showcasing diverse voices that are underrepresented in academia or paying specific attention to the Global South?

Including books addressing key challenges and issues within the social sciences which are essential to creating a fairer society for all with specific reference to the Global South, *Diverse Perspectives on Creating a Fairer Society* amplifies underrepresented voices showcasing Black, Asian and minority ethnic voices, authorship from the Global South and academics who work to amplify diverse voices.

With the primary aim of showcasing authorship and voices from beyond the Global North, the series welcomes submissions from established and junior authors on cutting-edge and high-level research on key topics that feature in global news and public debate, specifically from and about the Global South in national and international contexts. Harnessing research across a range of diversities of people and place to generate previously unheard insights, the series offers a truly global perspective on the current societal debates of the 21st century bringing contemporary debate in the social sciences from diverse voices to light.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This book is dedicated to Dr Nicholas Wise, Assistant Professor at the School of Community Resources & Development (CRD), Arizona State University, USA. Dr Wise earned his PhD in Human Geography in 2012 from Kent State University and has since made significant contributions to the field. His extensive travels to over 100 countries, whether as a student, instructor, researcher, conference presenter, volunteer, or editor, reflect his unwavering commitment to research focused on placemaking, competitiveness, social regeneration, and community impacts. Dr Nicholas Wise's remarkable work closely aligns with the principles of Building Strong Communities Through Ethical Approaches Toward Inclusive Development.

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CONTENTS

About the Authors *xiii*
Foreword *xv*
Preface *xix*
Acknowledgments *xxiii*

1. The Fabric of Society: Understanding Community Development 1
   - 1.1 Introduction 1
   - 1.2 The Foundations of Community Development 2
   - 1.3 Historical Perspectives of Community Development 3
   - 1.4 Forms of Community: From Local to Global 4
   - 1.5 Community Development: Tools and Strategies 9
   - 1.6 The Broader Impact of Community Development 14
   - 1.7 The Future of Community Development: Anticipating Change 20
2. Grounded Morality: The Role of Ethics in Community Development 27
   - 2.1 Introduction 28
   - 2.2 The Intersection of Ethics and Community Development 28
   - 2.3 Understanding Ethics: A Primer 30
   - 2.4 Applying Ethical Theories to Community Development 34
   - 2.5 Ethical Principles in Practice: Global Case Studies 35
   - 2.6 The Challenges of Ethical Implementation in Community Development 37
   - 2.7 Ethics in Action: Building a Moral Framework for Community Development 44

3. Empowerment and Participation: Key Strategies for Inclusive Development 47
3.1 Introduction 48
3.2 The Ethics of Empowerment 50
3.3 Participation as a Tool for Inclusive Development 53
3.4 Global Case Studies: Empowerment and Participation in Action 58
3.5 Overcoming Barriers to Empowerment and Participation 61
3.6 The Future of Empowerment and Participation: Toward More Inclusive Communities 64
4. Navigating the Challenges: Ethical Dilemmas in Community Development 69
4.1 Introduction 69
4.2 Identifying Ethical Dilemmas: Power, Resources, and Cultural Sensitivity 72
4.3 Global Case Studies: Ethical Challenges in Real-world Contexts 76
4.4 Strategies for Navigating Ethical Dilemmas 80
4.5 Creating an Ethical Decision-making Framework 83
4.6 Conclusion: The Constant Evolution of Ethical Challenges 87
5. The Road Ahead in the 21st Century: Mapping Global Progress in Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Community Development 91
5.1 Introduction 91
5.2 Global Trends and Case Studies: Insights from Diverse Communities 92
5.3 Navigating Ethical Dilemmas: New Challenges and Opportunities for Inclusive Development 104
5.4 Designing for the Future: Ethical Considerations Across Continents 112
5.5 Guiding Ethical Development: Principles with Global Applicability 119
5.6 Inclusive Governance in a Global Context: Collaborative Decision-making 121
5.7 Empowering Through Global Awareness: Educating for Ethical Engagement 123

5.8 Ethical Responses to Global Uncertainties: Building Adaptability, Resilience, and Inclusive Development 125
5.9 Synthesizing Global and Local Ethical Frameworks Across Cultures 127
5.10 Conclusion: A Global Call to Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Community Development 129

References 133

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Ifzal Ahmad, PhD with over 16 years of experience in teaching, research, and professional engagement, is currently serving as an Associate Professor of Human Resource Management at Umm Al Quwain University, UAE. He is concurrently on sabbatical from his role as Associate Professor at Karakoram International University, Gilgit, Pakistan. He completed his postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Sharjah, UAE, deepening his expertise in areas such as sustainability, leadership, and social entrepreneurship. Apart from his academic roles, he has been instrumental in fostering the growth of small businesses in the Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan, notably as the Director of the Business Incubation Center, and later, the Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization. Throughout his career, he has actively contributed to the scholarly community with over 30 research publications and a book, predominantly focusing on human resource management and allied fields.

M. Rezaul Islam, PhD, a Distinguished Academic, currently holds the position of Professor in Social Work at the Institute of Social Welfare and Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. With a profound academic journey that encompasses a Master of Social Work (MSW) and a PhD from the University of Nottingham, UK, he brings over 27 years of diverse experience to his role, encompassing teaching, research, and collaborative initiatives on a global scale. His expertise transcends disciplinary boundaries, allowing him to decipher intricate socio-political dynamics, and his pedagogical influence spans various universities worldwide. His commitment to nurturing research capacity is evident through his affiliations with renowned institutions such as the University of Malaya, the University of Johannesburg, Universiti Sains Malaysia, and the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD). His expansive scholarship traverses the realms of social work, community development, climate change and disasters, and migration studies, presenting a comprehensive body of work that includes a remarkable 120 impactful journal articles, 45 enlightening book chapters, and 15 meticulously authored and edited books. These scholarly contributions encompass a wide spectrum of topics, ranging from climate change, migration, and social inequality,

deeply rooted in the contexts of regions such as South Asia and the Arab world. Central to his academic pursuits is an unwavering commitment to social justice and empowerment, as he delves into the challenges faced by marginalized communities and advocates for research-informed solutions. In his role as a Doctoral Supervisor, he plays a pivotal role in guiding impactful research endeavors, leaving an enduring mark on the advancement of knowledge within these vital domains.

FOREWORD

Reading this book reminded me of my brief encounter with Anna Hazare (2003), a well-known social worker and social reformer who transformed his village, Ralegan Siddhi, located in Maharashtra state of India. To collect data for my book, *Community Development in Asia and the Pacific* (Pawar, 2010), I specially visited Ralegan Siddhi to observe the comprehensive community and social development. Anna Hazare had accomplished by employing his own community development approaches and by engaging people of the village. I recall the interview with Anna Hazare, who told me that rural/community development or development does not mean just building of roads, bridges, dams, and skyscrapers, but it also means building moral fabric of the society, values of people. But unfortunately, we often see building of the former and little of the latter. This book, *Building Strong Communities: Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development* appears to address that latter part, ethical or values aspect of community development which is also an important dimension of social development (Dean, 2010). While discussing moral standards and ethical principles, Dean clarifies:

> *Morals are concerned with cultural* mores*: ethics with cognitive* ethos*. Morality and ethics are, of course, closely related and exist in dialectical relation to each other. Morals may entail the (re)interpretation of ethics. Ethics are a reflection upon morals. Morals are grounded; their preoccupation is with norms and customary practices. Ethics are systemic; their preoccupation is with values and abstract principles. Morals are expressed in terms of codes; ethics in terms of doctrines. (pp. 185–186)*

Thus, ethics or values/principles-based community development practice is critical in the contemporary world that is confronted with conflicts and wars, climate change and natural disasters, pandemics, forced displacement of people, development-led displacement, least or underdeveloped conditions, poverty and inequality, communal violence and appearance and reappearance of conservative/radical fundamentalism, and challenges posed by digital technology and artificial intelligence.

To address these issues and consequences of these issues we need to draw on community development knowledge and skills and good examples of community development practices. But knowledge and skills relating ethical aspect of community development practice are very limited. This book refers Jeremy Bentham's consequentialism/utilitarianism, Immanuel Kant's deontology and Aristotelian Virtue ethics. To some extent these are reflected in professional code of ethics such as social work. As discussed in my previous work (Pawar, 2014), in the ethical framework it is important to further include Habermas' communicative action and discourse, ethics of care and faith and spirituality.

I have not come across specific code of ethics for community development practitioners, though professional social work code of ethics may be broadly applicable. Recognizing this gap, I initiated the process of drafting a Statement of Ethics for the International Consortium for Social Development for the benefit of development practitioners, including community development. The draft developed by Profs Richard Hugman and Vijayan K. Pillai, and myself, with input of colleagues, includes four important pillars of the ethics statement: goals, roles and tasks, methods, and character. The ethical framework in the statement is built around humanity dignity and worth, satisfaction of human needs, human rights, equality and social justice, integrity (character), and peace (ICSD, 2021).

The book's virtue ethics focus may be understood in terms of values and principles, character, qualities and attributes, and roles and functions (see Pawar et al., 2017; Hugman et al., 2021) as it broadly discusses some of these elements. Similar to the values and principles I have discussed (Pawar, 2010, 2014), the book looks at empowerment and participation, though the current trend seems to be codesign. I wonder whether the phrase 'participation' is replaced by codesign.

But community development practice is not one thing, not universal. But what is mostly universal is, all community organization/development is locally based. Even digital communities, their actions and consequences, somewhere have a local base. Discussing community development without linking it at local levels raises many questions. There is so much of diversity in community development programmes and practices (Pawar, 2019). Therefore, the ICSD's (2021, p. 99) statement of ethics under plurality of responsibilities states that

> *[…] there may be reasonable differences of view between social/community development practitioners concerning the importance of particular ethical principles or virtues in circumstances when particular values are incompatible. Therefore, all social/community*

> *development practitioners have a responsibility to engage in dialogue on such matters with respect. The ethical principles and virtues of social/community development apply to relationships and actions within the field as well as between practitioners and beneficiaries.*

Thus, the ethical approaches discussed in the book apply to relationships and actions within the broad field of community development practice, to organizations, and as well as between practitioners and beneficiaries.

Community organization/development is a broad, diverse, and complex field and so is the application of ethics. Our way of understanding and depicting community development is dependent on and limited by what and how much we imagine, think, read, understand, and write. The five chapters written and loosely knit together by the authors demonstrate this. Their efforts need to be appreciated because, the literature on community development, particularly relating to ethics, is relatively limited and this work adds to it. Similarly, authors writing from Global Southern countries are very small in number and it is important to have their voice in the community development literature, and it is one of the objectives of the Emerald book series, *Diverse Perspectives on Creating a Fairer Society*. At the same time, it may be useful to alert readers, particularly, serious community development scholars and practitioners, that if they are looking for the breadth and the depth of the issue the book is addressing, they need to undertake further reading. Drawing from the secondary data, case studies presented in the book are merely good examples, written in a cursory manner, though they provide leads to them. Certain terms such as "case study," "journey," and "narrative" may not adhere to their original meaning. The broad sketch of ethics, strategies for, ethical dilemmas in, and future of community development presented by the authors may be compared to early cartographers' maps of the world. Like how those maps led to refined maps of the world today, I hope the authors' work might motivate other scholars to refine and elaborate their sketches of *Building Strong Communities: Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development*.

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PREFACE

Building Strong Communities: Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development represents a comprehensive and innovative exploration into the intricate realm of community development in the dynamic landscape of the 21st century. This book, underpinned by a global perspective, unearths ethical approaches to inclusive development through a multifaceted lens, showcasing a wealth of global case studies that provide invaluable insights. Our endeavor seeks to empower readers, equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to not just navigate but thrive amid the challenges and opportunities that the ever-evolving 21st century presents. As we journey through these pages, it becomes evident that this book is not merely a collection of ideas, but a pioneering publication that weaves together a rich tapestry of illustrative examples and valuable experiences culled from diverse countries around the world.

In essence, this book encapsulates the essence of community development with a keen focus on the pivotal aspects of ethics and inclusivity. It is an indispensable guidebook, tailored to address the pressing need for sustainable and equitable development practices in our contemporary society. By adroitly navigating the intricate challenges that modern communities grapple with, this book provides not just a fresh perspective on community development but also serves as a beacon of guidance. Within these pages, we meticulously dissect ethical frameworks, illuminate empowering strategies, and infuse tangible real-life instances, offering a holistic perspective on community development. Assembled here are the tools and insights that have the potential to guide not only policymakers, practitioners, and scholars but anyone committed to nurturing resilient and thriving communities.

The rationale behind this book is rooted in the dynamic landscape of the 21st century. As our world faces unprecedented challenges, from climate crises to technological advancements, globalization, and shifting social dynamics, the need for innovative and ethical approaches to community development becomes increasingly evident. Ethics, inclusivity, and sustainability are at the forefront of this rationale, recognizing that community well-being hinges on these principles. Moreover, the book's significance lies in its capacity to provide guidance amidst this complexity. It offers practical strategies and

ethical frameworks that empower policymakers, practitioners, and scholars to address these multifaceted challenges effectively. By integrating global case studies and experiences, the book underscores the universal relevance of its insights, making it a valuable resource for individuals and communities worldwide. Additionally, the book's interdisciplinary nature is significant, bridging the gap between various academic and practical domains to present a comprehensive understanding of community development in the 21st century, fostering a collective and holistic approach to building strong and resilient communities in an interconnected world.

The integration of numerous examples and experiences from different countries across the globe enriches the content, adding layers of applicability and real-world wisdom that deeply resonate with the challenges faced by communities today. *Building Strong Communities: Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development* is not just a book; it is a guiding light illuminating pathways toward a future where ethical considerations and inclusivity form the bedrock of flourishing communities. Diving deeper into the scope of this book, it's evident that it transcends disciplinary boundaries, encompassing a wide range of academic and practical domains. From sociology and social sciences to social entrepreneurship, business, community development, applied sociology, management studies, climate change, and disaster management, this work employs an interdisciplinary approach. This approach enables us to transcend disciplinary silos and present a more comprehensive understanding of community development.

Extensive literature reviews spanning diverse disciplines ensure that the book incorporates a myriad of perspectives and insights. Collaboration with scholars and experts from various fields has been pivotal in shaping the book's content, ensuring that it resonates with practitioners and researchers alike. The book also leverages an array of case studies and practical examples drawn from different regions and contexts. These real-world scenarios vividly illustrate how ethical and inclusive approaches can be applied across disciplines, emphasizing their universal relevance.

Ethical considerations are seamlessly interwoven into the fabric of our discussions throughout the book, ensuring a deep exploration of the moral dimensions of community development. The book concludes by offering not just theoretical insights but practical recommendations and strategies for interdisciplinary collaboration. It underscores the significance of working together to foster sustainable and ethical community development practices that resonate across diverse community contexts.

The readership of the book is broad and diverse, reflecting the multidisciplinary and inclusive nature of its content. This book is highly relevant to

policymakers, offering valuable insights for shaping ethical and inclusive development policies. Practitioners in the field, including community development professionals and NGOs, will find practical strategies and real-world case studies to inform their work and empower marginalized communities. Academics and scholars from various disciplines, such as sociology, social sciences, business, and environmental studies, will benefit from its interdisciplinary approach and extensive literature review. Students pursuing studies related to community development, ethics, and social sciences will find this book a valuable educational resource. Additionally, anyone with an interest in fostering resilient and equitable communities in our ever-evolving world will find inspiration and actionable guidance within its pages.

OUTLINES OF THE CHAPTERS

In the inaugural Chapter 1, "The Fabric of Society: Understanding Community Development," we embark on a journey through time and perspectives to unravel the origins and evolution of community development. This chapter explores the historical underpinnings and various lenses through which community development has been viewed. It dives into its profound role in contemporary society, dissecting its multifaceted dimensions and significance. Readers will gain a comprehensive understanding of the foundations upon which community development stands, setting the stage for the ethical and inclusive exploration that follows.

Chapter 2, "Grounded Morality: The Role of Ethics in Community Development," forms the ethical bedrock of our exploration. Ethics, as the cornerstone of effective community development, takes center stage. Here, we delve into a rich tapestry of ethical theories, from consequentialism to deontology and virtue ethics, examining their relevance within the complex landscape of community building. These theories come to life through practical examples and case studies drawn from various corners of the globe, demonstrating their real-world applicability. As we navigate the ethical dimensions of community development, readers will gain insights into the moral compass that guides this field toward fairness, justice, and sustainability.

Chapter 3, "Empowerment and Participation: Key Strategies for Inclusive Development", shifts our focus to the heart of community development – empowering community members and ensuring their active participation. This pivotal chapter explores strategies and provides practical examples of inclusive community development. Drawing from a diverse array of global case studies, we illuminate the transformative potential of empowering individuals

and communities. These case studies offer insights into effective strategies for amplifying marginalized voices and agency, fostering ownership, and shaping more inclusive and equitable futures. As readers navigate these pages, they will discover the power of participatory approaches and how they can adapt their strategies to meet the complex dynamics of diverse communities.

In Chapter 4, "Navigating the Challenges: Ethical Dilemmas in Community Development," we confront head-on the common ethical challenges and dilemmas that often arise in the course of community development projects. This chapter serves as a practical guide, offering strategies to address these challenges while upholding integrity and inclusivity. The content unfolds through a tapestry of case studies representing diverse cultures and socioeconomic conditions. Readers will grapple with the complexities of ethical implementation, including the delicate balance between immediate needs and long-term sustainability, power dynamics, and conflicts of interest. This chapter underscores the importance of ethical decision-making in the pursuit of community development and equips readers with the tools to navigate these moral quandaries with heightened awareness and ethical reasoning.

The concluding Chapter 5, "The Road Ahead in the 21st Century: Mapping Global Progress in Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Community Development," embarks on a comprehensive exploration of ethical considerations within the realm of inclusive community development in the 21st century. This chapter transcends borders and traverses global trends, offering insights gleaned from diverse case studies representing different corners of the world. It sheds light on emerging challenges and opportunities, with a spotlight on inclusive governance models, transparent and participatory decision-making, and communities' resilient responses to unforeseen challenges. The chapter concludes by weaving together the synthesis of global and local ethical frameworks, urging a collective commitment to ethical approaches for sustainable and inclusive development. As the book's final note, it serves as both a reflection on the ethical complexities within the field and a resounding call to action, inspiring stakeholders worldwide to embrace ethical practices in their community development efforts, fostering a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

Ultimately, *Building Strong Communities: Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development* is a holistic and interdisciplinary resource that empowers readers to draw upon multiple perspectives and tools. It encourages collaboration, dialogue, and action across research communities and fields to promote a collective and comprehensive approach to building strong and resilient communities in an increasingly interconnected world.

Ifzal Ahmad and M. Rezaul Islam

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The creation of *Building Strong Communities: Ethical Approaches to Inclusive Development* has been a collaborative endeavor, and we are deeply grateful to those who have contributed their expertise, support, and encouragement along this transformative journey.

First and foremost, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the contributors of this book, who have generously shared their knowledge, insights, and experiences. Your dedication to the principles of ethics and inclusivity in community development is reflected in the pages of this book, and we are immensely thankful for your valuable contributions.

We would like to express our profound appreciation to the reviewers and editors who meticulously reviewed and enriched the content, ensuring its quality and relevance. Your feedback and guidance have been instrumental in shaping this publication.

Our sincere thanks go to the team at Emerald Publishing, whose professionalism and dedication have been invaluable throughout the publication process. Your support in bringing this project to fruition is deeply appreciated.

We also extend our gratitude to our respective institutions, Karakoram International University in Pakistan and the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh, for providing the academic environment and resources that enabled us to undertake this endeavor.

To our families and loved ones, we offer our heartfelt thanks for your unwavering support, understanding, and patience during the countless hours devoted to this project. Your encouragement has been a constant source of inspiration.

Last but not least, we are grateful to the global community of community development practitioners, policymakers, scholars, and advocates who work tirelessly to create positive change in communities around the world. Your dedication to ethical and inclusive approaches is a testament to the transformative power of collective action. As we present this book to the world, we hope it serves as a valuable resource and an inspiration for all those committed to building strong, resilient, and equitable communities. The journey of

community development is ongoing, and together, we can continue to shape a more just and sustainable future.

With deep gratitude,

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