Meanings and Practices of Reciprocity: Enactments of Power in Partnerships

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ABSTRACT

This study considers a research conceptual cross-walk between: 1) orientations of reciprocity, 2) manifestations of power, 3) types of partnerships, and 4) stages of engagement. Nuanced meanings and practices of reciprocity, which are impacted by critical, reflexive attention to enactments of power, open possibilities for building generative reciprocity in movement toward transformational partnerships and sustained engagement.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

• Reciprocity and mutual benefit are two foundational elements of engaged scholarship, yet the meaning of these constructs are often taken for granted and/or conflated in research and practice (Driscoll, 2009; Sandmann, 2008).
• Rowlands (1997) outlined four manifestations of power that might inform CES partnerships: 1) Power over, indicating control or compliance; 2) power with, such as collaborative action; 3) power to, connoting productive action to create new possibility; and, 4) power within, or the sense of agency.
• Clayton, et al (2010) recognized exploitation can occur if partners are not attentive to reciprocity and power.
• Butcher, Bezzina & Moran (2011) and Enos & Morton (2013) identified a typology of transactional, transitional, and transformational partnerships that are comprised of differing orientations of reciprocity.
• Hoyt (2011) theorized stages of engagement that develop as reciprocity is cultivated in a partnership: Pseudo, tentative, stable, authentic, and sustained engagement.

MEANINGS OF RECIPROCITY

• An exchange, *quid pro quo* meaning of reciprocity that is based on an exchange-of-benefits supports transactional partnerships (Enos & Martin, 2003), in which the main goal is short-term mutual benefits for the partners involved (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010, p. 8).
• Influence orientations to reciprocity (Dostilio, et al, 2012) allow partners to sway the direction of their engagement from technical considerations to more substantive issues of connection and creation (*or vice versa*) which supports transitional partnering.
• Generative reciprocity (Dostilio, et al, 2012) is a synergistic joining of partners across diversity of interests and perspectives from which emerges a new entity that would not have been possible within either partner alone, that is, a transformational partnership.

PRACTICES OF RECIPROCITY

• Exchange orientations of reciprocity (Dostilio, et al) in transactional partnerships (Enos & Morton, 2013) are reinforced by collaborative manifestations of power (Rowlands, 1997) within a stage of tentative engagement (Hoyt, 2011).
• Influence orientations of reciprocity (Dostilio, et al) in transitional to transformational partnerships (Butcher, Bezzina & Moran, 2011) correspond with creative manifestations of power (Rowlands, 1997) that are expressed in stable to authentic stages of engagement (Hoyt, 2011).
• Generative orientations of reciprocity (Dostilio, et al) experienced in transformational partnerships (Enos & Morton, 2013) correspond with agency manifestations of power (Rowlands, 1997) in authentic and sustained engagement (Hoyt, 2011).

CROSS-WALK

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No true reciprocity</td>
<td>Power Over (Control)</td>
<td>No true partnership</td>
<td>Pseudo-engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>Power With (Collaborative)</td>
<td>Transactional to Transitional</td>
<td>Tentative to Stable engagement</td>
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<td>Influence</td>
<td>Power to (Creative)</td>
<td>Transitional to Transformational</td>
<td>Stable to Authentic engagement</td>
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<td>Generative</td>
<td>Power Within (Agency)</td>
<td>Transformational</td>
<td>Sustained engagement</td>
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CONCLUSIONS

• Manifestations of power effect building reciprocity in partnerships (Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012)
• Inattention to meanings of reciprocity and manifestations of power opens possibilities for exploitation in community-engaged partnerships (Clayton, et al 2010).
• Critical attention to nuanced meanings of reciprocity and manifestations of power support transformational partnerships and sustained engagement.
• Generative reciprocity is built through attention to enactments of power over iterative stages of engagement (Hoyt, 2011)
• Hoyt’s (2011) theory of community engagement positions reciprocity as a process located in stages of mutually shared power that reaches its full potential in the co-creation of knowledge that impacts social change.

REFERENCES & CONTACT INFO

• Please take a handout with references and contact information included.