

Educational anthropology and community partnerships: Addressing social challenges through collaboration

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ABSTRACT

Empowering collective action through strategic community partnerships is vital for addressing social challenges and promoting community engagement. In the context of Educational Anthropology, understanding the dynamics of community partnerships can enhance collaboration and shape community outcomes. Despite the potential of collective action, disparities in community resources, social capital, and civic engagement persist, hindering community development and perpetuating social inequality. This study employs data mining techniques (including classification, regression analysis, clustering techniques, association rule mining, and Natural Language Processing) to investigate the role of strategic community partnerships in promoting collective action and community engagement through an Educational Anthropology lens. Findings highlight the importance of addressing these disparities through targeted partnerships and initiatives that foster collaboration between educational institutions, community organizations, and local stakeholders. Investing in capacity-building programs, community outreach initiatives, and collaborative governance models can enhance collective action and community engagement. Implementing inclusive and equitable community development policies can promote equal opportunities for marginalized groups. By empowering collective action,

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strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology can play a vital role in shaping community outcomes, promoting social cohesion, and fostering culturally responsive learning environments.

Keywords: educational, anthropology, community partnership, social challenges, collaboration

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INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected world, complex problems like poverty, inequality, climate change, and social injustice necessitate collaborative efforts among diverse stakeholders to foster meaningful change. Strategic community partnerships emerge as a vital approach to addressing these multifaceted challenges. By bringing together community organizations, businesses, government agencies, educational institutions, and other stakeholders, these partnerships leverage collective resources, expertise, and perspectives to work towards common goals that benefit the community. Within the realm of Educational Anthropology, understanding the dynamics of these partnerships is crucial for promoting community engagement, cultural responsiveness, and collaborative learning. Educational Anthropology, as a field, examines how education is shaped by and shapes cultural contexts, making it a pertinent lens through which to study community partnerships aimed at addressing social challenges in educational settings.

Strategic community partnerships are built on the premise that collaboration can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions than isolated efforts. These partnerships can facilitate the sharing of knowledge, resources, and responsibilities among partners, leading to outcomes that are greater than the sum of individual contributions. In educational contexts, such partnerships can bridge the gap between schools, communities, and external organizations, enhancing the relevance and impact of education on local needs and challenges. For instance, partnerships between educational institutions and community organizations can lead to culturally responsive curricula, community-based learning experiences, and increased engagement of students and families in educational processes.

Research has shown that strategic community partnerships can be very effective in addressing social challenges and promoting community engagement. For example, studies in the United States have found that partnerships between community organizations and businesses can lead to improved health outcomes and economic development. Similarly, partnerships between community organizations and government agencies in countries like Australia have led to increased community engagement and social cohesion. Despite the potential of strategic community partnerships, there are also challenges that need to be overcome. For example, partnerships can be difficult to establish and maintain, especially when there are different interests and priorities involved. Additionally, partnerships can be affected by power imbalances and unequal access to resources, which can make it difficult for all partners to have an equal voice.

This research aims to explore the concept of strategic community partnerships and their role in addressing social challenges and promoting community engagement through the lens of Educational Anthropology. Through a review of existing literature and case studies, this research

will examine the key characteristics, benefits, and challenges of strategic community partnerships in educational contexts. It will investigate how these partnerships can empower collective action, promote social cohesion, and contribute to more effective and sustainable solutions to pressing social issues. By bridging Educational Anthropology and community partnerships, this study aims to enhance understanding of collaborative strategies for addressing social challenges and promoting community engagement in diverse educational settings.

In addition, this research will explore the concept of collective action and how it can be empowered through strategic community partnerships. Collective action refers to the process of people working together to achieve a common goal. It is an important concept in the context of strategic community partnerships, as it highlights the need for collaboration and cooperation among different stakeholders. By empowering collective action, strategic community partnerships can help to create a sense of community and social cohesion among partners. This can lead to a range of benefits, including improved health outcomes, increased economic development, and enhanced community engagement.

The research will focus on the following questions: What are the key characteristics of strategic community partnerships in educational contexts? What are the benefits and challenges of strategic community partnerships? What are the best practices for building and sustaining effective partnerships? How can strategic community partnerships be used to address social challenges and promote community engagement? By answering these questions, this research hopes to contribute to a better understanding of strategic community partnerships and their role in creating a better world for all through collaborative efforts in educational settings.

Overall, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of strategic community partnerships and their role in addressing social challenges and promoting community engagement through the perspective of Educational Anthropology. By exploring the key characteristics, benefits, and challenges of these partnerships, this research hopes to contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable solutions to the big problems that face us today.

Statement of the problem

This research study aims to:

1. To examine the concept of strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology and their role in addressing social challenges.
2. To identify the key characteristics, benefits, and challenges of strategic community partnerships in the context of Educational Anthropology.
3. To investigate the impact of strategic community partnerships on community engagement and social cohesion in educational settings.
4. To explore the role of collective action in empowering strategic community partnerships for addressing social challenges in Educational Anthropology.
5. To develop a framework for building and sustaining effective strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology contexts.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs data mining techniques to uncover hidden patterns and relationships in community data, informing strategic partnerships and interventions that address social challenges (Kelleher & Tierney, 2022). Data mining helps identify key factors influencing community engagement, allowing for targeted interventions that promote collective action and social change (Rajasekaran et al., 2023). By applying data mining techniques, community organizations and stakeholders can make data-driven decisions, optimizing their efforts to address pressing social issues (Han et al., 2020). Leveraging data mining in this way enhances the potential for strategic community partnerships to effectively address social challenges and promote community engagement through informed, targeted interventions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study explores the nexus between collective action, community partnerships, and social change, with a specific focus on community engagement and social challenges. By analyzing the relationships between these variables, the aim is to uncover how strategic community partnerships can promote collective action, address social challenges, and foster community engagement. The findings reveal that collective action through community partnerships can drive social change, promote social cohesion, and support the empowerment of marginalized groups.

Developing partnerships with local businesses and organizations

Developing partnerships with local businesses and organizations refers to collaborative relationships that drive economic growth and community development. These partnerships facilitate the exchange of resources, expertise, and ideas, leading to innovative solutions and mutually beneficial outcomes. By working together, local businesses and organizations can build stronger, more resilient communities that thrive and prosper. Within this broad framework are several sub-variables that highlight specific strategies for collaboration. These include internship and job shadowing opportunities for students, guest speakers and industry experts in the classroom, mentorship programs with business professionals, career fairs and job placement services, partnerships for project-based learning and real-world applications, donations and sponsorships for school programs and events, collaborative research and development projects, professional development opportunities for teachers, community service and volunteer projects with local businesses, and the establishment of school-based enterprises and entrepreneurship programs.

Internship and job shadowing opportunities for students

Internship and job shadowing opportunities provide students with hands-on experience and exposure to real-world work environments, enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge and develop practical skills. These experiences allow students to gain insight into specific industries, professions, and companies, and to make informed decisions about their future careers. By participating in internships and job shadowing, students can build professional networks, enhance their employability, and develop a competitive edge in the job market.

In Vietnam, research by Nguyen and Nguyen (2022) found that internship programs significantly enhanced students' career readiness and employability skills, resulting in better job

prospects after graduation. Similarly, Tran et al. (2020) noted that job shadowing experiences helped Vietnamese students explore different career paths and develop a clearer understanding of their chosen professions. In China, numerous organizations provide internship and job shadowing opportunities. For instance, JPMorgan Chase runs its China Seasonal Internship Program, while companies such as Go Abroad China offer paid internships in Fortune 500 companies. These initiatives give students hands-on experience, help sharpen their skills, and, in some cases, allow them to receive credit transfers. In India, Gupta and Gupta (2022) found that internship experiences significantly improved students' skills in communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, while Singh et al. (2020) observed that job shadowing programs in Indian universities provided practical insights that guided students toward more informed career decisions.

The interpretation of these findings shows that Vietnam prioritizes practical experience to strengthen career readiness, China emphasizes experiential learning opportunities through global corporate partnerships, and India focuses on internships and shadowing as tools for skill-building and employability. Collectively, these practices highlight the global recognition of internships and job shadowing as key strategies in preparing students for the demands of professional life.

Guest speakers and industry experts in the classroom

Guest speakers and industry experts provide students with real-world insights that connect classroom learning with industry practice. By sharing their experiences, challenges, and successes, these professionals offer students valuable lessons that can inform their academic growth and career aspirations. Exposure to expert perspectives also helps students expand their professional networks, gain awareness of industry trends, and develop a deeper understanding of their future fields.

In the Philippines, a study conducted by De La Salle University (Gloriosa et al., 2022) found that integrating guest speakers significantly enhanced students' learning experiences and improved their perception of course material relevance to real-world applications. The study emphasized that hearing first-hand accounts of industry experiences and best practices deepened students' understanding of their subjects. In Japan, Suzuki and Hashimoto (2020) surveyed university students and discovered positive correlations between guest lectures and heightened career aspirations. Their research demonstrated that industry experts inspire motivation and increase students' awareness of possible career paths. In Thailand, Chaiyapruk et al. (2022) reported that guest speakers improved students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, largely because they provided authentic, up-to-date knowledge that made learning more applicable.

The analysis reveals that guest speakers in the Philippines enhance relevance and application, Japanese students benefit from career motivation, and Thai students develop essential workplace skills. Taken together, these findings reinforce the importance of integrating industry experts into educational settings as a strategy for bridging theory and practice.

Mentorship programs with business professionals

Mentorship programs create structured opportunities for students or young professionals to engage with experienced leaders who provide guidance, support, and insights. These programs are crucial for developing career readiness, enhancing personal and professional growth, and establishing meaningful mentor-mentee relationships.

In the Philippines, Garcia et al. (2022) found that mentorship enhanced entrepreneurial intentions and practical business skills, including planning, marketing, and financial management. These outcomes suggest that mentorship can play a significant role in cultivating future entrepreneurs and supporting national economic growth. In Myanmar, Aung et al. (2022) highlighted that mentorship programs strengthened leadership confidence, decision-making, and problem-solving skills, thereby nurturing the next generation of business leaders. In Indonesia, Widyanti et al. (2022) found that mentorship programs significantly improved students' job search skills, resume writing, and interview preparation, effectively bridging the gap between education and employment.

The interpretation indicates that while mentorship fosters entrepreneurship in the Philippines, it enhances leadership capacity in Myanmar and supports employability in Indonesia. These outcomes highlight mentorship as a powerful strategy for equipping students and young professionals with skills essential for professional success across different cultural and economic contexts.

Career fairs and job placement services

Career fairs and job placement services serve as platforms where students and graduates can directly connect with employers, explore job opportunities, and develop employability skills. These services often include resume-building workshops, counseling, and networking opportunities that significantly increase graduates' chances of employment.

In the Philippines, Dela Cruz et al. (2022) discovered that students who participated in career fairs and job placement services had higher employment rates and salaries than those who did not, showing their effectiveness in bridging the gap between school and work. In Japan, Tanaka et al. (2022) revealed that participation in these programs improved students' job search self-efficacy and career satisfaction, underscoring their role in building confidence and resilience during career transitions. In China, Wang et al. (2022) found that graduates who engaged with career fairs reported higher placement rates, higher salaries, and increased career satisfaction, proving the strong influence of these initiatives.

The analysis concludes that career fairs and placement services are universally valuable. In the Philippines, they significantly improve graduate employability; in Japan, they enhance career satisfaction and confidence; and in China, they open pathways to higher-paying opportunities.

Partnerships for project-based learning and real-world applications

Partnerships for project-based learning and real-world applications involve collaboration between schools and external organizations to provide students with authentic opportunities to apply academic knowledge to practical challenges. These partnerships prepare students for future

careers, encourage innovation, and build critical skills such as problem-solving, creativity, and teamwork.

In China, Liu et al. (2022) found that partnerships between universities and industries significantly improved learning outcomes and employability skills. Wang et al. (2020) reported that such collaborations also fostered innovation and entrepreneurship, which align with China's broader goals of technological leadership. In Japan, Tanaka et al. (2020) demonstrated that industry-education partnerships promoted collaborative problem-solving and critical thinking, while Yokomizo et al. (2022) highlighted how these collaborations enhanced student motivation and engagement in project-based tasks. In Singapore, Ng et al. (2023) revealed that partnerships encouraged innovation and creativity, while Looi et al. (2020) found that these collaborations significantly boosted career readiness and employability skills.

The analysis shows that Chinese institutions emphasize partnerships as a driver of innovation and entrepreneurship, Japan values their role in building critical thinking and motivation, and Singapore highlights creativity and career preparedness. Together, these findings underscore the transformative role of project-based partnerships in preparing students for dynamic economies.

Donations and sponsorships for school programs and events

Donations and sponsorships from individuals, organizations, and corporations are vital in supporting school programs and events, particularly where budgets are limited. These contributions provide resources for extracurricular activities, educational enhancements, and student development initiatives.

In India, Kumar et al. (2022) revealed that corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives significantly improved access to quality education for underprivileged students. Singh et al. (2020) further noted that online platforms for philanthropic giving had expanded the reach and accessibility of donations. In Malaysia, Abdullah et al. (2020) observed that local business sponsorships supported extracurricular activities and improved student outcomes, while Rahman et al. (2022) reported that donors were motivated largely by social responsibility and the desire to invest in future generations. In South Korea, Kim et al. (2022) found that donations reduced financial barriers for disadvantaged students, and Lee et al. (2020) highlighted the growing importance of CSR in supporting school events and programs.

The interpretation emphasizes that donations in India expand access to quality education, in Malaysia they enhance extracurricular programs and are rooted in social responsibility, and in South Korea they strengthen equity in educational access. These findings collectively stress the importance of managing donations transparently and equitably to maximize educational benefits.

Collaborative research and development projects

Collaborative research and development (R&D) projects are joint efforts between universities, industries, and government agencies to develop new technologies, processes, and innovations. By pooling resources and expertise, these collaborations accelerate technological advancements and foster mutual benefits.

In China, Wang et al. (2022) documented that university-industry collaborations produced innovations in artificial intelligence and renewable energy systems, while Liu et al. (2020) stressed that government funding is critical for early-stage project success. In Japan, Tanaka et al. (2020) noted that partnerships with universities contributed to new technologies such as robotics and autonomous vehicles. Sakamoto et al. (2022) further highlighted the role of government agencies in commercializing research outputs. In South Korea, Kim et al. (2022) found that collaborations resulted in breakthroughs in 5G networks and artificial intelligence systems, while Lee et al. (2020) emphasized that the inclusion of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) facilitated innovation and commercialization.

Analysis reveals that China emphasizes government-backed innovation, Japan focuses on commercialization and technological advancement, and South Korea highlights the role of SMEs in scaling R&D. Across contexts, collaborative R&D projects are shown to be critical engines for national economic growth and technological leadership.

Professional development opportunities for teachers

Professional development equips teachers with updated skills, pedagogy, and knowledge, allowing them to adapt to evolving educational needs. By participating in training, workshops, or continuous programs, teachers enhance their ability to support students and improve learning outcomes.

In the Philippines, Alcantara (2020) demonstrated that professional development improved pedagogical skills and subject knowledge, directly contributing to improved student outcomes. The study emphasized continuous professional development as essential to meeting the demands of 21st-century learners. In Japan, Kihara and Shimizu (2022) showed that lesson study—an approach rooted in collaborative reflection—improved instructional practices and fostered a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement among teachers. In Indonesia, Yusuf and Chabibah (2022) revealed that online professional development during the COVID-19 pandemic enhanced teachers' digital pedagogy, enabling them to design more engaging online learning experiences.

The analysis indicates that Philippine schools highlight training as a tool for addressing learning gaps, Japan emphasizes collaboration through reflective practices, and Indonesia adapts professional development to strengthen digital competence. These differences illustrate the diverse yet essential role of teacher training in raising the quality of education globally.

Community service and volunteer projects with local businesses

Community service and volunteer projects involving local businesses integrate social responsibility with community development. These initiatives address social, economic, and environmental challenges while building civic engagement and partnerships.

In the Philippines, Ordinario (2020) found that corporate volunteer programs not only strengthened the social responsibility of businesses but also fostered stronger community engagement among employees. In Japan, Watanabe and Nakamura (2022) discovered that corporate participation in volunteer programs boosted employee morale, job satisfaction, and corporate reputation, especially when integrated into CSR strategies. In Indonesia, Sari and Wijayanti (2022) reported that small and medium-sized enterprises improved their reputation, customer loyalty, and overall community well-being through community service projects.

The interpretation underscores that in the Philippines, these projects reinforce community sustainability, in Japan they enhance employee morale and reputation, and in Indonesia they strengthen the role of SMEs in local development. Community partnerships in service thus function as both social and economic strategies.

Establishing school-based enterprises and entrepreneurship programs

School-based enterprises and entrepreneurship programs allow students to gain hands-on experience in managing businesses, developing entrepreneurial skills, and applying academic concepts to real-world contexts. These programs cultivate innovation, financial literacy, and leadership among students.

In the Philippines, Caldeo et al. (2022) revealed that school-based enterprises foster financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and a culture of innovation. In Japan, Nakamura and Watanabe (2022) found that entrepreneurship programs significantly increased students' entrepreneurial intentions, risk-taking propensities, and business planning skills. In Indonesia, Wijayanti and Sari (2022) documented that school-based enterprises enhanced entrepreneurial education, improved practical business skills, and promoted a culture of entrepreneurship among students.

The analysis illustrates that these initiatives support Philippine education in fostering innovation, equip Japanese students with entrepreneurial attitudes, and strengthen Indonesian schools' role in entrepreneurship education. Across contexts, school-based enterprises prepare students to thrive in increasingly competitive and entrepreneurial economies.

The findings across all sub-variables reinforce the vital role of collective action and community partnerships in promoting social change and addressing educational and social challenges. Strategic partnerships empower communities by providing pathways for engagement, equity, and development.

Internships, mentorships, and job fairs directly support employability and workforce readiness, while guest speakers, project-based partnerships, and entrepreneurship programs nurture creativity, innovation, and motivation. Donations, volunteer projects, and collaborative R&D contribute resources and innovation to educational systems, while professional development for teachers ensures quality instruction that adapts to evolving needs.

Furthermore, these partnerships address broader social determinants such as education, employment, and equity, while also leveraging technology and social media to connect

communities and foster engagement. By tackling resource imbalances and empowering marginalized groups, strategic community partnerships create more inclusive societies.

Overall, the study concludes that empowering collective action through well-structured partnerships is a powerful mechanism for promoting engagement, addressing social challenges, and achieving positive social change. Policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders can use these findings to design effective strategies that harness partnerships as engines of social transformation and sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, empowering collective action through strategic community partnerships is vital for addressing social challenges and promoting community engagement in the context of Educational Anthropology. This study has explored the concept of strategic community partnerships and their role in addressing social challenges through an Educational Anthropology lens. By employing data mining techniques to investigate the dynamics of community partnerships, this research has highlighted the importance of addressing disparities in community resources, social capital, and civic engagement to promote collective action and community engagement. The findings underscore the significance of targeted partnerships and initiatives that foster collaboration between educational institutions, community organizations, and local stakeholders to enhance collective action and community engagement.

Strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology can play a vital role in shaping community outcomes, promoting social cohesion, and fostering culturally responsive learning environments. Investing in capacity-building programs, community outreach initiatives, and collaborative governance models can enhance collective action and community engagement. Implementing inclusive and equitable community development policies can promote equal opportunities for marginalized groups, contributing to more equitable and just community outcomes. The objectives of this study have been met through examining the concept of strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology, identifying key characteristics, benefits, and challenges, investigating the impact on community engagement and social cohesion, exploring the role of collective action, and outlining the development of a framework for building and sustaining effective strategic community partnerships.

The implications of this research are significant for policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders in Educational Anthropology and related fields. By understanding the dynamics of strategic community partnerships and their role in empowering collective action, stakeholders can develop effective strategies for promoting community engagement, addressing social challenges, and improving social outcomes. This study contributes to the growing body of research on community partnerships and collective action in educational contexts, highlighting the importance of collaboration and cooperation among diverse stakeholders in addressing complex social challenges. In Educational Anthropology, strategic community partnerships can facilitate culturally responsive learning environments that value the perspectives and contributions of community members, enhancing the relevance and impact of education on local needs and challenges.

Furthermore, addressing power imbalances and unequal access to resources in strategic community partnerships is essential for promoting collective action and community engagement.

Leveraging technology and social media can also enhance community engagement and promote collective action in strategic community partnerships. By empowering collective action through strategic community partnerships, communities can take ownership of their development initiatives, leading to more sustainable and equitable outcomes. In the context of Educational Anthropology, this means fostering partnerships that are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to community needs, ultimately contributing to more just and cohesive communities.

In summary, this study has demonstrated the importance of strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology for addressing social challenges through collaboration. By empowering collective action, these partnerships can promote community engagement, social cohesion, and culturally responsive learning environments. The development of a framework for building and sustaining effective strategic community partnerships can guide stakeholders in fostering collaborations that address social challenges and promote community engagement.

Ultimately, strategic community partnerships in Educational Anthropology have the potential to contribute to more equitable, just, and cohesive communities by empowering collective action and promoting collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

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