

Call for Papers: Special Issue of the Rivista Italiana di Psicologia di Comunità

Rethinking Participatory and Transformative Methodologies: New Directions and challenges for Contemporary Community Psychology

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Introduction

Community psychology is a multidisciplinary field characterized by innovative approaches, participatory and transformative research methodologies, and intervention aimed at promoting collective well-being, equity, and social inclusion. These methodologies are grounded in an epistemological paradigm that fosters community empowerment and supports social change processes based on shared, co-constructed knowledge practices. However, their transformative potential is not merely technical and it depends on: the ethical and political conditions under which participatory processes take place; who defines the problem; how benefits and knowledge circulate; and the forms of recognition and redistribution that interventions enable (or restrict). In this context, adopting transformative and innovative tools enables the development of new theoretical knowledge and generates interventions capable of producing meaningful changes in social systems and power relations. Furthermore, these methodologies allow for the timely identification of emerging issues and unprecedented challenges, enabling effective responses to social, cultural, and economic transformations. Their contextual nature makes them essential tools for understanding and addressing the complexities of a constantly changing society, fostering the development of theoretical and practical interventions suited to contemporary needs. This requires an in-depth understanding of the context and close collaboration between different disciplines. Sometimes it involves adopting methods typically rooted in other disciplines (e.g. visual arts, theatre, outdoor activities), which can play a crucial role in fostering meaningful community participation and enriching disciplinary knowledge. From a community psychology perspective, this requires maintaining robust ethical standards regarding participation. This includes recognizing consent as an ongoing process, caring for relationships, preventing potential harm, and promoting epistemic justice, which encourages knowledge exchange and reflexivity regarding power asymmetries among academia, institutions, and communities.

This discussion is particularly relevant in Global South contexts and in territories marked by structural inequalities, coloniality, and historical violence, where participation may become a vehicle for democratising knowledge, or “managed participation”, or a means of knowledge extraction or tokenism - the superficial inclusion of individuals, groups, or communities belonging to minority groups to give the appearance of diversity and inclusion without granting them real power or addressing structural inequalities. For this reason, this Special Issue also seeks contributions that help to unpack the complexities underlying transformative methodologies and their conditions of possibility in diverse contexts.

This Special Issue aims to gather contributions that critically and innovatively explore the potential of innovative and transformative methodologies, emphasising their role in fostering inclusive, resilient, and participatory communities.

Objectives

This Special Issue seeks to explore and discuss transformative and innovative methodologies applied within the field of community psychology. Articles may address research, intervention, and/or training experiences and should highlight the transformative impact of the methodologies employed, both in terms of knowledge development and social change.

Topics of Interest

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Participatory methodologies for the active involvement of communities.
 - Innovative approaches to knowledge co-creation.
 - Digital technologies as useful tools in community psychology.
 - Evaluation of the impact of transformative methodologies.
 - Case studies of experiences that have produced significant change at the community level.
 - Ethical and practical challenges in the use of these methodologies.
 - Theoretical and methodological perspectives on the role of transformative methodologies in addressing current and future social challenges (e.g., climate change, migration flows, emergencies, etc.).
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Types of Contributions Accepted

The following will be considered for publication:

- Theoretical and review articles critically analyzing the use of transformative methodologies;
 - Empirical articles;
 - Case studies documenting significant experiences in the application of transformative methodologies;
 - Methodological contributions presenting new transformative techniques or tools.
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Guidelines for Manuscript Submission

Authors interested in contributing to this Special Issue are invited to submit their manuscripts in accordance with the author guidelines of the *Rivista Italiana di Psicologia di Comunità*. Submissions must be original and not under consideration by other journals. Manuscripts, written in English, must be submitted by May through the journal's online submission system, clearly indicating in the appropriate field that the article is intended for the Special Issue "Transformative Methodologies."

Important Dates

Submission deadline: Extended abstract due by July 30

Submission deadline: Submit the full paper by October 1

Publication of the Special Issue: on December 26
