Circular Economy in Social Practice in Response to Social Needs: Community Actions Versus Government Policy

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Abstract : While traditional social services heavily depended on Government funding and support, there were always time lag, and resources mismatch with the fast growing and changing social needs. This study aims at investigating the effectiveness of implementing Circular Economy concept in a social service setting with comparison to Government Policy in response to social needs in 3 areas: response time, suitability, and community participation. To investigate the effectiveness of implementing Circular Economy concept in a social service setting, a real service model, a community resources sharing platform, was set up and statistics of the first 6 months' operation data were used as comparison with traditional social services. Literature review was conducted as a reference basis of traditional social services under Government Policy. Case studies were conducted to provide the qualitative perspectives of the innovative approach. The results suggest that the Circular Economy model showed extraordinarily high level of community participation. In addition, it could utilize community resources in response precisely to the burning social needs. On the other hand, the available resources were unstable when comparing to those services supported by Government funding. The research team concluded that Circular Economy has high potential in applications in social service, especially in certain areas, such as resources sharing platform. Notwithstanding, it should be aware of the stability of resources when the services targeted to support some crucial needs.
Keywords : circular economy, social innovation, community participation, sharing economy, social response
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