

Social Service Delivery for Alleviation of Poverty

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Part I: Background of Social Issue

Poverty affects a significant number of people around the world. Scholars describe this social issue as a situation where people cannot meet their needs sufficiently due to lack of enough resources. It requires the government's intervention since the people affected often experience various challenges in life, such as reduced well-being and lack of educational attainments (ASPE, 2018). Thus, individuals and the state must find ways of responding to this challenge because by doing so, they can help many children in such families realise their dreams. Historians argue that the American society started to witness several issues in the 1890s that required effective intervention approaches through social services. Such challenges included immigration, lack of jobs, and tension between different races. These developments saw the emergence of the Settlement House Movement, whose aim was to help the community attain education, leisure activities as well as various social services regardless of their races. They aimed at achieving all these goals through robust organisational systems that they believed could help them improve lives (Harris, 2004, et al.).

Previous research estimated the poverty rate in the US at 12.7% in 2016, where about 43.1 million U.S. citizens were living in poverty (U.S. Census, 2017). The U.S. government is currently doing what it can to improve the lives of its people, such as through job creation and by raising of minimum wages. Due to increased poverty rates, the American society has been affected in various ways. The government has however responded to these issues through its various agencies like Child Care assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid and SCHIP. They are responsible for the provision of healthcare, housing and access to education (Van Ryzin, Fishbein & Biglan, 2018).

Part II: Theory and Research Related to Social Issue

Poverty and its related social problems such as unemployment, inability to access quality health care and education, underemployment and inadequate housing, are some of the critical factors that psychodynamic theorists addressed (Harris et al., 2004). The psychodynamic theory maintains that poverty may lead to mental disorders. Other associated problems include criminal activities and drug use. The psychodynamic approach studies the mind and behaviour as well as the factors that influence them. The proponents of this theory can apply it in relational social work, which uses therapy as a tool to promote individual well-being (Bliss & Ramussen, 2013). Research shows that mental illness can sometimes result from urban poverty. Feelings of economic insecurity can contribute to anxiety disorder, psychological disturbance and depression. Usually, criminal activities and drug use are the results of lack of resources for development (Anakwenze & Zuberi, 2013).

Contemporary psychodynamic theory can be used to analyse the work of a social worker who responds to the needs of his or her clients. Such workers apply this theory by embracing ethical values and experience gained from clinical practice, as they use them to guide their decision-making processes. The psychodynamic methods also outline vital factors that entail a close working relationship between social workers and their clients. Learning theory can also be applicable in explaining the relationship between the employment rate and poverty. It is arguable that the poor are often associated with specific jobs in various industries. This kind of situation exists because some tasks depend on worker's cognitive ability. Since the poor are sometimes not able to get a quality education that can prepare them for jobs that require learning and strong mental capacity, they end up accepting jobs low-status jobs (Dang, et al. 2016).

Part III: Best Practices Related to Social Issue

One of the ways through which the U.S. government is responding to the issue is through the Broader Bolder Approach. The basis for this strategy is the argument that

improving school learning can lead to increased development and enhance people's wellbeing (Noguera, 2011). BBA receives its funding from different organisations like Ford and Prudential and seeks to incorporate social services, various measures taken to meet the needs of students, as well as after-school programs, into education strategies to prepare them to achieve their life goals. Additionally, the program also provides access to healthcare for various services such as mental assessments, nutrition, and provision of preventative medication. The BBA also encourages schools to collaborate with service organisations that will see students get access to various services such as counselling and dental examinations.

The second intervention program is the Barnabas Uplift Project (BUP) that aims at helping people become self-sufficient. Some of their activities include job creating and training of professionals in various fields. They train people on building self-esteem and becoming productive members of the society. After successful completion of one's course, they provide job placement in hospitals and various facilities around. Everybody is eligible for the program regardless of their religion or race (Fullwiler & Meyeraan, 2010).

The above two programs are equally effective in responding to the problem of poverty. The training and empowerment that people undertake through these two interventions guarantee personal and economic development. They offer both long-term and short-term solutions to the issue. Various initiatives have been seen in diverse communities to help respond to the most pressing needs of the people, and all these have come out with good results (Hansen-Turton & Mortell, 2014).

Part IV: Human Service Professionals Related to Social Issue

The two well-known human service professionals who are directly involved by people identified as living in poverty include Care Coordinators and Housing Services Coordinators. These professionals work in various organisations like the Union Station Homeless Services and Grandma's House of Hope respectively. The care coordinators provide multiple services

during the process of leasing and ensure that tenants assure them of house retention and one's integration into the community. Moreover, care coordinators also offer clinical services to those who need it. Grandma's House of Hope provides various necessities and empowerment services to everybody identified as living in abject poverty and faces myriad challenges brought about by drug abuse, diseases, and criminal activities. The Housing Coordinator ensures that those who are receiving the organisation's housing services receive the social support they need, which include resources and individual support.

Human Service Workers are equipped with skills that enable them to build close working relationships with their clients. They can listen, identify client's needs, and respond to them. They also have teamwork skills that can enable them to carry out their duties in interconnected teams. They are creative, critical thinkers and compassionate. Most importantly, these professionals are trained to adhere by the regulations and objectives of their organisation so that they can work to achieve the primary purpose of alleviating poverty by providing services and support to the communities with which they work.

Concerning communication, a human service worker is required to possess both written and verbal skills. The Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) is used to assess the communication abilities of such individuals, where one's interpersonal and intergroup relationships are key factors to evaluate (Parcha, 2014, p 230). For cultural competency, these workers are expected to be respectful to everybody, to portray openness and validation to individuals living in poverty. They must acknowledge that people from different socio-economic background may have different viewpoints in life, and learn to respect their perspective as well. They must recognise their needs and challenges and accept to offer support irrespective of one's social status (VanRyzin et al., 2018).

Part V: Model Intervention

The Family Line Model

The proposed Family Line Model is a unique approach to poverty eradication. It will approach the problem of poverty from the family line and aims at preventing poverty from being passed from one generation to the other. It entails first identifying the households that are considered economically underprivileged and then taking them through the program. This process will see the family receiving information on the benefits of maintaining a smaller family, utmost two children. After that, the children shall be incorporated in the intervention program by allied agencies that shall pay their school fees and train them to become responsible members of the family. The training shall also ensure that these children also learn the benefits of having smaller families that they can support once they reach that age. Moreover, the initiative shall aim at educating the clients on wealth creation as opposed to just acquiring skills to ready themselves for the job market. Thus, the Family Line Model shall ensure that poverty is completely wiped out by eliminating factors that perpetuate it.

The theory of sub-culture of poverty, which sees the problem as a stable state of living that is self-perpetuating, shall act as the basis for this Model. It sees poverty as the way of life for some individuals that have accepted it as their social status, which reinforces it in their midst and allows it to pass over to the next generations (Davis, 2014). These individuals are usually at a disadvantage due to their incapacitating thoughts, lack of education and economic ability to realise a greater good. Thus, a model that helps them deconstruct their old negative perceptions and embrace a positive belief system and the attainment of goals would be appropriate in supporting this group. The proposed model is unique because it will aim at addressing poverty from its roots, which include lack of resources for education, improper thinking, and the passing of a family's status to the children.

The model shall target the populations that are affected by the subculture of poverty, as well as those whose low social status is self-inflicted. The term subculture of poverty is

used to refer to impoverished living conditions that perpetuate neediness, such as reduced housing standards, little wages, lack of education and involvement in criminal activities. Children brought up in these conditions have high chances of becoming poor due to their upbringing (Davis, 2014). Thus, the model will aim at uprooting such a sub-culture by training and educating all the children born in these families.

Incorporating Best Practice

The principle of Best-Practice encourages inclusivity and a participatory approach to ending poverty. It requires that every marginalised group participates in the programs aimed at alleviating the problem; that such individuals receive the support they need and that they have the opportunity to lay down structures for their economic development (Sam, 2014). Thus, the proposed model shall ensure that every family that is considered to be living in poverty is represented in the program. It will require that every family offers their children for the training because it will only be interested in school-going children. It will focus on all communities regarded as poor regardless of their race. The participants shall undergo the training, and then they shall be helped to acquire jobs or start their self-employment.

The Delivery Setting

The program shall be delivered through selected high schools in various neighbourhoods across the U.S. The children shall be expected to join these schools just as regular children, but they will be placed under special units where they shall regularly meet with the professionals from the program. The coordinating team shall administer the program in collaboration with various agencies and health organisations that shall be responsible for offering multiple services, like health assessments and treatment, counselling, and provision of basic needs. The program shall receive its funding from donors and various agencies

Program Co-coordinators

The program co-coordinators shall be directly involved in managing the program. They shall work in an equal capacity as they report to the board of directors. They will be responsible for connecting the program with the outside funders, agencies, organisations, and well-wishers. They shall ensure that every activity is undertaken as successfully as possible, that every child gets access to the services they need, and that the program's training and education are administered to them until they complete and proceed to the next levels. For one to qualify for these posts, they must have trained in social work or provision of social services to the community, as well as five-year experience in the same.

Components of a Successful Health and Human Service Delivery

The components include a collaborative culture, Family-centered-approach, Cultural and linguistic competence, and Strength-Based Strategies (ecmhc.org, 2018).

Collaboration

Collaboration ensures a strong relationship between consultants and their clients. It will be used to strengthen the relationship between these two groups, as well as to ensure understanding and coordination of activities

Family-centered

Families will be engaged in the consultation process as well as in the delivery of services since all the information about the children can only be obtained from the parents.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence

Since the program shall target diverse communities, cultural and linguistic competence shall ensure positive relationships and delivery of services without any barriers or biasness.

Strength-Based

The strength-based approach to service delivery shall help the children acquire different skills and abilities that will enable them to become socially competent individuals.

Use of Technology

The program shall liaise with major technology companies that shall provide the hardware and software needed for training so that learners can acquire technical skills through the initiative. Experienced IT tutors shall then be employed to train the children in various technological areas of their choice. Computers will also be used during presentations where the training will be administered through PowerPoint presentation. Learners will also interact with the coordinators, their counsellors, and health attendants through an interactive online platform that will enable them to reach out to these people with ease.

Strengths and Limitations

The perceived advantage of this program is its ability to educate and train up children from high school through to university and do a follow up on them later after their successful completion of training. By this, it ensures that its efforts are effective in ensuring that children brought up in needy families do not inherit family poverty and pass it over again. The limitation of this Model is that it only targets a specific category of individuals, which are children, thereby failing to involve the elderly and the younger adults directly in the intervention.

Evaluation Criteria

The program coordinators shall be required to keep in touch with the beneficiaries of the program and conduct a follow-up study to determine the effectiveness of this intervention. This shall ensure that every individual who completes his or her training carries on successfully with life, in his/her job or business.

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