Poverty and Its Sequential Measurements - A Review

Abstract: Poverty is an undesirable and intolerable state of affairs which is considered as a social, economic, political or psychological problem. The word suggests that individuals or groups who are in poverty have to be helped to change their conditions. The eradication of this poverty problem has now become the primary focus of the socio-economic development polices of developing world governments. There is therefore the need to have a clue to identify the poor, tools to measure the depth of their poverty which will then assist policy makers to assess their policy impact.

Keywords: Poverty, Measurement, Well-being, Socio-Economic Development Policies.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is about not having enough to meet basic needs (UNESCO, 2014). Most of the poor are seen in the developing countries including Nigeria where about 82% of the population lives in abject poverty (Milli et al., 2017). The World Health Organization (2014) stated that poverty creates ill-health because it forces people to live in filthy environments. Malnourished situation is responsible for millions of deaths annually in low and middle-income countries, not only directly but also in combination with or as a result of multiple infections (Bourke and Berkley, 2016). Due to poverty, childcare becomes complicated as parents have inadequate resources to take care of their children’s pressing needs (Islam et al., 2013).

Poverty is a disease that takes people’s energy, de-humanises them and creates a sense of helplessness and is frequently associated with deteriorating environments (Rodríguez et al., 2011). Poverty further leads to inadequate food intake in children resulting in malnutrition. Some children under five years suffer from malnutrition evidenced by stunted growth. The effects of poverty are most often interrelated, for example, poor sanitation makes it easier to spread around old and new diseases, and hunger and lack of water make people more vulnerable to them (Kapungwe, 2005). Impoverished communities often suffer from discrimination and end up being caught in cycles of poverty.

When one family experiences ancestral poverty, it is no surprise they are under-achieving by societal standards. Lack of educational opportunities, joblessness, and undiagnosed mental illness are few issues faced by families living in poverty. This reiterates that disadvantage is passed through generations (Mulford et al., 2008).

Measuring poverty in rich nations involves comparing some index of household well-being or economic resources with household needs. When command over economic resources falls short of needs, a household (person or family) is classified as poor. Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2003) revealed that parents who moved to low-poverty neighborhoods reported significantly less distress than parents who remained in high-poverty neighborhoods. With less stressful living conditions, one is able to think more clearly and has time to plan (Wasonga, 2005).

Students can easily be exposed to some type of abuse, whether it is physical, verbal, or sexual. These forms of abuse can also occur at school, leaving a student in a discouraged situation. The superior counselors and other mental health practitioners in impoverished communities affect their quality of work (Yanagisawa, 2011). This affects the students who need the expertise but are unable to receive quality care because they cannot afford better services. Emphasis should be made on correcting individuals by addressing part of the problem (Uwalaka and Ahaotu, 2013).
Students living in these communities suffer from the same things that affect their parents. Much of their free time, including holidays, may be devoted to working to help support the household or spent abusing drugs and alcohol as an escape from the pressures in their lives. This reality leaves very little room for interest in summer enrichment programs.

Other risks and dangers often associated with poverty are the high rates of drug and alcohol abuse. Sharma (2008) indicated that impoverished households are predisposed to have at least one type of substance abuse. Alcoholism is a gateway to increasingly neglectful parenting as well as physical abuse. As growing children observe these at homes, they are more likely to repeat the behavior (Englund et al., 2008). Often times, alcohol abuse is observed synonymously with physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse (Englund et al., 2008).

Research showed that the stress of low socio-economic status can lead to adolescent psychological problems, the likes of which include anxiety, depression and behavioral issues (Wadsworth, 2008). Moreover, students coping with poverty face deep humiliation and embarrassment when their appearance, clothing and personal hygiene, are not the same as their colleagues (Beege, 2003). Side effects of these psychological damages are extremely low. This can lead to frustration, danger and insecurity when it comes to the educational setting, which can then lead to unruly behaviours.

CONCLUSION

Poverty causes diseases, which in turn breeds poverty. A healthy person secures his well-being, and that of his family. The causes of poverty are complex; its reduction still needs to be given priority. Among them are social insurance programmes, improved education, cancelling debts developing nations owe to them are social insurance programmes, improved education, cancelling debts developing nations owe to

REFERENCES