



THE INFLUENCE OF FUNDING ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY IN THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

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Abstract

The author conducted a study to identify the influence of funding on the accessibility of social services in informal settlements, specifically, a case of children living with disabilities in the Kasarani sub-county, Kenya. The target population included caregivers of children with disabilities, stakeholders working with children with disabilities, funding agencies targeting children with disabilities, and community-based organizations working with children with disabilities in the informal settlement area. The target sample size of 200 was selected from a population of 2,000 individuals and data was collected using a questionnaire. The study applied data coding and analysis performed through SPSS and utilized descriptive and regression analysis to evaluate the data collected. The data findings were summarized using tables, figures, and the regression model. The study findings indicate that there is a significant relationship between funding and accessibility to social services for children with disabilities in Kasarani Sub County, Kenya. Based on the study findings, this author recommends that more accessible home care be established in the informal settlements in the country to help children with disabilities. Additionally, results support the need for the government, through policy intervention, to review the funding of homecare programs by fully extending the support to all local community organizations in informal settlements.

Key Words: Influence of funding, accessibility of social services, Children with Disability, and Informal settlements

1 Introduction

The World Bank estimates that twenty percent (20%) of the world's poorest people have some kind of disability and tend to be regarded in their own communities as the most disadvantaged. In Africa the number of people living with a disability is increasing due to increased violence, HIV/AIDS, poverty indexes, Malnutrition, and environmental degradation. In developing countries like Kenya, it is approximated that ninety-eight percent (98%) of children with physical and intellectual disabilities are not enrolled in school and that less than ten percent (10%) of all children with disabilities do not attend school (Nair, 2010). In the year 2006, the World Health Organization estimated that a hundred and fifty (150) million children aged fifteen (15) years and below had a disability and that only a partly three percent (3%) of these children were enrolled in special need education in developing countries.

Nairobi Integrated Program (NIP), a program addressing the challenges of both people with and without disabilities has been assisting such children since its inception in 1998 through support from Child Fund Kenya. The program has been providing rehabilitation (occupational and physiotherapy) services to these children to facilitate their chances of getting enrolled. Rehabilitation plays a key role in early intervention and mobilization of limbs that are later trained in school activities like scribbling to prepare the child for schoolwork. To date, the program has been able to fully rehabilitate over three hundred (300) children with various types of disability such as cerebral palsy, spinal bifida, and delayed milestones secondary to rickets among many. Access to special education is not the only challenge faced by children with disabilities to lead an independent and dignified life but also gainful employment after graduating from special schools.

Statement of the problem

It is projected according to the World Health Organization (WHO); the disability affects 10% of every population. An anticipated 650 million

people worldwide, of whom 200 million are children, experience some form of disability. Disability affects hundreds of millions of families in developing countries. According to Kenya National Disability Survey 2008, five (5%) percent of the Kenyan population have one or other forms of disability. The survey unveiled that person with a disability access to infrastructure and services such as health, education, and economic assistance (social support) is a big challenge. Regarding access to rehabilitation services and assistive aids, the findings revealed that most people with disability have problems accessing these needed services and aids respectively. Indeed, only thirty-two (32%) percent of those surveyed were using assistive aid.

The survey further revealed that children with disability in the County did not receive the same treatment as their counterparts without disability. The survey revealed that there is only one organization that works for the well-being of children with special needs in the County (NIP Outcome Survey, 2013). In addition, the survey indicated that the County lacked a special unit for children with Physical and Mental impairments in both public primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, the existing special unit in the neighboring Sub counties charges exorbitant fees which were not affordable to caregivers of these children owing to their poor economic status. Furthermore, the survey revealed that children with special needs suffered neglect due to the economic status of the household they came from (NIP Outcome Survey 2013). The success factors and success criteria played a pivotal role in defining the road of this research problem under study. To get to that point the study employed some social development theories.

Research Objective

To determine the influence of funding on the accessibility of social services for Children with disability accessibility in informal settlements in Kasarani Sub-County.

Theoretical Framework/Literature Review

This study was informed by two theories, Social Theory and conflict theory propounded by Albert Bandura and Karl Marx respectively as expanded below.

Social learning theory by A. Bandura

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) posits that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. Social learning theory suggests that human behavior is learned as individuals interact with their environment. Problem behavior is maintained by positive or negative reinforcement. Learning theory explains behavior based on what organisms have learned from the environment. Methods that stem from this theory are the gradual shaping of new behavior through positive and negative reinforcement, modeling, stress management: biofeedback, relaxation techniques, cognitive restructuring, imagery, and systematic desensitization. Cognitive behavioral therapy looks at what role thoughts play in maintaining the problem. Emphasis is on changing dysfunctional thoughts which influence behavior.

Conflict Theory by Karl Marx

This theory draws attention to conflict, dominance, and oppression in social life. Groups and individuals try to advance their own interests over the interests of others. Power is unequally divided, and some social groups

dominate others. Social order is based on the manipulation and control of non-dominant groups by dominant groups. Social change is driven by conflict, and thus lack of open conflict is a sign of exploitation with periods of change interrupting long periods of stability. It is important to note that social workers use this theory to understand clients who are experiencing oppression in some form or another in our capitalist society.

Influence of Funding on Accessibility to social services for Children with Disabilities

Funding and delivery of social services are increasingly under pressure. One theory is that charities alleviate this pressure by delivering supplementary services (Weisbrod, 1988), and seeking public donations to augment fees for services when the market and state fail to meet beneficiaries' needs. Alternatively, charities may deliver, or partner with the government to deliver complementary services (Salamon, 1987). The question of how citizens' welfare is funded is a structural one that is contextually and historically informed and against which policy choices can be analyzed.

The establishment of a welfare state is an expression of a country's norms, values, and social goals (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Therefore, the funding of welfare is a normative issue that not only asks what the state should do, but also what it can do. In analyzing these issues in the US context, Weisbrod (1988) posits a strong state, while Salamon (1987) argues for state-charity partnerships. As potential users cannot be excluded from using public goods (Falk, 1992), the government typically provides such goods, because for-profit firms cannot charge sufficient fees for services to assist them in meeting their objectives. Charities also fund (and provide) services that may be supplementary responses to state failure (Weisbrod, 1988), or alternatively, work in partnership with the government to provide social services which are complementary (Salamon, 1987). Notwithstanding tax policy implications, the relationship between the state and charitable sectors is complex. Abramson et al. (2006) note that government and charitable funding relationships for the delivery of social services have been both supplementary and complementary.

It is common to find in most informal settlements not just in Kasarani Sub-County but also in other areas that the government relies on other charitable organizations to curb the gaps in social delivery by organizing and bringing together key players. The history of the relationship between public and private funding of social services has been long and complex, as well as important (Tennant, 2007). As this funding is typically by government grants, charities were able to pursue their own aims with the benefit of private and public funding (O'Brien, Sanders, & Tennant, 2009) utilizing their good relationship with the government both to obtain funds for themselves and to spur the government to action on beneficiaries' behalf.

Government funds local establishments through devolution. According to Dacks (1990), devolution means the transfer of powers from a higher or central order of government to a regional or local order of government. It occurs when a regional or a local government formally receives either broad powers over a specific territory or more limited powers over a specific jurisdiction. He describes devolution as a type of administrative decentralization. In this case, the governments devolve functions; they transfer powers for decision-making, finance, and management to independent units of local government with corporate status.

Devolution transfers responsibility for services provided to municipalities that elect their own leaders. The author notes that the concept of devolution has its basis in precepts of democracy and self-determination. The first principle is pegged on the premise that large governments cannot make suitable policies or provide effective services to distant communities with special climates, geographical, economic systems, and cultures. He asserts that only governments closer to the people can make and supply better services. The principle of self-determination holds that culturally and regionally distinct communities must have a degree of control over those economic, political, and social institutions that impact their way of living.

2 Research Methods

The researcher used a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive design is used to obtain information concerning the status of the phenomena to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation, it allows the researcher to describe record, analyze and report conditions that exist or existed Kothari (2005). It is aimed at finding out "what is," so observational and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data (Borg and Gall, 1989, Kothari, 2005). It is mainly conducted when the researcher wants to gain a deeper understanding of a topic. It involves gathering data that describe events and then organizing, tabulating, depicting, and describing the data collected (Glass and Hopkins, 1984).

The researcher used quantitative research which was used to check on the accessibility of social services in the informal settlement areas. Descriptive data were collected and categorized in the field using questionnaires. The major purpose of descriptive research design is the description of the current situation as it exists at present (Kothari, 1999). Conclusions were drawn as the study progresses. The study also reviewed both primary data obtained through questionnaires, individual and key informant interviews, and secondary data referenced from journals, baseline/assessment research and strategy reports by different agencies, text and electronic books, and other related materials.

3. Results

Response Rate

The study targeted a sample size of 200 respondents from which 157 responded which constituted 78.5%. This response rate was satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. The response rate was representative. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. Based on the assertion, the response rate was excellent.

Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

This section analyzes the demographic information of the individual respondents and their respective agencies. The aim of doing this was to enhance understanding of the background information of the respondents and their personal ability to provide relevant data sought for this study.

Gender distribution

The study sought to find out the gender of the respondents. From the findings, 68% of the respondents were female while only 32% of the respondents were male. This implies that most of the respondents were female.

Age of the Respondents

The researcher also sought to determine the age bracket that the respondents fell in. This was illustrated in the table below:

Years of experience

On respondent's age category, the study revealed that most of the respondents as shown by 35.67% were aged between 18 to 35 years, 27.39% of the respondents were aged between 36 to 49 years and 23.57% were over 50 years whereas only 13.38% of the respondents were below 18 years. This implies that respondents were well distributed in terms of their age.

Level of Education

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of education. This was demonstrated in the figure below.

According to the findings, most (55.4%) of the respondents indicated tertiary as their highest level of education, 34.4% indicated secondary 6.4% held primary certificates, and 3.8% never enrolled in school. These findings imply that most of the respondents were academically qualified and therefore familiar with their duties.

The researcher sought to determine the years of experience of the respondents as shown in the table below.

From the findings majority (29.3%) of the respondents indicated that they had worked as caregivers and stakeholders of children with disabilities for 5 to 10 years, 28% had worked for 10-15 years while 22.3% and 20.4% had worked for over 15 years and 1 to 5 years respectively. Productivity in jobs is dependent on knowledge that is acquired prior to entry to the labor market or early in the career. This implies that most of the respondents of this study had worked for an ample time thus they were conversant with the information that the study sought pertaining to their organization. The funding influences the accessibility of social services for Children with disability.

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which funding influences the accessibility of social services for children with disability accessibility in Kasarani Sub County. The majority (52.2%) indicated that funding influence accessibility of social services for children with disability to a great extent, whereas only 1.9 % said it affects them to a low extent. The table below shows the results.

Responses

From the finding, the majority agreed with the above statements that charities partner with the government to deliver complementary services as shown by a mean of 3.7, funding of welfare is a normative issue as shown by a mean of 3.97, potential users cannot be excluded from using public goods as shown by mean of 3.87 and charities fund services that may be supplementary responses to state failure which is shown by a mean of 4.17. All the above cases were supported by a low standard mean of deviation which implies that respondents were of similar opinions.

Regression Analysis

A multiple regression model was applied to identify the factors influencing the accessibility of social services in informal settlements. The study adopted the following regression equation to establish the relationship between variables $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + e$; where Y = accessibility to Social Services in the informal settlement, a = the constant of regression, b_1 , b_2 , b_3 , and b_4 = are the regression coefficients/weights of the following respective independent variables; X_1 = Stakeholder's participation, X_2 = Funding Agencies, X_3 = Capacity of caregivers and X_4 = Other Local Com-

munity Based Organizations. All four independent variables were measured using the responses on each of the variables obtained from the respondents. The results are shown in the Table below.

Regression Coefficients

- a) Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder’s participation, Funding Agencies, Capacity of caregivers, and Other Local Community Based Organizations.
- b) Dependent Variable: Accessibility to Social Services in the informal settlement.

The established regression equation was:

$$Y = 0.889 + 0.555X_1 + 0.187X_2 + 0.231X_3 + 0.117X_4$$

The regression equation above has established that holding all factors (Stakeholder’s participation, Funding Agencies, Capacity of caregivers, and Other Local Community Based Organizations) constant, other factors influencing the accessibility of social services in informal settlements will be 0.889. The findings also show that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in funding agencies will lead to a 0.187 increase in the accessibility of Social Services in the informal settlement. The study also established a significant relationship between the accessibility of Social Services in the informal settlement and Funding Agencies (p=0.000<0.05).

Regression Model Summary

- a) Predictors: (Constant), Funding Agencies,
- b) Dependent Variable: Accessibility to Social Services in the informal settlement.

The study used the R square. The R Square is called the coefficient of determination and tells us how the accessibility to Social Services in the informal settlement varied with Stakeholder participation, Funding Agencies, Capacity of caregivers, and Other Local Community Based Organizations. The four independent variables that were studied explain 74.5% of the factors influencing the accessibility of social services in informal settlements as represented by R Squared (Coefficient of determinant). This, therefore, means that other factors not studied in this research contribute 25.5% of the factors affecting the accessibility of Social Services in the informal settlement. The results of this study concur with those (Clark, 1999) who found that the Capacity of caregivers plays a significant role in improving the accessibility of Social Services in an informal settlement.

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