

The Contribution of Community Centers in the Elimination of Socio-Economic Problems of Family

D. Bachyncova Giertliova (Daniela Bachyncova Giertliova)¹

¹ Health and Social Work of St. Elizabeth, Bratislava, Slovakia.

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E-mail address:

giertliovadaniela@gmail.com

Reprint address:

Daniela Bachyncova Giertliova
St. Elizabeth University of Health and Social Sciences
Bratislava
Slovakia

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Andrea Shahum
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, USA
Pawel S. Czarnecki
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Abstract:

Community Centers have for marginalized groups, their integration into society, and elimination of socioeconomic problems its justification. Community Centers are implemented as an institutional facility that provides: primary programs; responsive lectures; discussions aimed at preventing socio-pathological phenomena. Prevention is focused on all target groups and all ages. This is a task that is accomplished through direct contact with specific people in a community who find themselves in an unfavorable social situation. And, right, the center is a place for them where they can turn to people who will try to help them so that they can help themselves. At the same time, the Center is the place of active work for Roma who help people who need this help and also presentation of individual activities of the Center for Majority, to Majority on Minority is very important.

Introduction

Current problems of many families living in our country require more comprehensive and more systematic approaches. Approaches which offer community work through the implementation of Community Centers within the context of § 24d Z. z. Social Services Act. Community Centers are mainly created thanks to the support of the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, and the Ministry of the Interior. Community Centers offer various programs responsive to current socio-economic problems and community needs. It is a sort of challenge for the need for resolving marginalized Roma communities. However, it must also be pointed out that the justification for Community Centers is also in a broader context and also in sites of marginalization. The reasons are mainly lifestyle, urbanization, working pace, as well as some social isolation of certain populations.

To eliminate socio-economic problems in communities, Community Centers and projects implemented with youth to avoid unwanted forms of behavior is significantly contributed. It is primarily on unorganized youth projects providing leisure activities in low-threshold centers and clubs. The low-threshold program for children and adolescents can be an important activity in solving socioeconomic problems but also in solving social delinquency. Especially at work that uses specific programs, these practices focus on specific socio-pathological phenomena and seek to minimize the negative effects and risks of these phenomena.(1)

The Community Center cooperates with local governments and off-road social workers. Together, they participate in the goal to make a poor social situation of people - social isolation - resolved and transformed into social inclusion. The aim of the Community Center is to help clients break the earlier circle of social exclusion, limit possible ways of failure and help them to start living with a positive direction (4).

In Slovakia, the Community Center is a social service for crisis intervention enshrined in Act 448/2008 on Social Services with clearly and relatively strictly stated content, target groups and more implicit objectives.

The disadvantage of the formulated definition of Community Center is less space to support and building the internal potential of communities,

through the detection of their needs and in particular, participation in the creation, decision on the objectives of the Community Center and fulfill the form of concrete activities. Although in community work, a generally accepted access from bottom - up is declared in key documents for Community Centers (Community Center standards, Methodology for Community Centers) these must be linked to the applicable legislation setting out the "boundaries" within which the Community Center can operate.(2).

Another problem that Community Centers face on a daily basis in practice is insufficiently processed community social work, which everyone explains in their own way. Thus, also within the management organizations - donors, various clashes arise, which fundamentally change community work and often have a conflict with current legislation. Despite these problems, we want to map the contribution of Community Centers in eliminating the socio-economic problems of families. Within the main goal, we have set partial goals, which are:

- find out what socio-economic problems most often occur with clients of the Community Center,
- find out which social service clients of the Community Center most often use
- find out which target group most often visits the Community Center,
- find out what methods of work community workers use,
- find out what activities aimed at preventing socio-economic problems are implemented in the Community Center.

We chose employees of Community Centers as a research sample. Using the questionnaire method, we sent out 150 questionnaires via the Internet aimed at ascertaining the opinions of the participants on the justification of Community Centers in eliminating socio-economic problems.

Our research sample consisted of erudite experts (professional guarantors, professionals of Community Centers and employees of Community Centers) of various ages with different lengths of professional experience in the field of social work.

The vast majority of participants had experience in community work for more than 5 years (the practice was mostly implemented through national projects). As part of the first research

goal, we found with what social problems clients most often turn to the Community Center. Clients' problems are broad-based: 26% of Community Center workers said it was unemployment and a problem in finding a job, where clients need assistance in writing resumes, job applications, finding vacancies or communicating with a potential employer. 23% of participants stated that clients turn to the Community Center with financial problems, where clients are provided with financial advice, advice to increase financial literacy, assistance in communicating with the executor, etc. 19% of Community Center staff said clients turn to a Community Center when they have health problems. Here, community workers provide interventions when ordering for professional examinations and mediate communication with doctors. Alternatively, they address the neglect of vaccination in children and dissemination of awareness in the field of health and hygiene. Subsequently, we found: that clients have problems with housing (27% of employees), and 5% other problems. We can see from the results of the research, that clients turn to the Community Center with various problems that they cannot handle on their own and require professional intervention.

Participants stated that in deprived regions, the social and economic problems of citizens are among the most serious social problems. Unemployment is linked to economic problems, so helping the unemployed is one of the most useful concrete help a Community Center can provide. Participants stated that they provide clients with: advice on finding a job; organize various discussions with potential employers; carry out various activities to support the development of job skills; social, legal and health counseling; search for new jobs; consultation and preparation of the long-term unemployed to get a new job.

Community staff explain to clients the benefits of employment, alert clients to compliance with rules and behavior at work, and maintain contact with the employer. Community Center employees regularly communicate with employers about how the client behaves at work and what shortcomings need to be remedied. Participants also stated that daily work with the target group in the Community Center is: very demanding; requires patience; tenacity; perseverance; empathy; communication skills; time spent in the

field in all weathers. They often communicate directly with law enforcement authorities. Clients are provided with assistance with repayment calendars so that clients can gradually get rid of debts.

Providing social counseling is based on the needs of clients. Participants stated that they approach each client individually and provide advice that is diverse. In this open-ended question, participants had the opportunity to answer at their own discretion. Participants stated that in deprived regions, the social and economic problems of citizens are among the most serious social problems.

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Community workers explain to clients the benefits of employment, alert clients to compliance with rules and behavior at work, and maintain contact with the employer. Community Center employees regularly communicate with employers about how the client behaves at work and what shortcomings need to be remedied. Participants stated that all interventions provided to clients in case of economic problems are in agreement with the client. The client himself is looking for ways to solve the problem. They often communicate directly with law enforcement authorities. Clients are provided with assistance with repayment calendars so that clients can gradually get rid of debts.

Providing social counseling is based on the needs of clients. Participants stated that they approach each client individually and provide advice that is diverse. The Community Center, as an institutional facility, primarily provides primary programs responding to the current pressing issues and needs of the local community.

We asked the participants what methods and techniques of community work are more implemented by them. 40% of respondents stated that they provide individual help and support, social

counseling, individual mentoring and tutoring and others; 29% that they support the development of groups; motivational discussions for young people; skills training for the unemployed; 31% that there are methods for community support and development, networking, awareness activities. Community Centers carry out their activities in a diverse environment.

In another research question, we asked the participants in what form they provide more interventions, social counseling to clients of the community center. 68% of respondents stated that they provide clients with outpatient professional assistance in the Community Center; 32%

of more respondents provide assistance in their natural environment in the field. They found which activities implemented in the Community Center clients prefer the most. 61% of participants stated that they are sports and cultural activities; 26% stated that clients prefer educational activities; 13% hobby activities; 16% educational activities such as lectures or discussions on the topic.

The mission of the Community Center is to provide comprehensive social and community services and through these services to contribute to the social integration of socially excluded groups at the local and individual level. Community Centers provide their clients with: social counseling; assistance in exercising rights and legally protected interests, assistance in preparing for school attendance and school teaching and accompanying a child to and from a school facility, preventive activity, leisure activities. In the research, we found that the clients of the Community Center most often use the social counseling service provided to them in the community center, as well as crisis intervention. 68% of the surveyed respondents stated that they provide clients with outpatient professional assistance in the Community Center. Clients also prefer hobby activities that are carried out in Community Centers, especially sports and cultural activities.

In the research, we found that clients most often turn to the Community Center with problems with housing, employment and financial problems. Participants stated that in the Community Center, interventions are provided to clients on the basis of agreement with the client and they themselves actively participate in solving their problem.

Participants in the research stated that the most common socio-pathological phenomenon among clients is unemployment and related poverty, homelessness and alcoholism among clients. 36% of participants in the research observed socio-economic problems in socially excluded groups.

As we found in the research, the Community Center is visited by various target groups. However, 46% stated that it is the most frequently marginalized group of the population. We found that clients also visit the Community Center during the COVID 19 pandemic under strict hygiene measures. Community Center staff spread awareness in Roma communities about preventive measures. The research showed that clients ask for individual help and support, social counseling, individual mentoring and tutoring and more.

37% of participants in the research stated that clients most often require the provision of social counseling when solving their social problems. The purpose of social counseling is: to reduce the risks caused by social exclusion; conflicting social conditions; lifestyles and at the same time improve the social skills and social mobility of clients; support social integration of clients families and communities; prevent; mitigate; eliminate negative effects of socio-economic problems. The purpose of social counseling is: to reduce the risks caused by social exclusion; conflicting social conditions; lifestyles; and at the same time improve the social skills and social mobility of clients; support social integration of clients, families and communities, prevent, mitigate and eliminate negative effects of socio-economic problems.

Participants stated that the organization of discussions with experts and thematic workshops significantly contributes to the elimination of socio-pathological phenomena. Short-term and long-term activities are aimed at children and young people in order to prevent social pathology and dangerous behavior.

Behavior

In the research, we found that activities in the Community Center are more implemented to reduce the incidence of socio-pathological phenomena and risk behavior in children and adolescents. 61% of participants stated that they use sports and cultural activities. The purpose of pre-

vention and activation activities is to prevent adverse situations and to support the social integration of children, young people and adults through incentives, education, activation and voluntary services.

The Community Center can be implemented through the following activities and programs.

In our research, we found that in addition to personal work with clients and the provision of social counseling, the Community Center also provides clients with space and wider self-realization, leisure activities and education. The research showed that the staff of Community Centers actively work with children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds with preschool children. With children, they implement programs on various topics such as oral hygiene; bullying; decency; human trafficking; prevention of abuse on the Internet; preparation for parenthood; addiction; AIDS; and many other topics.

They organize regular meetings for seniors, always on a different topic. The activity of a social worker also focuses on research showed that the staff of Community Centers actively work with children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds with preschool children. The prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in children and adolescents. For children and youth, there are regular leisure activities and circles with different focus - sports, culture, art, education.

In her research, Citterbergová investigated the occurrence of educational activities in the Community Center. The aim of the research tasks was to find what specific educational activities are carried out in Community Centers for Roma children; to find the frequency of individual activities. Through the research, the author found that the most common is the preparation for teaching, then the circle activity, followed by leisure activities and preventive programs. The aim is to motivate children to go to school regularly to prepare honestly for school. Social and educational workers try to highlight the value of education for Roma children, as most of their parents have an opposing view of education. We found in the research that community workers in the Community Center are dedicated to children and youth, preschool children are reserved in the morning and are preparing to enter school. Leisure activities and clubs are provided for children. All circles, discussions and lectures for chil-

dren are held in order to prevent socio-pathological phenomena.

In our research, we found that the most common group visiting a Community Center is the marginalized Roma community. Field research also confirms that communication and cooperation with Roma families is mainly developed through national projects funded by the European Union, which are related to field social work and Community Centers. A similar approach seems to be applied in national projects focused on community work and client-oriented field social work. According to Rosinský, Matulayová and Rusnáková (2015), the evaluation of the National Project of Community Centers brought findings that the most frequently implemented activities were educational activities for children and youth which the employees of the Center consider to be the most important output of the project. Community workers and other professionals working with Roma families need: continuous professional development including training to break down prejudices; to better understand the historical; linguistic; cultural and social environment; and the initial situation of Roma communities.

Insufficient understanding and communication between Roma and non-Roma living in the same community, who have different cultural and social backgrounds, often leads to stereotypical views as to why Roma families do not participate in community or community activities or services. In our research, we found that 93% of participants receive regular training for professional growth. The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities is an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic, which in accordance with the statute has competence to perform tasks aimed at resolving Roma community issues, implementing systemic measures to improve the position of Roma communities and their integration into society.

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