Poverty And Healthcare In Developing Countries

Poverty is a situation whereby an individual or a family lacks the financial capability to afford the necessity of living. One of the major factors used to identify developing countries is the level of poverty of an average individual or family in the country. In developing countries, the poor have more difficulty affording or receiving good healthcare. This because they do not have the financial resources that qualify them for good health care. “Poverty is a major cause of ill health and a barrier to accessing health care when needed. This relationship is financial: the poor cannot afford to purchase those things that are needed for good health, including enough quantities of quality food and health care” (World Bank, 2014, para. 1). Due to the lack of good healthcare, the poor suffer from bad health and high mortality rate. They are also prone to more sicknesses and diseases. Poverty exists when people lack the means to satisfy their basic needs. Reproductive ill health is both a cause and consequence of poverty. Poverty is also a significant cause of maternal mortality, as it prevents many women from getting proper and adequate medical attention due to their inability to afford good antenatal care. (Lanre-Abass, 2008, p. 1).

This paper is aimed at explaining the relationship between poverty and health care, illustrating the challenges that healthcare system faces in developing countries and, discussing the effect of poverty and healthcare on a country’s economy. The questions I intend to answer with this paper is the reasons for the inadequate healthcare system and the possible solutions ahead for developing countries.

Relationship Between Poverty and Healthcare

Roberts (2018) in Key facts: poverty and health says that poverty and ill health are closely related across different countries. The triggers of inadequate health for millions of citizens nationwide are embedded in cultural, social and economic injustices. Poverty is a cause and a result of bad health. Poverty raises the risk of ill health. Bad wellness, in effect, is leaving populations in deprivation. Poverty creates ill-health because it forces people to live in an unfit environment, without decent shelter, clean water, or adequate sanitation.

All over the world, healthcare is seen as an expensive expense. Due to the monetary expense of health care, the poor cannot afford adequate healthcare services. This resulting in a lack of proper healthcare for the poor. Health, at the individual level, is mainly influenced by a variety of factors such as unobservable biological determinants, lifestyle choices (also referred to as health-related behaviors), nonmedical purchased inputs, purchased medical inputs (health care), and various socio-economic factors. (Awiti, 2014). In order to have a good health, one needs to eat healthy, eat balanced diet, take vitamins, etc. People living in poverty can barely afford a health meal talk less of a meal that has a balanced diet.

Poverty exists when people lack the means to satisfy their basic needs. These may be defined narrowly as 'those needs necessary for survival' or broadly as 'those needs reflecting the prevailing standard of living in the community' (Akpomuvie, 2010). According to WHO (2010), approximately 1.2 billion people in the world live in extreme poverty (less than one dollar per day). 65% of people living in poverty are from developing countries.

Challenges Healthcare system Faces in Developing Countries

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The healthcare system is proportional to the nation's economy. The inadequate public healthcare systems will result in instability of the economy of a country and all human beings have a right o proper healthcare. Since health is an important component of human capital, good health can substantially increase the capabilities of individuals to perform various activities, including income-generating ones (Awiti, 2014), One of the major challenges that healthcare system feces is the issue of corruption. Mackey and Bryan (2012) said that corruption can drain resources from already impoverished and fragile health systems, precluding access to life-saving treatment for vulnerable patient populations. They also mentioned that surveys reporting that 80% of individuals in developing countries have experienced health sector corruption, these resource-poor populations are disproportionately impacted. Another challenge that the healthcare system faces is the unskilled professionals due to migration of skilled professionals. Pang, Lansang, and Haines (2002) have shown that in Africa alone, where health needs and problems are greatest, around 23 000 qualified academic professionals emigrate annually. Also, they have gotten information from South African medical schools suggest that a third to a half of its graduates emigrate to the developed world. Furthermore, they say that the loss of nurses has been even more extreme—for example, more than 150 000 Filipino nurses and 18 000 Zimbabwean nurses work abroad. A recent report from the United Kingdom estimated that 31% of its doctors and 13% of its nurses are born overseas; in London the figures are 23% and 47% respectively. These reported figures are likely to be underestimated as many migrate unofficially.

The Effect of Good Healthcare System on A Country's Economy.

The wellness of an average citizen of a country is an indication of the nation's prosperity. A good healthcare system will generate money for the economy and also increase the ability of individuals in the country.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have discussed the relationship between poverty and health care, illustrated the challenges that healthcare system faces in developing countries and, listed the effect of poverty and healthcare on a country's economy. The current status of healthcare for poor people in developing countries is very low. Possible solutions that government of developing countries may want to look into in order to provide adequate healthcare for their citizens include good insurance policies for citizens, improved research and development labs and companies, donations from both private and public sectors of the economy, etc. If the government of developing countries work on these solutions, there will be improvement on the general healthcare system of the countries.

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