

Social inclusion, empowerment and health



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Empowerment and advocacy affiliation Empowerment and advocacy

Empowerment can be defined as a way in which person with shortcomings, challenges and powerlessness can be provided with a way and means to live normal and productive lives (Lord & Hutchison, 1993). The author further points out that; empowerment is a tool that aims at improving the lives of less perceived people in society (Lord & Hutchison, 1993). Advocacy refers to the measures and efforts put in place to enable empowerment. Through advocacy, involvement by more significant bodies is a possible outcome and the main objective of advocacy. In addition, advocacy aims at enlightening the society in a particular problem they face but unknown to them is the negative impacts on the problem (Lord & Hutchison, 1993). In an argument Lord & Hutchison (1993) empowerment and advocacy are put in place and work more effectively in cases where there is powerlessness.

A group of community members' with disabilities came up with an organization that was aimed at advocating for their rights as disabled people. They were disabled which limited their locomotion. In addition, they could not do many of their daily duties which drove them towards poverty. They were powerless and isolated to a point they became social insignificant. In their quest to seek social care in homes for the disabled, the admission fees were high, and they could not afford. In addition, equipment such as wheelchairs was too expensive for them to acquire. For this reason, they lived in isolation for each and every day.

However, with the creation of the organization their social status changed. The response from the society was exceptional as people showed up to support their campaign. At the start, the organization was just a creation in theory since they had no funds and sponsors. After volunteers had stepped

up on their social responsibility, they had enough funds to support and put the organization in to practice (Lord & Hutchison, 1993).

In this situation, empowerment was provided in the form of social support and funds. This form of empowerment provides an affected person with power to create strategies for advocacy. In this case, the organization has the funds to hire lawyers that would represent them in cases seeking the provision of social care and government financial support. As a marginalized group, the organization was entitled to support from social services.

However, the rightful consideration was only achievable through advocacy.

From funds provided by social care and the community, the organization was made a community project. It was enrolled to receive annual funding from the government. The organization also enrolled other disabled people.

Additionally, social care provided care givers and funded routine visits by doctors.

From this example, the value of empowerment and advocacy can be viewed as an important tool in social care and public health. In an argument by Lord & Hutchison (1993) empowerment and advocacy has led to the notion where a community becomes responsible for its problems. From the involvement of the community, the powerless nature of affected people is diminished.

Reference

Lord, J. & Hutchison, P. 1993. The process of empowerment: implications for theory and practice. *Canadian journal of community mental health*, 12(1) 5-22.