

Community service can restore social justice and uphold human rights

[Sociology](#), [Human Rights](#)



According to Mahatma Ghandi, “ The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others”. Community Service is crucial in today’s society because it can help to restore social justice and protects and upholds the rights of those who the volunteer helps. Without community service, people would be left in poverty without the opportunities of those more fortunate and, therefore; have their rights being infringed upon. Community service helps to create a socially just community.

Many South Africans rights are being infringed upon. Considering that 500 000 women are raped in South Africa every year, it is very evident that many people are in need of help. Community service helps to uphold the rights of others. There are many people living in poverty being deprived of their rights, especially in South Africa where there is a very high unemployment rate. By doing community service, you are creating equality within the community. Many outreach programmes are aimed at educating the less fortunate, giving them the same opportunities as someone who can afford education. Only 10% of South Africans reach matric without being held back at school. Community service can help to provide underprivileged children with the proper education that they need to matriculate, find a job and possibly make it out of poverty. Many common forms of community service can provide underprivileged people with food or money such as charity organisations or soup kitchens. There are also forms of community service that provide medical care for those in need who can not afford their own medicines, hospital fees or get the necessary transport to a hospital or clinic. These are institutions such as AIDS centres or non-government charitable medical organisations; for example, Doctors Without Borders. These are very

necessary considering that 82% of South Africa's population are cared for by only 27% of South African physicians. All of these help to uphold the right to health care, food, water and social security which is a very important right as without it, lives could be endangered. Community service upholds the right to human dignity, giving the less fortunate a greater quality of being. Community service especially protects the rights of children by protecting them and providing them with great opportunities.

Social justice is a large problem world-wide, but South Africa is a country that has an especially unjust society due to separation during apartheid and problems such as corruption, discrimination and lack of education. Even in a first world country such as the United States, the percentage of black children living in poverty is more than double the percentage of white children. Community helps to create a just society by distributing opportunities. Many forms of community service are aimed at educating, providing an income for and uplifting the less fortunate. This creates a sense of equality throughout the community by providing them with equal opportunities. With these opportunities, people can make it out of poverty and this creates a smaller gap between the rich and the poor, which is noticeable in a socially just community. In South Africa, effects of apartheid are still noticeable considering only 5% of whites are unemployed compared to 45% of black people. Community service can help to close this gap. Community Service also bridges gaps in the community when diverse people interact with and help each other. This helps to create a sense of unity within a society. Community service aimed towards helping the

environment helps to create a clean, healthy environment for people to live in. This creates a happy healthy society. Community service creates a united community with well distributed opportunities and privileges in a just society.

In this current society, community service may not be enough to achieve social justice or uphold human rights. In the US, there are more than 1. 5 million registered non-profit organisations, but the number of Americans with families living on less than two dollars a day has increased from 600 000 to 1. 6 million from 1996 to 2011. This shows that as much as charities do, it is not enough to create a just society. In South Africa, the murder rate has increased from less than 16 000 murders in 2012 to more than 19 000 murders in 2017. As much as is being done to help, the rights of people are deteriorating. Many people are also becoming reliant on the help of others. People may be relying on charity to live, which creates a socially unjust community when people are not working for money and are not playing an active role in society. People may feel belittled by community service, as if they are not a “ charity case” which may infringe on their right to dignity.

Although community service does not create a completely just society and ensure every person’s rights (as these are almost impossible tasks); it is still crucial as it can protect and uphold some people’s rights and contribute towards social justice. It can protect crucial rights of those in need and united and justify a community.