



# Challenges of poverty alleviation through social work interventions

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the challenges faced in efforts to eradicate poverty through the implementation of social work intervention programs. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results show that the concept of social work intervention at the micro, mezzo and macro levels makes a significant contribution to poverty alleviation efforts. Social workers at the micro level are able to form deep partnerships with clients, develop personalized intervention plans, and provide individualized support, which has an impact on improving individual and family well-being. At the mezzo level, collaboration in the development of community welfare programs and resource mobilization results in significant change on a broader scale. At the macro level, a focus on structural transformation and system improvement has a positive impact on overall social impact. The integration of these strategies forms a robust support network that empowers individuals and drives sustainable social change. The results of this research confirm that a holistic approach in Social Work Intervention has an important role in creating a more just, inclusive and just society in overcoming poverty.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Thoughts about poverty have evolved over time, but its essence remains related to the inability to fulfill basic needs (Rahayu & Syam, 2021)). Poverty is not a condition desired by the individual who experiences it; on the contrary, poverty is often the result of the limited power and strength possessed by the individual (Tanjung, 2022).

Understanding of poverty has developed from simply describing a situation of material deprivation to a more complex concept, including aspects such as health, education and access to economic opportunities (Kumalasari & Poerwono, 2011). In this context, poverty is not just the inability to meet basic material needs, but also involves limitations in accessing resources and opportunities that can improve the quality of life (Solikatur et al, 2014).

It is important to remember that poverty is not always static or passed down from generation to generation; on the contrary, many factors can influence poverty dynamics, such as government policies, inequality, and economic changes (Muhammad et al, 2024). Therefore, addressing poverty

requires a holistic and sustainable approach, by understanding the root causes and developing solutions that can empower individuals and communities to overcome these challenges (Bahri, 2019).

The causes of poverty are complexities involving various factors, both natural, economic, structural, social and cultural (Faradila & Imaningsih, 2022). Natural and economic poverty arises due to limited natural resources, humans and other elements, which result in limited production opportunities and difficulty contributing to development. This factor creates inequality in resource utilization, limits economic growth, and makes it difficult for some people to escape the cycle of poverty (Itang, 2015).

Structural and social poverty is caused by unequal development results, lack of equality in institutional arrangements and development policies (Utama & Handayani, 2014). This system tends to favor certain groups, leaving some people marginalized and having difficulty accessing opportunities that should be available to all (Bhinadi, 2017).

In addition, cultural or cultural poverty arises because of attitudes or living habits that make a person feel satisfied with the existing situation, making it difficult to achieve positive change (Putriyai et al, 2022). This involves psychological aspects and values that can trap individuals in thought patterns that hinder economic and social progress (Suryono, 2019).

It needs to be acknowledged that the causes of poverty do not only come from within the poor community itself, but are also influenced by external factors. Among them are the low quality of human resources and individual attitudes, which are internal causes (Arifin, 2020). Meanwhile, external factors involve limited natural resources, uneven social and institutional structures, development policies that are not yet inclusive, limited employment opportunities, and competition which can cause poor people to be marginalized (Hidayat, 2017).

Social work intervention is a crucial role in poverty alleviation efforts. Social workers act as agents of change who not only provide direct assistance to individuals or families who are in poverty, but also try to identify and overcome the root causes of poverty (Andari, 2020). Through a holistic approach, social workers work together with communities to formulate strategies and solutions that suit the unique needs of each individual or group. They not only provide financial support, but also facilitate access to health services, education and skills training to empower individuals to create positive changes in their lives (Tiftazani & Rohman, 2017).

In addition, (. By understanding the dynamics of marginalized communities, social workers help create well-targeted policies and intervention programs, bridge social gaps, and increase opportunities for those in conditions of poverty to take control of their own lives. Thus, intervention social work not only focuses on providing immediate relief, but also aims to dismantle the social structures that drive poverty, bring positive change on a larger scale, and provide hope to marginalized communities.

Social work intervention is a form of deep engagement between social workers and the individuals, families, groups, or communities they help. Social workers strive to holistically understand the needs and challenges faced by clients by conducting comprehensive assessments. Based on the results of this assessment, an intervention plan is developed with the goal of helping the client achieve positive change and ensuring the best chance of success. In this process, social workers act as facilitators who provide emotional support, information, and access to needed resources, so that clients can take control of their lives and improve their well-being. Such intervention plans may also include collaboration with other agencies and utilizing community support networks to ensure a holistic and sustainable approach in providing assistance to clients.

By implementing intervention strategies in social work, the role of social workers becomes crucial in delving into clients' lives with the aim of helping them overcome the problems they face. Through this intervention, social workers not only provide assistance to overcome the current negative situation, but also focus on solving the root of the problem and developing a support system that can prevent the problem from recurring in the future. By listening and responding empathetically to clients' experiences, social workers guide them in finding solutions that fit their unique needs. Holistically, the intervention includes providing emotional support, practical guidance, and

strengthening the client's internal resources to facilitate positive change and the creation of a supportive environment.

The aim of this research is to investigate and understand more deeply the challenges of poverty alleviation through social work intervention programs. By identifying factors that influence program effectiveness, this research aims to provide in-depth insights to stakeholders, including government and non-governmental organizations, in order to improve policies and support the development of more effective programs in overcoming poverty problems. The benefits of this research include contributing to a general understanding of the complexity of poverty, providing an empirical basis for improving social policies, and facilitating the development of intervention strategies that are more targeted and sustainable in order to improve community welfare.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is a type of qualitative research that aims to solve problems by identifying the social context in detail, referring to the theoretical framework proposed by Moleong (2014). The focus of this research method lies in an in-depth understanding of the research subject's experiences, including behavior, perception, motivation for action, and other aspects, with an emphasis on holistic descriptions using language and words. This research specifically examines sustainable marketing strategies by integrating environmental aspects, making it an approach that is in accordance with the concept stated by Yulianah (2022). This research is descriptive in nature and is intended to provide a clear picture of a particular situation, event, population or area, reflecting the need for a deeper understanding of sustainable marketing strategies. During the research process, the collected data is thoroughly analyzed and compiled to conclude research findings, which are then presented in the form of scientific writing.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Social Work Intervention Concept**

Social work intervention, as a social worker's direct involvement with an individual, family, group, or community, places emphasis on a deep understanding of the client's situation and needs. Initiation of this intervention involves a comprehensive assessment, in which the social worker actively maps the factors influencing the client, including challenges faced and resources available. This assessment forms the basis for the formulation of a detailed intervention plan tailored to the uniqueness of each case. By focusing on the client's success, the intervention plan not only includes problem-solving strategies, but also takes into account the development of a support system that can help the client maintain stability and overcome difficult times.

The social worker, through the implementation of the intervention plan, acts as a facilitator of positive change in the client's life. The intervention process involves emotional support, providing information, and practical guidance designed to help clients get out of negative situations and build a stronger foundation for the future. By applying the principles of engagement and empathy, social workers play an important role in forming supportive partnerships with clients, ensuring that interventions are not just temporary solutions, but also create lasting change in their lives.

Interventions in social work are usually implemented at three different levels. All of these levels have a similar goal, namely helping clients achieve better outcomes and overcome problems to improve quality of life. The three levels in this list of social work interventions have different scopes regarding who they help and how close the social worker's relationship is to the individuals or groups they help. Although each level has a different focus, the overall goal remains consistent, namely providing effective support to encourage positive change and client well-being.

### **Micro**

Social work assessments and interventions at the micro level occur directly at the individual level. This is where many social workers establish deep engagement with clients to understand and respond to the needs and challenges faced by those individuals. At the micro level, social workers can develop intervention plans that are highly personalized and tailored to each client's unique needs. For

example, a geriatric social worker may be involved in helping a family design a smooth transition for an older parent to an assisted living facility, ensuring that the individual's well-being and social needs are properly met. On the other hand, a school social worker may provide direct intervention by meeting face-to-face and providing support to a child experiencing emotional problems, helping them in the process of understanding and resolving personal problems.

The micro level of social work intervention allows social workers to form closer and deeper relationships with clients, understand their life context, and provide support focused on individual or family needs. Therefore, this level includes a wide range of interventions that are personalized and combine professional discretion with sensitivity to the uniqueness of each situation. In its essence, interventions at the micro level aim to provide highly individualized and supportive services, creating a strong basis for positive change and improving the client's quality of life.

#### **Mezzo**

The mezzo level of social work assessment and intervention represents one level above the micro level, where the focus is more on helping small communities or institutional groups. At this level, social workers are involved in dealing with problems that affect certain populations, such as dealing with problems at the school level or helping disadvantaged groups in society. Social workers at the mezzo level can design intervention plans that involve collaboration between individuals and groups, creating broader strategies to improve the quality of life and well-being of the group.

For example, a social work intervention plan at the mezzo level might involve efforts to help underprivileged people improve their living conditions through the establishment of free health clinics. Social workers can work with health agencies, local governments, and non-profit organizations to design and implement health programs that can include free health screenings, health education, and basic medical services. Through engagement at this mezzo level, social workers can play a key role in mobilizing resources and building the support networks necessary to achieve significant change on a broader scale. The mezzo level creates opportunities for social workers to work with larger groups, form strategic partnerships, and design interventions that affect the structure and dynamics of the community more holistically.

#### **Macro**

Social work assessment and intervention at the macro level involves a much larger scale compared to the micro and mezzo levels. Social workers at the macro level are usually not directly involved with the individuals or groups being helped; rather, they address large systemic issues that can affect populations on a city, state, or even national scale. Macro-level social workers devote their efforts to reviewing policies, systems, and social structures that may be at the root of persistent problems.

In their efforts to address these issues, macro-level social workers will conduct in-depth research, analyze data, and collaborate with key stakeholders such as government, non-profit organizations, and private institutions. They then develop solutions that can take years to implement and have an overall positive impact. For example, macro-level social workers may advocate for changes to more inclusive education policies, create broad employment programs to reduce unemployment rates, or review housing systems to address homelessness as a whole. Macro-level social workers act as agents of change who focus on structural transformation and improvement at the broader social level.

#### **Challenges of Poverty Alleviation through Social Work Interventions**

Poverty alleviation through Social Work Intervention involves a series of strategies aimed at responding to and overcoming the root causes of poverty at various levels, namely micro, mezzo and macro. At the micro level, social workers play a key role in providing direct interventions focused on individuals, families, or small groups. By deeply understanding the client's life and needs, the social worker creates an intervention plan that is personalized and tailored to his or her unique needs. Counseling is an important element of micro-intervention, where social workers provide professional support and help clients identify and overcome personal or family issues that may be contributing factors to poverty.

Emotional support is also an important aspect of micro-interventions, helping clients manage stress and negative feelings that can arise due to difficult life conditions. In addition, social workers play a role in providing resources appropriate to clients' needs, such as access to health services, education, or financial assistance. In this way, micro-interventions not only target the symptoms of poverty, but also seek to improve an individual's overall capacity and well-being.

Social workers at the micro level carry out the role of facilitators of positive change in clients' daily lives. By building strong, trusting relationships, they help individuals or small groups develop skills and strategies to overcome everyday challenges. Through this approach, intervention at the micro level becomes a fundamental first step in efforts to eradicate poverty, bringing a significant impact at the individual and family level.

At the mezzo level, social workers broaden the scope of their interventions by focusing on collaboration with community groups, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations. In this context, social workers seek to identify and understand the social dynamics that affect these groups, and design more comprehensive interventions. One form of intervention at the mezzo level is the development of community welfare programs designed to improve the social and economic conditions of certain groups.

Social workers at the mezzo level can also be involved in providing skills training to increase the group's capacity and independence. This training may include developing professional, entrepreneurial, or other skills that can empower community members to overcome the challenges of poverty. Additionally, social workers at the mezzo level can facilitate the creation of support networks among various groups in the community, combining their resources and efforts to create more sustainable solutions.

By engaging at the mezzo level, social workers play the role of change agents who build community capacity. Through these strategies, they contribute to community empowerment, increase access to resources, and stimulate collaboration that can support poverty alleviation. Interventions at the mezzo level not only target individuals or families, but also strengthen larger social structures, forming the basis for positive and sustainable change at the community level.

At the macro level, the role of social workers involves interventions that focus on systemic and structural aspects that can affect society at large. One form of intervention at the macro level is advocacy for changes in government policy. Social workers at this level can be a voice for those less fortunate, working to identify and address policies that may be barriers to poverty alleviation. By participating in the policy formulation process, social workers can ensure that public policies reflect social justice and provide better support to vulnerable groups.

Apart from policy advocacy, social workers at the macro level are also involved in developing national welfare programs. This can include the design and implementation of programs that target the overall problem of poverty, such as social assistance programs, skills training, or housing programs coordinated with government agencies and non-profit organizations. Macro social workers also play a role in reviewing economic systems that may be factors causing poverty, providing constructive input to create more inclusive and sustainable policies.

By focusing on systemic change, social workers at the macro level aim to create change on a broader scale. By understanding the root of the problem and intervening at a structural level, social workers seek to reduce the social and economic disparities that underlie poverty. Intervention at the macro level, therefore, is a strategic step towards broader and more sustainable social change. In carrying out the mission of alleviating poverty through Social Work Intervention, a holistic approach is the main basis. Social workers, focusing on the individual, group, and structural levels in society, form deep partnerships with communities struggling with poverty. Through micro, mezzo and macro interventions, they not only provide concrete solutions to everyday challenges, but also seek to shape structural changes underlying social and economic disparities.

By aligning these strategies, social workers create robust networks of support and empower individuals and communities to overcome the challenges of poverty. Emotional support, providing resources, developing welfare programs, and advocating for government policies, all work together to

create positive and sustainable change. The whole intervention is not just about providing temporary relief, but rather establishing a strong foundation for broader and deeper change in society. As agents of change, social workers continue to dedicate themselves to creating a more just and inclusive society, where every individual has equal opportunities and access. With determination and enthusiasm, Social Work Intervention is an important milestone in joint efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve equitable prosperity for all.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The concept of social work intervention at the micro, mezzo and macro levels provides a comprehensive view of efforts to improve the welfare of individuals, groups and society as a whole. Social workers at the micro level play a direct role in forming deep partnerships with clients, designing highly personalized intervention plans, and providing highly individualized support. The mezzo level involves social workers in addressing issues affecting small populations or communities, mobilizing resources, and designing broader strategies to achieve significant change. Meanwhile, at the macro level, social workers focus on structural transformation and system improvements that can influence social impacts on a larger scale. Efforts to eradicate poverty through Social Work Intervention demonstrate a holistic approach involving social workers at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. Through micro-interventions, they provide direct support to individuals and families, helping to overcome daily challenges, and building skills and strategies for positive change. At the mezzo level, social workers expand their role by collaborating in the development of community welfare programs and mobilizing resources that support broader change. Meanwhile, macro intervention involves policy advocacy and development of national programs aimed at addressing the root causes of structural poverty. By integrating these strategies, social workers create robust networks of support, empower individuals, and stimulate sustainable social change. As agents of change, social workers dedicate themselves to creating a more just, inclusive and just society, moving together in a joint effort to eradicate poverty.

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