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### Views From Two Perspectives

Federal government benefits and antipoverty efforts have played a major role in overcoming the issue of poverty; however, due to mismanagement by the government and improper applications from its recipients the proposed good intentions have become unsuccessful. One major program in relation to the antipoverty efforts that has not been successful is the welfare program. This program is a series of benefits which is funded by the government to help the underclass overcome poverty. So why is the poverty rate increasing and why are people depending upon welfare benefits longer than they should be? People are taking advantage of the welfare system and the system is drowning because of the open gaps that are allowing these cheaters in. The existence of the system is merely a free ride in the eyes for some recipients. How does such a problem become solved? A good idea would be by closing in the gaps that are causing the welfare system to sink and by educating people to provide for themselves by giving them job training or access to more education. Those who are on welfare are more than likely in need of understanding the perception of efficacy and the ways to achieve high-efficacy (Popkin 65). A prime example of a program that is being cheated by its recipients and in need of reform is the food stamp program.

Comment:

The food stamp program is aid that allows eligible recipients to purchase food. In 1985 there were over 20 million Americans who relied on food stamps (Leinward 50). The first food stamp program was designed in 1939, though it died out because of World War II (54). The stamps were later redesigned in the 1960's to promote the purchase of nutritional food. The encouragement to purchase healthy food with food stamps has been a widely discussed issue, especially in the early 80's (54). In 1983, United States Secretary of Agriculture John Block illustrated that a family of four could purchase fifty-eight dollars worth of food each week by following a Department of Agriculture booklet which consisted of a menu of foods such as dried milk, noodles, grits, and chili, and still be able to sufficiently feed themselves (56). That seems to be an open door to suffering rather than staying healthy. It's a wonder why people deceive the guidelines in purchasing nutritional foods. The program's expectations are also asking the recipients to know how to buy nutritional food. This guideline serves no purpose if the holder of the food stamps is lacking an education on how to manage a healthy diet (57). A helpful solution to this problem may be that an educational program on nutrition be given to the recipients in order for them to follow the guidelines of the food stamp program.

Another reason why the guidelines are not being followed is because of the recipient's free will to use the money provided for food stamps to buy other things in order to accommodate themselves. There have been instances where the money given to the recipients to purchase food stamps was used for rent or utilities (57). D.J. Noland, who was previously on the food stamp program, knew of people who bought alcohol and drugs such as crack cocaine. He mentioned even though there are people who really do need them, there are a lot of others who don't and could still obtain them quite easily.

Noland also noted that, “there was not enough policing of the program to make sure that fraud was being kept from happening. This type of management from the recipients suggests that their hunger falls last on their list of priorities (57). The guidelines of this program are obviously in need of reform. More restrictive guidelines would be of help to this seemingly submissive program and acquiring an education is clearly seen as being extremely significant in society.

The food stamp program is only one part of the welfare system. We know that many outsiders feel negative about the welfare programs in general, but how do recipients, (the ones on the inside) feel about being on welfare? Studies have shown that the recipients themselves call in question whether or not the system is even really effective (65). Many recipients see the welfare system, “as a way of life” (64). This life of receiving is all some of the recipients know. Noone provides different alternatives such as education and job training. Another reason recipients have held negative opinions towards the welfare programs is because the system, “discourages their initiative because they fail to provide job training or educational opportunities” (65).

By examining the food stamp program and gathering information of how the recipients feel about the welfare system, it seems the most desirable resolution is to hold more restrictive guidelines and provide a supplemental education for those in need of it. The system can be kept from drowning beyond question, but poverty will always be in society and abolishing this problem is far from happening; nevertheless, an education may be the only true solution in conquering poverty.

Works Cited

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