Effects of powerlessness and exploitation in the community

**Introduction**

Living a life where one felt powerless and exploited in any society is a very destructive and challenging thing in life. It often causes pain and suffering and may result in suicide, stress or various mental disorders. In most experiences of the world, powerlessness and exploitation have been interrelated. Most people often feel trapped in a web of interlinked deprivations that have resulted in a series of social problems. Powerlessness and exploitation of the less powerful is a phenomenon that dates back several years back when issues such as slavery were practiced. In addition to slavery, any tribe that had no authority and voice to raise their grievances were taken advantage of with their resources used for the benefit of the powerful. Present day, exploitation of the less powerful in the community continues in most facets of the society including and not limited to the criminal justice systems. Such exploitation includes racial profiling, child labor and child prostitution among others (Ayón, Messing, Gurrola & Valencia-Garcia, 2018). For this reason, powerlessness has made the less fortunate vulnerable to various
aspects such as racism, sexism and various forms of oppressions making them feel dejected in the society.

Nature of the issue

Powerlessness and exploitation are among the various forms of oppression that can be experienced by the less fortunate. Powerlessness is the lack of influence as well as lack of power to air one's grievances to relevant persons or entity. Exploitation, on the other hand, involves mistreating others for the benefit of your good by utilizing their resources. Exploitation often occurs when efforts and energies of the members of individual groups are directed towards benefitting the members of another group.

Exploitation and powerlessness can be discussed in the context of capitalism, racism, sexism, and classism. In regards to capitalism, exploitation is depicted in the way most businesses convert worker's labor into a product or service that yields value through profits that are channeled to shareholders and owners but not the workers. The case of capitalism is shown in the instances whereby forced labor and slavery was in play. The issue is also linked to racism with those races that are few being exploited in various ways. As stated above, the less fortunate in some states experienced challenges and were taken advantage of. Some people have been oppressed in one way or the other including sexual exploitation. Others have been suppressed in one way or another with others being marginalized and deprived of development. Sexism can also be associated with oppression since, in some instances, women may fail to secure jobs due to their gender while others are being told that the position only fits masculine status (Ayón, Messing, Gurrola & Valencia-Garcia, 2018).
The issue can be associated with various forms of oppression. A ruling group can describe oppression as the exercise of tyranny. The powerless tend to be vulnerable to multiple types of oppression (Young, 2013). Among these forms of oppression is exploitation which occurs through transfer of results of labor from one social group to another. Exploitation was depicted by the fact that in the United States, menial jobs were meant explicitly for the blacks, Chicanos, Indians, Chinese as well as the Latinos (Young, 2013). In this case, menial labor is exploitation to those listed groups since they are powerless in the society.

Another form of oppression that can be associated with powerlessness is marginalization. In America, racial abuse has been on the rise in the way of marginalization with most people and organizations failing to employ the marginalized groups. Most people have in this case been pushed at the edge of a tribe that has been termed insignificant. According to Ladegaard (2016), These people are often mistreated since they are powerless. Other forms of oppression include cultural imperialism, violence, and powerlessness. These forms, however, do not associate with the issue at hand.

In the case of powerlessness and exploitation, the less advantaged groups are minority groups, women and children. The minority groups undergo challenges that involve racial discrimination and marginalization among others. Children, on the other hand, may be exploited through activities such as child trafficking and child sexual prostitution among others. The women may experience sexism in daily activities.

Moradi (2017) states that Intersectionality is a framework for conceptualizing is a framework used in imagining an individual or groups as affected by some disadvantages. It takes
into account the people's overlapping identities and experiences in an attempt to understand the
prejudices that they experience (Lecture notes, intersectionality, 2018, Slide 2). It aims at
exposing how oppression and exploitation create an inequality in the society (Moradi, 2017).

Intersectionality, privilege, and power affect other's access to resources and rights in some ways.
First, intersectionality ensures that the less privileged access the benefits stated above. Power and
privilege, on the other hand, serve as a hindrance to the less fortunate since it clogs them from
assessing the benefits.

Others, however, claim that intersectionality is biased in that it benefits a single group of
individuals. They argue in favor of a free world with no intersectionality or power and privilege.

I, however, oppose the argument since the powerful in the society would take advantage of the
power they have in ensuring that they get access to rights and resources since the powerless are
more susceptible to exploitation

**Advocacy efforts**

Efforts have been adopted at various levels of the social setting to ensure that exploitation
and powerlessness are curbed. Some of these levels include the macro, micro and the mezzo
levels whereby the micro level involves direct interaction with individual clients to address
personal problems while mezzo levels affect small and medium size groups. Macro levels, on the
other hand, include helping clients within larger systems. Efforts at the macro level that have
attempted to bring change to this issue include legislation by the government and its agencies to
minimize exploitation. At the mezzo levels, most groups have tried the formation of social
groups and agencies that handle such issues. Training employees and managers of the organization on the effects of exploitation has also been done.

These strategies and efforts have yielded significant results since they resulted in a reduction of cases of exploitation of the powerless. By empowering the less fortunate to report various instances, instances of oppression and exploitation reduced significantly. They, therefore, lead to positive outcomes. Recent advocacy efforts to ensure social justice include media campaigns and the formation of social groups including the social justice organization. Various policies are being drafted to provide economic and social justice within most states of the country.

Having looked at those issues, I believe that the country can achieve equality and equity as time progresses. Equity involves giving everyone what they deserve to achieve their desired goals and objectives while equality involves treating everyone the same without making others feel sad or powerless. In my view, equal sharing health finance or health care insurance between an old grandmother and a teen would be, but not equity since healthcare needs of a grandmother surpasses those of the teen. To ensure equity and equality in society, various actions including imposing a law to protect the weak people in the community need to be taken (Bauer, 2017). There should be penalties for those people who fail to follow the outlined law.

Additionally, the government should create a forum where each will express his thoughts on how to solve several problems in society (Laing, 2017). Such issues include exploitation and powerlessness. The community should be educated on issues concerning their rights and how they should exercises these when protecting their properties.
Conclusion

From the paper, we can note that powerlessness has made the less fortunate vulnerable to various aspects such as racism, sexism and various forms of oppressions making them feel dejected in the society. This is supported by the fact that the less fortunate are subjected to multiple forms of oppression including marginalization and exploitation with issues such as racism, sexism, and ageism being recurrent in society. To ensure that these issues are minimized, legislative action, as well as individual training, needs to be undertaken by the responsible agencies. The governments should strive to ensure an equitable and just society. During the writing process, some of the comments that came into my mind included the fact that I felt the need to educate and train people on the negative effects of oppression. I also asked myself questions such as how one feels oppressing others and what measures can be taken to ensure that the vice is fully stopped.

References


Lecture notes (2018) intersectionality and privilege, *lecture notes slide 1-11*

Moradi, B. (2017). (Re) focusing intersectionality: From social identities back to systems of oppression and privilege.
