INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE CASE OF HIGH-RISK COMMUNITIES BASED ON A CASE STUDY OF ROMANIA

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Abstract

The main objective of this research article is to investigate the impact of social exclusion in the case of high-risk communities based on a case study of Romania. An adequate understanding of high-risk communities can lead to the achievement of challenging objectives in combating social exclusion. Additionally, community-based social programs provide an effective solution based on social assistance services. Moreover, considering Romania's demographic characteristics, government programs and strategies play an essential role in the case of high-risk communities.
Key-Words: social exclusion, high-risk communities, discrimination, poverty, unemployment, globalization

I. INTRODUCTION

This research article aims to provide an overview on the impact of social exclusion on high risk communities based on a case study of Romania. Moreover, the case study selection is not random. Romania is a geographically positioned developing country in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The integration into the labor market of vulnerable groups and high-risk communities implies the implementation of sustainable social inclusion strategies. In this respect, public policies promoted by government authorities need to focus on active employment measures. The importance given to the social economy at European Union level is significant, so that the alignment of public policy programs in Romania becomes a natural consequence. At the level of high-risk communities, social exclusion reaches a worrying threshold, so that the level of employment into the labor market is extremely low. Major concerns arise from official statistics highlighting an aging population trend, especially in rural areas, as well as a decline in birth rates.

II. CONCEPTUAL APPROACH AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Pierre-Louis, Guddati, Gorospe, Sultana, Aronow, Ahn, Clark, Wright and Fergus (2013) have conducted a relevant research on cardiovascular risk factors in a high-risk community and have provided empirical results that highlight "significant disparity in the prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors, morbidity and mortality among African-Americans and Latinos, especially in low socioeconomic communities". Poulos, Hayen, Chong and Finch (2009) investigated interesting aspects of using geographic mapping as a tool for identifying communities at high risk of fire and burn injuries in children.

Greenwood, Mezey and Smith (2018) have provided a comprehensive insight into social exclusion experienced by adult informal carers of people living with dementia or severe mental health disorders. Rothpletz-Puglia, Jones, Storm, Parrott and O'Brien (2011) suggested that "building social networks for health promotion in high-poverty areas may reduce health disparities".

In Romania, the social economy is mainly a purely conceptual construction, whose practical projections is fairly fragile. In addition, the legislative framework is rather inadequate and insufficient in terms of social exclusion for high-risk communities in Romania. The implementation of active public policy measures in order to combat social exclusion in high-risk communities in Romania is, however, a long and tedious process, whose expected outcomes are rather broad. A fundamental objective to be pursued is to promote equality of opportunity for all Romanian citizens regardless of the selection criterion.

Identifying the special needs of high-risk communities in Romania must be a priority in order to implement effective social inclusion policies. In this sense, a fairly important role is held by religious affiliation. The limitations imposed by religious affiliation must be perceived correctly so as to lead to fair conclusions. Certain religions are more constraining than others so the decisions of its followers are strongly influenced.

Regarding religious affiliation in Romania, according to the 2011 Census, the following statistical data are recorded: Orthodox - 16,307,004 persons, Roman Catholic -870,774 persons, Reformed - 600,932 persons, Pentecostal - 362,314 persons, Greek Catholic - 150,593 persons, Baptist - 112,850 persons, Seventh-day Adventist - 80,944 persons, Muslim - 64,337 persons, Unitarian - 57,686 persons, Christianity after the gospel - 42,495 persons, Jehovah's Witnesses - 49,820 persons, the Lutheran evangelical - 20,168 people, the Augustan-evangelical confession - 5,399 people, the Serbian Orthodox - 14,385 people, the evangelical Romanian - 15,514 people.

Inequality of chances among the citizens of a country, for example Romania, inevitably leads to the generation of economic and social imbalances based on the inefficient allocation of resources. Considering the alternative of using modern methods and techniques in achieving the proposed objectives, Birău (2014) suggested that "artificial neural networks are powerful tools designed in order to provide high accuracy solutions to real-world modeling problems."

Public policies to reduce poverty and social exclusion in the case of high risk communities in Romania are fundamental in order to reduce social inequality. In Romania, poverty is much higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Income sources are very limited in rural areas of Romania so that the personal development possibilities of the indigenous population are also very limited. Moreover, the birth rate is extremely low in the rural areas of Romania with an obvious tendency for aging populations. Nevertheless, the Roma population in Romania is at a much higher risk of poverty even taking into account criteria such as age, state of health or education level.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of active public policy measures in order to combat social exclusion in high-risk communities in Romania requires the infliction of coordinated strategies focused on achieving strategic objectives. Social exclusion is generally associated with poverty, but can reach varied dimensions with severe consequences for high-risk communities in Romania. Governmental authorities need to focus on implementing integrated social policies in order to achieve effective results in combating social exclusion in the case of high-risk communities.

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