DTL Symposium Addressing Inequities in Underserved Communities

NC1

Students:

- **Sarayu Ganganalli**
- **Sravani Enaganti**
- **Rahul Santharaam**
- **Sibi Santharaam**
- **Sahas Vijayabaskar**
- **Nirmal Chandren**

Mentors:

- **Indu Nair Padavanalil**
- **Nandhini Venkataswamy**

Sewa International
Together We Serve Better

Education Inequities in Underserved Communities

Phase 1

Background to Need statements

Based on our initial research, there are 3 problem areas we found:

- Education inequities in underserved communities - Unequal distribution of academic sources, lack of qualified and
- experienced teachers, facilities, lack of awareness of educational opportunities etc
- Food insecurity and economic distress in unhoused communities - NC is the 10th hungriest state in U.S. 15.9% are in the
- food insecure category, with food pantries reporting 35% increase in food needs.
- Families in distress (economic, legal, etc.) in underserved communities

Out of the three problem areas above, we have focused and finalized on **education inequities in underserved communities.**

- Education is a key stepping-stone to rising above poverty and leading a better life.
- Kids under the poverty line don't know how to change their story. That's where education comes in.
- Encouraging children across the community with the education they deserve is a crucial step towards eradicating poverty.
- It is not just about teaching students' math and reading lessons. Students need to be taught basic life skills such as communication, navigate using digital gadgets etc., This will ultimately help them make long-term decisions that lead to better opportunities.
- We want to empower children to live to their fullest potential by educating both their minds and their hearts.

Key insights from research

- Based on data from the US census bureau, NC had a lower percentage than the national average of those with a bachelor's degree. One of the main causes of this is the education gap and education inequalities.

- -Wake county has 62 Title 1 schools(Low-income families) out of which 42 schools are elementary schools.

- The more specific issues of the problem are lack of education and resources, dropping out due to poverty, more relevant opportunities(digital), and a personal lack of motivation.

- Resources like teachers, equipment, and even basic school supplies can be harder to get for those that of certain races, socioeconomic status, and also the place that they live.

- Those who are in and involved with schools such as the students, teachers, administrators, and parents are the more abundant, while other non-profit organizations and future workplaces are a little less.

- Students of Color in schools located in disinvested communities are less likely to receive course work targeted at grade appropriate standards, reflect higher-level cognitive demand and are meaningfully engaging and relevant (Santos & Haycock, 2016; "U.S. Department of Education," 2016)

Final Need Statements

1. **A way to address the lack of academic resources in NC Wake county Title 1 elementary schools(Powell and East Garner) to improve their academic performance based on the teacher feedback.**

1. A way to remove education inequities in underserved communities with more colored populations in order to remove the barriers and inequality for accessing and using resources in their communities.

1. A way to prevent homeless youth from dropping out of school in order to acquire skills to help them get out of poverty.

Education Inequities in Underserved Communities

Phase 2

Key takeaways from stakeholder meetings

- Students' performance in school is impacted by many elements such as ethnicities, resources and environment provided at home and at school etc.

- Covid pandemic had largely impacted students' abilities to interact with others and motivate themselves to succeed.

- The funding received by schools is not enough to cope up with the influx of population coming to the Wake county schools.

- Frequent and consistent sessions with students and more one on one coaching is needed to help them achieve their full potential.

- Lack of parent involvement and support are often leading to less motivation in students.

Education Inequities in Underserved Communities

Prototype1: After school tutor program – Sarayu

Prototype2: Donations - Books, Tech donations/support etc - Sibi

Prototype3: Workshops - Science/Math night, tech workshops, mental wellbeing workshops etc - Rahul

Prototype4: Competition Prep - Nirmal

Prototype5: Guest speakers from other areas - Sravani

Prototype 1

Solution 1: Create an after school tutor program to motivate and support the students from the title 1 schools in Wake County.

Prototype 2

Solution 2: Conduct a book harvest in the community and collect all the books and donate in title 1 schools. With this we can support and motivate underserved kids to use the resources they need. We can also collect laptops, ipads if any and refurbish and donate it in schools.

Prototype 3

Solution 3: Organize an education night with a focus on STEM subjects and concepts that students may have difficulties with. Additionally having computer etiquette workshops to helps students efficiently use technology to benefit their learning. Lastly having a yoga/meditation session to improve students mental wellbeing.

Prototype 5

Solution 5: Having guest speakers from underserved communities come to schools to talk about how they found success and steps to achieve it in school. This could help students form connections to learn with people outside of school and increase motivation.

Appendix

- Retrospective
    - Understanding the problem areas were an eye-opener. It was hard to believe that there are so much of hunger deprived kids/adults and still can't have proper education.
    - Though there is some support from communities, the awareness is lower in some areas versus other.
    - As a team getting involved a little earlier and getting to know more of what is expected is another item that came up in our retrospective.

- MLA Format of work cited