



THE PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL WORKERS ON THE FAMILY GRANT PROGRAM IN THE CITY OF MANAUS, AMAZONAS, BRAZIL

Adria Leite Vinhot	Reference Center for Social Assistance (CRAS). 13th Street; Alvorada 3, Manaus-Amazonas, Brazil.
Elizangela Pinto Gomes Monteiro*	State Department of Health. Home Care Management and Community Programs. Street André Araújo, Manaus-Amazonas, Brazil. *Corresponding Author
Alexsandra Cordeiro do Nascimento	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza. Street Rio Madeira, Nossa Senhora das Graças, Manaus-Amazonas, Brasil
Luana Soares Marinho	Postgraduate University Santa Tereza. Street Rio Madeira, Nossa Senhora das Graças, Manaus-Amazonas, Brasil
Claudius Walber Nóbrega de Araújo	Consultancy, Projects and Manpower Hire of Amazonas. Street Independencia, 162, Centro. New Olinda do Norte - Amazonas, Brazil.

ABSTRACT

Family Grant is an income transfer program that was created in 2003 to combat poverty and social inequality in Brazil. There are people who consider assistentialist and election the Family Grant Program, others defend as an innovative program and that changed the Brazilian social reality. Social workers had the function of harmonizing the social relations that came from social, political and economic conflicts. From the Federal Constitution of 88 and the Organic Law of Social Assistance - LOAS of 93, that the work of social workers is aligned in the search for the realization of rights. Therefore, the objective of the study was to analyze the perception of the Social Workers about the Family Grant Program in the city of Manaus, Amazonas. A bibliographic search was carried out on websites of journals and international journals. After that, a questionnaire with 10 open and closed questions was elaborated, where 47 professionals in Social Service in the city of Manaus, Amazonas, responded individually. The results indicated that professionals agree that the Family Grant Program contributes to the fight against poverty reduction.

KEYWORDS : family allowance, social workers, social inequality

INTRODUCTION

Family Grant is an income transfer program that was created in 2003. As of 2011, it began to be part of the Brazil without Misery Plan, linked to the Ministry of Social Development. In which, its main objective is to combat poverty and social inequality in Brazil, benefiting families with per capita income of R \$ 85.00 to R \$ 170.00 per month, provided that they have children and adolescents from 0 to 17 years old (MINISTÉRIO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO SOCIAL –MDS, 2018).

The Program has three main axes: First, the income supplement, which guarantees the most immediate relief from poverty; Second, access to rights, where families must make commitments in education, health and social care, which offers opportunities for social inclusion, and; Third, the articulation with other actions, with the purpose of contributing to the families to overcome the poverty situation (MINISTÉRIO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO SOCIAL –MDS, 2018).

According to Coelho (2016), the Family Grant is a direct income transfer program and is understood to have a direct effect on the economy of Brazilian municipalities. According to Andrade (2016), the function of the social service professional was to harmonize the social relations that came from social, political and economic conflicts. From the Federal Constitution - CF of 88 and the Organic Law of Social Assistance - LOAS of 93, that the work of social workers is aligned in the search for the realization of rights.

The Reference Center for Social Assistance - CRAS is a decentralized state public unit of the social assistance policy responsible for organizing and offering the social assistance services of the Basic Social Protection of the Single Social Assistance System - SUAS (CENTRO DE REFERÊNCIA DE ASSISTÊNCIA SOCIAL – CRAS, 2018).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The bibliographic research was carried out in international

magazines and journals websites, such as Google scholar, Scielo and Web for Science, through the predominant articles on the perception of social workers about the Family Grant program.

For the research, a questionnaire with 10 open and closed questions was elaborated, where the respondents answered the questions individually. The questionnaire was applied online via Google forms containing a link to a secure web server, through which an automatic evaluation is performed, presenting two personal questions (age and gender) and 8 general questions related to the perception of social workers about the family grant program. The questionnaire was applied on May 2018.

In order to carry out the data measurement, the research was based on 47 voluntary responses, being Social Service professionals in the city of Manaus, Amazonas that act directly in public and private agencies, and also used the descriptive statistics where the data presented in the questions were validated in graphics format.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Although the data collected show a predominance of a certain age range, it is observed that 8.5% of respondents are older than 50 years, thus determining the age diversity of the participants (Figure 1).

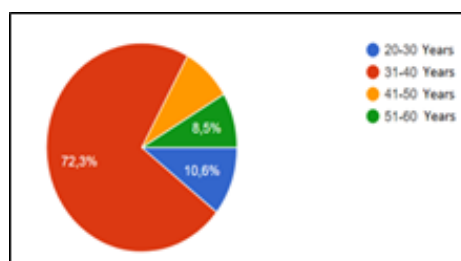


Figure 1. Graph of the age group of respondents.

Sources: the authors (2018)

In the Figure 2, shows that Social Workers occupy diverse workplaces, which vary between public and private institutions. Among the interviewees, stands out in greater concentration, within the scope of the city hall, specifically in the Municipal Secretariat of Women, Social Assistance and Human Rights - SEMMASDH.

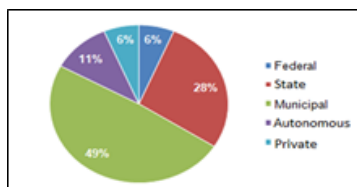


Figure 2. Graph of the interviewees' place of work.

Sources: the authors (2018)

Figure 3 shows that 100% of the participants are familiar with the Family Grant Program. According to data from the Ministry of Social Development - MDS (2018), the Family Grant Program (PBF) currently serves 14 million families and reaches some 50 million people throughout Brazil (PEREZ, 2016, pag. 2). Another important factor is that the PBF is the most important and comprehensive social assistance program in Brazil, having a great prominence among the professionals.

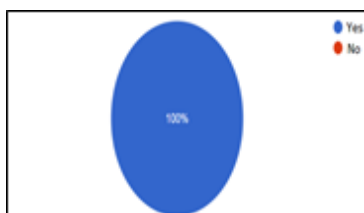


Figure 3. Graph of the knowledge of the interviewees about the Family Grant Program.

Sources: the authors (2018)

Regarding the social worker's perception of the Family Grant program, we identified that 53.2% of respondents agree that the program actually fights poverty, according to the following report: "In the country with so many inequalities where people enter and leave the labor market all the time, it is important because it guarantees an income in which it assists in their spending when the citizen has no other means of survival". However, 19.1% declare that the Family Grant - PBF Program "does not fulfill the main objective". According to the report: "It is part of a focused policy. It does not serve all needy users. Insufficient monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, susceptible to fraud".

We also noticed that 27.7% of the professionals said that the program has positive but also negative points, one of the interviewees reported that: This is because, according to Sposati (2011), as with any newly constructed policy, many aspects and concepts of the National Social Assistance Policy and the Single Social Assistance System are today objects of professional controversy. In Figure 4, 93.7% of respondents said that "the Family Grant Program does not serve the entire low income population", 4.2% say that "the entire population is served" and 2.1% stated that "depends", because families identified in the database of the single cadastre are attended, but families that were not entered in the cadastre are not benefited.

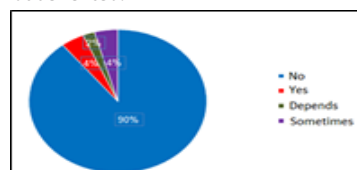


Figure 4. Graph depicting whether the Family Grant Program serves the entire low-income population.

Sources: the authors (2018)

Figure 5 shows that 83% of beneficiaries said that "the program actually contributed to improving health conditions" and 17% stated that "it did not contribute to health conditions". Thus, Ribeiro (2017) notes that there are many positive studies about the health area, however, Camelo et al. (2009) points out that it is necessary to make a deeper study between the health of the beneficiaries and the Family Grant Program.

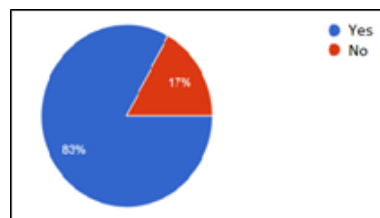


Figure 5. Chart about the Family Grant Program giving help to improve the health conditions of beneficiaries.

Sources: the authors (2018)

In Figure 6, we identified that 85.1% of the respondents stated that "the Family Grant Program contributed to the conditions of education" and 14.9% stated that "it did not contribute to the conditions of education". According to Lucena (2015), it is a worrying factor that the Family Grant Program's requirement for school is limited to school attendance, since, according to its research, educators and students declare themselves in favor of the idea that, in addition to compulsory minimum attendance, the program should also require the academic performance of the students.

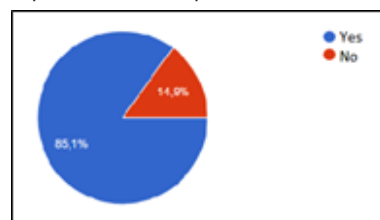


Figure 6. Bolsa Família Program and the education of beneficiaries.

Sources: the authors (2018)

In Figure 7, we noted that 87.2% of the people agreed that "the Bolsa Família Program helped improve financial conditions" and 12.8% said that "it did not contribute to improving financial conditions". In this sense, it can be seen that, despite the aid program in improving the financial conditions of families, through greater access to assets, there is an debt that arises due to an erroneous allocation of resources, making it difficult to overcome the situation of poverty. According to Cabral (2014), there was a significant reduction in the number of poor among the studied years, taking as a basis the inclusion criteria in the Family Grant Program. However, in addition to this Campara (2016), states that the benefit has brought women the power of financial decision making, which has been adopting practices that seek to satisfy the basic needs of their family, but need further clarification on financial knowledge for that they can allocate their income more efficiently.

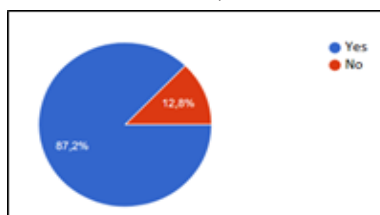


Figure 7. Graph on the Family Grant Program about help to improve the financial conditions of beneficiaries.

Sources: the authors (2018)

Among the most varied and different suggestions for improving the Family Grant Program are: supervision, inclusion of new families

living in poverty, need for evaluation and monitoring of the program.

Regarding supervision, Melo (2015) points out that it is important that the statements made by the citizen to the single cadastre are documented and subsequently investigated, through social assistance professionals and the Federal Revenue Inspection Body, about the veracity of the statements provided.

CONCLUSION

Based on what was mentioned in the results, we conclude that the professionals interviewed in social services agree that the Family Grant Program contributes to the fight against poverty reduction through direct income transfer and access to public health, education and social assistance policies. In addition, it is predominant in the research that the Family Grant Program enables the financial increase of the beneficiary families and helps in the improvement of health conditions and education of this public.

It is noteworthy that, despite the fact that most professionals realize that the Family Grant Program is necessary and effective, research shows that a significant number suggest the supervision of the Family Grant Program, the inclusion of new families in a situation of poverty, and the need for evaluation and monitoring for program improvement.

Finally, because the Family Grant program is a federal government program, which serves throughout the country, it is recommended that there be a need to expand the sample level, including social workers from all regions of Brazil.

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