Walking in "their" Shoes... an Experience in Poverty

Walking in "their" shoes... is a version of The Cost of Poverty Experience™ an immersive role play learning experience that gives participants an opportunity to experience poverty firsthand through the scenarios of real families who lived them. It is designed for practitioners to see what the individuals and families they serve, experience as they navigate the system of helping organizations, governmental agencies and social challenges they face living in poverty. We offer this resource in partnership with Think Tank Inc., owners of The Cost of Poverty Experience™ (COPE)

In 2024 The Cost of Poverty Experience (COPE) reach a milestone Nationwide with over *100,000 who have participated in or been impacted by the Poverty Simulation *(in-person or on-line)* and the other simulation related resources offered by Think Tank. **Since 2013**, in partnership with Think Tank Inc, Answer Poverty has facilitated over (60) Poverty Simulations with over 2000 participants. *(*Think Tank 2024 Annual Report)* **Local Clients Include:**

Frankin University / City of Columbus Division of Police
Dr. Chenelle Jones chenelle.jones@franklin.edu
Sgt. Keith Barker kbarker@columbuspolice.org

The Columbus City Attorney's Office
Tiara Ross TNRoss@coulumbus.gov

The Graham Family of Schools
James Kutnow Kutnow1@gemsschool.org

The Ohio State University, College of Dentistry
Dr. Canise Bean (Retired) bean26@osu.edu
Rachel Whisler whisler.32@osu.edu

Supporting Research

Below is some of the research that informs the on-going development of the poverty simulation and that demonstrates the impact it has on practitioners.

National Institutes of Health
Poverty Simulation: An Experiential Learning Tool for Teaching Social Determinants of Health

Kennesaw State University
The Efficacy of the MCAN Poverty Simulation (Paper)

Freed-Hardeman University
The Missouri Poverty Simulation: A Transformative Learning Experience for Students.

The Journal for Nurse Practitioners
Using the Community Action Poverty Simulation to Accelerate Learning About Health Equity

Morehead State University
Influence of Poverty Simulation on Educators' Social Empathy (Paper)

US Department of Education
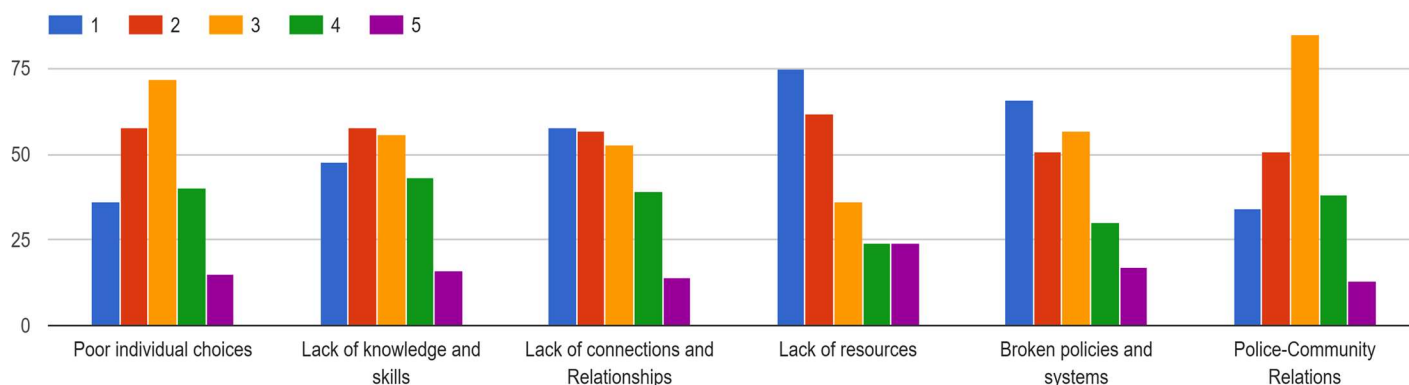An Examination of the Community Action Poverty Simulation in Rual Education (Paper)
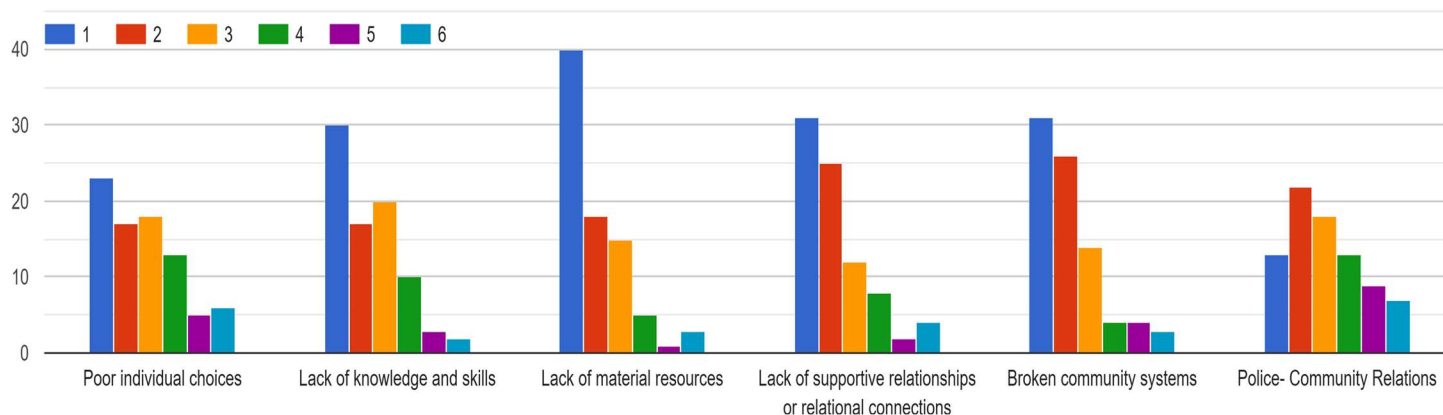
Answer Poverty Participant Survey Data

Each Answer Poverty facilitated Simulation participants complete PRE and *POST Surveys, intended to get a sense of how the brief but visceral experience with poverty impacts their thinking/perspective about poverty in their community. Below are the survey questions and results *(**Note:** A statistically significant fewer number of participants completed the POST- Survey)*

PRE-Survey Question: Causal Factors that influence Poverty

Please rank the following from 1 (most) to 5 (least) for how influential they generally are in causing poverty:

After experiencing your role in the COPE, please rank how influential the things listed below are in the perpetuation of poverty (1=very influential to 6=not very influential)
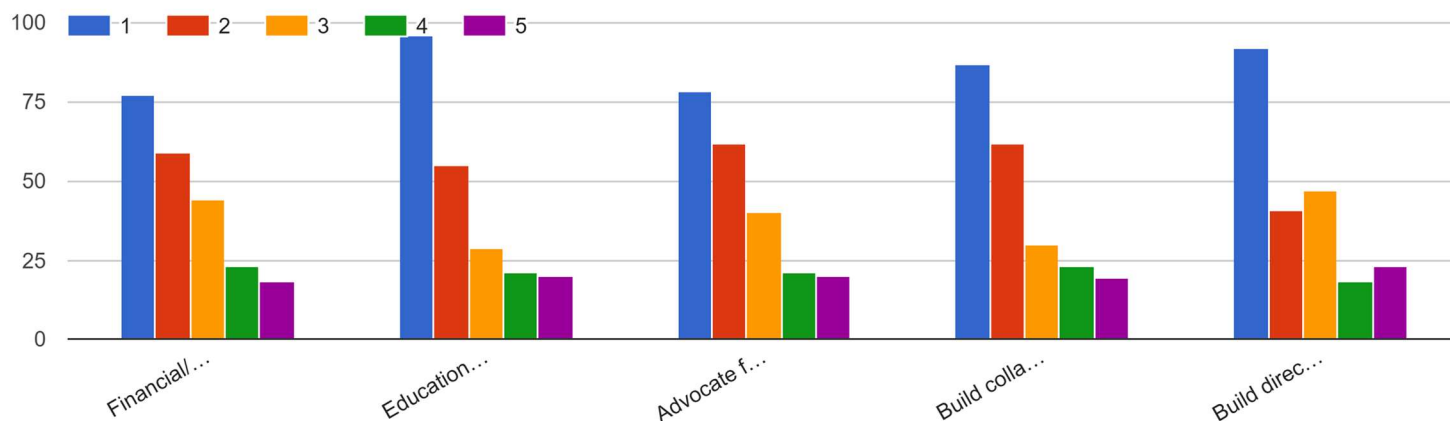

Highlights: Data indicate the while **Poor individual choices** remained constant, there is an increase in the belief that **external circumstances have a significant causal influence** causing poverty

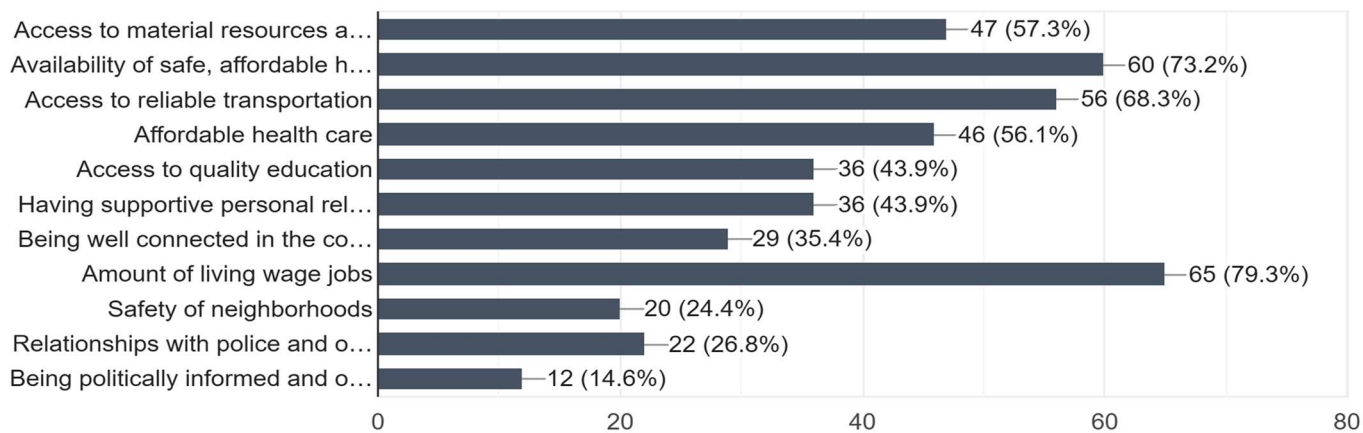**PRE-Survey Question: Best thing our community can do to address poverty**

The best thing that our community can do to address poverty: (Rank the following from 1 (most) to 5 (least) for their effectiveness to address poverty):

POST-Survey Question: After experiencing your role in the COPE, of the things listed please pick 5 you believe would have the most impact in helping to address poverty:

After experiencing your role in the COPE, of the things listed please pick 5 you believe would have the most impact in helping to address poverty:

82 responses

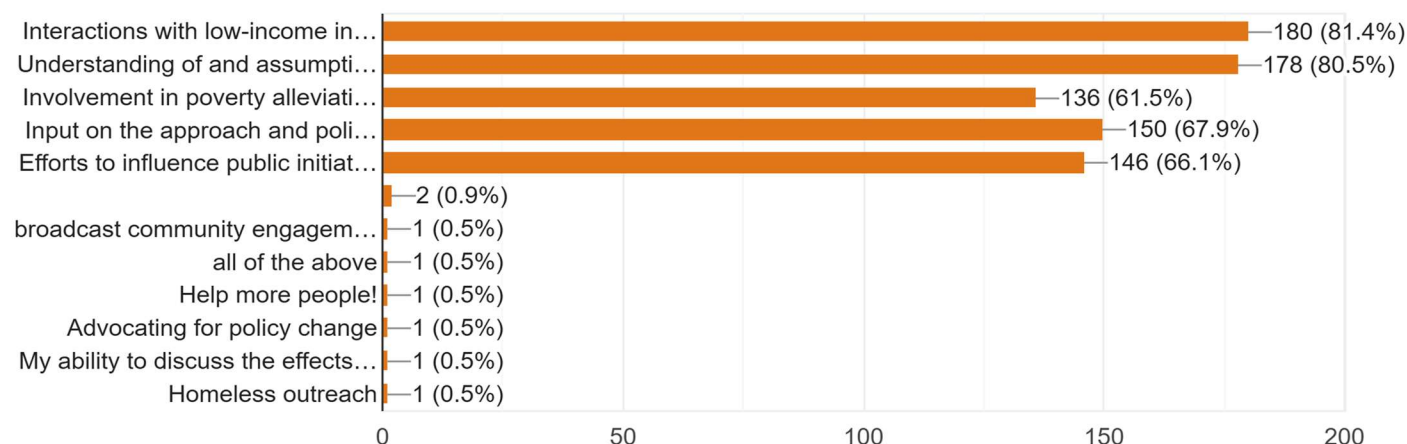|	
Access to material resources a…	47 (57.3%)
Availability of safe, affordable h…	60 (73.2%)
Access to reliable transportation	56 (68.3%)
Affordable health care	46 (56.1%)
Access to quality education	36 (43.9%)
Having supportive personal rel…	36 (43.9%)
Being well connected in the co…	29 (35.4%)
Amount of living wage jobs	65 (79.3%)
Safety of neighborhoods	20 (24.4%)
Relationships with police and o…	22 (26.8%)
Being politically informed and o…	12 (14.6%)

Highlights: Participants rank **1. Safe/Affordable Housing, 2. Living Wage Employment, and 3. Reliable Transportation** as these that have the most impact in helping individuals and families living in poverty.

COPE Poverty Simulation Pre-Post Survey Comparisons

PRE-Survey Question: My experience with COPE will likely influence

My experience in this COPE will likely influence (check all that apply):

221 responses

Label	Value
Interactions with low-income in…	180 (81.4%)
Understanding of and assumpti…	178 (80.5%)
Involvement in poverty alleviati…	136 (61.5%)
Input on the approach and poli…	150 (67.9%)
Efforts to influence public initiat…	146 (66.1%)
	2 (0.9%)
broadcast community engagem…	1 (0.5%)
all of the above	1 (0.5%)
Help more people!	1 (0.5%)
Advocating for policy change	1 (0.5%)
My ability to discuss the effects…	1 (0.5%)
Homeless outreach	1 (0.5%)

POST-Survey Question: My experience with COPE will likely influence

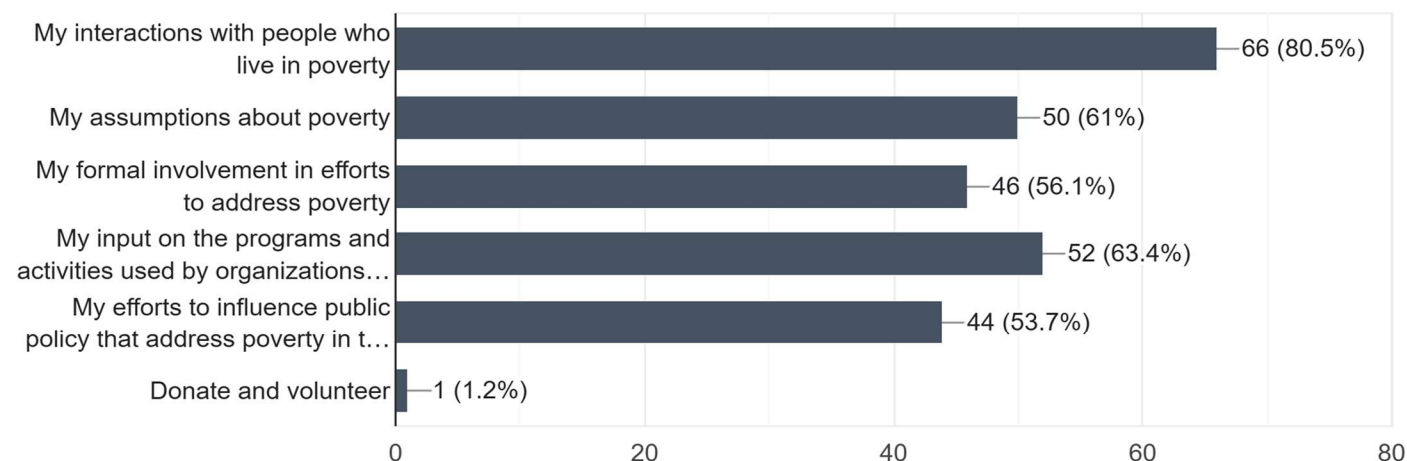My experience in this COPE will likely influence (check all that apply):

82 responses

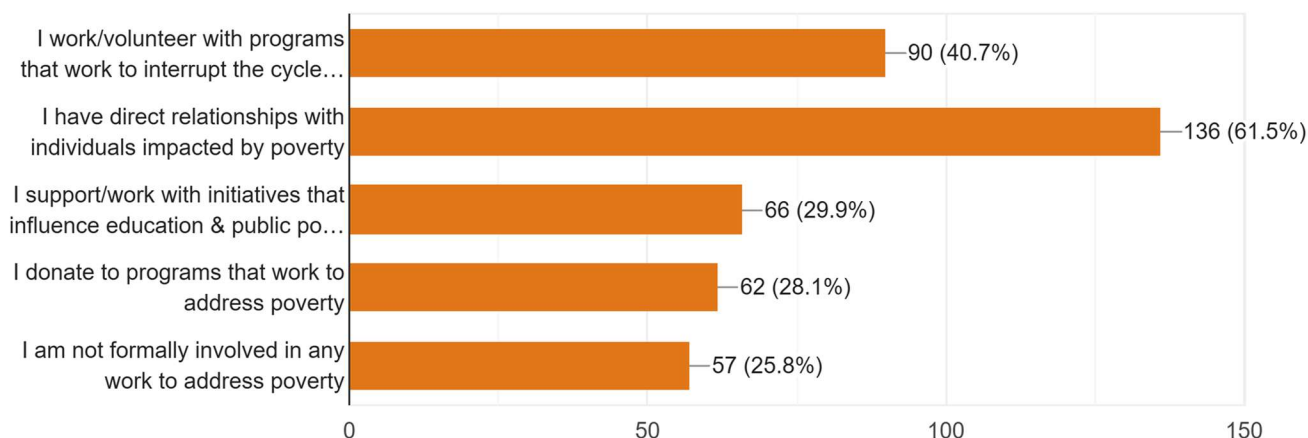| Label	Value
My interactions with people who live in poverty	66 (80.5%)
My assumptions about poverty	50 (61%)
My formal involvement in efforts to address poverty	46 (56.1%)
My input on the programs and activities used by organizations…	52 (63.4%)
My efforts to influence public policy that address poverty in t…	44 (53.7%)
Donate and volunteer	1 (1.2%)

Highlights: Participants indicate that their assumptions about poverty will change, and that they will increase their effort to influence public policy around issues addressing poverty

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PRE-Survey Question: Indicate specific ways you are involved in poverty Alleviation

Please indicate below specific ways you are involved in poverty alleviation (Check all that apply)
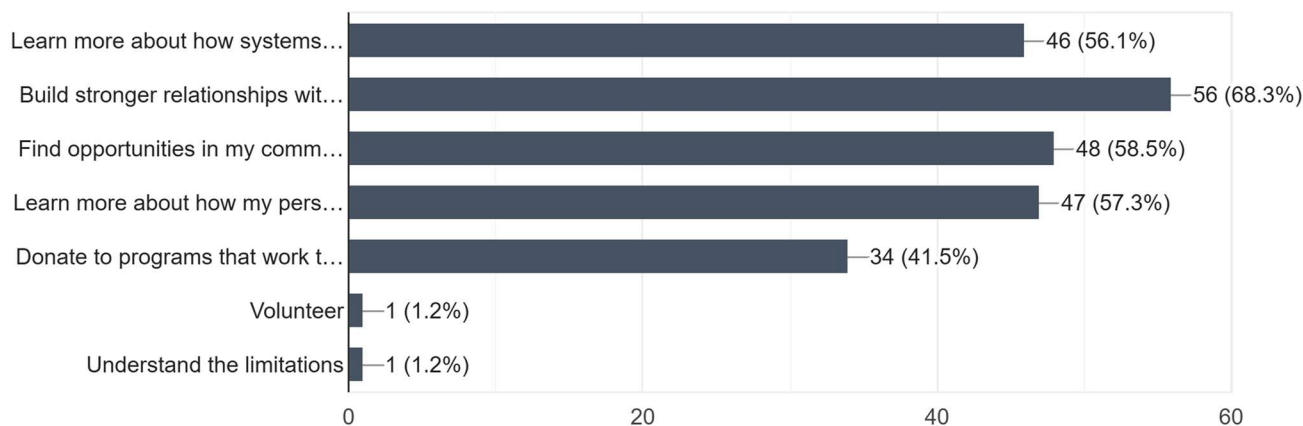221 responses

Response	Count (%)
I work/volunteer with programs that work to interrupt the cycle…	90 (40.7%)
I have direct relationships with individuals impacted by poverty	136 (61.5%)
I support/work with initiatives that influence education & public po…	66 (29.9%)
I donate to programs that work to address poverty	62 (28.1%)
I am not formally involved in any work to address poverty	57 (25.8%)

POST-Survey Question: Indicate Specific step you'd like to take to follow-up on your experience in this training

Please indicate below specific steps you'd like to take to follow up on your experience in this training (Check all that apply)
82 responses

Response	Count (%)
Learn more about how systems…	46 (56.1%)
Build stronger relationships wit…	56 (68.3%)
Find opportunities in my comm…	48 (58.5%)
Learn more about how my pers…	47 (57.3%)
Donate to programs that work t…	34 (41.5%)
Volunteer	1 (1.2%)
Understand the limitations	1 (1.2%)

Highlights: Building stronger relationships with people impacted by poverty and learning how their personal and professional interactions impact people living in poverty as their main take-a-ways.