Butterfly

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Anthropology& 206D (W)

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College Paper

# Entering the field

Anthropologists serve in many different areas. They work to find new avenues where interaction between human can be made more workable and productive. Anthropologist care for the community by working over the most prudent options which can benefit others. The community food banks are one such example of this. If a research-based mechanism is applied to study the demand and supply of food articles, it could be beneficial for both the food bank authorities and for the consumers. Since anthropologists work much differently, compared to other social scientists, therefore they often contradict with the perception of other social scientists. The under-discussed study is conducted in the Marysville community food bank which provides food to many elderly and financially unstable citizens. This community food bank is located in the state of Washington and provides food at the specified time to its consumers. The food bank serves the food demands of approximately three-fifty families per week.

Located at right behind the church of St. Mary, this food bank is open at different timings for seven days a week. It is located here since 1974 and serves the food requirement of the needy. The food bank operates with the help of volunteers who play their part in different roles. Some volunteer’s help in gathering food, sorting it out and some customize it as per the need of the visitors. Similarly, there are volunteers who look after the walk-in guests. They offer the place, food, and other stuff to the client. The Food Bank authorities also take care of maintaining the quality of food. No food there appeared perished or ingredient-wise stumpy. The food bank authorities take the utmost care ion to maintain the hygiene of the food carriers. For such reasons, the food bank is serving for many decades. Its visitors have never complained about the foodstuff and its quality.

# Findings

An interview conducted with the Director of Marysville community food bank, I found that the Director himself was responsible for the very ordinary work. He said “I clean up, and I am responsible for the general work.” it shows that the food bank operates in a very easy to go environment. The Director also elaborated about the food quality which he believes is hygienic, fresh and sterile. I have observed a practical example of faith and acceptance while being there. People work without requiring cash or anything else for this food bank. Considering the diverse role of the food bank, its operations could not meet unless many people come together and work for making both ends meet. I interviewed the director there, who claimed that “there are different categories of volunteers”; who come together at their specified timings and help in managing the staff at the venue. From collecting food from the specified places until the last consumers, the volunteers work in categories of “sorting food, shopping assistance, maintenance, and distribution.”

The trip at the food bank offered an insightful experience to the supply chain management. It was different from a typical supply chain management operation. Since the complete work is voluntary, therefore, it offers an exciting case study about how a voluntary task is met. The director explained the different phases of food collection, it's sorting, and repackaging. The complete operation according to him is met in hours or so. The orderly pattern, what the food bank reflects is even hard to find in established organizations. Other than the operation functions, the management it requires is huge. The food bank authority manages this in some minimum resources it is provided by some people. It met all these necessities by collaborating not only with the private entities but also with some federal government organizations. They offer the authorities some handful amount which is helpful in meeting the financial requirements of the food bank and some essential staff.

Our interview was not limited to sorting out the managerial operations and administrative responsibilities, rather we explored other areas too. For example, while talking about food handling, the director explained to us, that utmost care is taken to assure that person carrying food is hygienic and is in good health conditions. He explained about the donations, which he referred to as the essential amount required to meet administrative tasks. Unlike other food banks, the Marysville takes help from “food donating centers”. They offer help just in case the food is required to keep fresh and intact. These centers make sure that no one except the Marysville staff touches the food. It then makes other tasks such as further sorting, freezing or refreezing of the food for the Marysville staff easier. I have been to different areas of the food bank and have not found anything extra, which might in any way affect the presence of food.

I even asked the manager about any specific category of the customers they have made. He promptly responded, “we provide food to our community without any question or judgment.” Concerning the anthropology framework, the Marysville meets each requirement of a community welfare program. It meets the requirement of helping people, caring for the community needs, managing donations and voluntary basis, etc. In addition to this, the food bank authorities have practically manifested the resolve to keep on continuing the operations. The settling there also suggest that the food Bank authorities are handling the operations effectively, and the number of visitors along with voluntary participation is increasing.