Assignment 1: Agency Report

Name of Student:

Name of Professor:

Name of Institution:

Date:

**Q1: Include a description and history of the agency, the mission statement, philosophy, service, and operations; principles, code of ethics, eligibility criteria, age groups, programs, and whether services are on or off reserve.**

Ontario Native Women’s Association, also known as ONWA is an organization that works for the empowerment, endorsement and upkeep of indigenous women as well as their families. This is a nonprofit organization. ONWA works specifically in the province of Ontario, Canada. The association focuses and centers on native, regional, federal and provincial activities via exploration, encouragement, activism, policy development and several programs. Ontario Native Women’s Association was established in 1971. ONWA stands as a voice for the problems and issues of indigenous women.

The programs delivered by this organization are diverse and have been developed in cultural terms, to provide facilities to indigenous families specially women, irrespective of their standing and area. The mission and vision of the organization is to provide the indigenous women and their families such services that helps and aids in making the indigenous community powerful and capable, along with the guarantee and assurance to preserve the beliefs, art, language, traditions, custom and heritage of indigenous community. The mission also includes that the violence that is prevalent in the society against indigenous peoples should end. Indigenous women should be given equal access to the judicial system, education system, and health system and policy development. People from indigenous community should be capable of sitting at higher positions in any organization.

Ontario Native Women’s Association maintains the social and cultural wellbeing of all the women and families belonging to indigenous community. The main reason behind this is that every woman irrespective of their culture or social standing should be living a good life. At the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) we will support women to take up their leadership roles in the family and in the community. It supports leadership ability, headship and good management in indigenous women. For this the most important thing is that the voice this organization is heard and that it raises voice for most apt and concerning issues of community. The philosophy of this organization is that the history and lineage of indigenous community has to be preserved and treated with esteem, honor, social equality and impartiality. There should not be any kind of discrimination, which the indigenous women have been facing for many decades. Every service and every opportunity should be provided to indigenous women and their families regardless of where they are from.

The principles of the Ontario Native Women’s association include “bravery”, “honesty”, “humility”, “love”, “respect”, “truth” and “wisdom”. This means that the organization is wants to promote all these characteristics and qualities in indigenous women and their families through the programs and services they offer. The programs and services include “Aboriginal Diabetes Education”, “Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Awareness”, “Breaking Free from Family Violence”, “Community Health Outreach”, “Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women”, “Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking”, “Indigenous Women’s Leadership”, “Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Family Support”, “Urban Aboriginal Strategy” and many others. The programs are only for indigenous women and their families without any discrimination of their background.

**Q2: Review the eligibility criteria and identify how these criteria reflect beliefs about human nature, e.g., deserving vs. undeserving poor (Module 1). Make specific reference to how well this fits an Indigenous world view, as well as lifestyle, e.g., hunting, fishing.**

Ontario Native Women’s Association develops the programs and provides the services to the Indigenous Women and their families. There is no other pre-requisite to be a part of programs. The selection is irrespective of the social standing or thee tribal heritage of the indigenous community. All the programs that are offered by this organization are essentially focused on the wellbeing of indigenous people as well as on the development of indigenous women, since the foundation of any family is highly dependent on women. These programs are formed in such a way that they should throw light on the problems of poor indigenous people who are deprived of facilities and services.

These programs help to make indigenous people mature and capable enough to participate in municipal, federal, provincial, regional and governmental level. Having such aim and mission, it is highly possible that the voice of every individual of indigenous community will be heard and reached to the government for better reforms and better practices. The programs address a wide range of problems. The subjects covered are diverse. The programs and services are provided in two different ways. One of these ways is that the familiarity and information about certain issue is given to the participants.

The program coordinators are assigned with a duty to provide a service encompassing various activities. These activities may include some workshops, various educational promotions or movements and regional events. Other than this, the second way is based on funding models. This include the services provided on the Ontario Native Women’s Association website and other partner websites or organization that also have the mission to form a better community and to make indigenous women capable enough. These partner organizations are selected on the base of what the organizations offer and what is the need and requirement of the community. In addition to this, the service structure of ONWA is such that it shows and illustrates the reality of women of indigenous communities.

Indigenous women encounter many difficulties and problems such as violence, substance abuse, trauma, mental disorders and several health issues. The services and the basis of programs reflect the authentic and genuine problems of indigenous women and their families. These services also work with the indigenous community to make sure that the problems are brought under light and the needs of indigenous community are being answered to via these community and capacity building programs. For example, in the program youth life promotion, the activities are such that they provide an opportunity to indigenous youth to practice the traditional lifestyle. These activities include “bear fat rendering, community clean-ups, community kitchen, drum making, family-orientated activities, fire Keeper teachings, gardening, harvesting, moccasin making, prep and tan hides, snowshoeing, storytelling, syrup making and tea or bannock teachings”. All the programs are in accordance with the indigenous issues and their world view as well as their lifestyle and activities.

**Q3: Canada has been identified as a *pluralistic society*, which has had negative impacts for the Indigenous community (Module 1) as they are not well represented in the planning and development of social programs. In reviewing the services this agency provides, can you identify some potential problems or conflicts with Indigenous values and lifestyle?**

Cultural pluralism is an expression which is used when the smaller cultural groups are accepted in a large community. The smaller cultural groups are able to maintain their own cultural individuality. There is a chance that the traditions of smaller cultural groups are accepted by the dominant culture, with a condition that if those traditions or customs are one way or other comply with the dominant culture. In such culture, all the cultural groups live in the same society. These cultural groups do not only harmonize but the dominant cultural group can acquire the qualities or characteristics of smaller group, if worthy.

The pluralistic society integrate people from diverse groups into the social order as equals instead of accepting the customs of a different culture and entirely becoming part of a different society. This is a very elusive yet very noteworthy difference. Such integration of culture is only possible if the dominant culture is accepting enough or the law and regulation is strong enough that it can guarantee the safety of smaller group. There is a chance that dominant culture will accept the smaller group if the minority cultural group will eliminate a few or more aspects, customs or traditions from their culture.

We see that in Canada such cultural integration has not resulted in something beneficial. Indigenous people are among minorities. They are not at any government post which makes their participation in the government issues, planning or development and policy making nil. Furthermore, the laws and policies do not provide adequate security and provision to indigenous people. They are discriminated in health systems. They do not have access to proper education and good jobs. The programs and the services provided by Ontario Native Women’s association greatly focus on the discriminations that indigenous women face due to the pluralistic approach in Canadian society.

Each and every program that is offered by ONWA ensures that the activities performed by the participants should include the cultural events or traditional support, for the reason that indigenous people do not part ways from their cultural norms and retain their lifestyle. The program “Breaking Free from Family Violence” offers the services that support the indigenous women in practicing their culture and traditions. The youth promotion programs also ensured that indigenous people stay connected with their values and lifestyle by making them perform the activities such as gardening, harvesting, fishing and many more. These activities are a part of indigenous lifestyle and culture.

However, after reviewing all the programs and services it has been observed that the ratio of such activities is not appropriate. Not all programs offered by ONWA provide the cultural and traditional services. Moreover, if these services are provided in the form of lecture then they are of no use. Rather these cultural support activities should be practical. This will make the indigenous women and girls know the practical lifestyle. It will have a positive impact on the development and other skills of indigenous women.

**Q4: Can you identify changes or modifications to the service or how the service is delivered that would better serve the Indigenous community? Are the services culturally appropriate?**

The basic motto of ONWA is to support indigenous women in all dimensions and spheres, and to build up their leadership skills. To become a good leader, knowledge and information is necessary and this knowledge and information is entrenched in the tradition and the culture of the community. To make sure that indigenous women become a good leader then they should regain and cultivate their self-respect and make sure that the pain they have gone through should not affect them mentally.

They should place their hurtful feelings and trauma where it does not hurt them. The close affinity with the cultural practices can make indigenous women achieve this goal. The make the programs serve better to indigenous communities, ONWA should develop the programs that will impart good communication and interpersonal skills in indigenous women; so when they will speak, they will speak with sanity, balance, power and compassion. ONWA is helping indigenous women to fight against the culturally rooted violence that has become a part of their life, through a program “Breaking Free from Family Violence”. To achieve better leadership qualities, this culturally rooted abuse and violence should be eradicated. This can be done by imparting education and awareness.

These programs will only serve the indigenous community if the correct issues are addressed. They will serve if the truth is spoken and brought to light. Indigenous community can only prosper if the real issues and problems are taken to the governmental level truthfully. Most of the content of the programs is appropriate, but then again there are certain points which can be modified such that they can help indigenous women and their families to play a good and strong part at governmental level and policy making. Not only the awareness should be created but the laws should also be modified. The agency should incorporate headship skills and public speaking skills that will help indigenous women to speak up about their rights at any stage or any level. For instance, the program “Ending Violence against Indigenous Women” does educate women and assists them in moving forward in their lives after the sexual or physical attack but there is a chance that the same offender might attack any other woman.

So, instead of just giving information or awareness, self-defense techniques could have been taught. In the same way, as stated above, leadership comes from knowledge of your culture, tradition, heritage and legacy. The “Indigenous Women’s Leadership Program” could have make use or cultural practices instead of cultural teachings. This would enhance the knowledge of the participant about the indigenous culture, art, music, literature and lifestyle. As far as the cultural appropriation is concerned, these programs and the services are based on the indigenous culture and hence culturally appropriate. For example, the “Ska-Be” program included cultural activities and practices that would bring the families of indigenous women closer. Almost every program includes the cultural teaching, but some of them include theoretical information rather than practical knowledge.

**Q5: Are the services or supports provided more indicative of a residual or an institutional (Module 1) approach to helping people?**

The two different approaches residual and institutional are form of a model which is focused in addressing to any social work regarding issues such as poverty, hunger, heath. There is a form of government involvement in both the approaches, the difference lies down on the fact that in residual approach the government is a greatly involved with the program whereas in institutional, government only intervenes when it is needed.

The residual model which some of the organizations have adopted are that of the last resort for people and thus greater need for government intervention is required. When individuals in unfortunate positions in life are unable to get help from friends, family or any other relations then it is important for the government to intervene and help these people out and fill their needs. Once someone who has opted for this form of an organization, it is mainly for those who are poor. They are given support through the help of getting food stamps, if an individual needs emergency housing they can help provide for it or if any medical assistance is required. Once an individual is able to get back on their feet where they can support themselves, they are cut out of the program.

The institutional approach consists of very little government intervention, only when it is needed by such organizations. In this approach, the facilities of the social welfare are provided to the rich and the poor and thus there is no discrimination regarding the social class of individuals. This approach believes that these kinds of institutions should be an essential part of a society and available for every single citizen. In these institution people don’t come and go as it is done in the residual approach where this practice is common. Since these places can be very expensive to administrate and thus then comes the need for government intervention where some assistance is provided. Some of the examples that can be given for this kind of approach are public schools, libraries in some cases Medicare is also provided under the care of institutional approach. The main belief is that these requirements should be available to everyone coming from all walks of life regardless of color, creed and that this is seen as something that anyone can have access to and not used when someone is in a dire need, a consistency is shown with people where everyone is equal.

When comparing these two together with ONWA, we can understand that ONWA has an institutional approach where, although they are focused on the welfare of indigenous people, but there is no discrimination in the terms of poor or rich, they main aim is to empower all sorts of indigenous women and their families so that they can lead a happy their best life.

**Q6: Describe how this agency utilizes knowledge about facts, practice, theory, and values and the material world to serve its clients**

The main aim for the Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA) is to support and empower women belonging to indigenous community and their families. This whole process is done through extensive research. The programs are made available and developed locally, regionally and provincially. This association also helps in developing policies in the favor of the indigenous women. Since about 1971, this association has offered a good number of programs for indigenous women and without taking in the account their social status, standings or from where they belong. Their aim is to stop the violence which these indigenous women face. There is also the discrimination faced by them and their families pertaining to the education, health and economic development. The goal is that these women and their families should have a comfortable life. There are many ways in which this association utilizes knowledge and this is done by the development of the community programs.

These programs help indigenous women in having better access to knowledge and information which the program coordinator delivers. There is a service delivery model which essentially means that there are different workshops, different campaigns and activates which are conducted regionally. If you go on the website of ONWA, it can be noticed that there is a section available that says learning and resources. Under this there is an option that takes the user to learning section. This link helps in providing information about the latest trends that are happening around the world, some news or some fact that everyone should be aware of. Right now, it provides its users with information about COVID-19 and many more such as, diabetes, human trafficking, murders and more information about the problems concerning the indigenous women, girls and their families. Some of the programs and services that this association has are all available on their website.

Over here they have given many topics on which there are some workshops available, such as Aboriginal Diabetes Education. They provide same facts about diabetes and tell what the program would include, such as prevention measures, educational activities, and nutritional education. In addition to this, the programs also inform about the cultural practices and indigenous lifestyle. It also aids in building the knowledge of the participant about giving awareness related to a topic which is the issue of indigenous community; such as gambling. It also provides with resource development, information and support. Likewise, there are the covers and newsletters that help provide facts and figures about the latest trends and issues all over the world and regarding the programs of the association. It also has few articles that address the problems of indigenous women such as their vulnerable mental health and trauma. ONWA efficaciously make use of the facts and figures to address the issues on their website, through their articles, blogs and pamphlets. This keeps the client updated.

**Reference**

Ontario Native Women Association. (2020). Retrieved from [www.onwa.ca](http://www.onwa.ca/)