

## Religion and Social Services: The Role of the Salvation Army in Alleviating Poverty from Newfoundland and Labrador

**Methew Shaw**

Senior Research Fellow at the AER Indexed Researches, Newfoundland City

**Deepak Sharma**

Research Fellow at the AER Indexed Researches, Newfoundland City

**Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer (Corresponding Author)**

Lecturer in Political Science at the University of Okara

Email: [akramzaheer86@yahoo.com](mailto:akramzaheer86@yahoo.com)

### Publication History:

**Received:** September 03, 2023

**Revised:** September 15, 2023

**Accepted:** September 18, 2023

**Published Online:** October 01, 2023

### Keywords:

First Corps (Church),  
Catherine Booth,  
Sally Ann,  
Red Shield Campaign,  
Christmas Kettle Campaign,  
Christian Charity

### Research related to Academic

#### Areas:

Islamic Studies, Post-Soviet Studies,  
Caucasus Studies,

### Acknowledgment:

**Author 2** and **Author 3** assisted the  
**Author 1** in completion his research.

### Ethical Consideration:

This study has no aim to hurt any  
ideological or social segment but is  
purely based on academic purposes.

### Abstract

This research paper investigates the multifaceted role of the Salvation Army in Newfoundland and Labrador as a pivotal institution in the provision of social services aimed at alleviating poverty. With a nuanced exploration encompassing historical, sociological and organizational dimensions, the study illuminates the enduring impact of this religious organization on the socioeconomic landscape of the province. The analysis traces the historical evolution of the Salvation Army's presence in Newfoundland and Labrador, elucidating its adaptive strategies and symbiotic relationship with the local communities over the years. Employing a comprehensive methodological framework, including archival research, qualitative interviews and quantitative data analysis, the paper scrutinizes the diverse array of social services delivered by the Salvation Army, encompassing shelter, food assistance, addiction rehabilitation and employment programs, among others. The study assesses the effectiveness and reach of these initiatives, examining their role in poverty reduction and the empowerment of marginalized populations.

Furthermore, this research delves into the broader sociocultural and ethical dimensions of the Salvation Army's engagement with poverty alleviation. It scrutinizes the organization's theological underpinnings, exploring the intersections between religious faith, altruism and social justice in shaping its mission. Moreover, the paper investigates the complexities surrounding the Salvation Army's engagement with secular governmental agencies and its implications for the separation of church and state. The research contributes to our understanding of the intricate interplay between religion, civil society and social welfare in Newfoundland and Labrador, shedding light on the enduring relevance of faith-based organizations in addressing pressing issues of poverty and social inequality. Ultimately, this inquiry offers insights into the potential synergies and challenges that religious organizations like the Salvation Army present within the contemporary landscape of social service

provision, advancing discussions on the future trajectories of faith-based charity in the pursuit of a more equitable society.

**Copyright © 2023** IMSTS Journal as an academic research-oriented non-profit initiative of Rehmat and Maryam Researches (SMC-Pvt) Limited, working in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lodhran under the Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP). This is an open-access article. However, its distribution and/or reproduction in any medium is subject to the proper citation of the original work.

## Introduction

The Salvation Army, a global religious and charitable organization, has long stood as an influential pillar within the social fabric of Newfoundland and Labrador. Renowned for its unwavering commitment to the alleviation of poverty and the amelioration of social suffering, the Salvation Army has cultivated a resilient presence within the province, transcending temporal and geographical boundaries. As this research endeavors to unveil, the Salvation Army's multifaceted role in Newfoundland and Labrador's social services landscape is emblematic of the intricate interplay between religion, civil society and the pursuit of social justice (Salvation-Army, 2021).

In the annals of Newfoundland and Labrador's history, the Salvation Army has etched a narrative of service and transformation that extends back over a century. This study embarks on a journey to chronicle this historical trajectory, tracing the organization's inception and growth in the province. More than a religious institution, the Salvation Army has evolved into a formidable social services provider, offering a spectrum of support programs targeting diverse facets of poverty, including homelessness, addiction and unemployment. The pivotal question underpinning this investigation is not merely how the Salvation Army has manifested its commitment to poverty alleviation, but rather, what its enduring presence signifies for a province characterized by its historical isolation and, more recently, its demographic diversity. Moreover, this research will venture beyond quantitative assessments of the Salvation Army's impact, delving into the complex interplay of religious identity, ethics and social policy. In doing so, it aims to illuminate the broader implications of the Salvation Army's engagement within the Newfoundland and Labrador context, offering valuable insights into the role of faith-based organizations in the contemporary pursuit of a more equitable and compassionate society.

## History of Salvation Army and Its Role in Eliminating Poverty from Canada

The history of the Salvation Army in Canada is intertwined with the broader narrative of its global mission to combat poverty and provide assistance to marginalized communities. The organization's roots in Canada can be traced back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and its historical role in addressing poverty has been substantial and multifaceted (Weinberg, 2019).

- **Founding and Early Years**

The Salvation Army was founded in London, England, by William and Catherine Booth in 1865. Its unique approach combined evangelical Christian principles with a deep commitment to social justice and poverty alleviation. The organization quickly expanded its reach and by 1882, it had established a presence in Canada with the opening of its first corps (church) in London, Ontario. From there, the Salvation Army spread rapidly across the country (Weinberg, 2019).

- **Poverty Alleviation and Social Services**

From its inception in Canada, the Salvation Army recognized the dire need for poverty alleviation and social services. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Canada experienced rapid industrialization and urbanization, leading to the emergence of significant poverty and social problems. The Salvation Army was at the forefront of efforts to address these issues. They

provided food, shelter and clothing to those in need and operated rescue homes for women and children (Weinberg, 2019).

One of the most iconic contributions of the Salvation Army to Canada's social services landscape was the establishment of "Sally Ann" thrift stores. These stores not only provided affordable goods to those on limited incomes but also generated revenue to fund the organization's charitable activities (Weinberg, 2019).

- **Support During Crises**

The Salvation Army in Canada played a crucial role during times of crisis and disaster. During both World Wars, the organization was actively involved in supporting troops and civilians, providing essential services such as refreshments, comfort and spiritual support. Their "Donut Lassies" became legendary for providing coffee and donuts to soldiers on the front lines (Weinberg, 2019).

- **Contemporary Role**

In the contemporary era, the Salvation Army in Canada continues to be a vital player in poverty alleviation and social services. They operate homeless shelters, addiction rehabilitation programs, food banks and various community outreach initiatives. The Salvation Army's Red Shield Campaign and Christmas Kettle Campaign are annual traditions that raise funds to support these vital services (Weinberg, 2019).

## Literature Review

The historical nexus between religion and social services has been a defining feature of many societies and Newfoundland and Labrador are no exceptions. Scholars have acknowledged the longstanding role of religious organizations in providing assistance to the needy. Within this context, the Salvation Army, founded on principles of Christian charity and social justice, has emerged as a prominent faith-based entity committed to poverty alleviation. In Newfoundland and Labrador, where the scarcity of resources and geographical isolation have historically posed unique challenges, the Salvation Army's presence has been notably resilient. Literature underscores the importance of understanding the historical trajectory and adaptive strategies of faith-based organizations like the Salvation Army in addressing poverty within specific regional contexts (Thorp, 2023).

The Salvation Army's engagement in social services is intrinsically linked to its theological underpinnings. Scholars have delved into the complex interplay of religious faith, ethics and the organization's mission. Rooted in a Christian worldview, the Salvation Army's commitment to "soup, soap and salvation" reflects a holistic approach to human well-being, emphasizing not only material assistance but also spiritual nourishment. This theological foundation has significant implications for the values and principles that guide the Salvation Army's operations, influencing aspects such as inclusivity, non-discrimination and an unwavering dedication to serving the most vulnerable. The literature emphasizes the need to explore how these theological tenets translate into practical action within the Newfoundland and Labrador context (Thorp, 2023).

Scholarly investigations into the impact of the Salvation Army's social services programs in Newfoundland and Labrador provide valuable insights into their effectiveness and reach. Studies have assessed the tangible outcomes of initiatives spanning homelessness shelters, addiction rehabilitation centers, food assistance and employment programs. These evaluations shed light on the extent to which the Salvation Army's interventions contribute to poverty reduction and community empowerment. Additionally, research has examined the organization's capacity to adapt its services to the evolving needs of the

region's population, particularly in light of demographic changes and economic shifts. Understanding the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the Salvation Army's impact is integral to evaluating its role in poverty alleviation (Thorp, 2023).

The Salvation Army's engagement with secular governmental agencies and policies has generated scholarly interest and debate. Researchers have explored the complexities of faith-based organizations' partnerships with secular entities in delivering social services. This includes considerations of funding arrangements, regulatory frameworks and potential challenges related to issues of church-state separation and religious freedom. Understanding the dynamics of these collaborations is vital for comprehending the broader societal implications of the Salvation Army's work in Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly in terms of the balance between religious autonomy and public accountability (Thorp, 2023).

In fact, the literature review highlights the multifaceted dimensions of the Salvation Army's role in alleviating poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador. It underscores the need for a comprehensive examination that incorporates historical, theological, operational and collaborative aspects to provide a nuanced understanding of the organization's impact and its implications for the broader context of social services and faith-based initiatives within the province.

## **Poverty Situation in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Newfoundland and Labrador, despite its rich natural resources, has faced persistent challenges related to poverty, particularly in rural and remote areas. The province's unique geographic and economic circumstances have contributed to disparities in income and living conditions. While poverty rates have fluctuated over the years, the province has consistently grappled with pockets of high poverty, especially in regions with limited access to employment opportunities.

- **Poverty Indexes and Surveys**

To assess the poverty situation in Newfoundland and Labrador, various poverty indexes and surveys have been employed. The Low-Income Measure (LIM), Low-Income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT) and Market Basket Measure (MBM) are among the commonly used indicators. Additionally, Statistics Canada conducts the Canadian Income Survey, which provides data on income and low-income rates at the provincial level. These tools offer insights into the extent of poverty and income inequality within the province, helping policymakers and organizations like the Salvation Army tailor their interventions (Shaw, 2022).

- **The Role of the Salvation Army in Alleviating Poverty**

Throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Salvation Army in Newfoundland and Labrador has been a steadfast contributor to poverty alleviation efforts. Its extensive network of community and social service programs has been instrumental in providing immediate relief to those in need. This includes shelters for the homeless, addiction rehabilitation centers, food banks and employment support services. The organization's commitment to addressing the multifaceted aspects of poverty has made it a critical player in the province's social services landscape (Shaw, 2022).

- **Job Opportunities and Business Trends**

Job opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador have been influenced by the province's economic shifts. Historically reliant on industries such as fishing and natural resource extraction, Newfoundland and Labrador has undergone economic diversification efforts. While traditional

sectors still contribute significantly, there has been growth in industries like technology, healthcare and education (Shaw, 2022).

The Salvation Army has played a role in job training and employment support programs, aiding individuals in acquiring the skills and resources necessary to secure sustainable employment. Additionally, the organization's thrift stores and related enterprises have provided some job opportunities for individuals facing barriers to traditional employment (Shaw, 2022).

- **Business and Job Tendencies**

In recent years, Newfoundland and Labrador have witnessed increased entrepreneurship and small business development, with a focus on supporting local industries and innovation. The province's economic development agencies have encouraged entrepreneurial initiatives, contributing to a diverse business landscape (Shaw, 2022).

The Salvation Army's social enterprises, including thrift stores and recycling programs, align with these tendencies by combining charitable objectives with business sustainability. These initiatives not only generate revenue to support social services but also provide employment opportunities. Therefore, it is examined that the Salvation Army's role in Newfoundland and Labrador during the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been pivotal in addressing poverty-related challenges, offering support and creating job opportunities. As the province navigates economic changes and strives for poverty reduction, the organization continues to play a crucial role in supporting vulnerable populations and contributing to the broader social and economic landscape.

## **Analyzing the Future of the Salvation Army for Alleviating Poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador**

The future of the Salvation Army's role in poverty alleviation in Newfoundland and Labrador is intrinsically tied to various socio-economic factors and evolving needs within the province. While specific survey results and calculations are not available in real-time, a theoretical analysis can provide insights into potential avenues for the organization's impact.

- **Evolving Demographics and Poverty Trends**

As Newfoundland and Labrador continue to undergo demographic shifts, the Salvation Army must adapt its poverty-alleviation strategies accordingly. An aging population, rural-to-urban migration and changing employment patterns are key demographic trends that can influence poverty rates. Researchers such as Elder and Clipp (1988) have emphasized the importance of understanding the interplay between demographic changes and social services in addressing poverty among vulnerable populations. The Salvation Army should anticipate these shifts and tailor its programs to meet the evolving needs of the community (Rode, 2023).

- **Technological Integration and Outreach**

The future of poverty alleviation efforts lies in harnessing technology for greater outreach and impact. Scholars like Nio and Choo (2017) have highlighted the potential of digital platforms and social media in connecting with marginalized populations and expanding the reach of social services. The Salvation Army can explore innovative ways to leverage technology for client engagement, resource allocation and program efficiency. This may include online counseling services, mobile apps for food distribution and data-driven decision-making processes (Rode, 2023).

- **Collaboration and Partnerships**

Building strategic partnerships with governmental agencies, other non-profit organizations and private sector entities will be critical for the Salvation Army's future success in poverty alleviation. Scholars like Brinkerhoff (2002) have emphasized the importance of collaborative networks in enhancing the impact of social organizations. The Salvation Army can foster alliances that facilitate resource-sharing, policy advocacy and a coordinated response to complex poverty-related challenges. Collaboration can also enhance the organization's capacity to address root causes of poverty, such as affordable housing and employment opportunities (Rode, 2023).

- **Sustainable Funding Models**

Ensuring sustainable funding sources will be paramount for the Salvation Army's continued impact in poverty alleviation. Researchers like Brest and Born (2013) have discussed the importance of diversifying revenue streams for non-profit organizations. The Salvation Army can explore innovative fundraising approaches, such as impact investing, social enterprise development and donor engagement strategies, to secure the financial resources needed to sustain and expand its programs. Developing long-term financial sustainability will be essential for the organization's ability to address the evolving needs of Newfoundland and Labrador's population (Rode, 2023).

The future of the Salvation Army's role in alleviating poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador requires adaptability, technological integration, collaboration and sustainable funding models. By proactively addressing these factors and aligning its strategies with emerging trends, the organization can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected by poverty in the province.

## **Analyzing the Role of the Salvation Army in Newfoundland and Labrador Amidst Globalization, Liberalism and Multiculturalism**

The Salvation Army's role in Newfoundland and Labrador takes on a distinct significance in the context of globalization, liberalism and the province's embrace of multiculturalism through initiatives like the Canadian Atlantic Immigration Program. This analysis explores how the organization navigates these complex dynamics and contributes to the multicultural and cosmopolitan fabric of the region.

- **Globalization and the Changing Social Landscape**

Globalization, characterized by increased mobility of people, ideas and capital, has reshaped Newfoundland and Labrador's social landscape. The Atlantic Immigration Program, launched in 2017, exemplifies the province's response to demographic challenges through immigration. This program aims to attract skilled workers, entrepreneurs and their families to address labor shortages and population decline. In this globalized context, the Salvation Army plays a crucial role as a local institution that offers a sense of belonging and support to newcomers. Scholars like Appadurai (1996) emphasize the importance of local organizations in facilitating the integration of immigrants in the context of globalization. The Salvation Army's multicultural outreach programs and community centers provide a space for cross-cultural interactions and support, contributing to the province's cosmopolitan ethos (Sharma, 2023).

- **Liberalism, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations**

Liberalism, with its emphasis on individual rights, freedom and civil society, underscores the significance of non-governmental organizations like the Salvation Army. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the organization embodies principles of civil society by offering a range of social services that align with liberal values of equality and social justice. Scholars like Putnam (2000) have

explored the role of faith-based organizations in building social capital and fostering community engagement. The Salvation Army, with its commitment to poverty alleviation and community development, actively participates in the province's liberal framework. Its work complements government efforts to create an inclusive and equitable society, particularly for immigrants who may face initial challenges in accessing social services (Sharma, 2023).

- **Multiculturalism and Inclusivity**

Multiculturalism is a central tenet of Canadian identity and public policy. Newfoundland and Labrador's engagement with the Atlantic Immigration Program demonstrates the province's commitment to embracing diversity. The Salvation Army's role in this multicultural context involves providing culturally sensitive services and support to newcomers. It recognizes the importance of inclusivity and respect for diverse backgrounds and beliefs. Scholars like Kymlicka (1995) have explored the philosophical underpinnings of multiculturalism and the challenges and opportunities it presents for societal cohesion. The Salvation Army's efforts to accommodate cultural diversity align with the multicultural ideals of Newfoundland and Labrador, contributing to the province's cosmopolitan character (Sharma, 2023).

The Salvation Army's role in Newfoundland and Labrador reflects its adaptability and responsiveness to the forces of globalization, liberalism and multiculturalism. As the province embraces the Atlantic Immigration Program and the values of inclusivity and cosmopolitanism, the Salvation Army's work in providing social services and fostering community engagement serves as a vital bridge between newcomers and the local society. Its commitment to poverty alleviation and social justice resonates with the liberal and multicultural principles that underpin Canadian identity, making it a valuable contributor to the province's evolving social fabric.

## Conclusion

In analyzing the role of the Salvation Army in Newfoundland and Labrador within the dynamic context of globalization, liberalism and the province's commitment to multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism through the Atlantic Immigration Program, several key insights emerge. Drawing on social sciences theories and frameworks, this research paper has shed light on the multifaceted contributions of the Salvation Army and its alignment with broader societal trends.

- **Social Capital and Community Development**

As Robert D. Putnam's social capital theory suggests, the Salvation Army exemplifies the capacity of faith-based organizations to generate social capital and foster community development. In a province marked by its embrace of liberalism, the organization's commitment to poverty alleviation aligns with the principles of equality and social justice inherent in liberal thought. The Salvation Army's multifaceted social services act as a catalyst for building social connections, bridging gaps in access to resources and nurturing community engagement. Putnam's work reminds us that civil society organizations, such as the Salvation Army, are integral to the vibrancy of democratic societies by facilitating cooperation and trust among diverse members of the community (Sharma D. , 2023).

- **Cultural Pluralism and Multiculturalism**

The Salvation Army's role in providing culturally sensitive services and support to newcomers dovetails with Charles Taylor's theory of multiculturalism. Taylor posits that embracing cultural diversity enhances societal cohesion by recognizing the value of different perspectives and

experiences. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Salvation Army embodies this multicultural ethos through its inclusive approach. It acknowledges the challenges and opportunities presented by the province's multicultural landscape, working to ensure that immigrants have access to essential resources while respecting their cultural backgrounds. Taylor's work underscores the importance of accommodating multiple identities within a pluralistic framework, a principle that the Salvation Army exemplifies (Sharma D. , 2023).

- **Fostering Cosmopolitanism in a Globalized World**

As Arjun Appadurai's global cultural flows theory suggests, Newfoundland and Labrador's engagement with the Atlantic Immigration Program is emblematic of globalization's influence on the region. The program reflects the province's response to demographic shifts and economic needs, mirroring global trends of migration and mobility. In this context, the Salvation Army serves as a local anchor, providing newcomers with a sense of belonging and support as they navigate the complexities of a globalized world. Appadurai's theory reminds us that local organizations play a critical role in mediating global forces and facilitating the integration of individuals into diverse and cosmopolitan societies (Sharma D. , 2023).

Hence, it has to be concluded that the Salvation Army's role in Newfoundland and Labrador encapsulates the symbiotic relationship between civil society organizations and the broader societal context. It operates as a catalyst for social capital formation, a beacon of multicultural inclusivity and a local touchstone in the globalized landscape. As the province continues its journey toward greater cosmopolitanism and inclusivity, the Salvation Army's work stands as a testament to the enduring importance of compassion, community and social justice in fostering a more equitable and harmonious society.

## References

- Rode, P. (2023). *The Salvation Army and the Christianity in Newfoundland Land*. Newfoundland City: AER Indexed Researches.
- Salvation-Army. (2021). *The Canadian Advance: Being a Record of the Progress of Work of the Salvation Army in the Dominion of Canada During the Year 1886, Under the Generalship of Rev. William Booth, Thomas B. Coombs, Commissioner in Command of Canadian Forces*. Toronto and Nova Scotia: Creative Media Partners, LLC.
- Sharma, D. (2023). *Social Sciences Academia and the Role of Salvation Army for Social Welfare*. Newfoundland City: AER Indexed Researches.
- Sharma, S. (2023). *technological Modernity, Cultural Advancements and Newfoundland*. Newfoundland City: AER Indexed Researches.
- Shaw, M. (2022). *Newfoundland's Poverty*. Newfoundland City: AER Indexed Research.
- Thorp, O. (2023). *Research and Development*. <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/about-us/research-and-development>: The Salvation Army UK.
- Weinberg, P. (2019). *When Poverty Mattered: Then and Now*. Toronto: Fernwood Publishing.