

Example of sociology of social change term paper

[Sociology](#), [Poverty](#)



Introduction

Poverty is a major concern in the world today. It is said that about half of the world's population is poor. There are many definitions of the world basing on the point of view. Humanitarian organizations and the United Nations define poverty as the condition where an individual cannot afford proper basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Other organizations go as far as quoting an amount, for example, a poor person is one whose total daily expenditure is below one U. S. dollar.

There are several major problems that affect poor societies all over the world. This is especially in the developing countries in Africa and Asian countries. The problems facing these poor communities are caused by different factors, some controllable, others are natural. However, there are things that can be done to reduce the poverty levels in those societies, avoid some of the problems that these poor people face and promote society welfare. There is also the issue of the future economic, social and political situation in future. In the next fifty years, there will be definitely big changes in the world, specifically in terms of poverty eradication.

The major problems that poor societies experience vary from one society to another. However, these problems have same effects everywhere they are found in society, leading to suffering, social evils and even death.

War

In the developing countries where poverty is rampant, there are common cases of war. War in these countries could be between countries,

communities, or civilian wars. War is very costly; in fact, a country at war allocates a huge chunk of its budget on the military and weapons. There will be need to employ more soldiers to be at the war front. This will reduce the labor force in the economic sectors like food production which contributes to poverty itself. Research has shown that civil war in any country or economy will reduce economic growth rates by about 2.3%.

War will also cause displacements of people who will be left homeless. Homeless people will flee to refugee camps either in their own country or neighboring countries. In such camps, these people are prone to suffer from diseases and hostility from host communities. The host communities have to spend a lot of money to feed the refugees and protect them. The costs of the war usually spill to post war periods where security measures have to be taken to ensure peace prevails. The political stability is usually jeopardized due to opinions on war and ideology which contributes to more problems for the poor people in society.

Mismanagement and bad governance

In the poor societies, the leadership structures are not well defined and the rule of law is not followed to the later. In countries like Congo, Sudan and south Sudan and Nigeria, where there exists natural resources, there have been constant disputes and rows over the resources. In such instances, the Dutch disease factor takes center stage. The natural resources in these countries turn out to have adverse effects on the economy rather than benefiting it.

The issue of bad governance extends to the institutional and structural organization in these poor societies. Usually, the organization and structure of the governance institution is not clearly defined. Therefore, the leaders can violate the rule of law to their own individual benefits and leave the citizens suffering in poverty conditions. There are also free riders who are people who benefit from other individual's efforts. They do not take part in collective action duties yet want to reap the benefits and incentives.

Ethnicity and Cultural diversity

Ethnicity in the poor society like in the African countries is a major factor contributing to poverty and inequality. This is a problem because it is the root cause of political patronage. In such countries, political leaders seek cover in their ethnicity to exploit the nation. This will lead to unequal resource allocation among different regions which different ethnic groups reside. The political leaders will only consider their own ethnic society and will concentrate on that alone rather than fostering national unity and poverty eradication.

Over population

In most of the poor societies, there is the problem of overpopulation. Basically, this is because of there is no emphasis on family planning methods to the citizens. The poor societies also cannot afford the family planning services which results in high birth rates hence, over population. An over populated society needs also to be provided the basic needs. However, with a high dependency ratio, which is characteristic of a poor society, the basic

needs will not be properly provided. The families will not be able to afford the needs.

The overpopulation problem do spills over to essential needs such as education, health care and transport. The poor countries do not have proper and easily accessible facilities like schools and hospitals in every part of the country. Additionally, these services are only obtained at very high cost, of which most of the poor citizens cannot afford. Therefore, this leads to further levels of poverty in the countries.

Corruption

Corruption is a vice that has existed since time memorial. However, it only thrives in places where the rule of law is not respected and justice systems are not efficient. The leaders will engage in unfair businesses, allowing exploitation of the poor people. This is common with African countries where leaders collude with cartels to steal natural resources, like oil in Nigeria and the numerous natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Corrupt leaders do not benefit the poor people; instead, they take whatever the poor people deserve leaving them even more miserable.

Widespread corruption is the main cause of the Dutch disease. In countries where there are natural resources, the foreign currency earned from the minerals sparks mistrust among leaders who try to engage in mischievous tactics to earn themselves some of that income. They even go as far as inciting natives to start fighting. This will always affect the poor community because they are the people who do not benefit from those funds. They are also led to start conflicts which lead to ethnic clashes such as those in

Congo. Therefore, corruption contributes to the problems facing the poor society in two ways. First, the poor do not benefit from what they deserve and secondly, the corruption leads to deterioration of their living standards.

Social Evils

These are the unethical behaviors that come along with poverty. They are caused by the fact that the poor people are not a complete society. These are people who are either living in war ravaged areas, refugee camps or just plain poverty. They do not have access to proper basic needs. Such a society will tend to be infested by different kinds of people. It is in such areas that drug use has manifested itself. The youth in such areas engage in drugs like alcohol, cocaine, bhang and heroine because of different reasons. They could be engaging in drugs because of unemployment frustrations while others will be in it to earn a living from drug dealing.

Another form of social evils is robbery and theft. These communities are characterized by rampant theft and robbery with violence. The poor people do not have a means of survival since most are unemployed and illiterate. Therefore, theft and forceful acquisition of property and food is their only means of earning a living.

Social problems

Poor people in the less developed nations like some African countries face very many social problems. This is in terms of their poor living conditions and environments. The poor communities are usually ravaged by hunger and drought. These countries do not have a defined food production structure. They still use backward ways of farming. Therefore, their food production

does not cater for the whole population for a whole year till the next season of harvest. They also do not have proper storage methods of food. Therefore, these societies are faced with hunger and drought very often leading to deaths and suffering of many people. This has been evident in recent years. Countries like Ethiopia and Kenya have been struck by drought and hunger leading to deaths. International help has been called often to help out the situation.

The poor countries have poor social amenities because their national economies are mainly based on agricultural production rather than industrial production. There is poor infrastructure such as impassable roads due to under construction; there are not adequate schools and health facilities. Even in those facilities available, the cost of delivering services is high; the service delivery is poor due to inadequate staff. There are also environmental issues such as pollution, deforestation and wild life destruction as a result of illegal actions like poaching. The main root cause of the social problems is unemployment and illiteracy and poor governance.

There is so much that can be done to help reverse these adverse poverty conditions in the poor countries. The measures should be taken by all related parties in the poverty problem. These are the affected society, the society leaders, the charitable organizations and the international community.

Improve Governance

The poor countries are characterized by very poor governance, bad leaders and injustice is the order of the day. To eradicate the problems facing the poor people, the type of leadership in these countries has to be changed.

The leaders have to be honest, transparent and be driven by ideology rather than greed. The rules of law should be formulated and implemented to ensure that everything that happens in the country is legal and transparent.

A good system of governance will ensure that there will be ethnicity related problems such as political patronage and unequal resource distribution.

Cases of Dutch disease in countries with natural resources will also reduce because the leaders will be able individuals who can effectively manage national resources and respect the law as well. Good governance will also spread to the rest of the institutions in those countries where the service delivery and professionalism will be maintained. In a nation with good governance, the ethnic diversity will be an added advantage as it promotes cultural diversity which can contribute to the economy through tourism. Good governance also ensures that good policies are put in place to help the poor and eradicate poverty all together. The endowed countries like Congo which is said to have 40 different types of natural resources will be able to enjoy their well deserved resources. The poor nations should therefore embrace comprehensive reforms to help them develop as well as get international help.

International community help

The international community can play a major role in containing the major problems that affect the poor societies. First, the neighboring nations should ensure that there is peace in the war ravaged nations. For example, recently, Kenya, an East African Nation took a bold step by declaring war on the Al Shabaab rebels in Somali, its neighbor. The developed nations should also

help the poor countries which are unable to produce sufficient food, health services and other essential needs to their citizens. This could be by advancing loans or by giving grants to the poor nations. The charitable organizations like the Red Cross Organization also play key roles by advocating for peace, help in humanitarian ways to those affected by war, hunger and other poverty related cases.

The international financial organizations such as the World Bank should also help these countries by loosening their lending terms. These organizations have tough requirements which lock out the poor states which urgently need financial help. The international community can also play a major role in helping the poor by investing in those countries. Investment in poor countries is beneficial to all parties. The poor nations will earn some revenue and citizens will benefit from the employment opportunities created while developed nations get returns from abroad.

In the next fifty years or so, the poverty levels are projected to reduce significantly. Even the poor countries in Africa and Asia are now putting in place poverty eradication measures that will help the countries be at least middle income countries. Currently, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a poverty eradication campaign spearheaded by the United Nations has been adopted by most less developed nations. Other countries such as Kenya have their own development targets like the Vision 2030, whose objective is to ensure the country is a middle income nation by the year 2030. Therefore, in the next 50 years, there will be very few cases of

extreme poverty and the problems facing these societies will reduce or be a thing of the past all together.

Works Cited

Akram-Lodhi, Haroon, Saturnino M Borras and Cristóbal Kay. Land, Poverty and Livelihoods in an Era of Globalization: Perspectives from Developing and Transition Countries. illustrated, reprint. London: Taylor & Francis, 2007.

Townsend, Peter and David Gordon. World Poverty: New Policies to Defeat an Old Enemy. illustrated, reprint. New York: The Policy Press, 2002.

Verner, Dorte. Reducing Poverty, Protecting Livelihoods, and Building Assets in a Changing Climate: Social Implications of Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean. illustrated. New York: World Bank Publications, 2010.