

The severity of poverty in underdeveloped countries case study examples

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



Introduction:

The global economy's output has definitely expanded at an unprecedented rate for the past 25 years. In spite of this, the benefits of this growth have only been experienced by the developing world to a limited degree. This cannot be ascribed to any failure of underdeveloped countries as a group to share in the global economic expansion. In fact, their per capita incomes have been rising steadily over the past quarter century than in previous times. The failure lies in the distribution patterns of earlier growth which alienated the poorest groups from the sphere of economic growth and material developments.

This phenomenon can be looked at in two ways. First, the impressive growth record of the Third World as a whole hides the fact that some of the poorest nations, which contain the majority of the world's poor, have experienced lesser increases. Second, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that economic growth policies implemented in most underdeveloped nations are such that incomes of the poorer populations increase at a lesser than average rate.

Strategies for dealing with massive urban poverty, joblessness, and poor housing:

International debate has focused on policy designs intended to counter the slow development trends of poorer populations. Proponents of a New World Economic Order consider the main objective to be the acceleration of economic growth and development in underdeveloped countries, with special grants for the poorest. Others suggest on policies that will improve

the internal distribution of incomes which include direct measures of satisfying the basic needs of the poorest groups. These issues have only been discussed qualitatively so far with little effort made towards translating the global targets for poverty eradication into more specific and feasible strategies that are examinable.

In terms of direct alleviation of poverty, most common strategies include provision of basic education and health, employment creation, developing physical infrastructure and housing, and improving living conditions (which may include systems delivering crucial services at lower costs). Sometimes the subject of employment creation is tricky since these jobs need to be sustainable. It is therefore important to put social security needs into the agenda and protect the urban poor from shocks in critical policy areas. These include strengthening of intermediary institutions (emergency credit), compensatory schemes, and strengthening the existent coping strategies and measures to limit their erosion, thus making them more sustainable.

How the urban poor can and do influence politics in their country:

The participation of the urban poor in politics especially in free elections and democratization is conditioned by specific socio-political, economic, institutional and cultural factors. Participation in this case refers to all voluntary actions by private individuals that directly or indirectly aim at influencing political decisions at various levels of the political system. Conventional participation includes party membership, while strikes are considered unconventional participation. Citizens can also decide to be universally active, voters only or politically inactive. These differences arise

due to the varying cultural contexts.

The urban poor have limited resources and thus limited participation. Their main participation in politics is through electoral vote, and in some special cases through self-help activities. Voting patterns vary from one country to another but in general, political programs have no effect on the urban poor voter preferences. This is because they either lack interest or do not know about them at all. The urban poor thus usually vote for the personality that gives them the best deal thus leading to welfare oriented choices, intra-party competition, or floating votes. These events can lead to vote shifts therefore further support is needed to create real political influence opportunities for urban voters (Kersting and Sperberg, 2003).

Forms of political expression among the Urban Poor:

The urban poor are usually more informed and politically active than their rural counterparts because they live in urban centers where information is easily accessible. They therefore tend to vote in higher numbers than the rural poor. However, the mode of political expression among the urban poor takes various forms and chief among them is clientelism where members seek to promote their interests by attaching themselves to patrons. This is because they feel that collective action is more productive than individual participation.

The urban poor also have collective goals such as the need for housing and other urban services. Urban poor communities that are politically active can gain amenities such as legality, security, housing and sanitation by expressing themselves collectively. Governments will often cooperate with

such groups in order to gain political support.

The urban poor also tend to express themselves radically by supporting charismatic populists such as Hugo Chavez or radical political parties.

However, while the urban poor may tend to engage in adaptive behavior, urban unrest is more likely to be expressed in occasional riots than in revolution or mass insurrection (Handelman, 1996, p. 214-220).

References:

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