

The harmful consequences of poverty

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Poverty is the world's scourge, I believe. It is much worse than climate change or rhino poaching. Poverty degrades people, makes them unhappy, and easy prey for depression and drugs. It is impossible for people to get ahead when they are poor by getting an education. Poor people cannot get out of debt.

I will deal with some of these consequences in this essay. DebtPoverty means you live every day in financial insecurity. You may have a job that pays so little that by the third week in the month, you literally have nothing left. Or you may be a seasonal or casual worker who only gets work every so often and literally lives from day to day. If you are unemployed, the situation is even worse.

You may not even have a job but fend for yourself on a small piece of land or depend on state handouts. Typically, poor people end up borrowing money mostly from loan sharks, who charge high interest rates. This creates a cycle of debt: you have to borrow, but you can never get on top of the repayments. It's an exhausting life. Can't get a proper educationBecause there is no money, it's impossible to get a good education. Even in countries where education is ostensibly free, there are always costs involved.

There's the uniform. There's all the bits and pieces needed aside from books. There's the cost of transport to school. And food. Many children arrive at school hungry. There is no food at home.

As a result, they cannot concentrate. The brain needs nutrients to function properly. No or poor education means that children cannot move up into the professional world. They are doomed to be seasonal labourers, cleaners and

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the like, or in the poorest countries, no job at all. The cycle of poverty perpetuates itself.

Depression and drugsWe all worry, and what many of us worry about some of the time is money. When what you worry about all of the time is money, you will inevitably get depressed. And when depression sets in, many people turn to drugs because what drugs can offer is escape from your mind. But the effects of drugs wane after a while. And then depression sets in again, and so more drugs are needed.

Any money got is spent on drugs now, rather than food, housing or education. It's destructive for the whole family, who often repeat the cycle.

ExploitationWhen you're poor, you are easy prey for exploitation. If a person is hungry, they will accept almost any job to keep them going. The employer knows this and will often therefore pay the minimum wage (if there is one) or below minimum wage (if there is no set minimum).

The worker cannot complain, for fear of not getting the job. The power relation in these situations is totally imbalanced and unjust. If you live in a country where the state does not have measures in place to deal with poverty the situation is even more pitiful.

ConclusionIn this essay, I have tried to show that poverty has many harmful consequences. Poor people are vulnerable to exploitation because they are desperate for money. They often resort to drugs and drink as a way of escaping their depression that stems from lack of money.

Being in debt, often to unsavoury people who charge high interest rates, means that they can never get out of debt. And finally, poor people cannot

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get ahead and move up in society because to do so, you need a good education, and that costs money that poor people don't have.