

# [This per day. despite the fact that living](https://assignbuster.com/this-per-day-despite-the-fact-that-living/)

This essay discusses the causes of poverty in the world. Poverty and related social inequality are as old as human history. Over the years, people have postulated many causes of poverty and social inequality. The many causes of poverty not withstanding, many definitions of the phenomena have been established.

Whichever the definition, poverty is associated with want, lack of or deprivation of necessities in life. According to World Bank, people are individuals who survive on less than a dollar per day. Despite the fact that living below a dollar, especially in urban areas, is an indicator of being poor, this definition does not apply in given contexts. For people living in some rural areas, the value of what they use as per their market pricing is lower than a dollar.

However, considering the quality of life they live, they are better off than many others who live on more than ten dollars a day in the big cities of the world. Therefore, poverty is a complex concept and highly relative in its application or misapplication.

## Poverty Rates in the World

The world of today has the many people living in better socio-economic conditions than a century ago. However, the divide between the rich has widened over the years with the poor in the world forming an overwhelming majority. Statistics indicate that Africa carries the bulk of the poor in the world. However, even in highly developing nations like India and China, given regions are notably highly impoverished.

The impoverished regions of the world are characterized by dilapidated housing, lack of access to education, health care, frequent famines and other humanitarian disasters and catastrophes. Due to poor infrastructure, response to problems is not efficient and effective enough thus resultant high impacts of disasters that would otherwise be averted. To understand this point better, one has to consider how a natural disaster like a tsunami of say Katrina’s magnitude would affect a third world country. The effects would be high due to poor response unlike what actually happened in the USA.

## Overpopulation and World Poverty

One of the major factors that have contributed to poverty in given areas of the world is overpopulation (Jones 137).

The condition of having many people with fewer available resources combined with little space inevitably results in poverty. Uncontrolled birth rates, in places like Africa, have resulted in a general population boom. The population upsurge has continually exerted pressure on available resources in the world. The available resource in given countries can only support a given number of people (McCarthy 42). One of the critical resources that support mankind is farming. A majority of people around the world depend on farming or general agriculture for sustenance. Population upsurge and resultant splitting of land into smaller pieces has led to less food production.

## Culture and World Poverty

Culture is one of the reasons why people remain glued to practices that perpetuate poverty.

For example, in some developing countries the more children one has the higher he or she is regarded in society. Cultural practices in traditional rural communities usually sanction the ability of large members of the family (Baker 154). The governments of most third world countries give little or no attention to family planning because it goes against the cultural assumptions of the people.

People anticipating to have smaller families experience difficulty in realizing this as others consider them weird (Rohr 105). Surging population rates point to even higher poverty rates in developing countries (Rohr 149).

## Global Distribution of Resources: Historical Injustices and Poverty in Nations

Some thinkers have attributed poverty in some parts of the world to unequal distribution of resources. The legacy of colonialism is largely blamed for unequal resource distribution in the world economy (Baker 1). Most of the developing countries have put more efforts to develop and strengthen their economies with technology and industries but this has been unsuccessful. The inequality in world economy due to historical events has largely hampered poverty alleviation efforts in the world (Pogge 17). Colonialists, for example, left Africa with a very weak infrastructure i.

e. transport systems, power generation and communication after bludgeoning the resources of the colonies. These happenings have derailed all aspects of moving away from poverty because the infrastructure is critical in the development of industries and expansion of the economy (Pogge 123). In recent years, wealthier countries have been accused of neocolonialism i. e.

economic based dominance. This influence has enabled the wealthier countries to acquire inexpensive resources such as oil, ores and mineral from poor countries (Fields 59).

## Education and Unemployment

Lack of educational opportunities hampers development especially of children from rural areas (Baker 26). For the educated, lack of employment opportunities denies them an opportunity for social mobility.

The rural areas in most countries of the world have high rates of illiteracy. Illiteracy has been more severe in developing countries especially Africa south of the Sahara. Governments of poor countries have faced the inability to provide good and efficient public schools thus not marching with developments in the developing countries. Without good and sound education people fail to find a meaningful income. Most poor people, in rural areas, forego going to school to facilitate concentration on how to make a minimal living (Iceland 79). Developing countries provide minimal employment opportunities, especially for women, which dampens the youth’s morale of going to school.

When people do not work, there is no money which is earned and thus this increases high unemployment rate which in turn increases the level of poverty (Gilbert 131).

## Environmental Degradation

Environmental degradation in many parts of the world has led to the increase of poverty in the world. The world natural resources, which support mankind and enable growth and development, are slowly getting depleted due to unsustainable usage.

The climatic conditions have been changing gradually and natural habitats have slowly but surely been severely changed (Fields 167). Water bodies, atmosphere, forests and soils have deteriorated and this is a major cause of increasing world poverty. Global environmental degradation has led to the phenomenon of global warming. Weather conditions are no longer steady but rather erratic and unpredictable.

Over use of fertilizers and other wrong use of land has highly affected crop yield. Intensive farming or land over use, for instance, has lead to soil infertility and decrease in crop production (Fields 218). Pollution from industries such as power production, mining, automobiles, agricultural fertilizers and chemical production has adversely affected adequate food production, availability of clean water for drinking, and facilitated destruction of natural habitats especially for aquatic beings. Deforestation has brought environmental effects especially in developing countries where some sections of the population depend entirely on forests as source of food and wood to power their activities.

Their survival efforts have largely contributed to deforestation and its related effects (Fields 225). Forests absorb pollutant and offers catchment area for water. Without forests, the rain cycle is affected leading to increased famines in the world.

## Inflation and Development Approaches

Poverty in the world is linked to economic trends.

Developed countries, such as the United States in the 1950s, experienced high income growth (Dudley 167). Most families doubled their income within this period. However, in 1970s and early 1990s, inflation grew steadily hence raising the cost of living. The economic recession of the 1980s adversely affected families; the young and less educated people could not get well paying jobs to support themselves. The change of labor market in most developed countries has also further aggravated the situation of poverty in the world today (Dudley 215). The number of well paying jobs in the manufacturing industries has declined whereas in the service and technology industries, workers have significantly increased. Most people who cannot afford college education experiences hardship in securing a well paying work hence they are locked out of social mobility.

Moreover, in most wealthy countries, many people living in poverty have increased because of the rising inequality in the way resources are distributed. For instance in the United States, 20% of the poor have got smaller percentage of the total national income whereas the wealthy have increasingly earned much higher national income of 45%. During this period, the middle and bottom income distribution has been progressively worse as the cost of living has gone up (Kendall 67). Demographic shifts have contributed to poverty especially among the children. In the US for example, family structures have been altered significantly increasing single parenting. This has increased poverty in the world (Kendall 73).

## Conclusion

Poverty levels have been soaring around the world despite improved economic fortunes for a minority. The major causes of world poverty are improper policies and development approaches or plans undertaken in different nations.

Economic imbalance or inequalities resulting from historical injustices also maintain a world order that does not sustain all. To alleviate world poverty, issues like overpopulation, environmental degradation among other factors have to be looked into more closely.

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