

Example of less developed countries essay

[Environment](#), [Climate Change](#)



The United Nations, during the 2000 Millennial Summit addressed the problems plaguing Africa (Annan). They pledged to support the consolidation of democracy in this country and emphasized how other nations will be able to assist the struggles faced by people who live in this country. It was realized that Africa cannot be generalized as a whole, since the Sub-Saharan areas are different demographically and have their own individual issues. Economic development, education, human rights, health and gender equality are not the same in all countries within the Sub-Saharan parts of Africa. This means, that in order to understand the needs of these area, they have to be dissected and studied in groups (Thorbecke).

The United Nations, in an effort to reduce poverty, decided to study Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of health conditions, diseases, economic growth, gender equality and education (Bhorat and van der Westhuizen). By knowing which countries are lacking in any way, the right type of aid can be given. Although, this year, it was stated that the Africa continues to grow, however poverty is still persistent and remains a big problem. The World Bank announced that although economic growth, just this year was seen to increase 4.9% this 2013, there are still many areas that remain impoverished. With this type of growth, Africa is seen to be one of the fastest growing developing countries in the world. Private investments are at an all time high and Africa is continuing to be a tourism magnet. The World Bank claims that it can reduce poverty by 30% if these statistics remain the same by 2030 (Annan).

Looking at things from a functionalist perspective, the reason why Africa still remains impoverished could be because there are people within the

government, or maybe even other countries who want to keep the status quo the way it is. Herbert Gans (1972) wrote in his piece No, Poverty Has Not Disappeared numerous reasons why poverty should be seen as a positive thing within society. As the United Nations said in 2012, the problem with Africa is seen in inequality. This could be the reason why generally people in the Sub-Saharan areas of Africa are living on less than \$1.25 a day (Wodon and Zaman 157). This type of view is not necessarily beneficial for everyone, nor can it be seen as something the poor will appreciate, but for the benefit of society as a whole, Gans had made a conclusion that poverty indeed is needed in society for things to function. If poverty were to be diminished, many things would take on negative turns, and this would greatly affect the balance of society today. Poverty is needed by the people who are in the middle class or of a higher status.

A function is found most logical in Gans' essay was how the existence of poverty is needed by society in order for the unwanted jobs to be taken care of. This coincides with the Lucas Paradox. These jobs are the ones considered as "dirty" work; they can be something dangerous, underpaid or even temporary. The poor in society ensures that these jobs will always be filled because of their lack of choices in a career path (Thorbecke). The poor function in society as the pool of people who are unable to be "unwilling" to take these jobs at low wages. This is important to society as a whole because it ensures the balance of jobs, and if these jobs are not taken care of there will be a number of things left undone. There are many places which require such jobs which pay low wages, Gans suggests that these can be found in hospitals, restaurants, factories, even in rural environments. The function of

the poor is the assurance that these jobs will always be filled. The world can be seen as one big economy. Not all countries can be fully self-sufficient. Many countries rely on one another in order to get resources. The paradox exists not only in the statistical sense, but in the philosophical sense.

Another function of the poor is that they purchase goods which other people do not want. This ensures that society minimizes wasted resources and makes use of everything which is produced to its maximum extent. These are things like second hand clothing, day-old bread and other things which people of higher social statuses would not bother with or would simply throw away. This keeps the economic value of items much longer, and ensures that there are no " wastes" in society. The food, items and services are still paid for; however they may not be of the same quality. Additionally, the poor provide income for professionals who are either too old or poorly trained. Because the poor cannot afford doctors, teachers or lawyers which are top quality, they will offer jobs to those who are in the bottom of the chain, and this keeps the economic flow of cash going. Society needs the poor also for their purchasing power, no matter how limited it may be compared to those of higher social status. The developing countries are those who are considered in the bottom. Meaning that the " wastes" automatically will be allocated to these countries.

The poor are also to serve a cultural function. According to Gans, the poor's folk culture from the past has come to be appreciated in today's modern age. There were many examples given, and the ones I find interesting are examples pertaining to music. The poor people of the South decades ago had a culture of singing blues and their spiritual country music. Nowadays,

this is enjoyed by people from all social statuses. Even rock - which used to be targeted for those poor class, and performed by people who were not entirely of a high class - is now being enjoyed mostly by the middle class. Also, people who are in the music industry for rock are now also very rich. The poor culture of the past provides the rich a culture which they can enjoy.

In Gans' statement about the persistence and existence of poverty means that poverty is needed by society in order for things to function well; that the alternatives for poverty in society would result in a dysfunction for the rest of society. Gans (275) is pointing out that the members of the middle and the high class needs the poor, more than the poor need them. If there were no poor in society, the middle class would become of lower status, and this is not something which they would be happy about. The existence of the poor in society ensures that all is well for the middle class and the upper class to function well and be comfortable in their standards of living.

Another reason why a number of people who live in developing countries, specifically those in the Sub-Saharan areas of Africa is before they are more prone to natural disasters such as drought. It is difficult to raise the GDP of a country that struggles in producing more goods which can be exported (Bhorat and van der Westhuizen). Africa, like most developing countries around the world, have special needs that need to be met. Without knowing or meeting these needs, poverty will still be rampant. More people, especially from developing worlds, should learn about the dangers of global warming and climate change (Dale, et. Al, 723). Individually, people cannot really make a difference or stop something as big as climate change. Even

though many international efforts have failed in the past, it does not mean that there is no hope for the future. Individual cities should make more of an effort to inform citizens about climate change so that they can individually make a change. Little changes such as biking to work, installing a compost bin at home or minimizing the use of heating or cooling devices can really help if more people made an effort (Giddens, 2009). Many countries are already implementing change when it comes to eco-responsibility and promoting sustainability. There is now such a thing as responsible tourism, eco-friendly homes and eco-friendly products. By supporting such things, climate change will not stop, but it also will not worsen. The tourism industry in Africa, since the year 2000, has grown tremendously. However, this growth is still not steady enough to sustain the millions of people who go days without food.

Studies show that fighting climate change is all about a game of attitude (Giddens, 2009). If more countries and cities stressed on the importance of the reduction of greenhouse gases, more citizens would become aware of their emissions. In a new report, if there are fines from the local government for contributing to climate change, more people would start to want to live sustainable lives. The only problem is that sustainable living is very expensive. When going out and purchasing products, eco-friendly items are seen at a much higher price. However, if this was something that was encouraged by the local government, more people would take part in the battle against climate change. This means that countries should not only consider helping places like Africa by giving donations or volunteering, a big change can come from the reduction of carbon gases.

There are a number of reasons why developing countries, such as the Sub-Saharan areas of Africa still remain impoverished. One large factor which contributes to this is inequality, as mentioned above (Thorbecke). In order to fully understand the extent of poverty in Africa and other developing countries, the system of the government should be scrutinized. The flow of cash and the use of commodities need to be studied so that a possible solution to lessen the effects of poverty of provide opportunities to those affected by these socio-economic situations. Not all areas within the Sub-Saharan parts of Africa are receiving the same type of care. Education, health, gender equality and other issues affect the growth of each country differently.

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