

CAUSES & EFFECTS OF POVERTY ON SOCIETY, CHILDREN & VIOLENCE

Consequences of poverty on people

The vicious cycles of poverty mentioned before mean that lifelong handicaps and troubles that are passed on from one generation to another. To name just a few of these hereditary plagues: no school or education, child labor to help the parents, lack of basic hygiene, transmission of diseases. Unemployment and very low incomes create an environment where kids can't simply go to school. As for those who can actually go to school, they simply don't see how hard work can improve their life as they see their parents fail at the task every day.

Other plagues associated with poverty:

- Alcohol & substance abuse, from kids in African slums to adults in the US, this is a very common self-destructing habit often taken as a way to cope with huge amounts of stress and... well, despair;
- Crippling accidents due to unsafe working environments (machinery in factories or agriculture) as well as other work hazards such as lead poisoning, pesticide poisoning, bites from wild animals due to lack of proper protection;
- Poor housing & living conditions, a classic cause of diseases;
- Water and food-related diseases, simply because the poor can't always afford "safe" foods.

Effects of poverty on society as a whole

In the end, poverty is a major cause of social tensions and threatens to divide a nation because of the issue of inequalities, in particular income inequality. This happens when wealth in a country is poorly distributed among its citizens. In other words, when a tiny minority has all the money.

The feature of a rich or developed country for example is the presence of a middle class, but recently we've seen even Western countries gradually losing their middle class, hence the increasing number of riots and clashes. In a society, poverty is a very dangerous factor that can destabilize and entire country. The Arab Spring is another good example, in all of the countries concerned, the revolts started because of the lack of jobs and high poverty levels. This has led to most governments being overthrown).

CHILD POVERTY

Powerless victims

Ever since the 1960s, the share of children affected by poverty has only got bigger and bigger. Children are those who have the least choice and ability to change what happens to them. There isn't much they can do to help their families, nor should they have to. Until they can stand firmly on their two legs, usually by the age of 6, then they can be enrolled willy-nilly in child labor.

Nearly all possible effects of poverty have an impact on children's lives. Poor infrastructures, unemployment, lack of basic services and income reflect on their lack of education, malnutrition, violence at home and outside, child labor, diseases of all kinds, transmitted by the family or through the environment.

Children antisocial behavior

One of the effects of poverty on children's development is to lead them to build an antisocial behavior that acts as a psychological protection against their hostile environment. Discrimination and social exclusion often push them to more aggressiveness and less self-control and nuance in reaction to stressful events. Having often been taken advantage of in their early childhood, they rarely come to a constructive way to deal with conflicts.

As they grow up, these behaviors are more and more entrenched in their personalities and often considered unrecoverable. This highlights the importance of taking action as early as possible to improve children's living conditions. Policymakers should understand that not just income but a child's social environment at large (parenting, school violence, housing, but also sanitation, uncontaminated food and water) play a big role in creating new effects of poverty.