

Example by StudyDriver

Source: <https://studydriver.com/poverty-is-a-state-of-mind/>

Poverty is a State of Mind Example

Many people from all around the world; will be in jeopardy, witness, or deal with the issue of poverty in their lifetime, whether directly or indirectly. Regardless of race, culture, geographic location, or age; this epidemic seems to continue to expand and dominate lives across the globe. Poverty-stricken individuals face many obstacles in survival, because of the many different areas that it impacts their lives. Functional living, in my opinion is based upon the basis of psychological factors, first and foremost. Without the ability to mentally sustain, (physically, developmental, and cognitively) there is not any hope to survive life. Poverty affects each individual, family, culture, society and the world in so many different ways. But, exactly what does it do to us psychologically?

Psychologically, poverty affects us as much while we are experiencing it, as it does in the latter years of our lives; thus possibly bringing upon a post traumatic disorder. People that are living in poverty are subject to more violence, increasing the probability of suffering from more mental, physical and sexual abuse, when compared to others. According to Moen, Kain, & Elder (1983), families find their options and resources structured by economic misfortune such that it determines their ability to adapt to the present and manage their lives in the future.

Poverty limits individuals, resources that people need in order to live a comfortable lifestyle. Certain resources, such as adequate housing, nourishment, and medical treatment causes problems in the future, and the majority of the time, causing psychological frustration. The state of being without adequate food, clothing, shelter, childcare, health care, and transportation defines poverty status (Hyun Joo Oh 2001). Those who are fortunate enough to escape their past of poverty and change their future lives, still experience some kind of mental distress. The mental impairments can stay with them forever, even if they are successful through all the adversity and appear to be normal.

Most of the time, these suppressed emotions, frustrations, and paranoia are replaced by certain behaviors, habits, or anxiety. More displayed than most, through society and media; musicians, actors, and lottery winners that have experienced an extreme social class change in a very short period of time; go through a lot of these psychological inferences. Then on the other side of the line; there are those that are born into a substantially comfortable or exceptionally comfortable lifestyle, and later in life they experience financial hardship or ruin. "The effects of poverty can linger even for those who achieve financial stability later in life. Poverty can impact one's general outlook on the availability of money and resources. People who come from impoverished households may, for example, be more likely to spend their money impulsively, often out of a fear that funds will slip away if not spent immediately, or make purchases that others might consider frivolous, to make up for being deprived of desired items in childhood. Spending money impulsively, however, can reduce the likelihood of a person's being able to save for the future (goodtherapy)".

This also can cause a mental detriment. Whether it be through their own hand or someone else, a person develops upon his self, only by always comparing his or her accomplishments, down falls, and present situations, to what he or she feels like he or she was before he or she knew what it all meant; his or her born identity. That scale that is created; which I think we all do subconsciously as humans, is completely derived from our mental eye, built upon celebrations and crisis. Eventually, the perception of this Scale; subconsciously is our reason. Poverty, and its many impacts it has upon this scale, in all areas, is undeniably a great threat to the psychological nature of us, as people, period.

Children that are born into poverty, are psychologically at a disadvantage in life (along with a list of other disadvantages) before they arrive into the world. Their developmental stages, that are imperative to their well being from day one of their existence, are at risk of evolving inefficiently. Just being subjected to this atmosphere, creates a certain outlook and mind set, even as early as infant and toddler ages. Many children that are in these poverty stricken neighborhoods, receive their education in school systems; that are in the same despairing circumstance. Most often funding is low or almost unavailable for schools in these neighborhoods; thus limiting resources for students and faculty. This creates another issue. People can start to lose hope when they see nothing but negativity. Subconsciously, I think this mentally impairs the children and faculty, even the ones that started out optimistic and ambitious. If we were to teach children that any environment can be altered in perception with imagination and belief, and give teachers in these places more support first; I think that the educational progressions will be so much greater in these institutions. Claro, Paunesku, and Dweck (2016) had similar thoughts upon this reflection. To be clear, we are not suggesting that structural factors, like income inequality or disparities in school quality, are less important than psychological factors. Nor are we saying that teaching students a growth mindset is a substitute for systemic efforts to alleviate poverty and economic inequality. Such claims would stand at odds with decades of research and our own data. Rather, we are suggesting that structural inequalities can give rise to psychological inequalities and that those psychological inequalities can reinforce the impact of structural inequalities on achievement and future opportunity. In other words, Lever, Pinol, and Uralde (2005) states with respect to this variable's relationship to poverty and well being, a strong association has been found between individuals' socioeconomic level and level of achievement motivation.

There are programs intact across the world; that enable individuals and families to obtain certain resources without being able to afford them (ex. Medicaid). But there are not many therapeutic options available that are affordable or funded. These resources that are available are funded by state or federal. Even so, there is only a limited amount of these offered. Sometimes it is not even the availability of the services for the populations in poverty that hinder them from getting the services and help they need; other factors are also prevalent. "People with mental health diagnoses may also face discrimination from others, and this may prevent them from

succeeding in certain work environments or careers. Additionally, the cost of treating mental health conditions can be high, so some people may end up living in poverty because they cannot afford treatment, such as therapy or medication, for conditions that might otherwise be easily treated. The mental health care available to people living in poverty may also not be equal to that available to those with greater financial means. Some people with diagnosed mental health conditions who face financial barriers may have to rely on state hospitals, which do not typically provide long-term stabilization plans. Without adequate support, some mental health conditions may worsen, which can keep an individual living in poverty”(goodtherapy).

Kimberly Morrow LCSW posted in, “Access to Treatment”, 2014 suggestion of different types of services that can help with therapy for those people with little or no money. “If you are having trouble affording traditional psychotherapy, there are some low-cost alternatives that might meet your needs. For example, I offer a free support group to OCD patients and a \$15 therapy group for patients with anxiety. I don’t bill insurance and everyone who comes pays just \$15. A lot of other therapists provide similar free or reduced-cost support and therapy groups, so be sure to ask” (careforyourmind).

“If you live near a university, call the graduate psychology department and ask if they have a counseling center for people in the community. These centers are typically staffed by graduate students who are learning to provide therapy, and the care is usually excellent and free or very-low cost” (careforyourmind).

“In every community, there are crisis care services (usually provided by the local health department) for people facing a mental health crisis. Specially-trained support staff will help you over the phone, and may even come to your home to help you through the crisis. Often, services include connecting people to affordable, appropriate care, and this can be a valuable resource for people who don’t know where to turn for assistance” (careforyourmind).

“Finally, for people who are self-pay, some providers offer a sliding-fee scale. A sliding scale allows people to pay based on their personal income and what they can afford” (careforyourmind).

“There are many policies and laws that protect those without resources to make sure they are able to get some resources and benefits so that they are able to live a healthy life and obtain certain necessities and services they need to survive. Most of the people that cannot afford mental treatment or evaluation, cannot obtain the services that they truly need. Fear and shame or normally the two other factors that is evident, when these services are welcoming and in reach of some that need the help, but unwilling to take it. “The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 requires insurance groups offering coverage for mental health or substance use disorders to make these benefits comparable to general medical coverage. Deductibles, copays, out-of-pocket maximums, treatment limitations, etc., for mental health or substance use disorders must be no more restrictive than the same requirements or benefits offered for other medical care”(samhsa). “The Affordable Care Act of 2010 is one aspect of a broader movement toward reforming the health care system. The Affordable Care Act makes health insurance more affordable for individuals, families, and small business owners. People living with mental health challenges or substance use disorders often have problems getting private health insurance. Now there are special insurance”(samhsa).

Socioeconomic status in society today has made a major shift. “The middle class” is seemingly disappearing; leaving only the lower and upper classes (the rich and the poor). This shift is generating an enormous amount of people across the nation to now fall under the poverty line; thus, making our world psychologically more unstable as a whole. If this problem continues to be unaddressed; there will be a lot more people in danger of suffering from mental repercussions and or victims of acts from those with them. The impacts of poverty, not only leads to physical, cognitive, and psychological decline or impairment; but also creates a risk to the world’s present and future well being. Understanding the lives of the poor through this lens has proven invaluable. Similarly, understanding various correlates of poverty through the lens of bandwidth can be equally insightful by drawing attention to impacts we might not traditionally consider, or to the potential for feedback loops. The universality of the concept increases its usefulness, allowing us to apply it in many contexts around the world, knowing that we are relying on a basic feature of human psychology. (Schilbach, Schofield, Mullainathan (2016)