Causes and Results of Inequitable Distribution of Wealth, Opportunity or Education

By Claire Pettinger

The unequal distribution of wealth is a major problem not only nationwide but worldwide. There are several reasons as to why this is an issue, but the two major ones go hand in hand: lack of resources and the unequal distribution of capitalism. A common misconception is that the main reason for this wealth gap is because the rich are rich, as if they stole the poor’s money. This is not the case. As a product of the inequitable distribution of wealth, opportunities to advance become scarce and the overall standard of living decreases. It is impossible to pin this gap on any one thing, for there are multiple causes that result in this division. However it is safe to say that the outcome of it can be catastrophic.

There are several countries that prosper while having little resources. Their key to success is international trade. For example, Japan has very little usable farmland due to its rocky terrain and resources in general, and yet they are thriving. They are able to live in prosperity because of their open, capitalist economy. This prevents their government from interfering in their trade. Other countries such as the Central African Republic (CAR) are rich with resources, but do not have a capitalist economy, so its residents aren’t even allowed the opportunity to grow and thrive as a country. “The CAR’s economic freedom score is 46.7, making its economy the 161st freest in the 2014 Index” (Central). Since 2002 the CAR has gone deeper into poverty due government restrictions on trade and private businesses. These examples are indicators that “the uneven distribution of wealth in the world is due to the uneven distribution of capitalism” (Norberg).

As a result of the inequitable distribution of wealth and capitalism, much of the world’s population is living in poverty. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has become the world’s poorest country due to government restrictions on trade and its non-capitalist economy. Living conditions there have stooped to hardly livable. “75 percent live below the poverty line, more than half have no access to drinking water or to basic healthcare, and three out of every ten children are poorly nourished.” (Democratic). Haiti, which is the 156th freest economy in the world and the poorest country in the western hemisphere, is also a victim of the inequitable distribution of wealth and capitalism (Haiti). Most of this nation is hungry, 80 percent live way below the poverty line, and only 30 percent of the population has consistent jobs (Conditions). These are only two of numerous examples of the consequences of unequal distribution of wealth. Opportunities to transcend this wealth gap are scarce. Education is a crucial way of closing that wealth gap. However, if one were to start out with little it would be difficult to pay for an education, and in most parts of the world an education is the key to success.

The inequitable distribution of wealth is obviously not due to one sole cause. Lack of resources and the unequal distribution of capitalism are just two of the many factors that have been widening this wealth gap. There are unfortunate costs that come with this inequality. Much of the world is living in poverty, and has little opportunity to advance in modern society. The wealth gap is undoubtedly an enormous problem that is felt not only domestically, but worldwide as well.
Bibliography