

A Solution for Providing for the Homeless, Unemployed and Poverty Globally

By
Tristan Barnett

Introduction

In our current market driven capitalist society, it is important to provide needs such as food, clothing, shelter and health care for everyone (and most importantly the homeless, unemployed and those living in poverty) as these are fundamental economic needs for survival. Some countries provide unemployment benefits but they are generally very low in comparison to the minimum wage (in Australia it is about 40% of the minimum wage). Applying for unemployment benefits (at least within Australia) requires actively looking for work and reporting on a regular basis to a central office. This can be quite a stressful process. Further, there will always be a proportion of the population unemployed (and even underemployed). "Australia's trend unemployment rate remained steady in April 2019 at 5.1 per cent". Also, the minimum wage in many countries is very low. Poverty In Australia, shows that in 2010, after taking account of housing costs, an estimated 2,265,000 people or 12.5% of all people, including 575,000 children (17.3% of all children), lived in households below the most austere poverty line widely used in international research.

These Eleven Facts about Global Poverty are particularly important

<https://www.dosomething.org/us/facts/11-facts-about-global-poverty>

1. Nearly 1/2 of the world's population — more than 3 billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day. More than 1.3 billion live in extreme poverty — less than \$1.25 a day.
2. 1 billion children worldwide are living in poverty. According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty.
3. 805 million people worldwide do not have enough food to eat.
4. More than 750 million people lack adequate access to clean drinking water. Diarrhea caused by inadequate drinking water, sanitation, and hand hygiene kills an estimated 842,000 people every year globally, or approximately 2,300 people per day.
5. In 2011, 165 million children under the age 5 were stunted (reduced rate of growth and development) due to chronic malnutrition.
6. Preventable diseases like diarrhea and pneumonia take the lives of 2 million children a year who are too poor to afford proper treatment.
7. As of 2013, 21.8 million children under 1 year of age worldwide had not received the three recommended doses of vaccine against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis.
8. 1/4 of all humans live without electricity — approximately 1.6 billion people.
9. 80% of the world population lives on less than \$10 a day.
10. Oxfam estimates that it would take \$60 billion annually to end extreme global poverty-- that's less than 1/4 the income of the top 100 richest billionaires.

11. The World Food Programme says, “The poor are hungry and their hunger traps them in poverty.” Hunger is the number one cause of death in the world, killing more than HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined.

According to the World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>

Depression is a common illness worldwide, with more than 300 million people affected. Depression is different from usual mood fluctuations and short-lived emotional responses to challenges in everyday life. Especially when long-lasting and with moderate or severe intensity, depression may become a serious health condition. It can cause the affected person to suffer greatly and function poorly at work, at school and in the family. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide. Close to 800,000 people die due to suicide every year. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year-olds.

According to Heads Up

<https://www.headsup.org.au/healthy-workplaces/workplace-bullying>

Bullying is a serious issue in workplaces across Australia and a risk factor for anxiety, depression and suicide. Workplace bullying can affect people in a number of ways, including:

- distress, anxiety, panic attacks or sleep disturbance
- physical illness, such as muscular tension, headaches and digestive problems
- reduced work performance
- loss of self-esteem and feelings of isolation
- deteriorating relationships with colleagues, family and friends
- depression
- increased risk of suicide

In March 2013 the National Disability Insurance Scheme legislation was passed in Australia.

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/>

Firstly, it is not clear as to how much income is actually provided. The NDIS does cover schizophrenia as a mental health disorder, but does not cover depression or anxiety, and in particular does not cover generalized anxiety disorder (despite being highly debilitating). And yet depression and anxiety can be caused from workplace bullying. Further, workplace bullying would be difficult to prove in a court justice system for compensation, and reporting workplace bullying in a working environment is highly political and not taken seriously even by Vice Chancellors of universities (as the author discovered whilst being an adjunct for Victoria University, Melbourne 2009-2010) and was constantly bullied by John Zeleznikow, and after reporting the incident to the Head of School Pauline Stanton, received a termination letter from the Vice Chancellor Elizabeth Harman ([pdf](#)). In a typical working environment in Australia the employee is highly unlikely to leave the job since unemployment benefits have many restrictions (testing of assets for example) and the unemployment benefits being significantly less (about 40%) of the minimum wage. Also, the employee would have to spend a considerable amount of time in applying for another job.

Economic Model

The economic model is based on resolving class conflict in the workplace as this represents the most important conflict based on our everyday lives; and would therefore reflect on the economy as a whole including welfare. This also reflects on Marxist theory on class conflict in the workplace which has been a major factor in the formulation of left/right political ideologies. From yogic philosophy there are three of modes of material nature that we are all subject to causing miseries in this material world. From lowest to highest these modes are ignorance, passion and goodness. The majority of society is currently in the mode of passion by always looking at ways to increase one's wealth and is characterized by the attraction between man and woman. In order to obtain a transcendental state of consciousness and be free of miseries that exist within this material world, one must firstly transcend to the mode of goodness; where in this mode the accumulation of wealth is not the main priority but rather sharing the accumulation of wealth towards helping others. However, one's happiness in the mode of goodness may not necessarily be greater than one's happiness in the mode of passion. For example, in a working environment, employers are generally in the mode of passion (at least within Australian business) as their level of happiness tends to be greater in this mode regardless of the mode of nature that is present from the employees. This is reflected by the Australian unemployment system since under the current unemployment system there are many restrictions for obtaining unemployment benefits (testing of assets for example) and the unemployment benefits being significantly less (about 40%) of the minimum wage. Therefore, there is no threat to the employer to cooperate since it is highly unlikely that the employee will leave the job and the level of happiness for the employer is higher by not cooperating (and in a more serious case workplace bullying). The modes of passion and goodness could be equated to uncooperative and cooperative strategies respectively as given in Game 1. From this game, the employer will always choose the uncooperative strategies by being in the mode of passion and receive a positive level of happiness. And consequently, the employee will receive a negative level of happiness. In order for both the employer and employee to cooperative (and be in the mode of goodness) and receive a positive level of happiness requires changing the unemployment system to force cooperation.

		Employer	
		Cooperative	Uncooperative
Employee	Cooperative	(1,1)	(-2,2)
	Uncooperative	(2,-2)	(-2,1)

Game 1: Levels of happiness under the Australian unemployment system

The economic model involves introducing an unemployment system such that an allowance for unemployment is provided regardless of financial status and the allowance is comparable to the minimum wage. The unemployment system could be funded by an increase in the progressive taxation system and it is necessary for unemployment benefits to be paid back through taxation when work is established in the future. By introducing this employment

system both the employer and employee obtain a negative level of happiness by not cooperating (mode of passion). If the employee does not cooperate, then the employer will always end up with a negative payout regardless of the strategy the employer adopts. If the employer does not cooperate, then the employee will always end up with a negative payout regardless of the strategy the employee adopts. Therefore, cooperation is forced for both parties to obtain a positive level of happiness and be in the mode of goodness. This is represented in Game 2.

		Employer	
		Cooperative	Uncooperative
Employee	Cooperative	(1,1)	(-2,2)
	Uncooperative	(2,-2)	(-1,-1)

Game 2: Levels of happiness under the revised unemployment system

This revised unemployment system would improve working conditions, ‘fairer’ pay for workers, increase cooperative ownership of productive property and consequently assist trade unions in these negotiation processes. Increasing cooperative ownership in particular has the effect of weakening private to common productive property which is in agreement with Marx’s theory of resolving class conflict through common ownership. Work in general should be positive and a great lifestyle, and arguably the employee’s level of happiness is greater when working with both parties cooperating, rather than receiving unemployment benefits. However, when workers become alienated through class conflict (employer not cooperating and in a more serious case workplace bullying) then this positive lifestyle can have various health related effects. This unemployment system is likely to improve the welfare of the population through financial security. The economic model on resolving class conflict in the workplace is another example on the connectedness between health and conflict resolution processes.

Krishna Temples

<http://www.iskcon.org/what-is-iskcon/>

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), otherwise known as the Hare Krishna movement, includes five hundred major centers, temples and rural communities, nearly one hundred affiliated vegetarian restaurants, thousands of *namahattas* or local meeting groups, a wide variety of community projects, and millions of congregational members worldwide. Although less than fifty years on the global stage, ISKCON has expanded widely since its founding by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda in New York City in 1966.

Yoga is more than just a physical exercise. The word “yoga” comes from the Sanskrit root Yuj which means to link up with, or combine. Bhakti is derived from the Sanskrit word bhaj, which means – loving service. Bhakti-yoga means to connect to the Supreme by means of loving devotional service.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, the core spiritual text for ISKCON, describes variety of yoga practices. Among them are karma-yoga (the practice of conscious action), jnana-yoga (philosophical study and contemplation), and hatha-yoga (the practice of yoga-asanas and breathing exercises).

Today, some yoga practitioners consider the physical benefits of yoga to be the end in themselves. But according to the traditional yoga systems, physical exercises are just one step on path of God realization. The *Gita* ultimately prescribes bhakti-yoga (the path of dedication and love) as the culmination of other yoga practices. Bhakti-yoga focuses on developing our dedication, service and love for the Divinity, Lord Krishna.

The path of bhakti-yoga is developed through a variety of activities. These include mantra meditation, or the chanting of the names of God. The chanting is done either individually on beads (japa) or in community by chanting mantras accompanied by music (kirtan). The study of sacred texts such as the *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad Bhagavatam*, associating with like-minded spiritual aspirants, eating sanctified vegetarian food, and living in a way that upholds the principles of truthfulness, mercy, austerity, and cleanliness, are all core practices for a life of follower of bhakti.

Essentially you can sleep on the beach or any park during the day. The problem is then what you do at night time. Hare Krishna Temples globally are open daily from about 4:30am (with a Kirtan) to about 9:30pm. They will always offer free spiritualized vegetarian food to anyone, welcome anyone and never reject anyone as they view every living entity as eternal souls (and not these material bodies). There will also be no depression through Kirtan, Arati and learning of the Bhagavad Gita As It Is - with the help of Bhakti Yoga monks. Therefore, the ultimate solution to providing for the homeless, unemployed and poverty globally is simply to build more Hare Krishna Temples globally and to be open 24/7. There should also be medical doctors at these temples to provide for health care.