

Political Leadership, Health Policies and Health Disparities in Developed and Developing Nations

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**“The greatest single
challenge facing our
globalized world is to
combat and eradicate its
disparities”.**

Nelson Mandela



Of the state of nature, the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes ingeniously explained the outset of capitalism and the spirit of wealth creation, in employing various technological gadgets and sweat equity to exploit natural resources

Bloom’s Assertion

- In Hobbes’s era the population of the world was only 500, million
- The state of nature was very raw
- There was ignorance
- A sea of superstition
- Lawlessness

The Current Global Situation

- Half the world — nearly three billion people — live on less than two dollars a day.
- The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the poorest 48 nations (i.e. a quarter of the world’s countries) is less than the wealth of the world’s three richest people combined.
- Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.

Worldwide Poverty Situation

- Less than one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn’t happen.
- 1 billion children live in poverty (1 in 2 children in the world).
- 640 million live without adequate shelter
- 400 million have no access to safe water
- 270 million have no access to health services.

The Situation in Developed Nations

- Comprehensive medical care
- Vaccination of clients
- Motor vehicle safety
- Control of infectious diseases
- Decline in death from coronary heart disease
- Safe and healthier foods
- Healthier mothers and babies
- Family health and planning
- Fluoridation of drinking water

Technology that Created Affluence

- Electrification
- Automobile
- Airplane
- Water supply and distribution
- Electronics, radio and television
- Agricultural mechanization
- Computers
- Telecommunication
- Air conditioning

Technology in Developed Nations

- Refrigeration and food storage
- Highways
- Spacecraft and the spin-off benefits
- Internet
- Biomedical imaging
- Household appliances
- Health technologies and petroleum technologies
- Laser, fiber optics, nuclear technologies and high performance materials

Project Objectives

- Explore the political systems in selected developed and developing nations
- Describe specific health policies which have implications for health disparities in developed and developing nations
- Outline the role of technology in reducing health disparities worldwide
- Compare the health profile of political leaders, middle income and the lower class by using vital statistical data and develop strategies to eliminate global poverty and health disparities worldwide.

Political System in the U.S.A

- Democratic and Executive Presidency
- Federal Republic
- Bicameral Congress
- House of Representative
- Political leaders must be elected into their respective offices

Political System In Japan

- Bicameral Parliamentary system
- Prime minister has constitutional rights
- The Deit, Parliamentary monarchy
- House of representative
- Many political parties
- Political leaders are voted into their respective offices, the prime minister has the constitutional right to dissolve the house of representative but not the house of Councilors

Political System in India

- The largest democracy in the world
- Executive Presidency
- Congress
- House of Representatives
- All top-ranking political leaders are voted into offices

Political System In Nigeria

- A Federal Republic
- Executive presidency
- The congress
- House of Representatives
- Legislative branches
- All top-ranking political leaders can only be voted into office to participate in Nation building challenges.

Role of Technology in Reducing Health Disparities

- Technology led to the eradication of many parasitic diseases such as dracunculiasis
- Malaria, schistosomiasis, trypanosomiasis,
- Leshmaniasis, smallpox, yaws, and histoplasmosis etc.
- Technology has perfected the management of various invasive procedures including the development of bionic limbs, etc

Engineering Achievement Created Wealth and Improved Health Status

- Electrification
- Automobile
- Airplane
- Electronics
- Radio & television
- Telephone
- Air conditioning/refrigeration

- Health technologies, petroleum and petroleum technology, laser and fiber optics, nuclear technologies, high performance materials
- Water sanitation
- Agricultural mechanization, computers
- Highways
- Spacecraft
- Internet imaging

These Technologies Reduced IMR & Improved Life Expectancies

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and life expectancy for developed and developing nations

Developed Nations	IMR/1000	Life Expectancy
USA	6.4	78.7
Japan	3.2	81.4
Developing Nations		
India	34.6	68.6
Nigeria	95.5	47.4

Table 2

Existing Gross Domestic Product reported by two developed and two developing nations by Infant Mortality Rate and By Literacy Rate

Nations	GDP	IMR/1000	LiteracyRate/100
USA	10,082 trillion	6.4	97
Japan	3.45 trillion	3.2	99
India	2.5 trillion	34.6	52
Nigeria	105.9 billion	95.5	57.1

Health Disparities as Reflection of Socio-Economic Status

- Marxist's Philosophical Tenet
- Socio-economic status refers to economic stratification
- The Owners and the consumers
- Measures of socio-economic status
- Poverty, Income, education, occupation
- Sustainable economic well-being is the hallmark of radiant health

International Action to Eliminate Disparities Worldwide

- Unique and appropriate education of K-12
- Creation of scientific culture in developing societies
- Political leaders must create health care systems that promote primary prevention worldwide
- Political leaders and mass media must expose the ill-effects of disparities wherever it is detected

International Community Must Strive to Achieve the Policy Statement of World Health Organization

- "The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition".