

Chapter 16

Online Injustice, Poverty and Fear

O.F. Adebawale
Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The chapter examines the concept of injustice with special reference to its occurrence online. It also focuses on poverty as economic deprivation and fear together with injustice as essential components of vicious circle which may seriously impact transformative education, noting that transformative education is basically focussed at imbibing values and skills that will develop the individual's worldviews and encourage them to act individually or collectively so that they can improve social conditions and eventually eradicate the ills of society.

INTRODUCTION

Transformative education is usually aimed at healing and transforming persons, institutions, economies, and political systems locally and globally by learning to make our own interpretations rather than acting on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others (Garcia 1998). In order to achieve these goals the vicious cycle of injustice, poverty and fear requires an in-depth study with the view to finding its weak link and eventually achieving a successful dismantling of their apparatus. This is the focus of this chapter.

THE CONCEPT OF JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE

Most definitions described injustice as “violation of another’s rights or of what is right” or “lack of justice” (e.g. American Heritage Dictionary). This can be interpreted to mean that a clear understanding of injustice will be unachievable without a clear understanding of what justice means. Maiese (2003a) described justice as action in accordance with the requirements of some law which whether as grounded in human consensus or societal norms, are supposed to ensure that all members of society receive fair treatment. She affirmed that issues of justice arise in several different spheres and play

a significant role in causing, perpetuating, and addressing conflict, and argued that just institutions tend to instill a sense of stability, well-being, and satisfaction among society members, while perceived injustices can lead to dissatisfaction, rebellion, or revolution.

Meanwhile, Freudenthaler and Mikula (1998) contended that most theories of social justice consider the concept of entitlement as the central aspect of justice given that justice often refer to a state where people get what they deserve or what they are entitled to. This means that people would perceive a situation, event, or treatment as just, if they get what they are due by virtue of who they are or what they have done (Lerner, 1991). Further elements of the experience of injustice which have been discussed frequently are unfulfilled wants, attributions of responsibility to agents other than the victim, and perceived lack of justification.

The rule of justice is plain, namely, that a good man ought not to swerve from the truth, nor to inflict any unjust loss on anyone, nor to act in any way deceitfully or fraudulently (Brace, 2005).

According to Ascention Health (2007), it is important to distinguish between four different types of justice: when considering the concept of justice

1. **Commutative justice**, which refers to that which is owed between individuals, e.g., in conducting business transactions. It may be seen to be related to restorative justice which refers to the type in which a betrayed person may seek from the betrayer some form of restitution, putting things back as they should be. The simplest form of restitution is a straightforward apology. Restoration means putting things back as they were, so it may include some act of contrition to demonstrate one is truly sorry. This may include action and even extra payment to the offended party. Restorative justice is also known as corrective justice (ChangingMinds.org).
2. **Contributive justice**, which refers to what individuals owe to society for the common good. It is very similar to retributive justice approach which according to the ChangingMinds.org., conceives of transgressions as crimes against the state or nation while restorative justice focuses on violations as crimes against individuals. It is based on the idea that people deserve to be treated in the same way they treat others. (Maiese, 2003a). Revenge can be many times more severe than reparation as the hurt party seeks to make the other person suffer in return. Retributive justice plays a central role in legal proceedings, responding to violations of international law and human rights, and war crimes adjudication (Maiese, 2003a).
3. **Legal justice**, which refers to rights and responsibilities of citizens to obey and respect the rights of all and the laws devised to protect peace and social order. It can be likened to procedural justice which encapsulate the principle of *fairness* as found in the idea of *fair play* (as opposed to the *fair share* of distributive justice). If people believe that a fair process was used in deciding what it to be distributed, then they may well accept an imbalance in what they receive in comparison to others. If they see both procedural and distributive injustice, they will likely seek restorative and/or retributive justice.
4. **Distributive justice**, which refers to what society owes to its individual members, i.e., the just allocation of resources. It is also referred to as economic justice as it is concerned with giving all members of society a “fair share” of the benefits and resources available (Maiese, 2003a). Maiese contended that although, everyone might agree that wealth should be distributed fairly, much disagreement still exists as to what counts as a “fair share” considering some possible criteria of distribution such

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