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## POVERTY: EFFECTS, CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS

Poverty can be defined as the condition where the basic needs of a family, like food, shelter, clothing, and education are not fulfilled. It can lead to other problems like poor literacy, unemployment, malnutrition, etc. A poor person is not able to get education due to lack of money and therefore remains unemployed. An unemployed person is not able to buy enough & nutritious food for his family and their health declines. A weak person lacks the energy required for the job. A jobless person remains poor only. Thus, we can say that poverty is the root cause of other problems.

"poverty is not natural, it is manmade". This statement is true as the true causes of poverty are generally man-made. There are various causes of poverty but the most important is population. Rising population is putting the burden on the resources & budget of countries. Governments are finding it difficult to provide food, shelter & employment to the rising population. The other causes are lack of education, war, natural disasters, lack of employment opportunities, etc. For instance, lack of employment opportunities makes a person jobless & he is not able to earn enough to fulfil the basic necessities of his family & becomes poor. Lack of infrastructure means there are no industries, banks, etc. In a country resulting in lack of employment opportunities. Natural disaster like flood, earthquake can also contribute to poverty. In some countries, especially African countries like Somalia, a long period of civil war has made poverty widespread. This is because all the resources & money is being spent in war instead of public welfare. Countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc. are prone to natural disasters like cyclone, etc. These disasters occur every year causing poverty to rise.

Poverty affects the life of a poor family. A poor person is not able to take proper food & nutrition & his capacity to work reduces. Reduced capacity to work further reduces his income, making him poorer. Children from poor family never get proper schooling & proper nutrition. They have to work to support their family & this destroys their childhood. Some of them may also involve in crimes like theft, murder, robbery, etc. A poor person remains uneducated & is forced to live under unhygienic conditions in slum. There is no proper sanitation & drinking water facility in slums & he falls ill often & his health deteriorates. A poor person generally dies an early death. So, all social evils are related to poverty.

The government should be able to construct certain dams & canals in our country to provide easy availability of water for irrigation. The government should also take steps for the cheap availability of seeds & farming equipment to promote agriculture. Government should also promote farming of cash crops like cotton, instead of food crops. In cities, the government should also promote industrialization to create more jobs. Government should also open 'Ration shops'. Other measures include providing free & compulsory education for children up to 14 years of age, scholarship to children deserving students from a poor background, providing subsidized houses to poor people, etc. Poverty is a social evil; we can also contribute to control it. For example, we can simply donate old clothes to a poor child or we can utilize our free time by teaching poor students.