



Wilma L. West Library Resource Notes

Global Poverty

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This past weekend, in addition to the expected protest march against the War in Iraq, there was a demonstration against the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for their programs or policies to alleviate global poverty, the subject of the Sunday sermon at my church. One of our four speakers, a Peace Corps volunteer and staff member for over twenty years, shared his experiences of living in more than one African country. Then his daughter, who was born in Zimbabwe and moved to the United States at age sixteen, spoke of the culture shock she felt in entering life in a high school located in Fairfax County, VA, cited as one of the wealthiest counties in the U.S. An economist provided us with statistics on incomes in developing countries and on current aid programs. As well, he addressed some of the additional social crises that accompany poverty - hunger, illiteracy, child labor, disease, and violence. Once we were given this overview, the fourth speaker asked us to "think globally, act locally." Of course, all of us are aware of the opportunities in our own communities to make a difference; so, I shall refrain from offering suggestions. In turn, you know how to locate international organizations through the World Wide Web. I got over 300 hits in my search on Google, even though I used the advanced search mode for the exact phrase "global poverty" and further limited my retrieval to English language, "in the title of the page," and "past year."

For background reading, visit the following sites and read judiciously.

[International Monetary Fund](#)
[The IMF at a Glance: A Factsheet](#)

[Global Poverty Monitoring](#)
[The World Bank Group PovertyNet](#)

[United Nations Development Programmes, Millennium Development Goals](#) , are an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and improving lives that world leaders agreed on at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. For each goal one or more targets have been set, most for 2015, using 1990 as a benchmark:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability

8. Develop a global partnership for development

Vandemoortele, Jan. United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Development Policy: Are we really reducing global poverty. New York July 2002

Chossudovsky, M. (1998). **Global poverty in the late 20th century**. [Electronic version]. Journal of International Affairs, 52, 293-311.

The late 20th century will go down in world history as a period of global impoverishment marked by the collapse of productive systems in the developing world, the demise of national institutions and the disintegration of health and education programs. This "globalization of poverty"--which has largely reversed the achievements of post-war decolonization--was initiated in the Third World coinciding with the onslaught of the debt crisis. Since the 1990s, it has extended its grip to all major regions of the world including North America, Western Europe, the countries of the former Soviet block and the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) of South East Asia and the Far East.

In the 1990s, famines at the local level have erupted in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and parts of Latin America; health clinics and schools have been closed down; hundreds of millions of children have been denied the right to primary education. In the Third World, Eastern Europe and the Balkans, there has been a resurgence of infectious diseases including tuberculosis, malaria and cholera.

Innovative Development Network, The Synergos Institute

The Synergos Institute and its partners mobilize resources and bridge social and economic divides to reduce poverty and increase equity around the world. [Http://www.synergos.org](http://www.synergos.org)

The Innovative Development Network (IDN) brings together individuals working to engage their peers in global poverty alleviation. Members are in the first decade of their careers and work in many fields, including business, the arts, non-profit, government and technology.

I always learn at least one new thing while compiling information sources for a Resource Note, and this week it was about the Millennium Challenge Account, an initiative introduced by President Bush in March 2002.

Through the MCA, ". . . the United States will increase its core assistance to developing countries by 50% over the next 3 years, resulting in a \$5 billion annual increase over current levels by FY 2006. This increased assistance will go to a new Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) that funds initiatives to improve the economies and standards of living in qualified developing countries. The goal of the **MCA** is to reward sound policy decisions that support economic growth and reduce poverty."

The above are government sources, so here are two other sources on the MCA.

Sperling, G. & Hart, T. (2003). A better way to fight global poverty: broadening the Millennium Challenge Account. Foreign Affairs, 82, 9-14.

Summary: The Bush administration's proposed Millennium Challenge Account is welcome but with a few simple changes it could do far more to help the world's poor.

The Brookings Institute, [Global poverty and the Millennium Challenge Account](#)

Interestingly, I found this article in OT SEARCH that speaks of another effort to alleviate poverty and provide economic stability.

Ganguly-Scrase, R. (2000). Globalization and its discontents: An Indian response. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 7, 138-147.

Based on recent ethnographic research among salaried workers and their families in West Bengal, India this paper examines the lived experiences of people in lower-middle class households under a globalizing Indian economy. The major finding from this study reveals that there is a stark contradiction between the rhetoric and reality of globalization, economic liberalization and structural adjustment programs for the lower middle classes. The vast majority of my informants have not benefited economically over the past nine years, since the implementation of structural adjustment programs and the New Economic Policy (NEP) of 1991. However, while they remain doubtful about the long-term benefits of the NEP and the liberalization they positively evaluate many aspects of cultural globalization. This paper focuses on their ambivalence towards globalization, and examines their criticisms and their simultaneous and paradoxical espousal of the government rhetoric of work place restructuring and global competitiveness.

While sitting in church on Sunday, I wondered how I could make global poverty a Resource Note (RN) topic. One of the objectives for the RN is to make a connection with the role of occupation in societal crises. Obviously, poverty affects dramatically the occupational roles of everyone involved; plays havoc with any routines; and makes it impossible to select meaningful occupations when survival takes all of a person's time and energy. OT Search delivered the following.

Lobo, F. (1999). The Leisure and work occupations of young people: A review. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 6, 27-33.

This article presents perspectives on leisure, work and the relationships between work and leisure, in relation to young people. It argues that leisure is a complex phenomenon which affords young people an arena to experiment, to take risks and to face challenges. Its dimensions of time, occupation, and experience offers opportunities for relaxation, personal development, anti-leisure and serious leisure. Leisure is shaped by social factors and a culture of consumption. Young people are targeted as consumers of leisure not only through goods, but also by packages of experience. The work-leisure relationship shows how paid occupations influence leisure. In times of high unemployment and under employment, the quality of leisure may be diminished and its quality reduced, but young people learn to cope with deprivation, impermanence and temporary relationships in new and emerging ways of living.

Nelson, A. & Allison, H. (2000). Values of urban aboriginal parents: Food before thought. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 47, 28-40.

Using qualitative methodology, this study investigated values of urban Aboriginal parents, particularly with respect to parenting and child development. Data were collected from five

urban-dwelling Aboriginal parents aged between 25 and 55 years. Participants were parents of children aged between 18 months and 25 years. All participants were also employed in the fields of education or health where they had frequent involvement with other indigenous parents through welfare support or school or health programs. Each informant participated in either an individual interview or focus group. Supplemental data were also collected from participant observation in a kindergarten setting. Descriptions of Aboriginal parents' values and parenting styles are reported. The main values included an emphasis on maintaining social relationships and cultural identity with an overriding need for survival and security. Implications for occupational therapy practice and further research with urban Aboriginal families are suggested.

Papesca, L.K. & Joss, D.M. (1996). Global health issues: child labor: a global problem on the rise. *Work: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation*, 7, 129-137.

This paper intends to review and analyze the literature focusing on the topic of child labor. Child labor is a global problem on the rise despite modern Western beliefs. Today, such complex and interrelated issues as poverty, illiteracy, and politics fuel the growth of the number of children being exploited for economic gain. It is often difficult to imagine that the products we purchase are manufactured in such horrible conditions, but as consumers we must take responsibility for the well-being of these children.

Peterson, C.Q. & Nelson, D.L. (2003). Effect of an occupational intervention on printing in children with economic disadvantages. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57, 152-160.

OBJECTIVE. The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether an occupational therapy intervention improved an academic outcome (D'Nealian printing) in a school setting. The study specifically examined improvement in printing skills in economically disadvantaged first graders who were at risk academically and socially. The intervention was based on an occupational framework including biomechanical, sensorimotor, and teaching-learning strategies. **METHOD.** The final sample consisted of 59 first-grade children from a low socioeconomic urban elementary school-based health center who were randomly assigned to an occupational therapy intervention or a control condition. In addition to regular academic instruction, the intervention group received 10 weeks of training twice a week for 30-minute sessions. The control group received only regular academic instruction. Subjects were pretested and posttested on the Minnesota Handwriting Test, which assesses legibility, space, line, size, and form (the main variables in this study) as well as speed. **RESULTS.** Multivariate analysis of variance confirmed that the gain scores in the occupational therapy intervention group were significantly greater than those in the control group. The Hotelling-Lawley Trace value was 0.606, with $F(5, 53) = 6.43$, $p < .0001$). The estimated effect size ($[\eta]^2$) was .378, with an observed power of .994. Largest gains for the intervention group were in the areas of space, line, and size. **CONCLUSION.** The intervention group demonstrated a significant increase in scores on the posttest of the Minnesota Handwriting Test when compared to the scores of the control group. Occupational intervention was effective in improving the academic outcome of printing in children who are economically disadvantaged.

Shaw, K. & Dann, J. (1999). Work is sacred - the journey out of welfare. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 6, 80-87.

This paper is about an extended Ngarinyin/Bunuba family in the West Kimberley in Australia whose forebears participated in the transition from gatherer-hunter to pastoral worker. The

senior members of the family experienced first hand the consequences of the introduction of the Pastoral Award in the late 1960's and the replacement of meaningful work with welfare dependency and the culture of alcohol. It is an evolving journey of a non-literate community leader's struggle to organize out of chaos in order to generate and sustain social and economic practices that are consistent with life, and will produce a generation of young people able to protect a country and reproduce traditional culture. The process for the senior member of the group is the renewal of the ethic of socially useful activity, and simultaneous disengagement from economic subjugation and despair born of futile dependence on welfare. For the younger members, it is the discovery of socially useful activity and the experience of the fulfillment that it can bring. The Journey out of Welfare is premised on the centrality of meaningful work into the development and maintenance of productive and enduring human relations. Work that reflects and sustains strong social bonds and stimulated intellectual and spiritual development in the course of meeting the daily and longer term material conditions for a healthy and happy life.

Thibeault, R. (2002). Fostering healing through occupation: the case of the Canadian Inuit. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 9, 153-158.

Despite over 150 years of unrelenting colonization, the Inuit of Canada have maintained their cultural identity and established their homeland. But the price to pay has been high. Today, addiction, violence, depression, and unemployment plague many Arctic communities. This paper looks briefly at the evolution of occupation throughout Inuit history and at its potential for individual and collective healing. It highlights the fact that Inuit occupational well-being cannot be dissociated from economic and environmental factors, making the issue of Inuit survival a global challenge.

Tryssenaar, J., Jones, E.J. & Lee, D. (1999). Occupational performance needs of a shelter population. *The Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 66, 188-194.

Practice in shelters for people who are homeless is an exciting and challenging opportunity for occupational therapists. However, there is a paucity of knowledge about the occupational performance needs of this population. In the present study, 25 persons at a shelter were interviewed using the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM). Data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Several major themes emerged including spirituality, "we want what everyone wants", choosing satisfaction, diverse health concerns, power of relationships, the importance of environment to well-being, and poverty. Altruism in the midst of adversity and individuality were minor themes. Instrumental activities of daily living, such as access to employment, financial management, housing, and recreation, were reported as more important than basic activities of daily living. Participants and interviewers also responded to general questions regarding the use of the COPM in the assessment process. The COPM was found to be useful for assessing the occupational performance needs of this population, but should be augmented by inquiry about environmental concerns, relationships, housing, and spirituality.

Whiteford, G. (2000). Occupational deprivation: Global challenge in the new millennium. *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 63, 200-204.

Occupational deprivation is a relatively new term which describes a state in which people are precluded from opportunities to engage in occupations of meaning due to factors outside their

control. As we face the new millennium, it seems likely that, due to widespread social and economic change as well as increasing civil unrest, occupational deprivation will be experienced by increasing numbers of people globally. This article describes the conceptual origins of occupational deprivation, presents definitions of the term and discusses specific populations that may be vulnerable to being occupationally deprived. Global, contextual issues of economic reform and technological advances are addressed with specific reference to these populations. Finally, consideration is given as to how an understanding of occupational deprivation is of relevance to occupational therapy and its concern with social and occupational justice.

What is Empowerment?

Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.

Four elements of Empowerment

- Access to Information
- Inclusion and Participation
- Accountability
- Local organizational capacity

Bertram, M. & Linnett, P. (1995). Empowerment through Employment? An Innovative Work Scheme for People with Mental Health Problems: Opinion. *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 58, 7-8.

Polatajko, H. (2001). The evolution of our occupational perspective: the journey from diversion through therapeutic use to enablement. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68, 203-207.

Occupational Therapy, in the broad sense of the term, has become the most serious problem before the statesmen of every nation in the world at the present time. All over the civilized globe, the widespread disease of unemployment (lack of occupation) is monopolizing the attention of national parliaments and world conferences. Everywhere the effort is being made to remedy human dissatisfaction and mental unrest by providing daily tasks so that minds may be occupied, bodies may be healthy, and the means of sustenance may be found (Howland, 1933, p. 4).

Stewart, A.M. (1993). Empowerment and Enablement. *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 56, 433.

Stewart, A.M. (1994). Empowerment and Enablement: Occupational Therapy 2001. *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57, 248-254.

Wilcock, A.A. (1998). Reflections on doing, being and becoming. *The Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 65, 248-257.

Yeoman, S. (1998). Occupation and disability: A role for occupational therapists in developing countries. *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 61, 523-527.

Disability issues are rarely priorities for action in developing countries. Prejudicial attitudes against disabled people among the wider community are common and opportunities for empowerment are few. As a result, disabled people are frequently marginalized within their communities and have limited access to education and employment. Farming is a basic means of livelihood for many people in developing countries and for disabled people, unlikely to be able to secure other employment, farming is of particular relevance. Yet disabled people are often excluded from opportunities to develop farming skills, resulting in further disadvantage and reinforcing the notion of dependence on others. A qualitative study was carried out in the Bron Ahafo Region of Ghana in 1996 to examine the position of disabled people in local society, particularly in relation to the range of occupations available to them. The research highlighted a number of pressing needs for disabled people in Ghana. Analysis of these needs showed that, through application of basic occupational therapy philosophy and skills, occupational therapists have a unique contribution to make in improving the quality of life of disabled people in developing countries.

Listen to the Voices <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices/listen-findings.htm>

The poor view wellbeing holistically

Poverty is much more than income alone. For the poor, the good life or wellbeing is multidimensional with both material and psychological dimensions. Wellbeing is peace of mind; it is good health; it is belonging to a community; it is safety; it is freedom of choice and action; it is a dependable livelihood and a steady source of income; it is food.

The poor describe ill being as lack of material things - food especially but also lack of work, money, shelter and clothing -- and living and working in often unhealthy, polluted and risky environments. They also defined ill-being as bad experiences and bad feelings about the self. Perceptions of powerlessness over one's life and of voicelessness were common; so was anxiety and fear for the future.

Labovitz, D.R. (Ed.). (2002). *Ordinary miracles: true stories about overcoming obstacles & surviving catastrophes*. Thorofare, NJ: SLACK, Inc.

Crane, M. & Warnes, A.M. (2001). Older people and homelessness: Prevalence and causes. *Topics in Geriatric Rehabilitation*, 16(4), 1-14.

This article examines the prevalence and causes of homelessness among older people. It reviews the histories of a sample of older people in Britain who slept on the streets and stayed in temporary hostels. Some had become homeless for the first time in old age, having been married and worked for many years. Others had spent most of their adult lives in hostels or on the streets. Different events and states triggered and contributed to homelessness at various stages of the life course. Although homelessness generally is associated with shortages of low-cost rented housing, unemployment, and poverty, among our informants' personal and psychosocial factors had a dominant role.

Wilcock, A.A. (2001). Occupational Utopias: Back to the Future. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 8, 5-12.

The paper reflects on the historically recurring theme of Utopia. It does so from the perspective of the occupational nature of the types of

communities envisaged or established in the past. It reviews the ideas of visionaries such as Thomas More, but also the manifestations of practical utopians, like Robert Owen, credited with being the father of British Socialism, and Octavia Hill, a pioneer of housing schemes for the socially disadvantaged as well as the Open Space Movement. It is instructive to appreciate how others before have taken seriously the need to establish opportunities for people to experience well-being through occupation which provides meaning. Utopian communities, almost by definition, have to envisage or establish environments which enable people to become what they have the potential and capacity to become. In the paper three types of utopian communities are compared: those which look backwards with envy towards a golden age of the past; those in which the successive evolution of increasingly humane and advanced communities is seen as their purpose; and those with a holistic vision of the future in which people's occupational needs are not seen as wholly economic. Without consideration of people's occupational natures, no utopia or community of the future will be totally successful in that it would fail to meet an important basic human need.