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# INTRODUCTION

This course introduces students to the study of major contemporary social problems which has been from time immemorial, a cankerworm that has eaten deeply into the larger members of society. Kidnapping, rape, poverty, social and gender inequalities, homelessness, child molestation, child trafficking, child abuse, unemployment, depression among others are examples of social problems which is also known as social issues.

## What is Contemporary Social Problem?

Contemporary Social Problem as defined by (Hart’s 1923) is *“a problem which actually or potentially affects large numbers of people in common way so that it may best be solved by some measure or measures applied to the problem as a whole rather than dealing with each individual as an isolated case, or which requires concerted or organized human action.”*

These social problems/issues have been in existence for a long time even from the beginning of human existence. As earlier stated, it has affected greatly, the larger numbers of people in the society. Due to these emergence of social issues, members of the society had been living base on the survival of the fittest but in all these, there exist some people who still bear the burden of other members of the society not as though they have attained the level of sufficiency but lived based on sacrificing what they have for others to be happy i. e placing other people’s interests and needs above theirs’. This art of self-denial to satisfy the needs of others do not only exist among humans but also exist among animals.

In this assignment, I will be sharing my experience on how I view social issues in this generation and what has been my reactions or moral obligations to curb these problems if not totally eradicated in my society and to share in turn, some actions that I have carried out in the interest of others which had brighten my countenance and gladdens my heart and some actions that I carried out considering myself not really as above others but to meet my basic needs.

# GENERAL SUMMARY OF THIS COURSE

Many things are not going well in the society today. Social problems as poverty and unemployment, health problems as poor living conditions and poor health care services, political problems as immigration and civil rights issues, socio-psychological problems as racism and gender inequality, educational problems as poor access to education or quality education among others has affected the larger members of the society and has caused aggressive behaviors and violence among families, tribes, groups even to the larger society.

Thus, Contemporary Social Problems are the general factors that affect or damage society. Also known as social issues, it affects a particular area or people in the world which consequently, affect the behavior and reactions of people to certain situations. Most of these social problems make it difficult for people to achieve their full potentials. Of course an abused child, a child that has gone through the traumatic experience of rape could come up with strange behavior which could cause havoc to the child, the immediate family and the larger society. A hungered child/person could engage in robbery. Poverty and homelessness could lead to prostitution and other derogatory acts in the society. Malnutrition, unemployment amidst others could trigger problems in the society if not addressed.

According to Merton and Nisbet (1971); “A social problem is a way of behavior that is regarded by a substantial part of a social order as being in violation of one or more generally accepted or approved norms.”

Considering the above definition, one could deduce that the social order or the approved norms of the society has been tampered with to the detriment of the larger members of the society. For example, unemployment occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work and this could lead to frustration. Due to unemployment, problems like burglary, loot, murder, theft arises in the society.

However, many people as individuals, groups, government have sort ways of addressing these problems but many of the efforts proved abortive due to the divergent views of individual that makes up a group or the government.

Some people see the solution to social problems as going beyond their call to formal duty, to assist people who are living on the edge and who desperately need succor, giving them comfort by renouncing their own interest, devoting themselves to others just as their moral obligation.

On the other hand, there are other set of people who believe in self- satisfaction, self- interest above the interest of others. Considering one’s interest above the interest and needs of others is what this set of people believe in for survival.

The divergent views in belief of how the social issues as poverty, unemployment, homelessness, educational problem, health problem among others could be resolved, there arose two ethical views which are altruism and egoism. These two opposing ethical views to solving these problems have their proponents known as altruists and the other as egoists. The former believe in considering other’s interest first while the latter believe in self-interest over the interest and happiness of others.

Not taking sides of the two opposing beliefs but to see into what acts could be put in place to have a better life for the members of society and to disarm the cankerworm eating up the larger members of the society, which of these ethical beliefs should one practice? Altruism or Egoism?

## What is Altruism?

Altruism is defined by many disciplines and the perspectives on this term are different. Hence, there is no single conceptual perspective linked to the term “altruism” but rather many perspectives from different disciplines and within them. For example, in psychology, a relatively narrow version would be ‘vernacular altruism’ as defined by (Sober, 1994) as, playing a selfless, pro social behavior that is performed to help, support, do well for another person.

Taking a step back and looking at the term ‘altruism’ and its origin (pour...meaning “for others”). August Comte, the co-founder of sociology, created the term “altruism” in his publication, System of Positive Polity 1851. Comte states that “The individual must subordinate himself to an existence outside himself in order to find in it the source of his stability. In addition, this condition cannot be effectually realized except under the impulse of propensities prompting him to live for others” (Comte & Bridges, 2001). Comte not only provides a definition of the behavior linked to his new term, “altruism” but also considered the perspective of society’s developmental goal for this behavior. Thus, the key element of his definitions of altruism is the idea “to live for others” and therefore helping others.

To me, from the above definitions, especially that of its founder, August Comte, I could say that altruism is an unselfish concern for others i.e doing things simply out of the desire to help people. Acts as having concern for the well-being of others is considered altruistic in nature. In some cases, these acts of altruism lead people to jeopardize themselves to help others. Such behaviors are often performed unselfishly and without any expectations of reward though, there may be other forms of altruism as reciprocal altruism which involves taking actions to help others with expectation that they will offer help in return or reciprocating a kind act that was shown to one in the past to one’s benefactor. Also, there is another form of altruism known as pure altruism which could be going out of one’s way to assist or help a stranger. Therefore, everyday life is filled with small acts of altruism, from holding the door for a stranger to giving money to people in need. Some examples of altruistic behaviors could be:

* Forgoing things that may bring personal benefits if they create cost for others.
* Helping someone despite personal cost or risks.
* Sharing resources even in the face of scarcity.
* Showing concern for some else’s well-being.
* Doing something to help another person with no expectation of reward

Now, in most of the problems in our contemporary society, what should be our concern? Who are those to be helped? How can people be helped and why should one help others or carryout altruistic behaviors even at the expense of his/her well-being or personal interest? Having these questions in view will make up some of the acts I have carried out for the benefit of others as a means of contribution to solving the depression and fears of shattered hope in others’ state of poverty and joblessness.

## What is Egoism?

Egoism is the view that people pursue their own self-interest and act based on achieving self-interest. Here, I’m going to expatiate more on forms ethical egoism of course there are other forms as psychological egoism and rational egoism.

Ethical Egoism according to ( Fazeela Farook 2021), is the idea and belief which is based on what is right and wrong and based on people’s selfish interest. According to her, in the theory of ethical egoism, you ought to pursue according to your self-interest it means, if something is benefiting you, then it is the right thing to do and if it’s not befitting you, it’s wrong. So according to this theory, you need to do what is best for oneself. You don’t need to look out for others. You just do what is good for yourself.

Of course as I have earlier stated, altruism is the opposite of egoism. People act for many reasons but for whom, for what and why should they act… for themselves, for God, or for other’s interest? In the real sense, can an individual ever act only according to her own interest without regard for others’? Also, can one truly act for others in complete disregard for her own interest?

Amidst these mixed conceptualized theories I will state my opinion and give my analysis based on what I have learnt so far from the proponents of these theories and the realities of how these concepts could be useful based on their advantages and disadvantages to the problems that have affected and still affecting individual especially the larger members of the society.

# CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

In this analysis, I am going to state basically the advantages and the disadvantages of Altruism and Egoism to make clear the concepts and further give my opinion in which of these can the society be guaranteed solution to the contemporary social problems that has been eating deep into the larger members of the contemporary society.

First, talking about altruism, it is a theory of conduct that regards the good of others as end of moral action. It is a behavior that aims to benefit other person instead of oneself. For instance, one may want to do someone a favor just to make the person happy not considering whether one gain personal advantages out of it or not. One of the advantages of practicing altruistic behavior could just be to make others happy but beyond this, it could also be helping ones’ mental development or keeping one in a good mental health condition. In addition to ones’ mental health, below are other advantages of altruistic behaviors:

* **It saves the majority through selflessness:** Based on the evolutionary psychology perspective, altruism is what allows for the collective group to survive (Wilson, I975). The selfless desire to help those group even if it harms the helper, may explain why people sacrifice their lives for the well-being of their families and groups. In this theory, one could deduce that a major act of altruism is to give one self to save the larger members of the society. For example, there were some of our past political heroes who sacrificed their lives for the freedom and liberation of many from slavery and oppression of colonial master. Hence, if the members of the society can keep up with the act of sacrificing for the sake of others, of course the world would be a better place for many.

* **It saves humanity:** Sorokin (1948) presents majorly the aspects of what appear to be the only means of saving humanity which include creating peaceful and harmonious society which could be achieved only when the members of the society possess at least minimum of love, sympathy, and compassion ensuring mutual aid, co-operation and fair treatment. Under these conditions its members are united in one collective “we”. Here, the joys and sorrows of one member are shared by others in the society. (pg58). Hence, there’s a hope that humanity can be saved from the problems facing the larger members of the society if an individual act to the benefit of one another. Life has gone beyond saying let me mind my own business because the others’ businesses you fail to mind could destroy your own business that you might have laboured for, for years. There’s a saying in my culture that “omo tao ko agbele ta ba ko ta”…meaning ‘a child we fail to build will eventually sell off the house we built’ In essence, one of the advantages of altruistic behaviour is saving humanity by being kind to others, saving them of depression and anxiety of how to survive and how to meet up with basic necessities of life. Hence, if the members of the society irrespective of the social group could work as one, not regarding the lowly estate of others by the wealthy citizens otherwise known as members of the upper class, the problems will be at minimal.
* **Creates sense of belonging and reduces isolation:** Most of the problems we have in the society are based on idleness. An adage goes thus that an idle mind is the devil’s workshop. One of the acts of altruism is the meaningful engagement of people in positive discussion, giving ideas and helping with whatever could create cost for others. In this way, one could succeed in creating job for another thereby creating a sense of belonging and dealing with low self- esteem in others and bringing others out of the state of isolation.

Many graduates today, go about looking for a white collar job and when they might have gone round without success, they resort to either joining group of robbers or become internet fraud stars thereby raising more havoc on other members in the society. Some political elites have taken advantage of youths’ vulnerability to idleness to be used as instruments of destroying the few social infrastructures, killing and even assassinating their opponents. Lack of help from the so called leaders had actually caused more harm than good in our contemporary society. Even in the animal kingdoms, the super animals as gorillas, chimpanzees, protect their colonies from external invasions and this creates a sense of belonging in each animal within a specific colony.

* **Increase the well-being of others with a happier society:** A happier society can be achieved if the well-being of others is put into consideration other than thinking of only oneself-interest. Of course a tree can never make a forest. Ones’ happiness may be dependent on giving others joy and seeking for the well-being of others.

* **Encourages the establishment of meaningful connection:** The act of helping others has connected many to their marital destinies, partnerships, friendships, or even business opportunities on the long run. The act of helping others is a seed that is capable of bringing blessings to one self in the future. It is an act that brings blessings in disguise in some ways. This could be termed as reciprocal altruism.

Having the above as some of the advantages of altruism, there are other sides of it too which are the disadvantages of it. Although, to me, the disadvantages seems to be a kind of caution to displaying altruistic acts but not totally neglecting the acts of helping and caring for others. Some of these cautions that seems as disadvantages to some are:

* **Neglecting ones’ needs and desires:** Even though one could derive joy and fulfilment in helping others, altruistic behaviours should be carried out from time to time because ones’ needs are also important. If one is carried away by just meeting up with other peoples’ demands and needs, one could end up neglecting his/her needs especially the basic needs. I had come across a man who most times supports other people when it comes to their health issues and other things but whenever he is sick, his wife suffers most because he never take symptoms to illness serious until it gets worse. Consequently, the wife suffers and even supports him with hospital bills just because he never considered his health status at the earlier stage.
* **Financial Challenge:** Taking the act of helping others to the extreme could lead to serious challenges especially in the aspect of finances. When one is carried away with supporting others without gaining a solid ground for sourcing for more income, the altruist may end up as the people he is trying to help.
* **Exploitation by others:** A free giver of course is a friend to all. An altruist attracts many people to himself but these people may only be close for what they will get, they are just like predators that have gotten a prey to feed on. In helping others, one must consider who to help. Hence, some people are good at ceasing opportunities to exploit others.
* **Misinterpretation of Actions/Intension:** Altruistic behaviours have been misinterpreted many times especially among members of the same family as an act of pride and show off of ones’ wealth or affluence. Hence, an unhealthy rivalry and jealousy which could even lead to killing the altruistic fellow.
* **Good intention with bad outcome:** Imagine an altruistic woman whose intention was to help a prostitute out of the street, brings her home, gives her a better life and eventually turns out to be her rival because her husband is the loose type who doesn’t have control lusting after other ladies. Who could imagine someone one is trying to help would be the one to stab one from behind. In such case, the act of altruism involves risk taking and sometimes the result may not be what the act was intended for.
* **Confused reality of altruism:** Life is all about give and take. One of the fear of many about the nature of altruism is the question of trust in the sense that if one has sacrificed in some ways for the interest of others, is he really doing it without any expectation or he is doing it to benefit from the person he is helping in the long run? For example even parents expect returns of what they might have invested in their children in the long run. Husbands expecting a reciprocal action from his wife in most cases and even slaves expect to be treated well based on his loyalty and faithfulness to duty by his boss. With this mixed feeling of many as to whether if some does them good are they not to have a payback time in the long run has been the fear of many to the disregarding of some offers to help by some altruist.
* **Encourages Laziness:** Helping others is not a bad idea but many take advantage of it and lose their drive to achieve things in life since they know that someone will be there to fix their problems.

With the above analysis of some pros and cons of altruism, one could deduce that the act of altruism is good in itself but caution is needed not to affect the source which the act flows.

Ethical egoism is quite different from other ethical values because it suggests that the interest of others should not determine ones’ moral decision. An egoist believes that sacrificing oneself is not a moral action and one can only help another if the help will bring in benefit in the end not considering the fact that this mentality could only offer a short time benefit and satisfaction and could make life worse in the long run. If everyone acts only in their own self-interests, the society will continue to develop but under constant attacks and threats especially to the larger members of the society which could lead to anarchy and fall apart that will benefit no one. Thus, one of the disadvantages of ethical egoism is that it could create a society that no one wants to live in and where nothing would ever get accomplished because the society lacks unity and no one is ready to lift the other as everyone seek his/her interest.

Ethical egoism describes how people “ought” to behave unlike normative philosophies which prescribe certain types of corrective behaviour that should be adhered to, regardless of the situation. According to G.E. Moore, ethical egoists have a strong disadvantage because they hold what is contradictory to the view of the larger members of the society. Essentially, in a normative theory, something that is viewed as good must be universally viewed as good.

In my opinion, people would likely be uncomfortable with the egoists’ point of view because it doesn’t consider what could be of benefit to others even if it involves claiming of human lives. For example, if one sees one’s neighbour trapped in fire disaster and one has the chance of saving the neighbour, an ethical egoist might state that one should only save the neighbour if one would receive personal benefit which in itself is an inhuman act.

The problems we’re facing in the society today are beyond just seeking for ourselves. It is beyond minding one’s business but stretching out hands of love and care to others that we may have a better society and this should be the ultimate thing. At one point or the other in the journey of our lives we’ve faced challenges which others are going through now which should remind us of how we felt during those challenging periods. Our past experiences should lead us to develop a compassionate heart towards the less privilege in our society.

Hence, being egoistic cannot in anyway be a solution to the contemporary social problems in or society rather it may cause more damages. For example, if I see a child drowning and I am about starting my car to meet up with a business appointment which could fetch me great interest, I’m supposed to attend to the drowning child first to save life.

# HOW CAN ONE APPLY THE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND WAYS TO PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO THEM IN ONE’S LIFE, WORK AND COMMUNITY?

Contemporary Social problems are spoken about by many but faced by the larger members of the society. This is so pathetic and has become so detrimental to the wellbeing and progress of individual and the society at large.

Contemporary Social Problem according to Hart is “a problem which actually or potentially affects the larger members of people in a common way so that it may best be solved by some measure or measures applied to the problem as a whole rather than dealing with each individual as an isolated case, or which requires concerted or organized human.” Hart’s (1923) studies.

However, many people, especially the rich and those at the helms of national and societal affairs proved to be there as ambassadors of poverty who rarely think about or support the populace. The rich and national leaders are to serve as balms to the societal problems but instead, they add salt to the injuries eating up the larger members of the society. In such situation, we are to help ourselves knowing well that if we don’t, then we shall continue to be preys to the deadly traps of our leaders who don’t care whether the members of the society eat or not, have shelter or not, these among other problems will continue to prevail if we ignore others who are suffering from the same fate as ourselves but one may just be privileged to be better than the others.

Applying this knowledge in my life, first of all I must admit the fact that so many societal issues are in existence and being conscious of this fact, I must play my role no matter how small this role maybe. I must realise that many people are suffering in the society and the fact is that I am also a member of this society so I must crave to be independent by seeking knowledge to be a useful member of the society and not a dependant. I shouldn’t wait until I get employed by the government or in any private sector. There’s dignity in labour and not despising my little beginning will go a long way of saving me of begging or being a nuisance in the society thereby, aggravating the problems in the society. Therefore, applying this knowledge, I must be able to be:

* Independent. As everyone, including the members of my immediate family is striving to survive hence, the need for being independent.
* To acquire vocational skills apart from formal education.
* Resourceful in order to be a useful member of my society.
* Generate ideas that are capable of relieving others of their problems.

The working environment is not left out in the issues confronting the society. It is a social environment where people from different backgrounds, different languages and beliefs come together although they are members of the same society, having peculiarity in the problems they may be facing. This should open our hearts of compassion for one another that may not be privileged as we are. We must identify people around us who may be desperately in need of our collective support irrespective of how little this help could be. For me to be an agent of change at work and be part of change which the society may need, I must:

* Seek to know the challenges confronting people around me and seek for solution either directly or indirectly to save others.
* Seek to be diligent in discharging my duties responsibly.
* Be punctual at work to be effective and avoid truancy.
* Be ready to part with things that could create cost for others as a means of survival or livelihood. For example a teacher/student’s relationship, employer /employee’s relationship.
* Create awareness among members of the same working environment or field about things they could do to alleviate suffering.
* Impact skills that could be useful and generate income for members of the society.
* Not be bias among members of the same working environment irrespective of our differences in tribe, religion and gender.

As everyone knows that the community is largely affected by many problems, wisdom is needed as the leaders of the community are not ready to let the hook off the necks of the populace. Therefore, as members of the community, we must arise to collective responsibility to relief ourselves from the problem we’re in as a tree cannot make a forest. We must identify ourselves as one and do away with the baits of the rich and our leaders to be used as machineries against ourselves. We must wise-up to liberate ourselves from the cankerworms our leaders and selfishness has invented on us. To achieve this relief we must:

* Educate ourselves.
* Have compassion for one another.
* Pursue a collective goal against seeking individual interest.
* Keep ourselves informed.
* Be united
* Identify our differences and come to term with one another.
* Be willing to support one another.
* Be strong in our decisions and be determined.

# MY EXPERIENCE HAVING OTHERS IN MIND AMIDST SOCIAL ISSUES

Experiencing the world around us helps us to build empathy and compassion for others. Without experiencing various aspects of life, it would be difficult to understand or relate to other people’s situations.

I was born without a silver spoon in a typical village where there was no electricity, portable water, accessible roads, healthcare centres. Life was very difficult for an average man to survive talk less of a woman looking after six kids all by herself. My father left home when I was just a baby. Living from hand to mouth through the vigorous work of my mother and siblings as peasant farmers was not an easy task. Poverty and lack of exposure could not allow my siblings to have a formal education beyond middle school level since my mother couldn’t afford to pay for their fees. I was fortunate to go through formal education from kindergarten to the university level through the help of my eldest sister who got married to a mechanic and lived in the northern city of Nigeria.

Apart from formal education, I acquired skills as tailoring, baking and hair dressing which really helped me to be financially independent and contributed to the achievement of my educational level when I was still with my sister and her family. At a point, life wasn’t easy with my sister and her husband so I was able to assist with my school fees and school materials. I bought some foodstuffs and school materials for their kids. It was indeed a bitter-sweet experience.

As time went on, I discovered there were people who needed my assistance. Though to me, I wasn’t looking better than they were because we were all facing the same challenges in the society so I developed a heart of compassion towards meeting the needs of some people which actually led me to some altruistic behaviour.

As a tutor who comes across many students from different backgrounds, tribes, religions, mentality with their various challenges and confrontations, I don’t need to shy away from some responsibilities apart from my formal responsibility to them as a teacher. This responsibility has really helped me to save some students in making decisions that could have claimed their lives, fallen into immorality and addictions, depression and the likes.

# FIVE ACTIONS I CARRIED OUT FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS ARE:

* Helping a student who was feeling depressed to meet up with some of his challenges in study was one of my recent actions. I created extra time/hour which was cost free to teach a particular student and gave him some learning materials in order to overcome his fear of failure and to meet up with the required score of an international examination. As a teacher, I shouldn’t send students away with unkind words and actions because he/she is from a poor background. This could be a chance to protect a blinking future of someone that might be in a position to save others and be a useful member of the society in the future. I’m glad I could help and there was a positive outcome.
* Another student walked up to me and told me a pathetic story how he came from a broken home. He never opened up to me at first but I noticed his behaviour and absent mindedness in class and one day after the class I asked him and he narrated the story to me. I was moved to tears as sometimes he sleeps on an empty stomach because he doesn’t get money from he’s father sometimes because of his poor academic performance, he went through psychological torture and couldn’t help himself in anyway. I took it upon myself to let him come to my house at evenings to get dinner for himself and sometime if I don’t have the opportunity to cook I send him money for feeding. It was the beginning of a new thing in his life. He’s doing well now and he walks up to me freely to discuss his latest and progress with me.
* I had forgone personal benefits because of the pressing need of someone which could create cost for her. It was a sewing machine which I bought and I needed to make some income for myself but this was a lady that wanted to learn sewing too and this could save her mother from unnecessary burden of meeting some of her needs. More so, it was an opportunity for her to acquire a lifetime skill that could be an avenue to create job for others in the future. I gave the sewing machine out without collecting a dime. I was overwhelmed with joy the last time I saw some of the clothes she sewed for her customers and the level of creativity she applied to sewing. It was amazing. I’m glad because the sacrifice was not in vain.
* I forgone a land for the benefit of a co-beneficiary even though I don’t know what my future would be like. I don’t have a permanent job yet but there’s a need to let the other party use the land since she didn’t go through formal education in the higher institution but she’s engaged in business and this land could create more expansion to her business. Seeing the woman had gone through a lot and may not have a good pillar to rest on for income, I had to let go of this land to save her business and save her from depression of a failed business.
* The major challenge in Burkina Faso, the country where I am, is means of transportation. I had walked distances on foot since I do not have a car or motorcycle. Most times I board public buses to places. Recently, I got a motorcycle but gave it out to someone I think he needed it most to save him some cost and stress. Currently, I do not have a means of transportation to where I deliver lessons and I could walk sometimes or I get lift from people who own one. I am glad I could be of help to others. Helping others indeed feels good.

# FIVE ACTIONS I CARRIED OUT FOR PERSONAL BENEFIT

Having others’ interest in mind is important and gives joy and fulfilment but meeting my basic needs to fit in to the competitive society and have means of income to sustain being helpful to others and the society at large has been the source of things done for my personal benefit of keeping relevance in sustaining others and meeting basic needs of life. Among these acts are:

* The pursuit of additional educational qualification with A.I.U is one of the recent acts carried out for my personal benefit because the certificate will eventually be in my name and cease to be relevant if I am no longer living.
* I have been thinking on how to start a business to enhance constant income against having to wait long for salary to be paid before meeting needs and this has made me to save some money recently though there are needs I closed my eyes to in order to have a personal business.
* Amidst the sacrifice for others, I got a land in my name in order to have a personal building and be free from paying for a rented house.
* Room furniture like bed, mattress and wardrobe were some of the things I got for myself some months ago in order to have a good sleep and a tidy room.
* Recently, I agreed to teach some students at a subsidized amount and they thanked me as if I actually did them a favour but the act was because I needed money to meet up with some expenses. It was for personal benefit not because I actually wanted to help because the time is not favourable for me.

# EXAMPLES OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS, ALTRUISM AND EGOISM, CASE STUDY OF OUGADOUGOU THE CENTRAL CAPITAL OF BURKINA FASO IN WEST AFRICA.

Burkina Faso is a West African country that has been inhabited by different ethnic groups. Burkina Faso has been exposed to various social issues over the years. It has been exposed to the threats and attacks of violent by armed groups, targeting symbols, institutions and representatives of the state, including the defence and security forces, local leaders and political figures.

With the history of several coup d’etats, the country has been in a cycle of more terrorist attacks since 2014.

Among the social issues that have been affecting the larger members of the society are issues as food insecurity, poverty, unemployment, inequality, corruption among others.

**Uneven Distribution of Resources**: Burkina Faso is one of the world’s poorest countries with more than half of its population living on 1.90 USD per day. Agriculture is its main source of income. Farming and forestry employ 80% of the population. Despite the economic growth, poverty level remains largely stagnant. This is partly driven by population growth rates, combined with recent climate shocks, affecting crops and food security. Urban areas are particularly affected, with an unemployment rate of 50%. Poverty, combined with an overstretched state apparatus, leads to significant gaps in access to state security and justice services and creates a breeding ground for social tensions and violence. This gives credibility and space for non-state armed group to operate, in particular in areas where the community expresses perceptions of exclusion, especially amongst the youth, namely in relation to corruption and unequal distribution of resources and wealth. This could be compounded by un-harmonized access to public services between the capital and regions. With this problem of un-equality, many Burkinabaes, especially the male, just seek for the needs of their family and forget about others except for the few who consider hiring the less privileged to work as maids or errand boys.

**Insecurity:** The broader security landscape in the Sahel region needs to be taken into consideration when examining the worsened security situation in Burkina Faso. Following the conflict in northern Mali, the armed groups have contributed to the rise of inter-communal violence in central Mali, but also in Burkina Faso. The terrorists are also threatening the capital, Ouagadougou, and the border areas with Benin and Ivory Coast. These armed groups have been mostly targeting civilians and state security forces and committing serious human rights violations, leading to massive population displacement and inter-communal tensions. Amidst the state of insecurity, one could say the military personnel still consider a great deal the masses by not brutalising and still seek to put their lives at stake to defend the civilians from external invaders.

**Homelessness**: Indiscriminate attacks against civilians in Burkina Faso have led to the displacement of more people and experts expect that the number may continue to increase. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) face several critical human security challenges such as food insecurity and limited access to the land resources and markets. Access to basic services such as health, education, water, sanitation and justice is also a major concern. Their presence weighs on the resources of  host communities and puts an extra burden on an already stretched out national resources and public services infrastructure, leading to increasing tensions among the communities and risk of inter-communal violence. These tensions were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has globally affected the most vulnerable hardest.

**Poverty:**  Burkina Faso is a landlocked, low-income nation. Despite a recent increase in annual economic growth, approximately 40.1% of the country’s citizens still live below the poverty line. 90% of Burkina Faso’s poor live is in the rural areas, though the urban poverty growth is also increasing. The majority of the rural population works in the agricultural sector, which is highly vulnerable to unpredictable levels of rainfall as well as fluctuations in the prices of its exports.

Burkina Faso is ranked 185 out of 188 countries on the 2016 Human Development Index. The average life expectancy in the country is 59.0 years, slightly lower than the average life expectancy of 59.3 years of other low human development countries. The expected amount of schooling is 7.7 years, also below the low human development average of 9.3 years. High rates of food insecurity and under-nutrition persist, with approximately 10.4% of Burkinabe children suffering from acute malnutrition. Insufficient investments in education and infrastructure have made any development difficult to maintain.

**Political Instability**: Burkina Faso has a long history of coup d’états. In the current security situation, the international community could be concerned that non-state armed groups could seriously impair the election process. Due to increased violence and terrorist attacks, entire villages have been displaced from regions in the north and east. As a result, electoral constituencies have undergone significant change in inhabitants, reflecting an emerging imbalance between number of candidates and sizes of constituencies. The electoral law and the possibility for displaced voters to vote outside their constituencies have also been under scrutiny. Armed groups have also been playing a key role in the political space in Burkina Faso with increasingly important role, armed groups have been using their influence in shaping the future of Burkina Faso’ elections and politics.





# CONCLUSION

Contemporary Social Problem has been in existence for many years in our society; yet many have different view on how these problems could be tackled. Some view it as common problem to be tackled collectively while some see it as individual problem and look forward to see individual finding a way for survival.

In the contemporary society, there are people of different strata and of course the lower stratum is the majority who are ravaged by these problems as poverty, homelessness, unemployment and the likes. Hence, solution as seeking the way forward to have a better living among the majority is important.

Generally, individual has a role to play starting from educating our children and young adults about collective responsibility to achieve the kind of society individual has been dreaming about which could in turn enhance the progress of individual in the society. Hence, selfish desires have to be dealt with and seek for giving all for the benefit of all in the society. Individual must contribute to the success of one another. Let’s always remember that a tree cannot make a forest.

Many things are to be considered. The upper stratum seeks the society never experience a positive change because of the advantage most of the rich gain from the poor and corruptive state of the society. How do we salvage ourselves as the poor majority from the rich who have claimed to be interested in using the poor to their advantage and yet deprive us the joy of living a comfortable life? How do we attain to get quality education when the rich only think of sending their children abroad for studies? How do we attain the level of free access to good roads when the rich have money to board flights and own private jets? How can we have good hospitals and qualitative health facilities if the rich only travel abroad for medical reasons? These among other questions should run through our minds and seek for how we could tackle the issues staring us to the face over the years leaving us in a state of joblessness, poverty, homelessness and other problems as robbery, and kidnapping, killings and rape. We must rise to free ourselves not as the rich through their selfishness, seeking only for themselves but strive collectively and consider others more to eradicate selfish ambition and create a better society for all.

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