

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

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BAP/18/278

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DIRECT VIOLENCE

- Classic form of violence
- Involves the use of physical force
- Visible, intentional and direct
- Eruptive, catastrophic events
- Attributable to a person or persons- there is a perpetrator
- An 'assault or encroachment' on the physical/bodily integrity of another human being or his/her property

Introduction

- ▶ Structural violence from a germinal article published by **johan galtung** in the journal of peace research in 1969.
- ▶ It is the situation in which there is a difference between the potential and actual somatic and mental achievements of people.
- ▶ The violence is called as structural violence because
 - It is impossible to identify a single actor who commits the violence
 - Violence is impersonal, built into the structural of power

Introduction

- ▶ Structural violence occurs in any situation in which some people are unable to achieve their capacities or capabilities to their full potential , and almost certainly if they are unable to do so to the same extent as others
- ▶ Structural violence is a capacious term that encompasses not only the exclusion from entitlements such as food and water, but also the exclusion of certain groups from particular forms of recognition (citizenship rights , equal rights before the law , rights to education , representation, and so on)

Introduction

Dr. Paul Farmer

‘Structural violence is one way of describing social arrangements that put individuals and populations in harm’s way... the arrangements are structural because they are embedded in the political and economic organization of our social world; they are violent because they cause injury to peopleneither culture nor pure individual will is at fault; rather historically given (and often economically driven) processes and forces conspire to constrain individual agency. Structural violence is visited upon all those whose social status denies them access to the fruits of scientific and social progress.’

Introduction

- ▶ Paul Kivel
- ▶ “Over 20 years’ worth of studies show that **people of color** who arrive at a hospital while having a heart attack are significantly **less likely** to receive aspirin, beta-blocking drugs, dot-dissolving drugs, acute cardiac catheterization, angioplasty, or bypass surgery. **Race, class, and gender clearly make a difference** in how patients are diagnosed and treated.”

Characteristics of Structural Violence

- ▶ **Depersonalized** : no dear perpetrator
- Particular powerful interests are at work
- **Violence manifests itself as unequal power** and consequently as unequal life chances (**Galtung**)
- **On-going and pervasive** - goes beyond independent events
- **Invisible because**
 - Violence has been converted into structures of power that are normalized and routinized, so it has become part of everyday life.

Structural violence is problematic in and of itself, but it is also dangerous because it frequently leads to direct violence.

How structural Violence different from Direct Violence?

▶ Structural Violence

▶ Affected : social groups

▶ Although there is a victim-
Someone who is injured by the
Inequities of social

Arrangements-it is hard to identify
a perpetrator.

(a crime without a criminal)

▶ Absence of intention

▶ It is normalized

Direct Violence

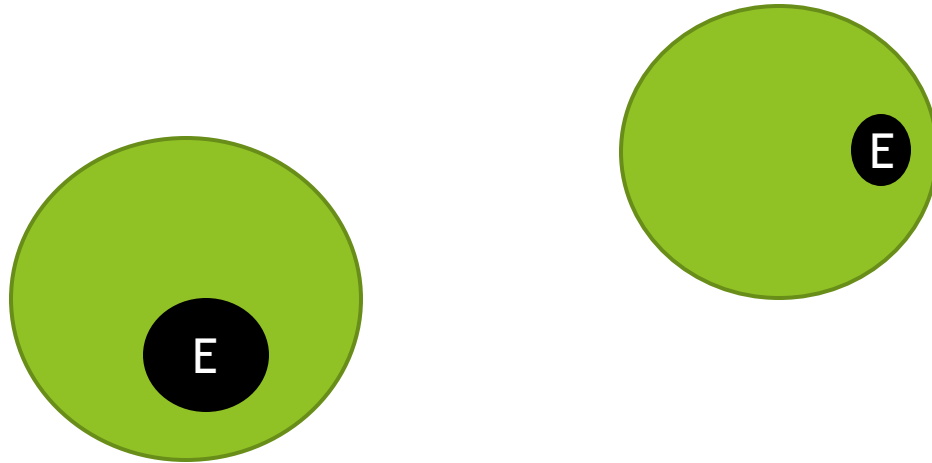
Affected : Individual

Requires a perpetrator who
commits the violent act and a
victim who is injured by it

Presence of Intention

It is unacceptable

Example



Property Tax → Educational discrepancies

More Property Tax → More investment Education → More opportunities

Less Property Tax → Less investment Education → Less opportunities

India's drought : A natural calamity or a man-made one?

- ▶ Largest number of dams in India, built to generate power, provide water for millions of farmers and service the state industries.
- ▶ Water resources 'mismanaged'.
- ▶ Water that was meant for farmers diverted into **power plants** and the highly **water intensive sugar cane industry**.
- ▶ **60 percent of the water meant for small farmers diverted to the power sector between 2003 and 2011.**
- ▶ Government policy **no more than 5 percent of irrigated land can be used to grow sugarcane**, ignored in Pune where nearly 40 percent of the total irrigated land is under cane cultivation.
- ▶ Thousands of villages had little drinking water or fodder for cattle; Poor farmers **migrated as environmental refugees**; and some **Committed suicide** because they had spent large amounts of money on costly seeds and chemicals, and couldn't face crop failure.

Examples

- ▶ Examples of structural violence might include :
- ▶ 2.5 billion people who live on less than US\$2 per day
- ▶ 30 year difference in life expectancy between those living in Africa and those in rich nations.
- ▶ 800 million people who have no access to essential health services.

Origin of Structural Violence

- ▶ Local Forces
- ▶ Global Forces

Local Forces

- ▶ Lack of Income and assests
 - ▶ Human assets, such as the capacity for basic labour, skills and good health;
 - ▶ Natural assets, such as land and cattle;
 - ▶ Physical assets, including infrastructure like roads and water supplies and all kinds of household goods;
 - ▶ Financial assets, such as savings and access to credit;
 - ▶ Social assets, such as networks, contacts and reciprocal obligations that can be called on in time of need, and political influence over resources.

Local Forces

- ▶ Vulnerability

Vulnerability means that a person is susceptible to being affected by sudden change. Vulnerability can be triggered by outside events (Such as economic crises, floods, war or famine), or by personal crises (for example, sickness or becoming old and no longer able to work).

- ▶ Powerlessness

- ▶ Common among the poor. Because they have little bargaining power they have little or no ability to negotiate good wages; they must accept being evicted from their property by landowners because they do not have access to justice; and they must accept the demands of moneylenders for exorbitant interest payments, because they have no choice but to borrow and other forms of credit are unavailable.

Local Forces

► Powerlessness

A striking finding from the World Bank's Voices of the Poor survey (Narayan et al. 1999, 2000) was that poor people were very often disempowered by their contact with health service providers. They often faced high payments for care relative to their income, bribery and physical or verbal abuse. We are all vulnerable when ill, but to have your social sense of powerlessness reinforced at the same time increases our vulnerability. This sense of vulnerability to the whims of the powerful is at the very heart of the experience of poverty (Mackintosh 2001).

Gender Dimension

- ▶ Women's access to assets is often far more restricted than men's
- ▶ Women's inability to be heard fairly in justice systems where male values predominate contributes to their social powerlessness.
- ▶ Women of the marginalized communities are affected by structural violence in various dimensions, including oppression, exclusion, exploitation, marginalization, collective humiliation, stigmatization, repression, inequalities, and lack of opportunities due to having a different identity.
- ▶ They are **not able to realize their potential** due to **the invisible form of structural violence** that not only destroys the present state of security but also threatens the future.

Global Forces

► Colonial Rules:

colonization, which occurred in waves from the 16th century onwards - starting in Latin America, proceeding to Asia and finally to Africa in the 19th century-was partly driven by the economic needs of European countries that were industrializing over the same period.

Colonial rule left an indelible mark on many of the world's poorest countries, and can be described as an apex of structural violence.

► Globalization :

Globalization effects on poverty, inequality and disease-the core components of structural violence.

Mechanism

- ▶ Corruption
- ▶ Corruption discriminates against all those who do not have the monetary resources to obtain goods and services that are supposed to be provided free or at subsidized prices but that in fact command a market price. It becomes a form of structural violence by placing a value on goods that should be available free from the state and thereby denying some of the poorest people the means to sustain life.

Reducing structural violence - path to building peace

- ▶ Reclaiming neighbourhoods,
- ▶ Demanding social justice and living wages
- ▶ Providing parental care
- ▶ Alleviate sexism
- ▶ Organizing globally while celebrating local cultures, and finding non-militaristic avenues to express our deepest spiritual motives, will be our most surefooted.

Reducing structural violence

- ▶ National level
- ▶ Factors frequently act together to produce vicious circles of deprivation.
- ▶ Policies that try to break in at any point in these circles to alleviate particular elements of deprivation.
- ▶ Stewart (2005) suggests that three types of policies can be used to alleviate horizontal inequalities. These include policies that :
 - Change processes that are discriminatory
 - Direct assistance towards groups that have been discriminated against
 - Introduce targets and quotas to correct inequalities.