

BORDERLINE: THE EDUCATIONAL DIVIDE

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Education is universally recognized as the key to success. In our society, educational achievements and attainment often influence, if not dictate a person's social standing. It is considered a key to better employment, access to opportunities, financial security and stability, and an improved standard of life. As such, most people spend a significant number of years in pursuit of education, knowledge, and all the advantages it entails. It is also why countries all over the world have been continuously ramping up their efforts in creating educational plans and policies geared toward delivering quality education for all. However, education's title as the social equalizer is challenged by a growing concern about the education gap between the rich and the poor, especially in developing countries.

There have been plenty of rags to riches stories of how children from poverty succeeded in life due to perseverance and education. These kinds of stories serve as an inspiration to many and as proof that hard work and determination will bear fruit. However, recent studies show that the divide between the poor and the rich has grown wider over the decades.

It is a well-known fact that children from wealthy backgrounds and powerful families are given a tremendous advantage in life. They are more exposed to opportunities and have the necessary resources to pursue their wants and dreams. Well-off parents have all the means to help support the development of their children's talents and skills. They have the money to invest in private lessons, sports, tutors, and other extracurriculars. It is a stark difference in the situation for those living in poverty and

barely managing. Many are engaged in child labor due to the need and pressure to help earn a living. For low-income families, additional pairs of working hands—as small as they may be, determines if they will have food on the table. Others who are fortunate enough to be able to study are often forced to abandon their passion and interest for the sake of taking up more in-demand programs and courses for employment.

While there is no one absolute solution to this problem, there are actions that can be and must be done. At its core, the problem lies in how policymakers and government officials turn a blind eye to this gap and fail to address and alleviate poverty. Educational systems, especially in underdeveloped countries suffer from poor planning, subpar program, and policy execution, and underfunding. Efforts should be directed towards the betterment of living conditions and bridging the educational gap between the poor and the rich.

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