

Worlds of Inequalities

(Special issue of *Social Development Issues*, 2023)

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Special Issue Information

It is hard to see an imminent future of the world, of our societies and our private lives, in where we can look at the Covid-19 Pandemic in the rear mirror. Far from it, it will follow us, as the Pandemic has rewritten our story ('history'), our lives, as well as every bit of societal fabric, and that around and in every corner of the world. The Pandemic furthermore changed the global economy in its core, by revoking global supply chains, global travel, and more. It also inflated governmental and technological capabilities to control people's lives, their thoughts and movements, their jobs and social contacts—controlling not only the very air they breathe but the entirety of their very existence and their every glimmer of hope and happiness.

There is no doubt that the world we live in today has not mastered and not recovered from the Covid-19 pandemic and virus. There is also no doubt that whatever greatest problems we had before the Pandemic we have not been able to cope with or come close to manage them. Indeed, for the most part, many of those greatest problems of our times are not fully understood or barely understood; or we have just come to understand them recently.

Thomas Piketty has become a household name all over the world in a handful of years. He unraveled 60 years of mainstream economic thinking, its dominant ideology and paradigm that with economic growth things get better (*a.k.a.* "the Kuznets Curve"), that is, wealth will be more evenly distributed than before. *This was—and is—just wrong.* Simon Kuznets himself, later, found out that his thesis was looking at the First and Second World Wars and thus, in comparative historical terms things got more equal in the first half of the 20th century, as wealth of the rich was blown to pieces, while the poor had no wealth to begin with, or very little of it.

Ever since Piketty's revelation and heroic empirical masterpiece (Piketty, 2013), the world we live in has come to understand more the blunder of mind control, policy control and people control that had been and, to a large extent, still is caused by formerly classic liberal and now neoliberal economic brainwashing, mind-controlling and behavior-steering (or 'nudging', as it is hideously called in recent modern scientific tongue).

On global, and on an historical, level wealth inequality has reached appalling levels, as the top 1 percent of the world's individuals own about half of all property and wealth of the world, while millions of children die every year around the world of malnutrition and poverty.

And Piketty, even before the onset of the Pandemic, predicted that global and local wealth inequalities will get yet much worse (after learning from the developments in the late 19th century, in long-term historical comparison)—that is, he was not even counting in the extra dire effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic yet. This means that economic enslavement of the majority of the world's population, systemic inequalities and systemic exclusions are yet to deteriorate further over time.

Wealth inequality is many times more important than income inequality. Nevertheless, it is mostly neglected fully or sidelined in scientific studies and public discourse alike, as the rich do not depend on income, for the very most part, to be (become and stay) rich and get richer.

The empirical world is not resembling anything traditional mainstream economic theory and thinking is telling us. We (the people) are rational *and* we are human. We are jealous, angry, stubborn, selfless, compassionate, loving, and hence rational and 'random' at the same time—in the way we feel, think, dream and expect, express ourselves and in the way we act by deciding on myriads of seemingly-and-not-seemingly *little* life decisions (food, drinks, exercise, etc.) and seemingly-and-not-seemingly *great* life decisions (marriage, children, friends, first job, next step in education, choosing a home, buying a house, choosing to migrate, etc.).

This new world we live in has become more vicious, more unforgiving, more unequal, more poverty-causing and more poverty-cementing than ever before. This Pandemic did change a lot. It made arguably an endless barrage of life's perspectives and human perspectives more agonizing, more heartbreaking, and more unjust to say the least.

The brunt of it is, most likely, just being uncovered and brought to light. Most of all the gaps that remain are due to the lack of focus on poor and poorer countries (so-called 'developing-but-not-developed' countries).

This *Special Issue* of 'Social Development Issues' is a call for any scientific article that is either related to (1) inequalities caused by Pandemic's evil forces and consequences, side-effects and follow-on effects, (2) inequalities caused by previously existing and now heightened (a) perils, (b) injustices, (c) government-caused and/or technology-caused discriminations, (d) discrimination, exclusion and oppression based on gender identity and sexual orientation, ethnicity, social

and economic origins, (e) education and health inequalities, (f) natural resource inequalities, (g) economic, financial and tax inequalities, and so forth.

Particularly welcomed are articles that are *deep-insight* case studies and thematic articles, as well as *comparative* articles—and here global comparative, world-regional-focused, or urban-versus-rural-focused studies may be of great value. Philosophical and meta-analytical articles on *the issue or issues of inequality* are of course also expected and fully supported.

Last but not least, it is hoped that this *Special Issue* will provide insights on the state of humanity in today's times and in all over the world—for all people, wherever and whoever they are. Please feel free to contact one of us with any concerns:

Christian Aspalter, Guest Editor
Brij Mohan, Editor, SD!

