

Social Justice Perspective: A Personal Narrative

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What is Social Justice?

Social justice is a concept which adheres to fairness and equity in all walks of life. It refers to a fair and equitable division of resources, opportunities, and privileges to each and everyone. Thus, it ensures that every person is treated equal regardless of his/her race, ethnicity, economic status, and gender.

In religious point of view, “we are created in the image and likeness of God.” All human beings were given with own free will, rational way of thinking and conscience. Hence, we should all be enjoying the same rights and privileges.

Positionality

I am born and raised in the Philippines. I came from a poor family. I managed to make my way out of poverty through education. I worked hard to be able to pursue my college degree to at least break the cycle of poverty in our family. I believe that education is gateway to more opportunities because it gives you more chances of employment and financial stability.

Social Justice Issue: Access to Education

The right to education is one of the basic human rights and everybody must be entitled of it, however poverty is a barrier that hinders it. Poor families are forced to choose whether to send their kids to school or to let them work at early age to fill their hungry stomachs. Most of the time they choose the latter, they make their children work to help provide the basic needs of the family. This kind of situation is still rampant in our country, and other third world countries as well. Education maybe free for public schools from K-12 but there are still other expenses such as school uniforms, transportation, and school supplies.

Equality and Equity

They say that if you go against the current while swimming, chances are you might drown if you're not too good at it, or you'll make it to the other end, but it will take you more time and a lot of

effort. On the other hand, if you swim with the current, it will be much more effortless. I know that we should not put all blame to the government when it comes to our socio-economic situation, but the government is the current. If they will help its people by providing more job opportunities, more affordable basic needs and free health care system, kids won't have to sacrifice their education.

While we aspire for equality, where everyone gets the same support, we forgot that we might need different kinds of support because we came from different backgrounds, under different circumstances. Therefore, inequity becomes more evident especially when you came from impoverished sector.

How the media reflects social justice interest?

In this point of time when we have access to different kinds of media like television, newspaper, websites, and social media, it is easier for us to become an advocate, and build bridges of communication for a common cause. Likewise, if we use these platforms wisely, we can be able to find support from each other, share personal experiences of social justice or injustice, educate the public through sharing posts and articles. One example is the movement #blacklives matter, which created public awareness to racism and discrimination of our black people.

How can I be an agent of change?

I believe in the saying that a teacher affects eternity; he [or she] can never tell where his influence stops by — Henry B. Adams. I know my influence as a teacher would not be visible in the next 5,10 or 20 years, but I know I can promote social justice through the following:

- By treating all my students equal and establishing good relationship with one another regardless of their economic status, gender, race, abilities, etc.
- By exercising fairness through authentic assessments and giving constructive feedbacks
- By giving opportunities to everyone to excel while respecting their way of learning, as well as providing resources that will help them succeed in the subject.