

The Correlation between Economic Status and Medical Circumstances

By Hasan ALPAGU ^{a †}

Abstract. Genetically modified foods, arsenic contaminated water, hormonal fruit and vegetables, genetically modified organisms, biological and chemical weapons, radioactive equipment, unsanitary living habitations, malnutrition, mental health complications and burnout are the major source of health problems of a large part of society. All these challenges of modern society are directly linked to the economic status of the people. Hence it is significant to take the health circumstances of people in terms of their economic situation in the foreground. Most importantly, scientists must always keep the externalities of their research outcomes into consideration. For that reason, this project is an attempt to design a common strategy between physicians and economists.

Keywords. Economy, Medicine, Human Mind, Social Challenges, Health Complications, Economic Conditions.

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1. Introduction

The objective of this study is to examine the relation between economic and medical circumstances of people and thereby to give suggestions and remarks which can be incorporated into the researches in order to increase the benefits and efficiencies of research outcomes as well as their implementation. Nowadays industrial units, but also health institutions are producing many negative externalities. In fact, the factories produce environmentally harmful materials, the physicians and genetics perform many experiments on humans and animals and they produce genetically modified organisms.

Genetic engineering and nanotechnology are targeting to co-produce new groundbreaking inventions, which can change the course of life conditions of living beings. However, such innovations can be also the causes of long-lasting dangers in the future. Therefore, cooperation between all disciplines must be possible to reduce such drawbacks of scientific developments. Such cooperation will bring the benefits and effectiveness for scientific researches as well.

Consequently, the economic, political, social developments and technological innovations have an inescapable impact on living conditions for all inhabitants of universe. If all atomic, nuclear and biological weapons that through long-term scientific experiments have been produced would explode at once, the earth would turn to a poisonous and burning ball in a few minutes.

Through this article we want to attract the attention of scientists from various fields on this gap. Moreover, we want to show how a cooperation between economists and physicians could be helpful in order to discover more effective way of handling research topics.

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2. Methodology

Throughout history, people believed that children were killed by evil spirits, evil witches, demons and sorcerers in masse. However science has proved that the main reason of such deaths was poor economic circumstance and its consequences. In this article we try to examine this concern of human beings through an economics-scientific oriented point of view.

The medical complications of the people is associated phenomenally with their economic situation. We took this matter from a result-oriented point of view, which might be helpful to medical men by their decision on medical treatment of their patients. In this way we want to encourage other disciplines also to examine the subjects of other research fields from different angles.

3. Science and Economy

In earlier phase of civilization the scientific disciplines were assembled under one roof. Consequently, a scientist could be at the same time as a philosopher, an economist, an astronomer, a mathematician and a physician. Aristotle, Hippocrates, Averroes, Galileo and Archimedes were some of those scientists. All these scientists were aware of the externalities of their research results. Also they were able to take the matter from point of views from different scientific fields.

In addition, all these scientists were genius and their number and time were scarce. Therefore, the rapid growing world population required more scientists and specialists. As a result, in the course of time, disciplines have been separated from one another in order to be more precise and more professional.

However, this new era of scientific innovation caused also some disadvantages. First of all this specialization led to a significant retreating of the cooperation and collaboration between scientific disciplines. In between the cooperation in some disciplines has been even totally abolished. As a result of this deficiency of cooperation many problems of society have expanded new dimensions.

The Industrial Revolution was a consequence of such developments and it was a breaking point in the development of civilization. These circumstances led to first and second world war. People were able to build powerful machines and weapons, which tremendously changed the course of history. In some cases the industrial revolution became a disaster for humanity. Wars, mass destruction, concentration camps and chemical weapons were most destructive parts of such negative effects of industrialization. In addition psycho-traumatic syndromes in the world population became more visible and intensive.

Nowadays, one can observe this negative deficit in the era of technology and the internet revolution more clearly. Mass communication is becoming a tool of dissemination of violence.

In fact, in this day and age, technology, technical progress is achieved on an epochal and world-class level. We can all quickly and visually communicate online in seconds. We can fly from one place to another within a short amount of time. People even fly to the moon and are able to access many other planets in the universe. In contrast, social confrontations are still extremely vulnerable and problematic. This means developments in social consciousness are lagging far behind the technological advances. The reason for this lies in the deficit in scientific research as well as lack of cooperation and collaboration between various scientific disciplines.

4. Medicine and Economy

Economics is a science that connects strongly with other disciplines and institutions. Economics looks at how people and economy interact. On the other

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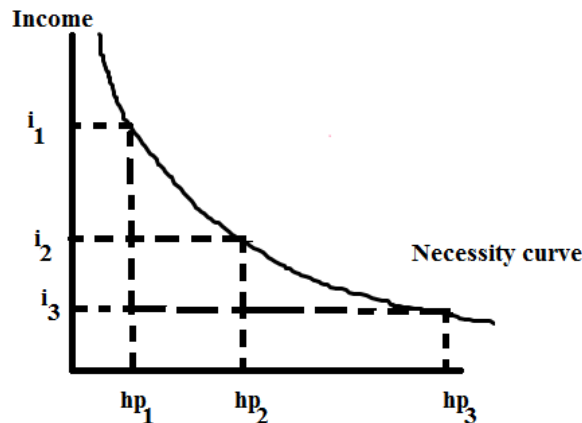
side, the medicine is a science that medically assists people as well as supports them by being able to be a part of this interaction process of daily life. However, without economic resources, it would not be possible to hold onto a healthy life or to undertake a treatment in case of a probable illness. For man it is impossible to survive without enough foods, drinks and a roof over head. The sources of the many problems of people are strongly associated with their economic situation. Poor people suffer more than other people because they have insufficient resources to take an adequate medical treatment. The lack of food and drinks they consume, are another reason of their miserable medical circumstances. For example Malaria is a typical disease which strongly related to the poor economic condition of people.

In fact, in our time millions of people are suffering from very simple diseases, which could be rehabilitated with just some simple economic resources. The lack of economic resources can cause psychological problems as well and having not enough economic resources drive people in depression and panic.

Moreover the health expenditures are compulsory (autonomous) expenditures, which can be explained by consumer formula ($C = C_0 + cY_d$)¹.

In other words, these kind expenditures have a main place in anybody's budget. It means they are a significant financial last for poor people's budget. Health expenditures are mandatory and permanent needs. This means that anyone must deal with it with a limited budget. More importantly, the lower the income, the higher is health expenditures. Basic needs such as nutrition, hygiene, clothing and refreshment are dependent on the income. Less income leads those affected people to more health problems. Consequently, there is an inverse correlation between health expenditures and income.

Image: The correlation between health expenditures and income



Note: i: income, hp: health problems

5. Suggestions from Homoeconomicus to Medicus

It is not said in vain that, "*Medicus curat, naturas sanat*".² Even the most modern medical equipment, medicines and treatment methods can be effective only if they are adapted to the patient's body and mind.

Thanks to science and technology in this century, a much smaller number of people believe in demons and the shadows of dark powers.

¹ C: Consumption Co: Autonomous Consumption c: marginal propensity to consume Yd: Disposable Income.

² Medicine helps, nature heals.

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Nevertheless, man consists of flesh, blood, bones, and a soul. These elements are highly variable and flexible. Therefore, neither alternative medicine nor modern medicine alone will be able to set a fixed standard for universally valid diagnoses and treatment methods. Therefore, by the process of making diagnoses and treatments, one must always keep this human phenomenon always in mind.

Without human values we are as human beings only one unit of blood and bones. Humans have three important characteristics:

- The first are our five senses, namely smell, taste, hearing, seeing and feeling.
- Second, the material things that we have: an apartment, a car, a bank account, etc.
- Thirdly, our invisible values that we can possess only through our thought and will, there are ideas, faith, hope, love, freedom, etc. What makes us human and differentiates us from other living beings, is the third category, namely the invisible values. Without these values, we would not be any different from animals or plants. Animals and plants sometimes have the same properties as we do. They can hear, smell, see, feel, taste, and they may also have some material things. But they have no part of the third category, at least not as far as we know.

Everyone can lose some features and objects of the first and second categories, partially or completely. But property of the third category cannot be taken away. Because it is invisible, and because our mind is with us always and everywhere. These are the things that keep people alive in spite of everything else. They give them strength and joy. Because of these values anybody can feel himself as happy anywhere.

Taking an example to stress the role of a proper mind in people's success, the strategy of a mountain climber can be mentioned. If a climber has one goal in mind, for example: to climb the mountain, she/he risks every-thing to manage this target.

The principle is clear: The mission must be completed. Weather conditions and physical difficulties of the mountain should not scare you enough to give up the proposal. A physician should take this principle as a guide. Therefore, when treating a patient, a doctor should always apply this principle. The main purpose should be only the health of patients.

For climbers, there is a clear rule. This is: The final decision is always with yourself. On the way to summit of a mountain there's no greater power than yourself, you are the law, the king and the ruler of your life. It can bring you up to the summit, or plunge you to your death. These things are totally dependent on your own decisions.

Therefore, the doctors should always try to teach their patients this rule. They should explain to them that the efficiency of drugs, surgery and other treatment methods depend on their own inner strength and motivation. A doctor should follow a standard treatment method: If someone comes to them, they should discuss everything very clearly and honestly with them first. Then they should start a certain process with them. The patients tell the doctor their story, without having to feel any fear or obstacle. They may comment on anything or everything they want to... Then the doctor define their situation. For every problem there is a different definition. Without a proper definition cannot begin to find the solution to a problem.

Then the patients classified as follow:

- Patients with physical complications
- Mental cases
- With temporary stress and demands, etc.
- Mixed cases

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The situation of patients should be defined, clearly according to this identification. Then doctor can imagine how to begin with the treatment of that patient. Doctors should try to synchronize the lifestyles and behaviors of the patients. They should encourage the patients to adopt a new life form:

Eating and nourishment: What the body takes into itself, must be controlled and regulated according to the body's needs.

Mind and thought: What is annoying must be discussed and clarified.

Employment and workplace: Work place and jobs, hobbies should be adjusted.

When doctor has set this phase, then the therapeutic process begins. One thing must be stressed clearly is that: Doctor is a kind of mentor and advisor. Doctor should send the patients as needed to various specialists. They must be investigated with all methods of modern medicine. Blood tests, x- ray films, etc. These findings have important implications for correct diagnosis. Then doctor should combine all of these findings and find a more effective method. So the patients can be cured faster and become healthier and more sustainable.

Some of patients just need to enhance the effectiveness of their treatments as well as to strengthen themselves and their mental stamina. That is why every patient, no matter what disease they have, should be treated by this way.

For many terminally ill patients, it can be cooperated with their families and physiologists in order to manage a combination of treatment. Such patients should be allowed to take also some alternative medical treatments.

In principle any kind of drugs can deregulate the natural metabolism of the body. If they are really necessary, however, the patients may then apply them.

It is recommended that the patients should follow three guiding principles:

- If not necessary, they should not take any medical drugs
- Do not catch cold over cool or overheat themselves
- Do not be overtired and avoid laziness

However, in spite of science, technology and natural remedies, in some cases it cannot be offered some patients any treatment for recovery: For the reason that "*Contra vim mortis non est medicamen in hortis.*"³ Hence a physician should consult the patients with reality, when there is no other way out. Everyone is more or less afraid of death. This is quite normal. Like every human being, patients sometimes feel a little scared. But each man must eventually die, sooner or later. There is no eternal life. One should see life as butterflies. These have an average life of one day. But they are stained with the most beautiful colors of the world. They fly nonstop from one flower to another. They live this day with joy and pleasure. Who knows, maybe they still have many dreams and hopes they can not fit into that day. But still they live this day as if they would live forever. Happiness and satisfaction are in the head. So long your mind is not tuned in to them, you can always be unhappy and dissatisfied, at any time, wherever you are. In economics one called this principle maximization of utility and profit. Also man has to maximize the most level of satisfaction in any phase of life and consumption.

6. Nourishment, Diet, Starvation and Overconsumption

The fact is that diet is an important part of health; a physician should regularly discuss this issue with patients. Since we are all humans and we have the same average stomach size and appetite. The same quantity is eaten, by meal, at the luxurious table as well as at poor people's table. Nevertheless, there are many differences. The peculiarity lies mainly in left-over food. For the wealthy tables, an abundant table is prepared and served with many foods and beverages.

³ No herb grows in the gardens against the power of death.

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Nevertheless, they will consume only the amount, which their stomach volume allows.

In contrast, the poor people eat everything edible down to the last bite. The wealthy people adjust the quality and enjoyment of the meal but the poor look at the prices and affordability of foods. The rich want to enjoy it slowly and take their time, but the poor are trying to fill their stomach as fast as possible, before somebody takes the food away from them.

A doctor should teach eating habits and amount of food restrictions to affluent patients more often than not. Doctor should urge them more often to eat the right things if patient suffer under food abundance and they often recommend a long list, 'You have not eaten this food, this drink, that and that, only in this crowd...etc.

In contrast, for the poor, doctor should do something completely opposite. Doctor should tell them that they should eat more and use as many necessary foods as they can buy. Therefore instead of prescribing them medicines, a doctor may recommend them to buy cheap vitamin-rich food and should teach them which foods they are. Consequently the main objective is how we can keep all parts of our body in cohesion and togetherness. Hence until end of our life we wish that our legs do not give up, eyes do not fall shut and they may show solidarity with one another and do not let us to down.

7. Resume

It can confidently be said that a collaboration between different disciplines can help each one of them more or less to find out better results which could be tremendously helpful to deal with the subjects of their fields.

In this project we showed how it would be applicable if different disciplines to deliver one another their experiences. Since the approach of scientists are more tangible and reasonable even if they might be not prices as in their own field. However, it is suggested to encourage other disciplines to undertake such collaborative research. In fact, a researcher can play a significant role in any research area. No wonder authors and journalists contribute tremendous inputs to any research field. Moreover physicians could recommend to people who are well-off to share a part of their happiness with poor people in order contribute something good to social fairness. This could disseminate a principle of moral, which help to effective allocation of resources.

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