

Global Remedial Contract Theory as a Framework for Miller's Remedial Responsibility for Global Poverty Alleviation

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Damilola Peter Olatade

Department of Philosophy, Lagos State University, Nigeria

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1647-7025>

Abstract

Poverty, a multidimensional deprivation in well-being, remains a pervasive global issue affecting both developed and developing nations. David Miller's work on National Responsibility and Global Justice introduces the theory of remedial responsibility, emphasizing our duty to relieve suffering when capable. Central to Miller's approach is the connection theory, which identifies six equally weighted factors linking nations to those in need. This study interrogates Miller's framework and submits that capacity- a nation's ability to act- plays a determinative role in the consideration of remedial responsibility. The research argues that Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT) addresses inherent shortcomings in Miller's framework. The theory merges global justice theory and social contract theory to develop a broader social contract defined by capacity, consent, reciprocity, and obligation. The study proposes a robust and holistic conceptual framework for addressing global poverty, particularly in the global South, grounded in normative philosophical reasoning and the synthesis of major traditions in political thought. Rather than providing empirical analysis, this paper offers a theoretical model that enriches discourse in global justice and informs policy imagination. It further lays the groundwork for future interdisciplinary studies on institutional responsibility and ethical redistribution.

Keywords: Global Justice, Capacity, Poverty, Remedial Responsibility, Political Philosophy, Social Contract.

Introduction

Tens of thousands of people worldwide die each day from poverty-related causes. More staggering than the statistics by the United Nations (2024) is the fact that these deaths and the appalling living conditions surrounding them sometimes are avoidable yet largely ignored. Not only have concrete strategies for poverty relief and sustainable development been suggested, but their implementation would require minimal sacrifice on the part of individuals in affluent nations. No doubt, one of the most prevalent and pervasive social problems in the world today, faced by both developed and developing countries is poverty. People live in abject poverty in the Global South. The need to combat the problem of poverty has raised so many concerns, and different methods have been employed to ensure that poverty is reduced to the barest minimum since it appears impossible to be eradicated. Although it appears that there is a higher level of poverty in the Global South than in the Global North, poverty is a global phenomenon.

It is understandable why Muhammad et al. (2022) believed that poverty was a social ailment with deteriorating economic consequences. He goes on to clarify that a person or household is considered to be in poverty when they lack access to the many resources necessary to meet their basic needs for survival in comparison to others in a society, a country, or the entire planet.

According to Shaikh (2020), the greatest persistent question that humanity will ever face is how to correctly solve such a difficult problem. According to him, poverty is caused by a number of factors, including familial dependency, education, undernourishment, and an aging household head. Global challenges such as poverty have an impact on people, communities and countries. Lack of access to resources, opportunities and necessities is poverty. A daily income of less than \$1.90 is considered to be poverty, while extreme poverty in the year 2021 is 9.2 % of the world's total population (Sheikh et al, 2023: 2).

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The issue of poverty persists despite efforts to alleviate it through social safety programs, economic expansion, and development, and there is growing recognition of the need for more all-encompassing and sustainable solutions. While the sustainable development goals place an emphasis on diversified approaches, the World Bank's endeavor to reduce poverty is centered on the welfare of people (World Bank, 2021).

In 2022, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Survey results were released by the Federal Government of Nigeria via the National Bureau of Statistics. The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), and the National Social Safety-Nets Coordinating Office (NASSCO) worked together to conduct this survey. The result revealed that 133 million people, or 63% of the population, live in multidimensional poverty in Nigeria. Just over 25% of all potential deprivations are experienced by Nigeria's poor, according to the country's National MPI of 0.257, 35% (about 47 million) of the impoverished reside in the South, whilst 65% (86 million) are in the North (NBS, 2022).

This precarious reality raises a fundamental philosophical question: who is responsible for

addressing global poverty scourge, especially in the South? Despite several global anti-poverty initiatives, a clear and just framework for operationalizing responsibility remains elusive. In addition, existing social and humanitarian frameworks in the form of global aid programs are often undermined by lack of coherence and long-term effectiveness, particularly in how responsibilities are distributed among supposedly capable actors.

Meanwhile, David Miller's theory of remedial responsibility is anchored on six factors which align the interests of the affluent actors to the global poor, and offers significant insight on the subject of discourse. However, his model falls short of acknowledging the fact of the primacy of national capacity in the determination of moral responsibility. This oversight undermined the relevance and applicability of Milner's postulation in today's socially asymmetric world. Accordingly, this paper is guided by the following questions: What are the theoretical limitations of Miller's remedial responsibility when applied to global poverty, especially in the Global South? And how can a more inclusive model, such as the proposed Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT), present a stronger normative foundation for redistributive justice and international obligation. This present study, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by developing the Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT), which aligns the principle of global justice with the social contract theory through an intersectional lens. GRCT is framed as a more equitable and just framework of remedial responsibility. The goal is to develop a nuanced paradigm to interrogating, understanding, and addressing the global scourge of poverty, with particular reference to the structural challenges that nourish social inequalities and poverty of the Global South.

David Miller's Conception of Remedial Responsibility

In the attempt to proffer solution to the appalling problems caused by poverty, Miller proposed his theory of remedial responsibility. Remedial responsibility is the responsibility we have to relieve harm and suffering when we are able to do so (Miller, 2007: 98). Though David Miller and scholars such as

Thomas Pogge (2001) and Peter Singer had earlier averred that the West have remedial responsibilities towards the poorer nations. It is simply because the situation of the developing countries could be traced to their doorstep. When the proposal of poverty is assessed from the perspective of how Western civilization has influenced Africa and Latin America especially, three crucial theses are noticeable. First, is the point that Western civilization seeks to dominate or exterminate and then replace non-Western civilizations in the latter's domain. Second, non-Western cultures are usually drained of their economic resources and minerals in the name of civilization and colonization. Third, the influence of the West in contemporary international relations is waning (Olatade, 2022: 46)

Miller argues further that we can determine which nations are remedially responsible for alleviating suffering or poverty elsewhere by way of his connection theory of remedial responsibility. Miller (2007: 99) says:

That demands to be put right: it is morally unacceptable for people to be left in that deprived or needy condition, and there is no overriding justification such as that they are being fairly punished for some wrongful deed . . . All that matters is that we find it morally unacceptable if the deprived person is simply left to suffer.

A connection theory of remedial responsibility considers six factors. Its goal is to determine what connections may exist between a nation and those in need elsewhere in light of these six factors. These factors and the questions they address includes:

- **Causal responsibility:** Was a nation causally responsible for bringing about suffering and deprivation elsewhere?
- **Moral responsibility:** Was a nation morally responsible for bringing about suffering and deprivation elsewhere?
- **Capacity:** Does a nation have the capacity to provide a remedy?
- **Community:** Is a nation amongst any particular community shared with a nation suffering deprivation whether it be 'ties of family or friendship, collegiality, religion, nationality, and so forth'?
- **Outcome responsibility:** Is the suffering and deprivation faced elsewhere a side effect of any nation's activities?

- **Benefit:** Did a nation benefit from the suffering and deprivation elsewhere even if the former played no causal role in the latter?

Miller argues that these different factors, when considered together, help us determine the remedial responsibilities of nations. We consider each nation with a view to any possible connections through these six factors. Miller also avers that the six factors of the connection theory weigh equally. That no one factor weighs above the other. This assertion of Miller is problematic. One factor weighs more than others and this factor is capacity. This is because if a nation lacks capacity, then such a nation cannot be held remedially responsible.

In the alleviation of poverty, it is a well-documented fact that the theory of global justice has its own embedded flaws, because it is noted to be insufficient in eradicating poverty in the global world. Granted that remedial responsibility as espoused by Miller is equally insufficient as a stand-alone concept in the quest for the alleviation of the global poverty. This is the reason for the need for a robust theoretical framework that encapsulates a scheme that contributes to the effort in the alleviation of global poverty. I think Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT) is suitable in that regard. The reason is not far fetched. The complementarity in the positives of the social contract theory, remedial responsibility and global justice all extend beyond national territories which are far removed from the nationalistic tendencies of the social contract theory alone.

To render discussions on GRCT, I shall give a clear and detailed analysis of global justice theory as it aligns with remedial responsibility, then to intricate how it can be connected with the social contract theory to fulfill the task of this paper. Global justice is a concept in political philosophy arising from the concern about unfairness and inequality. The idea of global justice is rooted in the theory of cosmopolitanism, which is defined as a moral ideal that emphasizes tolerance towards differences and envisages the possibility of a more just world order. Since global justice is justice across humanity, then remedial responsibility should also cut across borders in order to eradicate or at best reduce the rate of poverty in the world and especially in the global

South. Remedial responsibility should be carried out by both the individuals and institutions. On the part of the individuals, this is where the social contract theory comes in. The individuals are expected to see it as their duty to remedy every bad situation, especially to the poorer nations. The need to put bad situations right was what brought into limelight the social contract theory. Social Contractarians such as Hobbes, Locke and Rosseau have left indubitable marks in the quest for a better living condition in the society. The state of nature was a state prior to the formulation of the civilized state. Situations in the state of nature became very unbearable and there was the need for the emergence of a civilized society where law and morality were to be respected by the individuals in the society. It was in lieu of this that people sought to put an end to the experiences witnessed in the state of nature by coming together in order to agree to enter into a social contract which made all men surrender their rights to a sovereign master, the Leviathan. Though there are different versions of the social contract theory but one thing they have in common is that people agreed to enter into a social contract which was intended to make the society a better and conducive place for all the individuals to live.

The Social Contract Theory

At the beginning of his theory of the social contract, Hobbes talks about the state of nature. There existed a state of nature without common law or authority prior to the establishment of governments or societies. Even though man was naturally free, this freedom can be very harmful to oneself and one's neighbors because there are no rules or laws and no shared authority to hold people accountable. By nature, man was endowed with equal freedom, mental and physical capacities, and equality in need. Everyone has the same basic needs, such as clothing, food, and housing. The problem is that basic essentials, like clothing, food, and shelter, aren't always accessible. Man had unrestricted freedom in the natural state, but as there were no laws or regulations and no collective authority to control them, this freedom might be extremely detrimental to oneself and one's neighbors.

Thomas Hobbes believed that all men were created equal in terms of their physical and mental faculties, but we have occasionally observed that some people have wiser and stronger bodies than others because, depending on the strength of their bodies, the weakest person can kill the strongest person through covert means, assassination, or with the assistance of others (Pojman, 1996). We cannot dispute that there are a lot of people who are as wise as themselves, even if we have observed in nature that some people are smarter and more knowledgeable than others (Pojman, 1996). Hobbes referred to this as the condition of war, which occurs when two men have the same desire or love but are unable to enjoy it. As a result, they will turn against one another and attempt to destroy it (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003). It is clear from this that mankind lived in a state of conflict at that time, with no laws and no fear of punishment (Pojman, 1996). According to Hobbes, the war is not just about real combat but also about a recognized disposition (Pojman, 1996). There is no common authority to hold them in awe in the condition of conflict, and people only live for their own survival and their own viewpoint.

Having observed the life experienced in the state of nature which led to the life of man becoming brutish, nasty, solitary, short and poor, Hobbes advocated for a social contract. Hobbes defined a social contract as giving up one's rights to the sovereign in exchange for security and safety. The social contract serves as the foundation for morality and moral obligation. Hobbes believed that existence without a social contract was the condition of nature. Hobbes presents the natural world as a place devoid of rules and laws, as well as a shared ability to awe and fear. Hobbes states that moral duty and the person who establishes rules and regulations for society are responsible for the social contract. The idea of justice and injustice, as well as the law, originate from the social contract. To put it briefly, morality is based on the social contract. Promoting equality and fairness as well as the ideas of right and wrong justice and injustice are the goals of the social contract's development.

For Locke, the natural state is not a state devoid of morality, even though it lacks a government or civil power to punish individuals for wrongdoing

or harming their neighbors. According to Elahi, this condition of nature is pre-political but not pre-moral. Everyone is obligated to protect their life, liberty, health, and belongings in the state of nature, which is ruled by the law of nature. This means that it is forbidden for any man to infringe on another person's life, liberty, or property. He could be compelled to uphold peace and order and prohibited from hurting his neighbor (Locke, 1689).

According to the law of nature, which teaches man what is right and what is not, everyone has the right to protect their life, the life of others, their property, and their possessions, but all men are restrained from invading one's right, possession, liberty, and life (Locke, 1689). The law of nature is applied in the state of nature in such a way that everyone has the right to punish the criminal in order to prevent violent crime. The law of nature is implemented in the state of nature in such a way that everyone has the right to punish the criminal in order to prevent violent crime.

Property plays a major role in Locke's reasoning in his social contract theory. For him, property is the most important factor in his defense of the social contract and civil government. According to Locke's social contract theory, when we talk about property, we're talking about freedom, the state, life, and even one's body. Because it is based on natural law, Locke claimed that the right to private property comes before civil law (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003). Every man has a property in his person (owns himself), even though humans collectively own the world and all other species. We could argue that his hands and his body are entirely his (Cottingham, 2008).

According to John Locke, there are three reasons why property in the state of nature is insecure:

- The absence of established law;
- The absence of an impartial judge;
- The absence of natural power to execute natural laws.

Men therefore came into the social contract because, in the state of nature, they felt the need to preserve their property.

In the state of nature, everyone is completely free, yet they enjoy their freedom and possessions while always fearing that others may invade them. Their lives, liberty, and property are preserved when

they place themselves in the government (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003).

Though in the state of nature for Locke, man has the unrestricted right to his possessions, he is far from assured that he will be able to get used to them because they are constantly exposed to invasion by others. In order to preserve peace and order, everyone wants to create a widely recognized legal code, a standard for what is good and wrong, and appropriate penalties for both offenders and enforcers. According to Locke, as soon as a sufficient number of persons have agreed to form a single community or government, they are instantly incorporated. This enables them get into a single-body political system where the majority has the authority to decide on behalf of the others (Locke, 1689). Additionally, he asserts that the only way to achieve unified action is by majoritarian government (Locke, 1689). The community was created with the majority's permission; as a result, they have the authority to act as a single body, which is the exclusive decision and will of the majority (Smith & Grene, 1957). To ensure their safety, security, and tranquility, people cooperate with other individuals to form a single body community. The community has an obligation to safeguard everyone, measure everyone's property, and execute the law equally and impartially (Stewart et al., 2010). Therefore, according to Locke, the protection of property is the primary reason why men should form a commonwealth and submit to government (Locke, 1689).

For Rousseau, the state of nature vanished long before his own time. Rousseau, however, searches for indigenous people's examples to find out what may best illustrate this condition. He claimed that the "Caribbean savages," about whom he clearly knew very little, were the closest example of this condition of nature. According to Rousseau, people in the natural condition exist in the present and have access to all the resources they require to achieve their fundamental requirements. For Rousseau, families are only a later concept, and people are fundamentally solitary. Inequalities are negligible in the condition of nature. Inequalities are created and made worse by society and the formal institutions that are linked to it. These includes both the exacerbation of inherent talent inequalities, such as through formal

education, and the creation of new inequalities, the most significant of which is the creation of property. Furthermore, people have relatively little influence over one another in the natural state; in fact, even disparities in strength are insufficient to dominate one another because anybody may always leave.

The tale of this exponential increase in inequality, which starts with the creation of property as mentioned above, is told in the second section of the discourse. Rousseau links its inception and subsequent evolution to the advancements in metallurgy and agriculture. Conflicts between men became more frequent and violent as a result of the emergence of property, the growing interdependencies brought about by the division of labor, and the stoking of passions sparked by other men's commerce.

Rousseau did not align with the thoughts of Locke and Hobbes. He holds both of them accountable for conflating different civil society with the state of nature. Hobbes justifies absolutism by claiming that the conflicts of all against all are a natural state. Locke also incorporates the idea of property into the natural state, which is why he supports the social contract as a way to safeguard this property. For Rousseau, however, the departure from the state of nature is indicated by this very concept of property.

According to Rousseau, people are motivated primarily by self-preservation and as each person is best suited to choose what is best for him, liberty becomes a crucial component. Hobbes and Locke both share this trait. Rousseau later depart from them when he characterizes nature as a place where people dwell alone, "entirely complete and solitary" (Chapter VII, Book 2).

Among all the contractarian theories, the most suitable for this thesis is the 'General Will'. The 'general will', according to Rousseau, is a 'collective will' of all citizens which is targeted at their common good or common interest (Munro, 2020a). The 'general will', as it is being suggested by Rousseau, put into consideration the will of both the majority and the minority which is what makes it different from either the leviathan or majoritarianism.

It is in lieu of the foregoing that this paper uses the "General Will" as postulated by Rousseau as the foundation on which it builds a new model of social contract theory known as GRCT. Global Remedial

Contract Theory (GRCT), a modified form of the social contract theory which involves the merger of remedial responsibility, global justice and social contract theory as suggested by this paper will serve as a more robust theory that will help reduce poverty in the global south. It must be noted that it is not plausible or sufficient to propose the social contract theory alone to help elucidate the basis for remedial responsibility as regards the question of consent, reciprocity, willingness, obligations that arise from living in a society.

Global Justice and Remedial Responsibility

In this section, the task is to take a cursory look at the concept of global justice as it aligns with remedial responsibility in order to come up with a formidable explanation of the GRCT. Justice, in its broadest sense, is the concept that individuals are to be treated in a manner that is equitable and fair (Miller, 2021). In the domain of global justice, theorists do not seek primarily to define justice between states or nations. Rather, they drill down through the state shell and inquire about what justice requires among human beings. Global justice inquiries take individual human beings as of primary concern and seek to give an account of what fairness among such agents involves. Global justice is the justice that cuts across nation- states.

In order to fully understand the concept of fighting injustice, we must look beyond local observations and recognize the global dynamics at play. Failure to do so would prevent us from developing a comprehensive understanding of the fight against injustice. This is why the idea of global justice approached the concept of justice with a more humanitarian approach, housing and accommodating the interests of others with whom one happens to have no relational bond but that of humanity (Sen, 2017: 261). In support of this position, recent scholarship has also highlighted the need for evolvement, considering contemporary challenges. To begin with, in the work of Risse (2021), he highlights how global structural inequalities, intensified by crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, underscore the insufficiency of existing global justice frameworks. In a similar approach, Caney (2022) draws our attention to the ethical imperative of international cooperation in the face of

climate-induced displacement, further substantiating the need for remedial responsibility across borders. In a similar vein as Caney (2022), Olatade & Mogaji (2025) highlighted the need to expand the global justice framework in light of evolving challenges in contemporary society, particularly in the context of climate change. Using Nigeria as a case study, they emphasised the importance of incorporating both the theory of capacity and the theory of willingness in addressing issues concerning internally displaced persons. Fitzpatrick (2020) has re-examined the relevance of social contract theory in the 21st century, offering critical insights into how justice must respond to emerging welfare challenges. Ypi (2022), while reflecting on historical notions of freedom and obligation, reveals the inadequacy of nationalist moral reasoning in a globally entangled world.

No doubt, the claim of the global justice advocates concerning shared pain, suffering, and human degradation among many others is truly a necessity for the establishment of global justice. However, there is still the issue extracted from the position of Hobbes, which is the absence of a global government to implement the incentives expected to arrest the anomalies of the world amidst our adversities (Nagel, 2005: 115). In essence, the cry for global justice might be just a fantasy without a global government in place (Sen, 2017: 262).

With Prevailing occurrences and manifestations on the global scale, there is the realization that government of different nations tend to portray themselves as capable and self-reliant as to the power vested in them to carry out national duties, and thus, bowing down to a global power which might be considered as a sign of weakness from them. As such, a global government is almost impossible. Furthermore, considering the recent Israeli and Palestinian war, (as some set classify it), or rather genocide/occupation (as another set sees it), even with the verdict passed by the International Court of Justice and the United Nations, the Israeli government still did not back down, banking on the idea that they are an independent entity, shouldered with the responsibility of protecting the interest of their citizens, and hence can independently decide on what to do and what not to do. In essence, this

shows how less effective a global government can be with the activeness of territorial governments, and dissolving all existing territorial government into a unified global government is literally an impossible task, considering our diversities. Hence, this remains a pressing issue.

Another issue therein is that of definition, and this specifically is contingent to the fact that the concept of 'global justice' is a relatively new idea (Delanty, 2014: 213). The newness of this term has led to the aversion of various conceptions as to what its (global justice) priorities should entail, and hence making the concept vaguer, depriving it from having a universal definition

As regarding this issue, Delanty (2014) highlighted the four positions with which global justice has been conceived. The first position is popularly promoted by Pogge, who likened global justice to the alleviation of poverty, so as to ensure that the basic needs of everyone is fulfilled (Delanty, 2014: 215). This however has been considered to be a weak position, for global justice will cease to exist if this condition is met. The second position is that which is promoted by Martha Nussbaum, which is after the pursuit of human right. It sets out to enrich the individual rather than the state because Nussbaum is of the view that institution might be there to serve the people but individuals might in turn act in the other direction. In other words, just institutions do not necessarily assure just individuals, and so as a result special focus on the individuals is paramount, and hence Nussbaum agitated for the elimination of obstacles that could hinder the development of the individuals (Delanty, 2014: 215). The third position set out to define global justice as that which is focused on ensuring equality of all, and this according to Grillian Brock (2009a, 2009b), this is only possible by the establishment of social structures that would dethrone the old order and install new ones that will consider all in its consideration. The fourth position, thus, different from the third position argue for equality between states, rather than among individuals, synonymous to the goal of international justice, which banks on retributive justice. Considering all of the positions of what global justice entails, it is clear that every position to the advocator is strong enough and not

objective to the position of others and as a result of this, global justice is deprived of a universal definition and direction, and thus, this is without doubt an issue. But adopting the global justice theory alone is also not sufficient in the explanation of Miller's remedial responsibility. This is due to the fact that despite its profundity, global justice theory has its own flaws.

Remedial responsibility on the other hand is the idea that people have a duty to help those who are in need. Remedial responsibility starts with the patients, people who are deprived or suffering, and asks who should shoulder the burden of helping them. In Miller's Remedial responsibility, he avers a connection theory which he assumes can be used to determine which nation or nations should be held responsible for remedying the suffering and deprivation elsewhere. But there is a problem with Miller's procedure of the connection theory. The problem with the procedure is Miller's insistence that the six factors we should use to intuitively weigh any nation's connection with those suffering deprivation elsewhere are equal and do not weigh above other factors. The problem is that this view of Miller rest on an important mistake. This mistake is that a nation's capacity to provide remedy has priority. If a nation lacks any capacity, then it never matters how many nor how well other connections may relate to this notion because it could never be held remedially responsible. From the foregoing, it is quite evident that the social contract theory, global justice theory and the remedial theory as postulated by Miller cannot capture the alleviation of poverty in the global south when they stand on their own but the merger of these theories will mitigate the excessive poverty level in the sub-Saharan Africa.

Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT): The Justification and Significance

A Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT) is an integrated and a symbiotic theory that addresses issues in global justice, social contract and remedial responsibility. Since Remedial responsibility often involves issues of global justice and responsibilities toward the disadvantaged nations, I have drawn on the theories of global justice above in order to analyze the obligations of the individual, states and

institutions in addressing global inequalities and the issue of poverty. The reason is because to adopt the global justice theory alone is not sufficient in the explanation of Miller's remedial responsibility. This is due to the fact that despite its profundity, global justice theory has its own flaws. On the other hand, it is also not plausible or sufficient to propose the social contract theory alone to help elucidate the basis for remedial responsibility because of the question of consent, reciprocity, willingness, obligations that arise from living in a society. This is the reason I propose and argue for the Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT) as a new thinking in the discourse on global justice. The GRCT reflects the integration of global justice concerns with the idea of a social contract that extends beyond national territories.

In understanding the GRCT, there are three variables that are of great importance. I rehash them here to include the social contract theory, global justice and remedial responsibility. These fundamental variables which provide the fabrics of the GRCT speak directly to the subject of global poverty as encapsulated in this thesis. GRCT brings a global perspective to the issue of social contract arrangement, global justice and remedial responsibility beyond the local jurisdiction as the basis for a critical interrogation on the discourse of global poverty.

This GRCT has a new thinking in political philosophy can be justified on several grounds. First, it offers an inclusive and broad-based approach to addressing global poverty. With a focus on the ethical, practical, and institutional dimensions of global poverty, GRCT offers a lens to uncover the complexity of poverty and its multidimensional impacts. It is a framework that provides for a comprehensive approach to the issue of poverty, ensuring that anti-poverty targeted measures transcend the narrow focus on addressing immediate needs to unpacking the structural inadequacies that underpin and perpetuate inequality and deprivation. In this regard, the relevance of the integrated framework is particularly evident in climate justice discussions, where the intersections of poverty and environmental degradation are most noticeable. Hence, within the new framework, such issues as poverty, adaptation funding, and the responsibilities

of developed nations in addressing poverty and climatic inequities will enjoy considerable attention.

Second, it serves as a connectivity channel for several distinct theories, offering a rich context for multidisciplinary scholarship. By integrating different theoretical perspectives, the new theory blurs existing imaginary academic divides that long compartmentalised fields such as political philosophy, international relations, development studies, and environmental justice as distinct disciplines. The synthesis of hitherto compartmentalised theoretical and academic disciplines offers the added advantage of enriching academic discourse while drawing on the significance of innovative methodologies. A synthesised theoretical pathway will foster collaboration among academics and policymakers, engendering a partnership-oriented approach that guarantees rigorous and actionable strategies towards combating contemporary global challenges effectively. The focus on multidisciplinary will enhance the appeal of the new framework to a wide range of academic and policy contexts.

As an integrated theory, the GRCT is built on a collective and shared responsibility towards combating global poverty. This approach highlights the import of partnerships and solidarity rather than charity in the global drive against poverty. By extension, in a world of interconnectedness, shared aspirations and mutually-reinforcing goals of north-south dialogue offer appreciable prospects in the global quest for poverty alleviation. Seeing poverty from the moral ground of “ours” as against “theirs” justifies the kind of inclusivity which underpins the integrated theory. The GRCT offers a new and innovative approach to the subject of global poverty. Its inclusive foundation, built on a dialogue of ethical, practical, and institutional perspectives, provides a robust framework for unpacking the causes of poverty while ensuring methodically and systematically addressing them. In the final analysis, through interdisciplinary collaboration, inclusive global remedial responsibilities, justice and accountability, the integrated theory strengthens the prospect of a more equitable and sustainable world.

Conclusion

The issue of Poverty, which is undeniably an embedded structural and moral problem, this paper reveals, demands not only technical responses but also a fundamental rethinking of responsibility within the global order. This paper presents the Global Remedial Contract Theory (GRCT) as a philosophical reconstruction of existing models, which combines the normative depth of social contract theory, the moral urgency of global justice, and the ethical grounding of remedial responsibility. In response to the first question that guided this study, the limitations of Miller’s framework were shown to lie in its equal weighting of all six connections, which, as a result, overlooks the moral and practical primacy of capacity in real-world obligations. This paper further argues that Miller’s approach, no doubt, remains practically strong, but falls short in addressing the deep asymmetries and structural conditions unique to the Global South. The second guiding question of this paper was addressed through the development of GRCT, which this paper finds necessary, considering contemporary global challenges. Thus, through the establishment of GRCT, this study helps in providing a more equitable and context-sensitive model for assigning responsibility, built on the principles of capacity, willingness, reciprocity, and collective obligation. Its strength lies in the primacy of an integrated theory that avoids the limitations of existing approaches when treated in isolation. However, it is important to note that GRCT does not simply add to the literature on global justice, for it focuses on reframing the discourse around shared moral obligation rather than discretionary charity. No doubt, GRCT’s current limitation is its conceptual status, for it lacks enforceability and requires further institutional and political grounding. However, if thoroughly examined, we would be able to dissect that these are not weaknesses, but an avenue for future interdisciplinary refinement. Considering all of the above, GRCT is an attempt to reimagine global solidarity, not as a matter of benevolence, but as a shared and actionable moral necessity. It challenges the global community to see global poverty not just as a humanitarian crisis, but as a justice issue demanding a structural moral response.

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Author Details

Damilola Peter Olatade, Department of Philosophy, Lagos State University, Nigeria,
Email ID: damilola.olatade@lasu.edu.ng