This paper discusses the article of Social justice, economies and distance education. As the demand for education continues to rise in correlation to the increase in population, an educated workforce is needed to remain competitive in a global economy. Meeting this demand can be challenging and distance education is a way to provide access to higher education to greater mass of people.

The main issue that was stated in the article was pinpointed to the morality in humanity in its social responsibility to educate its population. Distance education is seen as a way to provide access to those who may not otherwise be able to obtain a higher education. Due to education being a “fundamental human right” (Rumble, p. 167, para. 2) the government has a fiscal and moral responsibility to help its citizens in meeting the demand for education. The need for morality of humanity is evident due to the costs associated with accessing higher education. This can be obtained with “cost-efficient distance education provided cheaply and flexibly to keep costs down” (Rumble, p.168, para. 3).

After reading the article, there was much strength in the argument presented regarding human capital modernization. First, that the nation-state through public funding is better equipped with helping provide access to education to all by keeping costs down as opposed to “privatizing funding through market-state which does nothing to help the poor” (Rumble, p. 170, para. 9). Second, that “charity is a virtue not as efficient as national welfare” (Rumble, pp. 70-171, para. 12) as seen by the level of poverty in the world and that donations alone will not enable all to afford the costs of an education. Third, in a liberal society where it is seen as acceptable to have those without access to food, education and healthcare is a moral atrocity and that a national welfare system will actually help decrease the inequalities in society (Rumble, 1997). Fourth, that not helping those lead good lives instead of bad lives whether by
“commission or omission” (Rumble, p. 173, para. 22) is a moral argument in itself and fails to help grow society. Fifth, that without help from national assistance, that those born into poverty and disadvantage will be condemned to this for the rest of their lives (Rumble, 1997). Sixth, that “societies with unequal wealth with have lower economic growth” (Rumble, p. 174, para. 25). Seventh, distance education makes gaining access to education possible and available to people who are disadvantaged (Rumble, 1997). Eighth, costs of education should be down as to pose no financial barrier to have access (Rumble, 1997). Ninth, the demand for education will increase as the population is estimated to grow from 6.5 billion to over 9.4 billion by 2050 and affordability will be crucial for those with limited means (Rumble, 1997). Lastly, without public assistance inequality with expand creating a large underclass as the middle class will shrink and “inhumane policies encourage violence and terrorism” (Rumble, p. 174, para. 26).

Weaknesses in the article included too few empirical data reflecting the number of the world’s population that is in poverty or disadvantaged. In addition, how states are to provide continued funding for social welfare programs was not given. Also, no details on how a change to the tax system will help change the inequalities in the United States.

The value of this article lies in the statement of “humanity is a morality of relationship” (Rumble, p. 173, para. 21). As Rumble argues that it is a moral imperative for the state to provide access to education, to allow its citizen to lead good lives that which is filled with access to healthcare, better economic attainment, education, freedom, well-being and material goods as opposed to bad lives (Rumble, 1997). Equality will allow for people to rise above their disadvantaged circumstances and decrease wealth disparities. Liberalism through its use of capitalism is hurting the lives of the poor as it works to shift expenses from that of the government to gradually transfer costs to consumers and students (Rumble, 1997). The state has
a responsibly for the well-being of its citizens and without this help the privatized industry will widen the disparity between the growing rich and poor (Rumble, 1997).

In conclusion, the article discusses how it is a moral responsibility of the state and its citizens to help provide access to education to all at an affordable cost. This will enable the economy to grow and decrease wealth disparities. It is a moral obligation as a humane right to help people attain good lives as opposed to bad lives. Access to education through distance education can provide more opportunities to people as the demand for education continues to rise along with the world’s population. A state welfare system will help the disadvantaged and allow access to education to those who may have none. Failure to do so can invite violence and terrorism into societies. Through the efforts of society as a whole people will regardless of their backgrounds be able to attain access to healthcare, education and economic prosperity in order to lead better lives.
Reference