



FOOD SECURITY AND ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN INDIA

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Abstract

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Commonly, the concept of food security is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. In many countries, health problems related to dietary excess are an ever increasing threat, In fact, malnutrition and foodborne diarrhea are become double burden.

Poverty is the condition of human beings who are poor. That is, they have little or no material means of surviving— food,shelter,clothes, healthcare, education, and other physical means of living and improving one's life.

To examine agricultural production, exports and imports of agricultural crops in India, to examine national poverty line comparison, to examine causes of poverty, effects of poverty, steps to alleviate poverty, poverty alleviation programmes, millennium development programmes.

To augment wage employment opportunities by providing employment on demand and by specific guaranteed wage employment every year to households whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work to thereby extend a security net to the people and simultaneously create durable assets to alleviate some aspects of poverty and address the issue of development in the rural areas.

Government and private institutions should take proper initiation for the effective implementation of poverty alleviation programmes so that we can reduce poverty levels in Indian economy.

Key words: Food Security, Eradication of Poverty, Agricultural Production, Exports, Imports, Millennium Development Goals.

INTRODUCTION

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Commonly, the concept of food security is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. In many countries, health problems related to dietary excess are an ever increasing threat, In fact, malnutrition and foodborne diarrhea are become double burden.

“Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels [is achieved] when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”(The 1996 World Food Summit).

“Food security is nothing but a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (The State of Food Insecurity 2001).

"Community food security exists when all citizens obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self reliance and equal access for everyone."
- Public Health Association of British Columbia (PHABC)



Poverty is the condition of human beings who are poor. That is, they have little or no material means of surviving— food, shelter, clothes, healthcare, education, and other physical means of living and improving one's life.

Poverty alleviation also involves improving the living conditions of people who are already poor. Aid, particularly in medical and scientific areas, is essential in providing better lives, such as the Green Revolution and the eradication of smallpox. Problems with today's development aid include the high proportion of tied aid, which mandates receiving nations to buy products, often more expensive, originating only from donor countries. Nevertheless, some believe (Peter Singer in his book *The Life You Can Save*) that small changes in the way each of us in affluent nations lives our lives could solve world poverty.

Poverty are generally categorised into types of poverty. They are i) absolute and ii) relative poverty. Absolute Poverty By the Copenhagen Declaration Absolute Poverty is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. •The term 'absolute poverty' is sometimes synonymously referred to as 'extreme poverty. •Absolute poverty refers to a set standard which is consistent over time and between countries. It depends not only on income but also on access to services. Relative Poverty •Relative poverty is defined contextually as economic inequality in the location or society in which people live. •Relative poverty views poverty as socially defined and dependent on social context, hence relative poverty is a measure of income inequality.

While India has seen impressive economic growth in recent years, the country still struggles with widespread poverty and hunger. India's poor population amounts to more than 300 million people, with almost 30 percent of India's rural population living in poverty. The good news is, poverty has been on the decline in recent years. According to official government of India estimates, poverty declined from 37.2% in 2004-05 to 29.8% in 2009-10.

METHODOLOGY

To examine agricultural production, exports and imports of agricultural crops in India, to examine national poverty line comparison, to examine causes of poverty, effects of poverty, steps to alleviate poverty, poverty alleviation programmes, millennium development programmes

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Table - 1, Agricultural Production in India

Agricultural Production	2007	2008	2009	2010
Rice Production	144,570,000 MT	148,036,000 MT	135,673,000 MT	143,963,000 MT
Wheat Production	75,806,700 MT	78,570,200 MT	80,680,000 MT	80,710,000 MT
Maize Production	18,955,400 MT	19,731,400 MT	16,719,500 MT	21,725,800 MT
Soybean Production	10,968,000 MT	9,905,000 MT	10,217,000 MT	12,736,000 MT

It is clear from the above table that rice production has increased from 2007 to 2008 and it has declined during 2009 and it has enhanced during 2010.

Wheat production has increased from 2007 to 2010.

Maize production has increased from 2007 to 2008.and it has declined during 2009 and it has increased during 2010.

Soybean production has declined from 2007 to 2008 and it has increased during 2009 and the sam has further increased to 2010.



Table 2Agricultural exports in India

Agricultural Exports	2006	2007	2008	2009
Rice Exports	4,739,872 MT	6,450,062 MT	2,484,275 MT	2,148,040 MT
Wheat Exports	46,633 MT	237.00 MT	1,121 MT	29.00 MT
Maize Exports	637,411 MT	2,727,720 MT	3,537,300 MT	2,600,820 MT
Soybean Exports	3,528 MT	7,460 MT	44,838 MT	24,699 MT

It is clear from the above table that rice exports increased from 2006 to 2007 and it has declined during 2008 and the same has increased during 2009.

Exports of wheat has declined from 2007 to 2008,it has increased from 2008 to 2009 and it has decreased during 2009.

Exports of maize has increased from 2006 to 2008 and it has declined during 2009.

Table -3, Agricultural imports in India

Agricultural Imports	2005	2006	2007	2008
Rice Imports	256.00 MT	162.00 MT	145.00 MT	85.00 MT
Wheat Imports	37,760 MT	6,079,560 MT	2,677,830 MT	20.00 MT
Maize Imports	1,632 MT	2,000 MT	4,273 MT	7,280 MT
Soybean Imports	2.00 MT	336.00 MT	29.00 MT	38.00 MT

It is clear from the above table that the imports of rice has declined from 2005 to 2008..

Imports of wheat has increased from 2005 to 2006 and during 2007 it has declined and during 2008 the same has further declined.

Imports of maize has increased from 2005 to 2008.

Imports of soyabean has increased from 2005 to 2006 and it has declined t during 2207 and the same has increased durin 2008.

Table 4:National poverty lines comparison

Country	Poverty line (per day)	Year	Reference
India	32 rupees (\$0.53)		2007
Argentina	6 pesos (\$0.74)		2012
China	¥ 6.30 (\$1.01)		2012
Nigeria	65 naira (\$0.4)		2011
United States	\$13		2005

(Pl Note: this is historical data, not current)
The above table indicate poverty line comparison.

Causes:

High population growth is the causal factor to increase in poverty.The various causes are: i) Caste System ii) Unequal distribution of wealth iii) Illiteracy iv) Increase in unemployment & v) Low productivity vi) Voicelessness or powerlessness vii) Vulnerability due to disasters, conflicts etc.

Effects

Poverty severely affects the following aspects in a society,Health,Education,Housing,Utilities, Violence 1. One third of deaths – some 18 million people a year or 50,000 per day – are because of poverty-related causes. Those who live in poverty have also been shown to have a far greater likelihood of having or incurring a disability within their lifetime. 2. Research has found that there is a high risk of educational underachievement for children who are from low-income housing circumstances. For children with low resources, the risk factors are similar to others such as juvenile delinquency rates, higher levels of teenage pregnancy,and the economic dependency upon



their low income parent or parents. 4. Poverty increases the risk of homelessness. Slum-dwellers make up a third of the world's urban population. 5. Deterioration of living conditions can often compel children to abandon school to contribute to the family income, putting them at risk of being exploited. It is also seen that the countries with higher relative poverty are at higher risk of unrest and also civic and domestic violence.

STEPS TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY

For much of history, poverty was considered largely unavoidable as traditional modes of production were insufficient to give an entire population a comfortable standard of living. Aristotle has said in his masterpiece-Politics that, 'Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.' Poverty creates an imbalance in the equality of the society, resulting in population explosion, unemployment, child labour and a rising graph of crimes. The following measures are advocated in order to curb poverty:

- a. Economic Liberalization Extending property rights protection to the poor is one of the most important poverty reduction strategies a nation can implement. Securing property rights to land, the largest asset for most societies, is vital to their economic freedom. The World Bank concludes that increasing land rights is the key to reducing poverty" citing that land rights greatly increase poor people's wealth, in some cases doubling it.
- b. Investing in Infrastructure, Education and Technology UN economists argue that good infrastructure, such as roads and information networks, helps market reforms to work. Cell phone technology brings the market to poor or rural sections. With necessary information, remote farmers can produce specific crops to sell to the buyers that bring the best price. Such technology also helps bring economic freedom by making financial services accessible to the poor.
- c. c)Employment and Productivity Economic growth has the indirect potential to alleviate poverty, as a result of a simultaneous increase in employment opportunities and increase labour productivity.
- d. Building opportunities for self sufficiency making employment opportunities available is just as important as increasing income and access to basic needs. This can be done by creating companies that employ the poor while creating "radically" affordable goods.
- e. Microloans One of the most popular of the new technical tools for economic development and poverty reduction are microloans made famous in 1976 by the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. The idea is to loan small amounts of money to farmers or villages so these people can obtain the things they need to increase their economic rewards.
- f. Empowering Women The empowerment of women has relatively recently become a significant area of discussion with respect to development and economics; however it is often regarded as a topic that only addresses and primarily deals with gender inequality. Because women and men experience poverty differently, they hold dissimilar poverty reduction priorities and are affected differently by development interventions and poverty reduction strategies.
- g. Increasing the supply of basic needs-Food and other goods Agricultural technologies such as nitrogen fertilizers, pesticides and new irrigation methods have dramatically reduced food shortages in modern times by boosting yields past previous constraints.
- h. d) Removing constraints on government services Government revenue can be diverted away from basic services by corruption. Funds from aid and natural resources are sent to overseas banks instead of spending for the poor. Therefore stricter laws must be enacted to curb corruption.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

The poverty alleviation programmes in India can be categorized on the basis of their focussed areas. ie., whether it is targeted for rural areas or urban areas. Most of the programmes are designed to target rural poverty as the prevalence of the poverty is high in rural areas. Also targeting of the poor is challenging in rural areas due to various geographic and infrastructure limitations. The programmes can be mainly grouped into 1) Wage employment programmes, 2) Self-employment programmes, 3) Food security programmes, 4) Social security programmes and 5) Urban poverty alleviation programmes.



Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) is the restructured, streamlined and comprehensive version of the erstwhile Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY). It was started on 1 April 1999. The main aim of this programme was development of rural areas.

National family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)

This scheme was started in August 1995 by the Government of India. This scheme is sponsored by the state government. It was transferred to the state sector scheme after 2002-03. It is under the community and rural department. This scheme provides a sum of 10000Rs to a person of a family who becomes the head of the family after the death of its primary breadwinner. The breadwinner is defined as a person who is above 18 who earns the most for the family and on whose earnings the family survives. It is for families below the poverty line.

Annapurna

This scheme was started by the government in 1999–2000 to provide food to senior citizens who cannot take care of themselves and are not under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), and who have no one to take care of them in their village. This scheme would provide 10 kg of free food grains a month for the eligible senior citizens. The allocation for this scheme as off 2000-2001 was Rs 100 crore.

Integrated Rural Development programme

This calls for integration of various agencies - District Rural Development Agencies, banks, line departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other semi-government organisations. The year 1999–2000 was the first year of the implementation of SGSY. As such, considerable detailed preparatory work and planning were carried out in order to ensure the successful implementation of the scheme. In order to finalise the guidelines of the programme, views were sought/consultations were held with State Governments, banks and programme was started in 1978 and it later merged with SGSY in 1999.

Rural Housing-Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)(initiated in 1985)

This scheme aimed at creating housing for all the people. It aimed at creating 20 lakh housing units out of which 13 lakhs were in rural area. This scheme also would give out loans to people at subsidized rates to make houses. It was started in 1999–2000. In 1999–2000 1438.39 crore Rs was used for this scheme and about 7.98 lakh units were built. In 2000-01 an central outlay of 1710.00 crores Rs was provided for this scheme.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)

The NREGA bill notified in 2005 and came into force in 2006 and further modified it as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2008. This scheme guarantees 100 days of paid work to people in the rural areas. The scheme has proved to be a major boost in Indian rural population's income. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) is the nodal Ministry for the implementation of NREGA. It will also ensure that the implementation of NREGA at all levels is sought to be made transparent and accountable to the public. Now 100 to 150 days work for all is provided.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 is a Millennium Development Goal. Access to information on sexual and reproductive health.

- Action against domestic violence.
- Appointing government scientific advisors in every country.
- Deworming school children in affected areas.
- Drugs for AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.
- Eliminating school fees.
- Ending user fees for basic health care in developing countries.
- Free school meals for schoolchildren.
- Legislation for women's rights, including rights to property.



- Planting trees.
- Providing soil nutrients to farmers in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Providing mosquito nets.
- Access to electricity, water and sanitation.
- Supporting breast-feeding.
- Training programs for community health in rural areas.
- Upgrading slums, and providing land for public housing.

CONCLUSION

Thus the definition of poverty, its meaning and the methods for its reduction have been discussed here. As the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius said, 'Poverty is the mother of all crimes' As long we allow poverty to fester, we shall have a reason for strife in our nations. So the steps to alleviate poverty must be taken immediately, implemented swiftly and enforced rigidly.

Food security is built on three pillars

- Food availability: sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis.
- Food access: having sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.
- Food use: appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation.
- "Food Security" is one of major elements of development and poverty alleviation and has been the goal of many international and national public organizations. The issue is so important that according to the state of food insecurity in the world 2012 published by FAO around 870 million people (out of which 852 million from developing countries) are estimated to have been undernourished in the period 2010-12. Although the phrase "Food Security" is being used widely, the definition and concept of food security is elusive and being evolved and expanded over time.
- Poverty reduction is a term that describes the promotion of economic growth that will permanently lift as many people as possible over a poverty line.

Poverty occurs in both developing countries and developed countries. While poverty is much more widespread in developing countries, both types of countries undertake poverty reduction measures.

To augment wage employment opportunities by providing employment on demand and by specific guaranteed wage employment every year to households whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work to thereby extend a security net to the people and simultaneously create durable assets to alleviate some aspects of poverty and address the issue of development in the rural areas.

SUGGESTION

Government and private institutions should take proper initiation for the effective implementation of poverty alleviation programmes so that we can reduce poverty levels in Indian economy.

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