

Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation in India

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ABSTRACT

There are many problems in underdevelopment countries. Among these Poverty is the major problem. As of poverty is a pandemic that affects a greater number of people and the whole society at large. India is to be considered as Developing country facing this problem as well. The economic reforms of 1991, despite a huge growth of economy, have left the country with terrible inequality and poverty within cities as well as between urban and rural areas.

This paper is an attempt to focus on the concept of sustainable development and poverty. It also explains the meaning and objectives of poverty and what steps should be taken by Government of India for alleviation of poverty. It also elaborates causes of poverty, impact, MDGs, SDGs and its performance in India.

INTRODUCTION

In all most underdeveloped countries where per capita income is very low, income inequality has resulted in number of problems, of which poverty is certainly the most serious one. It is a kind of diseases which affects large number of people of society. HIV/AIDS attacks only a few numbers of people but poverty affects major population of the country. It affects seriously sustainable development also.

India is a developing country facing this problem among other problems as well. India is a growing up and has a notable growth rate in recent years. It has maintained a decent growth rate 7.6% in the year of 2008-09 to 2010-11 even though global financial crisis was occurred. The average growth rate was 6.4% in the year of 2011-12 to 2014-15. It was 7.5% in the year of 2016 and expected to be remained around 7% to 7.7% in upcoming 2 years.

OBJECTIVES

1. To know the concepts of Sustainable Development and Poverty.
2. To examine Sustainable Development and poverty Alleviation in India.
3. To study Millennium Development and Sustainable Development Goals.

WHAT ARE POVERTY, HUNGER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

There are many definitions of poverty, according to how it is viewed. Encyclopedia Encarta defines poverty as the condition of having insufficient resources or income. In its most extreme form, poverty is a lack of basic human needs to sustain as useful and working efficiency such as adequate and nutritious food, clothing, and housing, clean water and health services. According to the United Nations Human Development Report, (1998) poverty is defined as a complex phenomenon that generally refers to inadequacy of resources and deprivation of choices that would enable people to enjoy decent living conditions. While Professor Muhammad Yunus

(1994) defines it as the denial of human rights relating to the fulfillment of basic human needs.

In 1995 the United Nations adopted two definitions of poverty.

Absolute poverty was defined as:

A condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services.

Overall poverty takes various forms, including:

Lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life. It occurs in all countries: as mass poverty in many developing countries, pockets of poverty amid wealth in developed countries, loss of livelihoods as a result of economic recession, sudden poverty as a result of disaster or conflict, the poverty of low-wage workers, and the utter destitution of people who fall outside family support systems, social institutions and safety nets.

These are relative definitions of poverty, which see poverty in terms of minimum acceptable standards of living within the society in which a particular person lives. (UN, 1995) But 'overall poverty' goes further, recognizing the many factors that can contribute to deprivation. In 2010, the United Nations adopted a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) covering health and education, as well as standards of living.

Poverty line cannot define based on the concept of multidimensional poverty as it includes both material dimension and non-material dimension. Accordingly, poverty

line focuses on material dimension and in this respect absolute poverty determined by poverty line.

In simple term Hunger defines as a very great need of food. Basically, hunger means an uneasy sensation caused by wants of food, craving appetite, and also exhausted condition caused by want of food. Another definition of hunger is a situation where adult and children cannot access the food constantly and it decreases food intake without food which leads to malnutrition.

Sustainable Development: Definition

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

-Bruntlan

Although many definitions abound, the most often used definition of sustainable development is that proposed by the Brundtland Commission (Cerin, 2006; Dernbach J. C., 1998; Dernbach J. C., 2003; Stoddart, 2011). This broad definition does not limit the scope of sustainability. The explanation does, however, touch on the importance of intergenerational equity. This concept of conserving resources for future generations is one of the major features that distinguish sustainable development policy from traditional environmental policy, which also seeks to internalize the externalities of environmental degradation. The overall goal of sustainable development (SD) is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; this is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision-making process.

CAUSES OF POVERTY IN INDIA

The term poverty and hunger are interrelated terms. The causes of poverty and hunger are given below.

1. Lack of resources
2. High level of illiteracy
3. High population growth
4. Large families and unequal income distribution
5. Increase in unemployment
6. Unskilled labor.
7. Low rate of economic growth

IMPACT OF POVERTY IN INDIA ECONOMIC REFORMS ON

Benefit to Only Rich

Right now, at this stage of development the services and especially IT and finance sector typically don't employ a lot of people. Although the tertiary sector (services) represents 50% of India's GDP, it employs only 2 million people! So many Indians are quite right to complain that globalization and modernization benefit only the rich.

Neglecting the poor, once more

However, the manufacturing sector is finally growing, so there are good prospects to reduce the massive unemployment and hence tackle one of the causes of poverty in India. But that leaves the problem of rural poverty. India just left its rural poor on their own.

Lack of decent housing

On the bright manufacturing develops, so does the tertiary sector which now provides services supporting the former such as better infrastructure, transports, and personal services. Plus, the services sector has a much greater positive impact on poverty. Despite that and the development of real estate sector, hundreds of millions still lack a decent home.

Market liberalization and globalization

There is nothing wrong with market liberalization in itself but in a developing country it can be disastrous because market forces will only invest in profitable areas which leaves plenty excluded in the country. The role of the state here is thus one of empowering citizens and making sure they can participate in the economy and growth of the country.

Resisting globalization: foreign causes of poverty in India?

Another dilemma with the globalization-liberalization duo is that typically it wipes out the least competitive companies in a given market. While this is a necessary evil if India is to adapt to globalization, the country should have nevertheless focused on protecting its laid-off workers.

One way to do so would have been to invest in education, as the country's share of GDP in education is far from enough and below that of other developing countries and regions such as China and Latin America.

POVERTY AND HUNGER IN INDIA

There are many socio-economic problems in underdeveloped countries and developing countries. Among these poverty and hunger is one of the major problems existing in developing country like India. India has got fast economic growth after 1991 economic reforms. But it is found that economic reforms do not show the positive impact on Indian economic. Despite huge economic growth of economy, the problems like poverty and hunger is existing. Human Development Report 2010 had introduced the concept of Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). HDR 2014 has presented estimation of MPI that shows the condition of India is worrisome. It shows the 55.3% of India's population suffers from multidimensional poverty. Moreover, 27.8% of India suffers from severe poverty. In this context India's position of poverty and hunger with the comparison of other countries must be examined. Here it can be seen in table given below:

Table 1 : India's Global Hunger Index

Year	India's Rank	Total Countries	IGHI
1992	76	96	46.4
2000	83	115	36.2
2008	102	118	36
2016	97	118	28.5

(India, 2016), A higher rank implies a worsening the hunger situation.

In the year 1992 India's Global hunger index score was 46.4 with rank 76, after eight years i.e. in the year 2000 it was 36.2 with rank 83. During global financial crisis India's rank was 102 out of 118 countries and global hunger index was 36 and finally present status of India's global hunger index is 28.5 out of 118 countries and we secured ranked 97. IGH constant decreasing that is good compare to other countries.

India's rank was 76 in 1992 out of 96 countries which continuously increased till the year of 2008 compare to other countries. In the year of 2016 it has decreased 102 to 97. In this case it can be said that India is in a better situation with decreasing IGHI which is 28.5 per cent. According to the International Food policy Research Institute, India has been ranked 100th among 119 developing countries with 31.4 GHI score in 2017.

POVERTY AND MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENTS GOALS

In 2000, world leaders came together at United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This declaration committed their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and set out a series of time-bound targets – with a deadline of 2015 – that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals. The development goals cover eight areas:

- ✓ End poverty and hunger
- ✓ Universal education
- ✓ Gender equality
- ✓ Child health
- ✓ Maternal health
- ✓ Combat HIV/AIDS
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Global partnership

The goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger sets three targets to be reached by 2015. Using 1990 as the base, it aims to:

- ✓ halve the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day
- ✓ achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people
- ✓ halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN INDIA

With the fifth plan poverty alleviation came to be accepted as one of the main objective of economic planning in India. In this context numbers of programs have been undertaken by the government to remove poverty. The programs for the rural poor in recent years include Swarnajyanti Grams Swavrozgar Yojna, Sampoorna Grameen Rozagar Yojna, The Nehru Rozargar Yojna, (Oct. 1989), Swarnajyanti Shaheri Rozagar Yojna (1978-79), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme(MGNREGS) Feb. 2006 and many more.

In December 2015, India was supposed to achieve the MDGs, but was not on track to achieve it completely. According to the statistical year book brought out by Ministry of statistics and programme Implementation that overseeing progress on the MDGs shows only six out of eight goals adopted in year 2000 have been fulfilled. One more report brought out by United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific shows that India could achieve only four of the eight MDGs. It shows that India has worked moderately on achieving MDGs but could not fulfill it completely especially alleviating poverty. So to fulfill the

other goals including reduction of poverty and hunger, United Nation General Assembly adopted the new set of 17 goals for sustainable development.

The twelfth five year plan emphasizes faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth. For this two reasons have been given; First rapid growth of GDP that directly affects large section of the society by providing employment and other income enhancing activities.

Second rapid growth generates revenue which help to finance various programs of poverty alleviation like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Sarva Shiksha Abhiya (SSA), Mid-Day Meals (MDMs), Integrated Child Development Services(ICDS), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) etc. Recently initiative taken by Government of India was "Make in India" with the aim of helping for creating jobs for more than 10 million people of India.

FINDINGS

1. It is found that despite high economic growth compare to pre-economic reforms, India facing problem of poverty and hunger.
2. The economic reforms 1991 does not show the positive impact on Indian economy especially removal of poverty.
3. It is found that IGHI has decreased compare to previous years but not sufficient for the economy.
4. The MDGs have not been fulfilled completely to remove poverty. India has to set sustainable development goals to achieve unfulfilled goals including alleviation of poverty and hunger.

SUGGESTION

Suggestions and solutions removing poverty and hunger from the economy are given below:

1. To increase job opportunities through inclusive growth.
2. To raise the minimum wages.
3. To provide micro finance.

CONCLUSION

There are many socio-economic problems in India and poverty and hunger is one of them which is still existing after economic reforms. India has adopted MDGs but could not achieve the target completely. To achieve the targets set by United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal by the year 2030, especially for India the concept of "Inclusive Growth" and "Micro Finance" is few of the key drivers which can help to reduce the poverty and hunger.

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