



POVERTY IN INDIA AND POLICY STEPS TO POVERTY REDUCTION

RUBELA ABSAR ¹

¹ RESEARCH SCHOLAR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, AMU, ALIGARH.

ABSTRACT:

In the country, poverty alleviation programmes aim to decrease the rate of poverty by providing the households and families belonging to the lower poverty line with proper access to food, monetary assistance and basic essentials. According to India's Planning Commission, the level of poverty in a country can be estimated based on consumer spending surveys conducted under the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). The article would address India's numerous Poverty Alleviation Programmes and the Indian government's efforts to reduce poverty.

KEYWORDS:

POVERTY, GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, EFFORTS.

Poverty is not just a shortage of sufficient income. It's a social phenomenon in which even the essential necessities of life cannot be met by a portion of a population. Even with more than a thousand analyzes and hundreds of programs designed to alleviate poverty, poverty levels in the world have not declined to the mark. India continues to tackle this problem despite its development in many areas of operation.

Poverty alleviation is the set of economic and humanitarian measures taken to eradicate a country's poverty. The World Bank states that if a person lives at or below \$1,90 a day, they are in extreme poverty and millions of people worldwide fall into that category today.

India represents one-sixth of the world's population and is increasingly rising to become shortly the world's most populous country. There is rising day-to-day pressure on land, though agricultural productivity is not keeping up with population growth. Almost two-thirds of the Indian population also depend on agriculture for their livelihood. In India, in recent decades poverty has decreased significantly. Orissa, Bihar, Chatisgarh and Madya Pradesh are the poorest states with a high poverty ratio.

Government initiatives to reduce poverty in India

Since the fourth five-year poverty reduction plan, a variety of initiatives have been introduced. Development of the rural poor target group is the fundamental aim of these programmes. It falls into 3 broad categories:

- (i) family of livelihood creation (self-employment) programs,
- (ii) income transfers in terms of kind and
- (iii) labour-intensive public works schemes.

Poverty eradication programs are used to build assets for the poor, and through education, public health and other actions relating to human resources, the productivity of the poor is increased. Some of the main poverty alleviation programs in rural areas are listed below:

Swarnajayanthi gram swarozgar yojana (SGSY)

The extent of poverty and inequalities that existed between the different social classes needed planned state intervention to provide assistance and relief particularly to the poor and marginalized groups like SC / ST, women, etc. Bringing this into account and taking into consideration both the good and the drawbacks, earlier self-employment initiatives such as TRYSEM, SITRA, GKY, DWCRA, IRDP and MWS were combined and a new work program was introduced during 1999. The program's primary goal is to put current disadvantaged families beyond the poverty line.

Sampoorna grameen rozgar yojana (SGRY)

Jawahar Gram Swarozgar Yojana (JGSY) and Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) were merged and a new scheme called SGRY was introduced as from 15th August 2001. The primary goal of the new program is to provide additional wage jobs as food security in rural areas through the creation of sustainable social and economic community assets and infrastructure growth in rural areas. To this end, the SGRY envisages the distribution of food grains to the workers at 5 kg per man / day as part salaries. While the Center and the States share the cash portion in the 75:25 ratio, the central government will provide the states with cost-free food.

Jawahar rozgar yojana (JRY)

A program was introduced in 1989 to provide rural poor jobs. This plan included the National Rural Employment Program (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program (RLEGP). The budget under the plan was shared on 80:20 basis by the Center and the States (Rural Development Department, 1989). The program's primary objective was to generate additional earned employment in rural areas for the unemployed and underemployed, both men and women.

Overall, pouring JRY funds into backward districts is a rare

opportunity to tackle both unemployment and underdevelopment in rural areas that are fairly backward. In insure that this resource is optimally used, the supporting distribution infrastructure needs to be given even more attention to shore up.

Integrated rural development programme (IRDP)

The program was launched in 1987 with the main goal of creating viable rural poor employment opportunities. IRDP's focus groups consisted of small and marginal farmers, farm labourers and rural artisans living below the poverty line. In 1999, the system was transformed into Swarnajayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana.

Employment assurance scheme (EAS)

It was introduced in 1993. This aimed at providing the poor and unskilled labourer with guaranteed jobs for 100 days. The program is available to all rural men and women over the age of 18 and under the age of 60. It was universalized and now all of the country's economic development areas are covered by the scheme.

National social assistance programme (NSAP)

This was launched in 1995 as a 100 per cent federally funded program for social assistance services for old-age impacted poor families, primary bread earner death and maternity care. Three components of the program viz. National Maternity Benefit Scheme, Pension Scheme National Old Age, and National Family Benefit Scheme.

Prime minister's rozgar yojana (PMRY)

During 1993 it was launched to provide self-employment for trained unemployed youth. It was planned by setting up seven lakh micro-enterprises in the Eighth Five Year Plan to provide jobs to more than a million people. Even the scheme was continued in program Ninth.

Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY)

Launched in 2000-01, PMGY envisages allocation for identified basic services such as primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural water supply, nutrition and rural electrification to states and UTs, with additional central assistance.

Jawahar gram samridhi yojana (JGSY)

This was launched in 1999 when the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was restructured. It is being implemented with a cost-sharing ratio of 75:25 among central states as a centrally sponsored scheme. The goals of the program are to provide the rural unemployed with sustainable productive community assets and wage jobs.

Bharat nirman

Throughout the four-year duration (2005-09) it is time-bound business strategy for rural infrastructure action. This scheme covers irrigation areas, rural housing, rural roads, rural electrification, rural water supply, and connectivity to rural telecommunication.

National rural employment guarantee scheme (NREGS)

The Food for Work Program (FWP) started in 1977 to

generate jobs through the redistribution of the surplus food grain stock, renamed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Program (NREGP) and launched in 2005. In its first year the Act included the country's 200 most backward districts. During the second year, hundred more districts were added, and the Act will cover all districts of the country from 2008. This aims to improve people's livelihoods in rural areas by ensuring hundred days of wage jobs in a financial year for a rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Poverty Alleviation in India- Five Year Plans

Twelve Five Year Plans for Eradicating Poverty from India is introduced. The list of those Five Year Plans which began in 1951 is given below:

- First Five Year Plan (1951-1956): The plan concentrated primarily on agriculture and irrigation, with a view to achieving a balanced overall growth.
- Second Five Year Plan (1956-1961): Focused on the development of basic and heavy manufacturing, growing job opportunities and rising national income by 25 per cent.
- Third Five Year Plan (1961-1966): The Chinese invasion (1962), the Indo-Pak war (1965) and the most extreme drought culminated in the complete collapse of the third five year plan. This was replaced by three annual plans, which lasted between 1966 and 1969.
- Fourth Five Year Plan (1966-1974): aimed at raising national income by 5.5 per cent, creating economic stability, rising income distribution inequality and ensuring equity in social justice.
- Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1979): This program centered mainly on poverty eradication (Garibi Hatao) and sought to put greater parts of the population over the poverty line. This also promised a minimum income of Rs. 40 per person per month, measured at prices 1972-73. The strategy was completed in 1978, rather than (1979) when the Janata government came to power.
- Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-1985): poverty eradication was the main goal of the Sixth Five Year Plan, with a significant emphasis on economic development, the reduction of unemployment, technical self-sufficiency and the lifestyles of the poorer sections of society.
- Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90): The Seventh Five Year Plan aimed at raising the quality of life of the elderly, with a substantial decrease in poverty.
- Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97): This program aimed at increasing jobs but later failed to achieve any of its objectives.
- Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002): The ninth

five-year plan focussed on agriculture, education, poverty and infrastructure.

- Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007): the Tenth Five Year Plan aimed at raising the poverty rate from 26% to 21% by 2007, as well as helping children achieve five years of schooling by 2007.
- Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012): The Eleventh Five Year Plan aims at reducing deprivation by 10 percentage points, creating seven new employment prospects and ensuring that all villages have electricity connections.
- Twelfth five-year plan (2012-2017): The Government of India's twelfth five-year plan was decided on an 8.2 percent growth rate. However, the National Development Council approved a twelfth plan growth rate of 8 percent for the twelfth on 27 December 2012.

Public distribution system (PDS)

The Public distribution system is the Government of India's main social security and poverty alleviation initiative. This is seen as the primary safety net for shielding the vulnerable against the detrimental impact of the short-term, priced. The Government of India has introduced a Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS) in 1992 to serve people living in rural, mountainous and hilly regions and to supply them with vital goods. Targeted Public Distribution Systems (TPDS) was launched in 1997 by the government. This focuses on the vulnerable and markets basic commodities on the basis of income. In the context of the progress of the PDS both the central governments and state governments participated actively.

The importance of employment generation in poverty alleviation in India

The problem of unemployment in India is one of the major causes of poverty in India. Through good economic growth and a decline in the unemployment issue the country's poverty rate can be that. The Government of India creates different poverty alleviation programs to alleviate poverty by providing on-demand employment and special guaranteed wage jobs to households below the poverty line every year.

In alleviating poverty, the generation of jobs is critical for the following reasons:

- This would raise the household families' level of income and help increased the country's poverty rate. Hence, the relation between unemployment and poverty is important.
- Rural-urban migration would be decreased through the development of rural work programs.
- Improved income rates would help the poor in accessing basic facilities like schooling, sanitation and health care through the generation of job programmes.

To conclude, policies at national and state level need to be oriented towards the creation of productive opportunities

for poverty reduction and human development absolutely necessary for sustainable and inclusive economic growth. In order to address the governance and management deficiencies associated with current policies, a decentralized strategy is desperately needed in the country in formulating strategies for poverty reduction and human growth, and for implementation thereof.

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