

EXPLORING THE DIMINISHED EXPOSURE OF IMPOVERISHED COMMUNITIES TO PREVIOUSLY OVERLOOKED DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY

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Abstract: *Poverty remains a complex issue, despite progress in reducing its worldwide. This paper examines the impact of poverty reduction on impoverished populations, focusing on previously unaddressed aspects like education, healthcare, and sanitation. In recent years, the government of India has made significant efforts to address poverty, and there has been great progress in reducing the number of people living in poverty. It reviews literature, identifies initiatives from the Government of India and NITI Aayog, and presents data analysis to support the claim. The paper analyses NSSO data from the years 2015–2023 to track poverty changes, finding a reduction in hunger, illiteracy, and exposure to basic amenities. However, there is still a long way to go, and more efforts are needed to address all aspects of poverty in India.*

Keywords: Impoverished Population, Poverty Reduction, NITI Aayog, Progressive India

Introduction

India faces significant poverty challenges, with 21.9 percent (according to World Bank) of its population below the national poverty line in 2018. India's government has made significant progress in reducing poverty through programs like MGNREGA and PMJDY, creating jobs, providing financial assistance, and improving access to basic services, resulting in a decline in poverty and the number of people living below the poverty line has declined significantly. India's government launched Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) in 2018, focusing on financial inclusion, education, health, and employment for the poor, aiming to improve their lives. Government of India and NITI Aayog implement progressive initiatives to address poverty in education, healthcare, employment, and social protection. These initiatives have had some success in alleviating poverty in India. In recent years, the Indian government has made tremendous headway in decreasing poverty. Poverty has dropped from 42 percent in 2004-05 to 21 percent in 2018-19. The proportion of persons living in poverty has decreased from 29.5 percent in 2011 to 21.9 percent in 2018. However, there are other dimensions of poverty that must be addressed.

Literature Review

The overlooked facets of poverty beyond income, such as social isolation and lack of access to education. The reduction in poverty exposure within urban slums by addressing previously neglected aspects like sanitation, healthcare, and education, using a multidimensional poverty approach (Kaibarta et al., 2022). Addressing healthcare disparities can lead to a reduction in the exposure of impoverished populations to previously ignored aspects of poverty. The study underscores the importance of healthcare equity in poverty reduction (Lin et al., 2021). The role of education in reducing poverty exposure by addressing previously unattended dimensions. The research highlights the correlation between improved education opportunities and diminished poverty exposure (Safarova, 2021). Theoretically and experimentally, financial aid has been found to be a significant strategy to help people climb out of poverty. However, there are prerequisites for it to perform properly. The primary battleground for fighting poverty in China today is in locations where low-income people tend to reside in clusters. The Chinese government has invested much on the smooth operation of rural finance as a means of combating poverty in these areas. However, the effects of financial injections on rural households have not been studied. Using data from a study of rural households in such locations, this paper provides empirical insight into the problem. The findings indicate that neither formal government transfers nor informal financing are helpful in alleviating poverty in the region. Instead, they contribute to a widening gap in household incomes. Nonetheless, rural poverty can be mitigated via investments in people, property, and relationships (Wang et al., 2019). The study highlights the importance of recognizing these dimensions to effectively reduce poverty exposure (Kim, 2018). A study found that a program in India that provided cash transfers to poor households had a significant impact on reducing poverty and improving health and education outcomes (Banerjee, A. V., & Duflo, E., 2011).

Limitations of the Study

The study provides evidence that reducing poverty is possible. However, it is difficult to evaluate the near-term outlook due to the lack of thorough data during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Data Analysis and Methodology

The data for this study comes from the NSSO's periodic household surveys. The NSSO surveys collect data on a wide range of topics, including income, consumption, education, and health. The surveys are conducted every five years. The most recent survey conducted accordingly the paper uses the NSSO data to construct a poverty measure that considers the multiple dimensions of poverty. Subsequently, the study proceeds to analyse the poverty rates associated with each indicator for the years 2015 and 2023

The Poverty Measure Is Based on The Following Indicators:

1. Household Consumption Expenditure
2. Education Attainment
3. Health Status
4. Access to Basic Amenities

The Government of India and Niti Aayog Have Taken several Progressive Initiatives to Address the Previously Unaddressed Aspects of Poverty. These Include:

1. The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY): The PMKVY is a skill development program that aims to train 500 million people by 2022. The program is designed to provide poor people with the skills they need to get a good job and earn a decent income.
2. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY): The PMJDY is a financial inclusion program that aims to provide bank accounts to all Indians. The program has helped to bring millions of poor people into the formal financial system.
3. The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM): The SBM is a cleanliness campaign that aims to make India open defecation free by 2022. The program has helped to improve sanitation facilities for millions of poor people
4. Ayushman Bharat is a health insurance program in India, implemented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) aims to provide cost-free healthcare services to over 40 percent of the population. The Ayushman Bharat–Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) offer free and inclusive healthcare services to 10.74 crore people, with coverage of up to Rs 5.00 lakh per family per year for impoverished and marginalized families, based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) database.

Results and Conclusions

The calculation of the Poverty Line in India is carried out by NITI Aayog, under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), using data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). Previously, this responsibility was held by the Planning Commission Utilizing information from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), NITI Aayog, a division of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), calculates the poverty line in India. Previously, the Planning Commission was in charge of this duty. According to the report, 25 countries, including India, have accomplished the astounding accomplishment of halving their MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Index) values globally over a period of 15 years. This development shows that it is possible to make quick progress in reducing poverty. These nations include Vietnam, Cambodia, China, the Congo, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Serbia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

According to the most recent version of the Multidimensional Poverty Index, India has reached a critical milestone. An astounding 415 million people in India were lifted out of poverty between 2005–2006 and 2019–21. The population of the country, which is currently projected to be above 1.4 billion, is represented by this number in a substantial way. The report demonstrates notable improvements in important poverty indices. Inadequate sanitation reduced from 50.4 percent to 11.3 percent, while the percentage of people without access to cooking fuel decreased from 52.9 percent to 13.9 percent. It is remarkable that poverty has decreased in India across the board, especially in the poorest regions and among the most vulnerable populations, such as children and members of lower castes. According to the Report, India's multidimensionally poor population has decreased by 9.89 percentage points, from 24.85 percent in 2015-16 to 14.96 percent in 2019-2021. Poverty in rural areas fell the most rapidly, from 32.59 percent to 19.28 percent. During the same time span, poverty in urban areas fell from 8.65 percent to 5.27 percent. Between 2015-16 and 2019-21, the MPI value nearly halved from 0.117 to 0.066, and the intensity of poverty decreased from 47 percent to 44 percent, putting India on track to meet SDG Target 1.2 (reducing multidimensional poverty by at least half) well ahead of the 2030 deadline. It indicates the government's strategic focus on promoting sustainable and equitable development and eradicating poverty by 2030, therefore conforming to the SDGs.

According to the NITI Aayog's report, "National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023," a record 13.5 crore people were able to escape multidimensional poverty between 2015–16 and 2019–21. In 5 years, 13.5 crore Indians will have escaped multidimensional poverty. Sharp decrease in the proportion of multidimensionally poor people between 2015–16 and 2019–21, from 24.85 percent to 14.96 percent. The fastest reduction in poverty, from 32.59 percent to 19.28 percent, occurred in rural areas. India is on target to complete SDG Target 1.2 years before the deadline of 2030. Improvements that are noticeable across all 12 MPI measures. There has been a significant reduction in the extent to which the impoverished population is exposed to hunger, illiteracy, health status and lack of access to basic amenities. The analysis of the NSSO data shows that proportion of impoverished households that are food insecure declined. The proportion of impoverished households with no literate adult declined from earlier. The proportion of impoverished households with no access to a toilet declined largely by the GOI efforts, the proportion of the impoverished population that does not have access to safe drinking water has declined enormously. These findings suggest that the progressive initiatives from the Government of India and NITI Aayog have had a significant impact on reducing poverty and improving access to necessities for the impoverished population.

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