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India's Pursuit of SDG 1: Strategies and Trends in Poverty Alleviation

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Abstract: Millions of Indians suffer from hunger, homelessness, inadequate health, education, and work due to poverty, which is a serious problem in the country. By 2030, the Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) of the UN seeks to eradicate poverty. With an emphasis on important policies, strategies, and programs including those run by NITI Aayog—this report examines India's progress toward SDG 1. The study also incorporates concepts from Mahbubul Haq, emphasizing the Human Development Index (HDI) and multidimensional poverty, which gauge well-being in addition to money. The study examines geographical variations, trends in poverty reduction, and the effects of focused interventions using a descriptive methodology. The results demonstrate the importance of inclusive, long-lasting, and scalable approaches that address social protection, education, health, and employment. Haq's viewpoint on human development emphasizes the significance of enhancing general well-being rather than merely income. India's sustainable development and equitable growth depend on achieving SDG 1.

Keywords: Inclusive Growth, Human Development, SDG 1, Poverty Alleviation.

INTRODUCTION

One of India's biggest development problems is poverty, which affects millions of people through unemployment, bad health, inadequate housing, malnutrition, and limited access to education. Because of structural disparities, geographical imbalances, and unequal access to resources, poverty persists despite significant economic progress in recent decades. Therefore, poverty in India is a multifaceted issue that limits human potential and general well-being in addition to being a problem relating to income.

With the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the United Nations made ending poverty a primary objective on a global scale. SDG 1: No Poverty, one of the 17 objectives, seeks to eradicate poverty in all of its manifestations worldwide by 2030. This objective places a strong emphasis on social safety nets, equitable access to financial resources, essential services, and resilience to environmental and economic shocks (United Nations, 2015).

Through a number of social welfare and poverty reduction initiatives, India has matched SDG 1 with its national development plan. Organizations like NITI Aayog are essential for tracking the development of the SDGs, creating national indicators, and encouraging evidence-based policymaking. Income and multidimensional poverty have decreased recently as a result of government programs centered on job creation, food security, financial inclusion, healthcare, and education (NITI Aayog, 2021).

The human development paradigm promoted by Mahbub ul Haq has had a major impact on how poverty is understood. He stressed that rather than just raising income levels, development should broaden people's options and capacities (Haq, 1995). The Human Development Index (HDI), which gauges advancements in standard of living, education, and health, was created as a result of this viewpoint. In order to achieve SDG 1 in a sustainable and inclusive way, poverty eradication must prioritize enhancing general well-being, according to the human development framework.

Review of Literature

In order to determine poverty levels, early research on poverty in India mostly used income and consumption spending. For many years, official poverty measurement was based on studies by Dandekar and Rath (1971) that defined the poverty level using calorie intake guidelines. These studies were criticized for being overly limited and for neglecting the social and human aspects of poverty, even though they offered quantifiable standards.

The human development and capabilities approach represented a significant conceptual breakthrough in poverty analysis. According to Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen, poverty is not just a loss of money but also the denial of fundamental abilities (Sen, 1999; Haq, 1995). The Human Development Index (HDI), which was created by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1990) to assess and compare development outcomes across nations, was influenced by this methodology.

Multidimensional poverty measurement has been the subject of more recent research. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) provides a more thorough view of poverty by capturing deficiencies in living standards, health, and education. According to empirical research on India, multidimensional poverty is still a problem, particularly in rural regions

and among socially disadvantaged groups, even though income poverty has considerably decreased (Alkire & Foster, 2011; UNDP & OPHI, 2023).

In their analyses of India's progress toward SDG 1, a number of scholars have highlighted the importance of social protection initiatives including the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) programs, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), and the Public Distribution System (PDS). Although interstate and rural-urban gaps still exist, NITI Aayog reports show a significant decrease in multidimensional poverty between 2005–06 and 2019–21 (NITI Aayog, 2021).

The literature unequivocally indicates that eradicating poverty in a sustainable manner necessitates an integrated strategy that combines investments in human development with economic growth. The human development framework reaffirms the need of social protection systems, equal access to essential services, and inclusive growth. Building on these realizations, the current study examines India's efforts to eradicate poverty from the perspectives of human development and SDG 1.

Sources of Data

All of the secondary data used in this study was gathered from trustworthy domestic and foreign sources. Official government publications and studies from international organizations have provided data on poverty, human development, and social indices. The 2011 Census of India, which was released by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, provides demographic, literacy, and population data (Census of India, 2011). The National Sample Survey (NSS) and National Statistical Office (NSO) reports, specifically the NSS 68th Round on household consumer expenditure and the NSS 75th Round on health and social consumption, are the primary sources of empirical data on household consumption expenditure, health, and social indicators (National Sample Survey Office [NSSO], 2014; National Statistical Office [NSO], 2020). These statistics include vital information about living standards, healthcare availability, and income poverty in both rural and urban India. The International Institute for Population Sciences' National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 2019–21, provides data on housing conditions, sanitation, maternal and child health, and nutrition (IIPS, 2021). Reports released by NITI Aayog, such as the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) baseline and progress review reports (NITI Aayog, 2021; 2023), provide information on multidimensional poverty and advancement toward SDG 1. Publications from the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme serve as the basis for international comparisons and conceptual frameworks pertaining to poverty and human development (United Nations, 2015; UNDP, 1990). These resources offer a worldwide framework for assessing India's initiatives to eradicate poverty.

Techniques

In order to investigate India's progress toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1 of ending poverty, the study uses a descriptive and analytical research design. Variations among geographies and social groups, shifts in human development indicators, and trends in poverty reduction are all examined using a descriptive methodology. Interpreting the connection between policy actions and results in reducing poverty is the main goal of the analytical component. A multifaceted framework is used to examine poverty, based on Amartya Sen's capability viewpoint and Mahbub ul Haq's Human Development approach.

The study includes indicators of health, education, and living standards, as represented by the Human Development Index (HDI) and Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), rather than depending exclusively on income-based metrics. Using data from the Census, NSS, NFHS, and NITI Aayog, comparative analysis is used to evaluate changes in poverty levels over time and between states. The success of job programs, social security programs, and policies focused on human development in lowering poverty is determined by looking at trends. To bolster the analysis, results from empirical research and government reports are methodically examined.

Primary data gathering is not a part of this project. Analysis is done utilizing secondary literature and published statistics, and all data sources are properly credited. This methodological approach aligns the study with national and international development frameworks while guaranteeing validity, reliability, and policy relevance.

Limitations

The report highlights multidimensional poverty indicators and focuses on India's attempts to eradicate poverty within the context of SDG 1. The availability and regularity of secondary data, however, place restrictions on the study. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the study offers a thorough grasp of India's poverty patterns and policy results.

Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework aims to clarify the connection between India's human development goals and the eradication of poverty (SDG 1). The concept is based on Mahbub ul Haq's human development perspective, which sees progress as the growth of people's capacities rather than just an increase in income. Poverty Eradication (SDG 1), the study's dependent outcome, is at the center of the framework. It is believed that poverty is a multifaceted phenomena that includes deficiencies in living standards, health, education, and income.

Policy and Institutional Factors as Input Variables

Policy and institutional inputs that impact poverty reduction make up the framework's first element. These include social protection programs, employment creation initiatives, government-led initiatives to reduce poverty, and policy coordination by organizations like NITI Aayog. Especially for excluded and vulnerable groups, these inputs seek to increase access to resources, essential services, and economic possibilities.

Process Variables (Aspects of Human Development)

The second element, which is represented by human development dimensions, depicts the mechanism by which policy inputs function. These consist of:• Health (life expectancy, access to healthcare, and nutrition),

• Education (learning, reading, and developing skills), and• Living Standards (electricity, drinking water, housing, and sanitation).

These dimensions illustrate the process by which policy interventions result in enhanced human capacities and are a reflection of the indicators utilized in the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and Human Development Index (HDI).
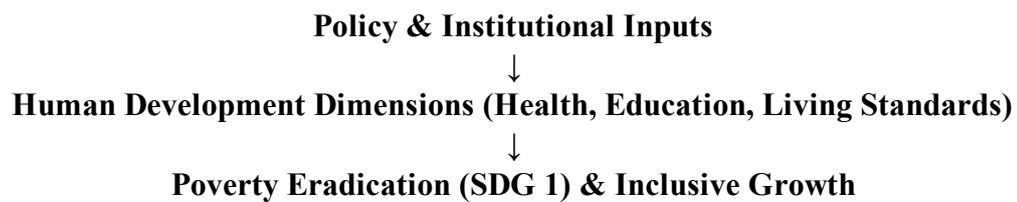
Outcome Variables (Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction)

The framework's last section provides examples of the results, which include a decrease in multifaceted poverty, an improvement in human well-being, and the encouragement of inclusive growth. Better human development results increase people's capacity to engage in the economy in a constructive way, which feeds back into long-term growth and the decrease of poverty.

Contextual Elements

The paradigm also recognizes how contextual factors, such social stratification, gender inequality, rural-urban distinctions, and regional disparities, affect how effective policies are at reducing poverty. The link between policy inputs and development results may be moderated by several factors.

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Overall Structure of the Conceptual Framework (Diagram Flow)

Policy & Institutional Inputs
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Human Development Dimensions (Health, Education, Living Standards)
↓
Poverty Eradication (SDG 1) & Inclusive Growth

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Human Development Dimensions (Health, Education, Living Standards), Policy & Institutional Inputs, Poverty Eradication (SDG 1), and Inclusive Growth

This conceptual framework illustrates that attaining SDG 1 in India necessitates a comprehensive strategy that blends investments in human development with targeted policies. The framework emphasizes the value of enhancing general well-being rather than concentrating only on income growth by highlighting Mahbub ul Haq's human-centered development ideology.

Conclusion

In order to eradicate poverty in India, a comprehensive strategy that addresses deficiencies in living standards, health, and education in addition to economic growth is needed. The study demonstrates that institutional efforts and focused policy interventions, especially through integrated monitoring and implementation procedures, have aided in the advancement of SDG 1. The results emphasize that improving human capacities is essential to attaining equitable and durable poverty reduction, drawing on Mahbub ul Haq's human development paradigm. Notwithstanding significant progress, enduring regional and social inequalities highlight the necessity of maintaining attention to equality, the development of human capital, and efficient governance in order to guarantee India's long-term eradication of poverty.

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