

Poverty in India

Poverty is a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living. Poverty means that the income level from employment is so low that basic human needs cannot be met.

According to World Bank, poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being, and comprises many dimensions. It includes low income and inability to acquire the basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity. Poverty also encompasses low levels of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate physical security, lack of voice, and insufficient capacity and opportunity to have better life. In India, 21.9% of the population lives below the national poverty line in 2011. In 2018, almost.

Types of poverty: There are two main classifications of poverty -

Absolute poverty: A condition where household income is below a necessary level to maintain basic standards (food, shelter, housing). This condition makes it possible to compare between different countries and also over time.

Relative poverty: It is defined from the social perspective that is living standard compared to the economic standards of population living in surroundings.

Causes of poverty in India:

- (i) Population Explosion: India's population has steadily increased through the years. During the past 45 years, it has risen at a rate of 2.2% per year, which means, on average, about 17 million people are added to the country's population each year. This also increases the demand for consumption goods tremendously.
- (ii) Low Agricultural Productivity: A major reason for poverty is the low productivity in the agriculture sector. The reason for low productivity is manifold.

Chiefly, it is because of fragmented and subdivided land holding, lack of capital, illiteracy about new technologies in farming, the use of traditional methods of cultivation, wastage during storage, etc.

(iii) Inefficient Resource Utilization: There is underemployment and disguised unemployment in the country, particularly in the farming sector. This has resulted in low agricultural output, and

(iv) Low Rate of Economic Development: Economic development has been low in India especially in the first 40 years of independence.

(v) Price Rise: Price rise has been steady in the country and this has added to the burden the poverty poor carry. Although a few people have benefited from this, the lower income groups have suffered because of it, and are not even able to satisfy their basic minimum wants.

(vi) Unemployment: Unemployment is another factor causing poverty in India. The ever-increasing population has led to a higher number of job-seekers. However, there is not enough expansion in opportunities to match ~~to~~ this demand for jobs.

(vii) Lack of capital ^{and} Entrepreneurship: The shortage of capital and entrepreneurship results in low level of investment and job creation in the economy.

(viii) Social Factors: Apart from economic factors, there are also social factors hindering the eradication of poverty in India. Some of the hindrances in this regard are the law of inheritance, caste system, certain traditions, etc.

(ix) Colonial Exploitation: The ~~But~~ British colonization and rule over India for about two centuries de-industrialized India by ruining its traditional handicrafts and textile industries. Colonial policies transformed

India to a mere raw-material producer for European industries.

(X) Climatic Factor: Most of India's poor belongs to the states of Bihar, UP, MP, Chattisgarh, ~~Orissa~~ Odisha, Jharkhand, etc. Natural calamities such as frequent floods, disasters, earthquake and cyclone cause heavy damage to agriculture in these states.

Poverty Alleviation Programs in India:

- (i) Integrated Rural Development Programme.
- (ii) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana / Jawahar Gram Samridhi ~~Yojana~~ Yojana.
- (iii) Rural Housing - Indira Awas Yojana
- (iv) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS).
- (v) Annapurna Yojana
- (vi) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).
- (vii) National Urban Livelihood Mission
- (viii) Pradhan Mantri Kisan Vikas Yojana.
- (ix) Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.