

# EFFECTS OF POVERTY ON EDUCATION IN INDIA

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**ABSTRACT :** *Although education is a right, it still remains a distant dream for many of India's children (Where knowledge is poor). It is clear that it is not enough to make laws; they need to be augmented by more efforts. Education should be accessible to all if democracy is to succeed. Many communities and groups like disadvantaged castes and women have been historically excluded from education. Devolution of powers is extremely important to make education accessible to children. The article rightly draws attention to the effects of poverty on children's education. As a teacher, one is continuously made aware of the educational disadvantages and disruptions poor students suffer due to lack of economic stability and social security. Unless we have a strong and universally available state welfare apparatus, the education of the working class children will continue to be sacrificed. In all this, cultural values and pressures also take a particularly severe toll. The wilful complicity of the ruling castes and classes is amply evident as their domination is derived from maintaining economic and cultural status quo. So the implications of all these studies for formulation of effective anti-poverty policies and proper education system in India are also emphasised in this paper.*

**IndexTerms -** *Democracy, Devolution, Economic Stability, Poverty, Social Security.*

## I. OBJECTIVES

The present study, therefore, is an attempt to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To know about Education and Poverty.
2. To highlight about impact of poverty on children in India.
3. To understand how education is effected by poverty.
4. To find out some cause of poverty in India.
5. To determine India's education is effected by poverty.
6. To highlight the education is the way out of poverty.
7. To suggest some point-of-view for solution the poverty.

## II. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the primary needs besides the food, shelter and clothing in modern life. The Constitution of India has granted right to live with dignity and honour to every citizen. To ensure this fundamental right the State has been taking several measures. Prominent among them are universalization of compulsory and free primary education to all children of school age. Further, right to follow and propagate the faith and religion of one's own free will and choice. While the formal (education) is a tool for ensuring right to live with dignity and honour the later (to follow and propagate the faith of one's own free will) is a pre-requisite environment in a multi-religious secular country like India. Education is a powerful tool for reducing poverty and unemployment, improving health and nutritional standard, and achieving sustainable development. Within the formal education system, primary education is recognized as a basic human right and significant for the development of both the individual as well as the society. Significance of education cannot be neglected. Education acts as the catalyst, which brings economic, social, cultural as well as technological changes in the society. It is considered to be the most important means of enhancing personal attributes, overcome constraints, availing more opportunities for sustainable improvement in well-being. Education has been identified as one of the most important determinants of economic growth. It is both, an indicator and an instrument of development. It increases labour productivity in both urban and rural sectors and the economic return to investment in education are typically high. With the increased level of education, the economic output increases, poverty is reduced, thus the whole of the region is developed which leads to the overall development of the nation. The return from education is not only economic but also social. Education alters the way of thinking, behaviour and attitude, increases awareness, develops personality for the development of the country and welfare for its people.

There is no doubt that the mid-day meal programme has improved enrolment and retention in schools. But many children continue to be deprived of primary education due to social and economic reasons like child marriage and bonded labour. The lack of facilities in government schools, especially for girls, is another impediment. Although Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Rajiv Vidya Mission have helped to improve infrastructure, they have not done enough to meet the expectations of the poor. Education should be reasonable and should reflect the needs of society.

## III. IMPACT OF POVERTY ON CHILDREN IN INDIA

Poverty affects many people. But, arguably, the effects of poverty are seen most in children. And, with 1.21 billion people living below the poverty line in India, the children are sure to bear the repercussions of it. Not only does poverty affect a child's development and educational outcomes, it also severely affects a child's morality and understanding of the right and wrong, as they are denied access to the basic fundamental rights of children laid down in the Constitution of India. That being said, here are some bee stings of Poverty that according to Professor Charles Karelis, Colgate University, are sure to affect the children in India:

### 3.1 Child Development

Often associated to food insecurity, children living below the poverty line are at an increased risk for becoming both malnourished and overweight. This can highly affect a child's confidence. Moreover, evidence suggests that many of the effects of poverty on children are often added to by their families. As they have limited education, it reduces their ability to provide a responsive stimulating environment for their children. They tend to limit a child's linguistic environment by using a language that is dominated by commands, instead of explanations and elaboration on what is good and bad. Mostly, these commands are also backed by negative comments, which further contribute to demoralising the child. In addition, parents living below the poverty line tend to use harsh parental styles that are based on parental control, rather than reciprocal interactive styles that promote emotional development.

### 3.2 Education

Education begins at home. In fact, many studies suggest that, being read to in the first few years of a child's life contributes to the development of phonemic and comprehension skills. However, children from families living below the poverty line are less likely to be read to, highly restricting proper growth of their skills. Moreover, parents who have not received a proper education tend to underestimate the importance of education, are hesitant to 'waste' money on schools. And, even those children that do attend schools have to face taunts and are often treated as outcasts as the present generation children do not accept anyone if they are not from their strata of the society.

### 3.3 Moral Values

Malnutrition, taunting and not getting basic necessities can be daunting enough for any child, a situation which easily becomes a turning point in their life. Moreover, with peer pressure and wanting what others have, their sole aim of life would be achieving financial success, no matter what the means. The end result becomes more important to them than the path they choose. This, in turn, results in them resorting to joining the antisocial and unlawful elements of our society. In addition, a child who has been bearing the consequences of long term poverty is bound to think that it is important to be in power and have a good status to command respect of the society. This leads to resorting to crooked means to achieve the status and power desired.

But, all is not lost. India is battling poverty for nearly 60 years now. And, with the help of new policies that strive to empower and spread awareness about the fundamental rights of children, along with participation and activities initiated by **CRY** – Child Rights and You, the children of India are sure to see a better future. However, we can't do this alone. As citizens of India, you too can help these children by donating or participating in our numerous activities and workshops that we conduct to spread awareness and help these children. After all, children are great imitators. So, give them something great to imitate!

## IV. HOW EDUCATION IS AFFECTING BY POVERTY IN INDIA

India, which now has the world's third-largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity, has been an urban-cantered, industrializing nation since its independence in 1947. Over the last 25 years, India has been noted for its significant economic growth which looks to continue for the 2017 -2018 fiscal year with an expected growth rate of 7.2 percent. While India has maintained much economic success, many failures and weaknesses still debilitate the nation's full potential. For example, the poverty rate in India has been less severe in recent years, but there is still much room for improvement. In 2016, 270 million Indians were surviving on \$1.90 or less a day, the World Bank's definition of extreme poverty. Of the people living in these conditions, 80 percent lived in rural India, where the main source of income for the population is through casual labour. While the economy has appeared to have boomed over the last 25 years, most growth has been in urban areas where large multinational corporations, such as IBM and Microsoft, base their software development headquarters. With this divide between urban and rural life, the economic growth does not seem to remove the issues of extreme poverty in the way a neoliberal economist would suggest. A study in 2002 found that these conditions in India are partially due to educational poverty, which is defined as the deprivation of basic education and literacy. Only 6% of the income from poor households is invested into education and health, while the majority is spent on other necessities such as food and fuel.

However, Tsujita, a researcher of the Institute of Developing Economies, believes that "there may be a chance of escaping poverty through education." The government in India seems to agree with this statement as they promoted the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) project as a part of their flagship program. SSA was a project in India that began in 2002 to enrol all 6-14 years old in primary education by 2010. The project attempted to do so by improving the facilities and infrastructure of schools while also expanding access to these facilities nationally. As a result, by 2009, 98 percent of children were only 1 kilometer away from educational facilities and only 2.7 million children remained out of school.

With the extreme poverty rate in India falling from 53.86 percent in 1983 to 21.23 percent in 2011, the World Bank strongly believes that education is a powerful instrument for poverty reduction. While the reductions in the extreme poverty rate in India over the past 20 years in India are not due solely to educational improvements, the investment in enhancing basic education has had a significant impact on the poverty rate in India.

Although India's literacy and education rates remain poor on a global scale, the recent achievements of the SSA are far greater than those previously undertaken, as the program was implemented throughout all districts of India. However, there is still more work to be done. A recent survey shows that half of government schools in India have no teaching activity and low student progression rates. For the nation to truly eradicate extreme poverty, quality education must be promoted.

## V. CAUSES OF POVERTY IN INDIA

Factors contributing to the persistent problem of poverty in the country are many and they need to be identified in order to be addressed properly. They can be categorized under the following heads.

## 5.1 Demographic

The main factor that contributes to poverty-ridden state of the country from a demographical point of view is the problem of over population. The growth of population in the country has so far exceeded the growth in economy and the gross result is that the poverty figures have remained more or less consistent. In rural areas, size of the families is bigger and that translates into lowering the per capita income values and ultimately lowering of standard of living. Population growth spurt also leads to generation of unemployment and that means diluting out of wages for jobs further lowering income.

## 5.2 Economic

There are a host of economic reasons behind persistence of the poverty problems which are outlined hereunder:-

**5.2.1 Poor Agricultural Infrastructure** –Agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy. But outdated farming practices, lack of proper irrigation infrastructure and even lack of formal knowledge of crop handling has affected the productivity in this sector tremendously. As a consequence there is redundancy and sometimes complete lack of work leading to decreased wages that is insufficient for meeting daily needs of a labourer's family plunging them into poverty.

**5.2.2 Unequal distribution of assets** – with the economy changing directions rapidly, the earning structure evolves differently in different economic income groups. Upper and middle income groups see a faster increase in earnings than lower income groups. Also assets like land, cattle as well as realty are distributed disproportionately among the population with certain people owning majority shares than other sectors of the society and their prompts from these assets are also unequally distributed. In India it is said that 80% wealth in the country is controlled by just 20% of the population.

**5.2.3 Unemployment** – another major economic factor that is causative of poverty in the country is the rising unemployment rate. Unemployment rates is high in India and according to a 2015 survey data, at the all-India level, 77% of families do not have a regular source of income.

**5.2.4 Inflation and Price hike** – the term Inflation may be defined as an increase in prices of commodities coinciding with the fall in the purchasing value of money. As a direct consequence of inflation, effective price of food, clothing items as well as real estate rises. The salaries and wages do not rise as much in keeping up with the inflated prices of commodities leading to effective decrease of the per capita income.

**5.2.5 Faulty economic liberalization** – the LPG (Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization) attempts initiated by the Indian Government in 1991 were directed towards making the economy more suited to international market-trends to invite foreign investments. Successful to certain extent in reviving the economy, the economic reforms had detrimental effects on increasing the wealth distribution scenario. Rich became richer, while the poor remained poor.

## 5.3 Social

The various social issues plaguing the country that contributes towards poverty are:-

**5.3.1 Education and illiteracy** – Education, rather its lack thereof and poverty form a vicious cycle that plagues the nation. Not having enough resources to feed their children, the poor consider education to be frivolous, preferring children to start contributing to the family's income rather than draining them. On the other hand, lack of education and illiteracy prevent individuals from getting better paying jobs and they get stuck at jobs offering minimum wages. Improvement of quality of life gets hindered and the cycle once again comes into action.

**5.3.2 Outdated Social Customs** – Social customs like the caste system cause segregation and marginalization of certain sections of the society. Certain castes are considered untouchables still and are not employed by upper caste, leaving very specific and low paying jobs that they can live off. Economist K. V. Verghese put forth the problem in a very lucid language, "Caste system acted as a spring board for class exploitation with the result that the counterpart of the poverty of the many is the opulence of the few. The second is the cause of the first."

**5.3.3 Lack of skilled labour** – lack of adequate vocational training makes the huge labour force available in India largely unskilled, which is unsuitable for offering maximum economic value. Lack of education, much less higher education, is also a contributing factor towards this.

**5.3.4 Gender inequality**–the weak status attached with women, deep-rooted social marginalization and long embedded perceptions of domesticity renders about 50% of the country's population unable to work. As a result the women of the family add to the number of dependents that need to be fed instead of being able to contribute considerably in the family income which might assuage the poverty situation of the family.

**5.3.5 Corruption** – despite considerable efforts from the government in the forms of various schemes to mollify the poverty situation, allegedly only 30-35% actually reaches the beneficiaries due to wide-spread practices of corruption in the country. Wealthy people with privileged connection are able to acquire more wealth simply by bribing government officials to maximize their profits from such schemes while the poor remain in a state of neglect for not being able to assert such connections.

## 5.4 Individual

Individual lack of efforts also contributes towards generating poverty. Some people are unwilling to work hard or even not willing to work altogether, leaving their families in the darkness of poverty. Personal demons like drinking and gambling also leads to draining of the family income inciting poverty.

## 5.5 Political

In India, socio-economic reform strategies has been largely directed by political interest and are implemented to serve a choice section of the society that is potentially a deciding factor in the elections. As a result, the issue is not addressed in its entirety leaving much scope of improvements.

## 5.6 Climatic

Maximum portion of India experiences a tropical climate throughout the year that is not conducive to hard manual labour leading to lowering of productivity and the wages suffer consequently.

## VI. EFFECTS OF POVERTY

The resounding effect of poverty echoes through various layers of an India citizen's life. If we try to have a systematic look at them, we should proceed under the three following heads:

**6.1 Effect on Health** – one of the most devastating effects that poverty has is on the overall health of the nation. The most prominent health issue stemming from poverty is malnutrition. The problem of malnutrition is widespread in all age-groups of the country but children are most adversely affected by this. Limited income in larger families leads to lack of access to sufficient nutritious food for their children. These children over time suffer from severe health problems like low body weight, mental, physical disabilities and a general poor state of immunity making them susceptible to diseases. Children from poor backgrounds are twice as susceptible to suffer from anemia, nutrient deficiencies, impaired vision, and even cardiac problems. Malnutrition is a gross contributor of infant mortality in the country and 38 out of every 1,000 babies born in India die before their first birthday. Malnutrition among adult also leads to poor health in adults that leaches their capacity for manual labour leading to a decrease in income due to weakness and diseases. Poverty also causes definite decline in the sanitary practices among poor who cannot afford proper bathrooms and disinfectants. As a result susceptibility to waterborne diseases peak among the poor. Lack of access to as well as means to procure appropriate treatment also affects overall mortality of the population which is lower in poor countries than developed nations like the USA.

**6.2 Effects on Society** – poverty exerts some gravely concerning effects over the overall societal health as well. These may be discussed along the following lines:-

**6.2.1 Violence and crime rate** – incidence of violence and crime have been found to be geographically coincident. In a backdrop of unemployment and marginalization, the poor resort to criminal activities to earn money. Coupled with lack of education and properly formed moral conscience, a poverty ridden society is more susceptible to violence by its people against its own people from a sense of deep-seated discontent and rage.

**6.2.2 Homelessness** – apart from a definite drop in the esthetic representation of the country, homelessness affects child health, women safety and overall increase in criminal tendencies.

**6.2.3 Stress** – lack of money is a major cause of stress among the middle-class and the poor and leads to decline in productivity of individuals.

**6.2.4 Child labour** – one of the hallmarks of a poverty-ridden society is the widespread practices of exploitation and the worst of it comes in the form of child labour. Large families fail to meet the monetary needs of the members and children as young as 5 years are made to start earning in order to contribute to the family income.

**6.2.5 Terrorism** – proclivity of youth towards terrorism stems from a combination of extreme poverty and lack of education making them susceptible to brainwashing. Terrorist organizations offer poverty-ridden families money in exchange for a member's participation in their activities which induces a sense of accomplishment among the youth.

**6.2.6 Effect on Economy** –poverty is a direct index indicating success of the economy of the country. The number of people living under the poverty threshold indicates whether the economy is powerful enough to generate adequate jobs and amenities for its people. Schemes providing subsidies for the poor of the country again impose a drain on the economy.

## VII. EDUCATION IS THE WAY OUT OF POVERTY

Poverty, health, sanitation and the need for education are the focus areas of round table India, a social organisation. Education Is the Way Out of Poverty. Throughout my career, I have maintained one constant, overriding belief Education is the ultimate equalizer, and the surest route out of poverty. Yet, our school system continues to fail students whose talents lie outside of the traditional academic sphere. Some point are given below which are eradicate of poverty through education, like-

### 7.1 Cultural Responsiveness

Today's one-size-fits-all system is sorely lacking in cultural responsiveness. By establishing a classroom environment more focused on passing tests than developing real-world skills, the educational establishment is harming urban education. Instead, schools d offer a varied curriculum, which caters to students who have a range of interests, including those whose needs are not met by a traditional academic program. As a starting point, we must seek to build broader character development into the curriculum by integrating entrepreneurial and leadership skills into day-to-day study. Doing so would not require a significant overhaul of existing practices, nor would it demand

additional resources. Math can be taught through practical accounting lessons, just as English can be studied by analyzing the speeches of CEOs and world leaders.

## 7.2 Prepare Students for Real Life

The choice of extracurricular activities available to students could be widened to include business clubs and internship programs, staffed by community volunteers. If educators are prepared to incorporate these practical considerations into the curriculum, tomorrow's students will have a far better chance of creating successful businesses capable of competing globally in an era of hyper-connectivity. Jumping through the academic hoops of one exam after another is not the hallmark of a successful education; rather, young people should be leaving school equipped with the lifelong skills needed to flourish in the real world. We have been failing urban and rural schools in this regard for decades, with untold consequences. If we stand any chance of improving our schools, fighting inequality, and positioning young Americans at the forefront of the global business world, we must start by ensuring that we are delivering a practical and forward-looking education for all.

## VIII. SOLUTIONS OF THESE PROBLEMS

The measures that should be taken to fight the demon of poverty in India are outlined below:-

- 8.1 Growth of population at the current rate should be checked by implementation of policies and awareness promoting birth control.
- 8.2 All efforts should be made to increase the employment opportunities in the country, either by inviting more foreign investments or by encouraging self-employment schemes.
- 8.3 Measures should be taken to bridge the immense gap that remains in distribution in wealth among different levels of the society.
- 8.4 Certain Indian states are more poverty stricken than others like Odisha and the North East states. Government should seek to encourage investment in these states by offering special concessions on taxes.
- 8.5 Primary needs of people for attaining a satisfactory quality of life like food items, clean drinking water should be available more readily. Improvement of the Subsidy rates on commodities and Public Distribution system should be made. Free high school education and an increased number of functioning health centres should be provided by the government.

### ❖ SOME OTHERS WAY OF SOLVE THIS PROBLEM –

- Access to food security: Food security at macro level continues to be influenced by interplay of factors affecting food production, food supplies, food price, food subsidies, food aid and food research. This will require specific measures at macro level to improve the capacity of the state and people to produce and purchase food.
- Access to Resources: The access to existing productive resources like land forest and water resources are needed to increase productivity, employment and income of the rural poor. Like -Land Reforms and Development, Training and skill up-gradation, People's access to productive employment further requires.
- Access to Special Nutrition Programme.
- Access to Basic Services and Healthy Environment.
- Poverty is not merely a problem of food security; rather it is multi-dimensional problem that includes low access to basic opportunities to education, health, water supply and sanitation.
- Access to Population Education.
- Access to Legal and Constitutional Rights.

## IX. CONCLUSION

So taking necessary steps to develop health and education sectors in these countries is a good way to reduce poverty. So firstly we increasing the number of organizations which are working to reduce poverty by educating people of developed countries to be organized and to take actions related to this matter are also another suggestion of mine. Encouraging people who have volunteered to provide facilities such as pure water, foods filled with nutrients, living places to poor people and who're conducting charity services to develop the lives of them, by offering special rewards and admiring them in various ways would be a good way to increase the number of voluntary workers. So I believe my opinions and suggestions would be a good help to conclude poverty. The Government of India and state governments have been implementing several programmes (e.g. IRDP, JRY-Jawahar Rozgar Yojna was launched on April 1, 1989) for eradication of poverty in India. While the objectives of these programmes may be commendable, they are based on a belief that spending of money is in itself a necessary and sufficient condition for poverty alleviation. This belief under plays the role of non-monetary policies and the impact they have on the lives of the people. It has been the experience of many grassroots workers that often certain government policies harm the poor much more than the benefit that accrues to them through money-oriented schemes like the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).

## X. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Any accomplishment requires work any effort of many people. This paper work is some different. I am grateful to Mr. Sankar Kar and Mr. Swarup Chandi, who inspired and directs me to carryout this paper.

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