



## POVERTY AND EDUCATION IN INDIA - AN INIMICAL RELATIONSHIP

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### ABSTRACT

Poverty and education is highly linked in all the ways of development. Absolute poverty induces impediment to education and the populace living in an around poverty line, regularly face limitations in continuing education further and further. Lack of mere minimum needs often retard them to avail the education in proper sense. Moreover, malnutrition, disease, sickness and the associated ill-feelings cause a grave threat in continuing education. Poverty, the societal state or gap or lack of purchasing power, prohibits in satisfying basic needs of health, education, and the necessary ingredients of maintaining standards of living. The present study is an endeavour to register causes and effects of poverty in relations with the level of achievement of education in Indian context.

**Keywords:** Deprivation, Developing Nations, Education, Population, Poverty.

### INTRODUCTION

India is a land of population explosion especially after 1950s. Population boom, in the event of eradication of deadly diseases due to improved medical facilities and side by side immigration from the neighboring nations have gathered in Indian states causing amass of number of poor and homeless populace. Government and non-government facilities have circulated among these almost unaccountable persons. Again, the clash between the son of the soil and the immigrants in many places were deadly as in Assam in the earlier days. The rehabilitee refugees in Kalahandi and Koraput districts of Odisha have also shared the highly distressing state which get negligence in education and attaining other civic amenities. Agrarian economies, like India, attract millions of child labourer with the cost of basic and elementary education. In urban sectors, children are mostly engaged in shops, household industries and domestic services. This scourge effect of poverty lessen the education opportunity and draws a line of inhibition to education as a means of poverty reductions. "Education-especially basic (primary and lower-secondary) education-helps reduce poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor, by reducing fertility and improving health, and by equipping people with the skills they need to participate fully in economy and society (World Bank-1995:1)" (Oxaal, June, 1997). Moreover, in the words of Edelman, co-founder and chief executive officer of Standard for Children, U.S., "Young children growing up in poverty face challenges with cognitive and literary ability and (often) begin school both academically and socio-economically behind their peers from higher-income backgrounds" (excerpts from Edelman by Taylor, 2017).

### AIMS OF THE STUDY

The present study aims at

- To point out the reasons behind the poverty
- To highlight poverty related issues and ultimately
- To establish the relationship between the poverty and education.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Weale (2019) carried out research that poverty laden pupils come to the school in exhaustion, hunger, anger and confused mood. Kapur(2018) opined that the "Poverty is regarded as an impediment within the course of social, cultural, economic, political and educational development." Taylor (2017) studied on the success rate of the low income children who usually experience physical and cognitive development deficiencies. Greever (2014) in her paper on Elementary Education viewed the significant impact of poverty on education where long term poverty laden students suffer adversely from physical, psychological and educational health. Sivakumar and Vijay (2012) in their paper, noticed the disparity in poverty and education level among the developed and developing states of India. Bandyopadhyay (2010) in his 'Poverty in India: A Chronological Review on Measurement and Identification' wrote on various poverty lines and identified the state of poor in different plan periods. Eswaran et al. (2007) agreed that though India has the highest number of poor, it has enough scope to raise income level, being one of the fastest growing economies of the world. They also pointed out the more possibility of it by switching over the basis of economy from agrarian to non-farm sector. Tilak (2005) in his article, *Post-Elementary Education, Poverty and Development in India*, viewed schematically that there is an inter-relationship between Education Poverty and Income Poverty. Johnson and Rogaly (1997) have agreed that the microfinance may solve the problems of poverty in the local level.



## POVERTY: REASONS

Developing nations in some cases face gasping state for financial oxygen. Primary economic activities initially provide them the age-old livelihood pattern. Intensive subsistence farming is their only means of sustenance. The manifold causes of poverty are as follows

**Rapid Population Growth**-Illiteracy, warm temperate climate, early marriage, apathy to birth control, ignorance, religious compulsion, craze for male child, supply of more number of working hands to agrarian sectors from family as earning insurance, once the high child mortality rate, absence of family planning measures, lack of government incentives to the parents of single or double child, lack of consciousness, absence of governmental prohibitive measures etc. are indicative of unchecked population growth in developing nations in general and India in particular.

**Unemployment**-Burgeoning population are not able to cope with the employment in absence of the perceptible growth of employment sectors in the agrarian countries like India. Dependence on traditional education system and thereby negligence on vocational and technical education system deters them to get employment. The resultant unemployment in some way keeps the populace under the darkness of poverty. These conditions inhibit the interest of education. Although, it is often argued that, "In practice employment has never of course been a guaranteed means of avoiding poverty" (Alcock, 1997).

**Agrarian Economy**-Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of India. The preponderance of or dependence on chemical input and excessive irrigation induced acidity increment of the soil dwindles the productive capacity of the land. Moreover, the increasing cost of the fertilizers and the deprivation of fair price of the harvest, compelled them to be in distress conditions. This scene is widespread almost throughout India. The conscious families may only retain efforts of education to the members in spite of the heaps of not.

**Subsistence Priority**-A good number of people of the developing nations are mostly within the imagination level of subsistence only. Their satisfactory level is within that day's sustenance. Aborigines and people belonging to the acute poverty level mostly do think about this. The information revolution has yet to perform a great deal of job to unveil the wrappers of ignorance.

**Lack of Counseling**-Developed nations do enjoy privileges of organized counseling at the early stages. In the developing nations, such activities prevail only in higher technical education sectors. The commoners or the lower middle classes are deprived of this blessing to set foot in the arena of next sphere of improvement.

**Competitive Inability**-The "...acquisition of foundations skills-literacy, numeracy, reasoning, and social skills such as ability of solving problems together is of utmost importance especially in countries with low levels of attendant ..." (The World Bank, 1999). In the absence of requisite skill they do not withstand the stress of competition. Regional language oriented basic education and thereafter the same secondary and higher education do not fulfil the preparedness or competitive ability.

**Absence of Foundation Education**-Effective and systematic education may only be able to outwit the age-old poverty. "All countries thus need to ensure that (1) primary education is readily available and of good quality for all, (2) secondary education, in the lower years first and eventually in all years... and (3) early childhood needs are starting to be met, given the growing evidence of the importance of children's earliest years for their future well-being. Countries that have not yet fully achieved these essentials need to give high priority to doing so as soon as possible" (Ibid).

**Political and Social Unrest**-Poor nations, like India often face social and political unrest in the absence of effective and democratic administration. Moreover, ethnical unrest and the prolonged scarcity have been pushing the children into acute distress. India had also experienced the same in the past as in the Assam. Developed nations had faced and have been facing in the contemporary years. Great Britain, Australia and U.S.A. exemplify the same. In recent years, the African nation of Yemen has been suffering from unbelievable disastrous fate. Five million children are in breathless conditions in all time catastrophic situation with the very acute shortage of food. They are waiting for starvation to die.

**Racism**-Dark skinned children are the general victim to achieve higher education which induces the poverty. "Cultural alienation and annihilation have had a devastating effect on Black Students' participation in education. Over time, the process of trying "to breed the black out" (assimilation), whether through the devaluation of the cultural capital of Blacks or the what and who of the transmission of knowledge, has severely impacted the black students' sense of self and achievement. There should be little doubt that cultural alienation or annihilation has led to a "culture of exclusion for Black populations globally" (Freeman, 2006). In India, mostly in the past, dark complexioned people often lost facilities from their teachers or higher officials.

**Colonial Legacy**-Colonial rulers have shaped the economic systems into their favour and inevitably cause unbelievable distress. Inequality and huge gap between the poor and the rich and even slavery often comes out. European colonialism had limited the scope of growth and invited economic gasping condition, disease-proneness, illiteracy, high mortality of the downtrodden in the event of their reckless resource hunting and deprivation.

**Caste System**-The lower caste people were strictly prohibited in learning with the upper one, from time immemorial. They even had shared direct or indirect harshness and ultimate fate. Even up to the first half of the last millennium, the same situation was prevalent in acute forms were in the *Chaturashram* or *Varnashram* days of Vedic-Brahmana ages. The north Indian states often do reflect the same even in the post-independent India.

## ILL - EDUCATION AND POVERTY

Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi once uttered, "Education is the key to empowerment and sustainability. Education is a right which is the key to the rest of the rights of life in society. Education is the key to social justice." Ban Ki-moon, the former UN secretary general



expressed about the immense power of education, “Education promotes equality and lifts people out of poverty...” So, “Inadequate education is one of the most powerful determinants of poverty, and unequal access to educational opportunity is a strong correlate of income inequality” (World Bank-2002). This financial organization also believes that education is a powerful instrument for poverty alleviation. That is why, insufficient education often invites poverty and vice-versa. So, proper and quality education is a boon to economic upheaval and social well-being. The member secretary (1964-’66) of the National Commission on Education, J.P.Naik, had aptly emphasized that “Education is a double-edged sword; while wrong education could lead to social disintegration, the right kind of education can bring about effective national development” (Chaudhri et al., 2011). Education, the antidote of poverty, should be provided in right time and to proper population level. Regular schooling is an effective measure of attachment with the education system and curtailment of school dropout cases. The interrelationship between education and poverty is well documented as “Income poverty of the households does not allow them to make adequate investments in education; and low or zero levels of investment in education accentuate their income poverty”(Tilak, *op.cit.*).

Economic backwardness is often lingered with absence of proper education. In this event, minimum academic eligibility and economically unprivileged classes should be given priority to higher job sectors. The contact with higher officials and their culture inevitably influence them a lot. Again, as all people are entitled to access equitable education, “Our first role as equity literature educators is to identify all the ways this opportunity is not equitably distributed within our spheres of influence. Perhaps your sphere of influence is a classroom. Developing equity literacy will help you identify the equity gaps, the opportunity gaps, in your classroom by strengthening your ability to recognize them. It also will give you the skills to eliminate ways you might unintentionally perpetuate those gaps in your classroom”(Gorski, 2018).

Level of education is highly linked with the wages or salaries though skilled and experienced personnel may only deserve such remuneration in few cases. “Employers are using learning skills as indicators for estimating the potential productivity of employees. Looking from another angle, depending on age, people with an advanced level of education, not only begins work at a higher level, but their progress is much faster, which for people with a low degree of education happens later in life” (Mihai et al., 2015).

**POVERTY CHECKS EDUCATION**

Poverty is the highest barrier to education. It affects children economically, physically, physiologically and psychologically. Economy always plays a crucial role for selection of better institute. Unaffordability in time of need, pauses a grave threat to the dynamicity. It causes apathy with the normal and regular school goes and thereby creating backwardness in learning.

Malnutrition, disease ridden, ill-healthy and feeble physique cause checkered growth and impaired learning ability. That is why, Swami Vivekananda once told “You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Bhagavad Gita!” Swamiji was aware about the relevance of being physically fit to cope with the stress and strain of the daily life and attentiveness in studying. Sound health helps to generate resolving power also. Poverty pauses physiological development and thereby inhibits cognitive development. Anxiety, depression, do follow side by side.

Hunter (2017) has rightly observed like, “Poverty and illiteracy are closely linked – and with the second largest population in the world, India is home to one-third of all world poverty. While 22% of Indians fall below the poverty line, it has been estimated that more than half of the nation’s population lacks even basic literacy skills.” The Indian scenario of poverty and literacy is given here in under (Fig. 1) (Table-1).

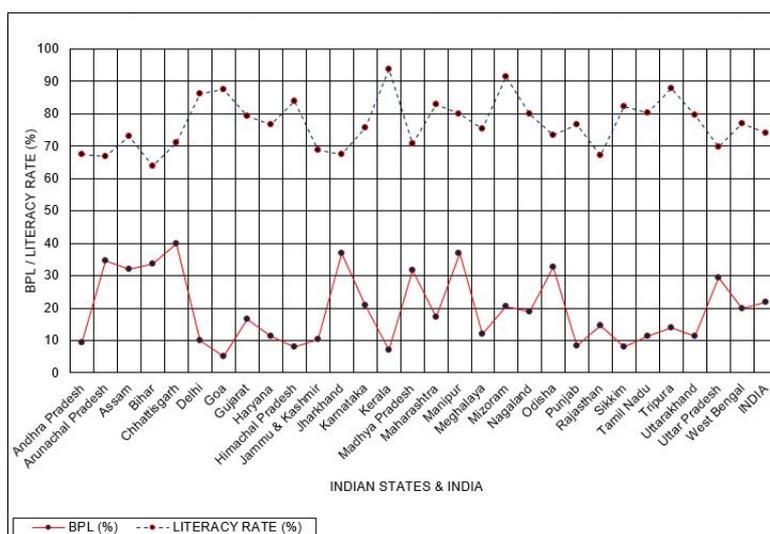


Fig. 1 Relationship between poverty (BPL) and literacy of Indian states



SL.NO.	STATE	BPL (%)	LITERACY RATE (%)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	9.2	67.35
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	34.7	66.95
3.	Assam	32	73.18
4.	Bihar	33.7	63.82
5.	Chhattisgarh	39.9	71.04
6.	Delhi	9.9	86.34
7.	Goa	5.1	87.40
8.	Gujarat	16.6	79.31
9.	Haryana	11.2	76.64
10.	Himachal Pradesh	8.1	83.78
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	10.4	68.74
12.	Jharkhand	37.0	67.63
13.	Karnataka	20.9	75.60
14.	Kerala	7.1	93.91
15.	Madhya Pradesh	31.7	70.63
16.	Maharashtra	17.4	82.91
17.	Manipur	36.9	79.85
18.	Meghalaya	11.9	75.48
19.	Mizoram	20.4	91.58
20.	Nagaland	18.9	80.11
21.	Odisha	32.6	73.45
22.	Punjab	8.3	76.68
23.	Rajasthan	14.7	67.06
24.	Sikkim	8.2	82.20
25.	Tamil Nadu	11.3	80.33
26.	Tripura	14.1	87.75
27.	Uttarakhand	11.3	79.63
28.	Uttar Pradesh	29.4	69.72
29.	West Bengal	20	77.08
<b>INDIA</b>		<b>21.9</b>	<b>74.04</b>

Table-1[Press Note on Poverty Estimate, Planning Commission, &amp;NITI Aayog, Govt. of India, 2013]

**POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES**

Poverty is a major challenge to overcome by the developing nations. The poverty line which is often demarcated by the earning of a US dollar a day is fitfully earmarked by the purchasing power of minimum food requisites for a day's sustenance. Economic crisis, inflation often enhances the degree of hopelessness among the poor.

India hosts 22% of the world's poor. To outwit this huge load of ill-paid and ill-fed people in both rural and urban areas, India has adopted a series of plans and programmes such as Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) 1973; Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) 1978-'79; National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) 1980; Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) 1985; Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) 1989, which later renamed as Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) 1999; National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) 1995; Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PM IUPEP) 1995; Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) 1997; Annapurna 1999-2000; Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) 2000; Food for Work Programme 2000-'01 as a part of the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) in 8 drought affected states of India; Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) 2001; National Food for Work Programme 2004; Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) 2005; National Rural Livelihood Mission: Ajeevika 2011; Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana (PMGAY) 2015; Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 2015.

The United Nations has adopted Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and fixed 2015 deadline to achieve the goals. Among these, are eradication of extreme poverty and hunger and all round spreading up of universal primary education. Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) constitute the pinpointed agenda of the IMF-supported economic as well as financial problems of the low-income nations (Silva, 2017). The Childfund Just Read! programme of the United States educate the children since 1952 to enhance the reading skill whose have no other alternative opportunities of learning.



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## CONCLUSION

Education, the career of culture and means of wellbeing, is more or less influenced by the poverty the socio-economic curse and vice versa. Poverty affects emotional, physical or motor skill, socio-economic and cognitive development of a child. Although, mothers' education, willingness and strong zeal are the essential ingredients of child's education. The then UN Secretary General, Kofi Atta Annan, 2003, said, "To educate girls is to reduce poverty." American religious leader, politician and settler Brigham Young once said, "You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation." But, in spite of the heaps of hurdles to education out of scourge of poverty we should have to endeavor to educate ourselves as Confucius aptly undermined as "Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace." Education is the most powerful means of eradicating poverty. So, we have to make effort to access the fruits of education in spite of many challenges. We should keep in mind that, education is not at all expensive, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

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