



Research Article

INCIDENCE OF POVERTY AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS IN INDIA: WHY DO THE SCS AND STS REMAINING CHRONICALLY POOR?

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is one of the cores and prior challenge in the development process of the nation. High poverty levels reflect poor quality of life, deprivation, malnutrition, illiteracy and low human development. This paper examines incidence of poverty among social groups in India. The analysis is based on the Tendulkar Poverty line during 1993-94 to 2011-12. The poverty have been identified to be the scheduled caste, the scheduled tribe, Other backward Caste, and Forward caste having poverty indicators in the rural and the urban. The poverty measures the proportion of the population living below poverty line among social groups. The Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) having highest poverty ration in India as well as rural and urban area. Other Backward Castes (OBC) and Forward Castes (FC) additionally measured the incidence of poverty in 1993-94 in India and after 2004-05 OBC and FC having separately measured the poverty. The highest poverty states are Bihar, Jharkhand and Maharastra in India as well as rural and urban area among social groups.

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty is one of the cores and prior challenge in the development process of the nation. High poverty levels reflect poor quality of life, deprivation, malnutrition, illiteracy and low human development. These all characteristics attach to the marginalised and vulnerable social groups. In other words, poverty in India is a social problem. Schedule Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribe (ST), which constitute about a quarter of the population, have a disproportionate rate of the poverty level.

Poverty and unemployment are the major bottlenecks in attaining faster, more broad-based and inclusive growth. Alleviation of poverty and unemployment, therefore, has always been central to the development paradigm during the post-independence period in India. The “growth enhancing strategy” based on the trickle-down mechanism soon turned out to be inefficient and inadequate in percolating the benefits of economic growth to the poorer sections of the society in rural areas. From 1970s onwards, the problems of poverty and unemployment were largely addressed through state-managed employment and income generating programmes in rural areas.(Biradar-2012)

In spite of several efforts coupled with high economic growth, the incidence of poverty continues to be widespread and persistent in India, especially in rural areas (WB, 2000; Dev, 2000; Sundaram, 2001).

Estimates of poverty among social groups (Sundaram and Tendulkar, 2003; de Haan and Dubey, 2003) also show that though the incidence of poverty has declined among SCs/STs over the years, a larger proportion of them continue to be victims of the poverty syndrome compared to others. It is unfortunate that a larger proportion of SCs/STs continued to combat multiple disadvantages and discrimination. Their places of residence and employment are largely exposed to vulnerable conditions. Most of them reside in locations that are generally isolated and close to sewage/drainage water and open to extremes of worst weather conditions. Most of them do not have access to productive assets like land (endowment failure), education (lack of human capital), regular employment, formal credit, market, state provided commodities and are often addicted to lifestyle habits that affect their health and efficiency at the work place. A combination of all these factors keeps the poor and/or drives the not-so-poor into the “vicious circle of poverty”.

It has also been argued that the reform measures initiated in the early 1990s have added fuel to fire, resulting in more sufferings to the weaker sections of the society in terms of loss of livelihood opportunities, especially for illiterates and/or literates with elementary level of education (Biradar and Jayasheela, 2007; Biradar, 2007). Thorat and Mahamallik (2005) found that the incidence of poverty was quite significant among STs followed by SCs compared to Others in rural areas from 1983 to 1999-2000. The disparity was marginally higher between STs and Others compared to that between SCs and Others. The incidence of rural poverty declined at 3.2 per cent per annum at the All- India rural level from 1983 to 2000. It declined at an annual rate of 2.9 per cent

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among SCs and 2 per cent in respect of STs during the same period. The former experienced a steeper decline than the latter (Thorat and Mahamallik, 2005:16). The poverty gap between SCs/STs and non-SCs/ STs increased although the levels of poverty declined among all social groups in varying degrees. They concluded that the decline in the incidence of poverty was accompanied by a rise in poverty disparity between SCs/STs and non-SCs/STs in the 1990s (Thorat and Mahamallik, 2005:26).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The brief review of the literature clearly indicates the incidence of poverty among social groups in India. The secondary data to examine the poverty among social groups, to review the important studies focusing mainly on the different aspects of poverty among social groups in rural India

Rohit Mutatkar (2005) author found to provide a profile of social group disparities and poverty in India, where social groups are classified as scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other social groups, and examine the factors underlying differences in levels of living between these groups and for each group separately. The paper argues that social group disparities in levels of living are the result of historically rooted ‘social disadvantages’ for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, by way of social exclusion and physical exclusion respectively, which continue to operate in contemporary Indian society. Kumar and Prakash (2017) author studied by Poverty is primarily a social problem in India which has its historical root in social structure. Poverty among socially marginalised groups is proportionately very high which is inferred from their high engagement in the primary sector, casual works and unorganized sectors with low wages. Development induced displacement and land acquisition have left them with depeasantization and casual works. Constitutionally provided affirmative action and other government steps towards poverty alleviation and employment generation have partially solved their concerns. This paper examines the current situation of poverty and employment condition among socially marginalised groups, specifically among schedule caste and schedule tribes. It focuses on the causes of their deprivation and marginalization. It also reflects the impact of government programmes and policies under inclusive development.

Objectives

- To examine the trends of poverty among social groups in India.
- To examine the state level poverty among social groups in India.
- To offer policy suggestion to reduced poverty among social groups.

Research methodology

The study is based on Secondary data collected from various source like, planning commission (2011-12), Suresh Tendulkar Repot, Aravind Panagariya and Vishal More (1993-94 to 2011-12). The study is including incidence of poverty among social groups and State level in India. The Statistical tolls used like Percentage and CV.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Incidence of poverty among social groups

The Poverty measures the proportion of the population living below poverty line among social groups in India. The table 1 presents the poverty among social groups in India during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12. The scheduled tribes have highest poverty in the year 1993-94, and additionally OBC and FC castes having 39.5 percent poverty in India during 1993-94. The scheduled castes (SCs) having continuously declined poverty based on Tendulkar poverty line during 1993-94 to 2011-12. Other back castes (OBC) and forward castes are separately measure the poverty. The Scheduled tribes having continuously highest poverty in India based on Tendulkar poverty line during 1993-94 to 2011-12. The percentage of reduction poverty is very less in scheduled tribes in India during 1993-94 to 2004-05. The scheduled castes, Other backward castes and Forward castes having 9.6 percent and 8.1 percent reduction poverty in the year 1993-94 to 2004-05. The percentage of change in SCs, STs and OBC having 21.5 percent, 17 percent and 17.1 percent reduction the poverty in India during the period 2004-05 to 2011-12.

Table 1 Incidence of Poverty among Social Groups in India

Social groups	Share in population 2011-12	Percent population below the Tendulkar line				% change of poverty reduction	
		1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2011-12
SC	19	60.5	50.9	40.6	29.4	9.6	21.5
ST	8.9	63.7	60	45.6	43	3.7	17
OBC	44.1		37.8	30	20.7	8.1*	17.1
FC	28	39.5	23	17.6	12.5		10.5
All	100	45.7	37.7	29.9	22	8	15.7

Sources: Aravind Panagariya and Vishal More

Table 2 presents the incidence of poverty among social groups in rural area in India during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12. Share of population among social groups like OBC, SCs, STs and FC having 45 percent, 20.8 percent, 11.1 percent and 23 percent during 2011-12. The scheduled tribes have highest poverty in rural area compared with other castes in the year 1993-94. An additionally others backward castes and forward castes have 44 percent poverty in rural area during 1993-94. Scheduled tribes (STs) have continuously highest poverty in rural area during 1993-94 to 2011-12. Forward castes (FC) have very low poverty in 2011-12. The scheduled castes (SCs) have continuously declined the poverty in rural area during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12. The percentage of poverty reduction having 3.7 percent in scheduled tribes, 8.9 percent in Scheduled castes and an additionally OBC and FC castes have 9 percent reduced the poverty in rural area during the period 1993-94 to 2004-05. The highest percentage of poverty reduction in scheduled castes has 22 percent in the year 2004-05 to 2011-12.

Table 2 Incidence of Poverty among Social Groups in Rural Area

Social groups	Share in population 2011-12	Percent population below the Tendulkar line				% change of poverty reduction	
		1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2011-12
SC	20.8	62.4	53.5	42.3	31.5	8.9	22
ST	11.1	65.9	62.3	47.4	45.3	3.7	16.9
OBC	45		39.8	31.9	22.7	9.0*	17.1
FC	23	44	27.1	21	15.5		11.6
All	100	50.3	41.8	33.3	25.4	8.5	16.4

Sources: Aravind Panagariya and Vishal More

The incidence of poverty among social groups in urban area in India during 1993-94 to 2011-12 shows in table 3. The Scheduled castes share of population is more than Scheduled tribe's population. The incidences of poverty Scheduled castes have 51.7 percent highest compared with other castes in urban area during the period 1993-94. The Scheduled castes (SCs) have continuously highest poverty compared with other castes during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12. Forward castes have very less poverty in the year 2004-05 and 2011-12. The percentage of poverty reduction having 11.1 percent Scheduled castes in urban area during 1993-94 to 2004-05. The Others Backward Castes (OBC) and Forward Castes (FC) having 5.8 percent poverty reduction in urban area during 1993-94 to 2004-05. The Scheduled castes (SCs) having 18.8 percent poverty reduction in urban area during 2004-05 to 2011-12. The percentage of poverty reduction STs, OBC and FC having 11.4 percents, 15.2 percent and 8 percent in urban area during the period 2004-05 to 2011-12.

Table 3 Incidence of Poverty among Social Groups in Urban Area

Social groups	Share in population		Percent population below the Tendulkar line			% change of poverty reduction	
	2011-12	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2011-12
	SC	14.6	51.7	40.6	34.1	21.7	11.1
ST	3.5	41.1	35.5	30.4	24.1	5.6	11.4
OBC	41.6		30.6	24.3	15.4		15.2
FC	40.3	28.2	16.1	12.4	8.1	5.8*	8
All	100	31.9	25.7	20.9	13.7	6.2	12

Sources: Aravind Panagariya and Vishal More

State level Incidence of Poverty among social groups

Poverty by social groups in rural area in the largest 21 states shows in table 4. Progress in poverty among SCs based on Tendulkar poverty line has been truly impressive trends of rural poverty among social groups in the largest 21 states. The incidence of Poverty Scheduled castes is very high states are Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Maharashtra having 76.8 percent, 73.7 percent, 72.7 percent and 74.1 percent in rural area during the period 1993-94.

Table 4 Poverty by Social Groups in Rural Areas in the Largest 21 States

States	SC				ST				All Groups			
	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12
Andhra Pradesh	64.7	41.8	25.7	13.1	58.4	60.3	40.2	24.1	48.3	32.3	22.7	11
Assam	59.2	45.3	36.9	28.2	55.6	28.8	32	33.4	55.3	36.4	39.9	33.9
Bihar	76.8	77.6	68.1	51.7	73.3	59.3	64.4	59.3	62.5	55.7	55.3	34.4
Chhattisgarh	53.6	48.6	67.6	48.2	66.1	65.5	66.8	52.6	56	55.1	56.1	44.6
Delhi	27.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16.2	15.6	7.6	12.9
Gujarat	56.6	49.3	17.9	22.3	53.2	57.1	48.6	36.5	43.3	39.1	26.6	21.5
Haryana	62.7	47.5	33.6	23.6	69.7	0	49.6	3.3	40.2	24.8	18.6	11.6
Himachal Pradesh	43.6	39.4	14.4	16.5	62.4	35.4	22	9.5	36.9	25	9.1	8.5
Jammu & Kashmir	34.4	14.7	8.5	18.8	74.5	26.5	3.1	16.3	32.6	14.1	8.1	11.5
Jharkhand	73.7	61	44.1	40.4	72.6	60.6	51	51.6	65.9	51.6	41.4	40.8
Karnataka	72.7	57.4	35.6	37.1	71.2	50.5	21.3	30.8	56.8	37.5	26.1	24.5
Kerala	54.4	30.8	27.7	17.8	40.9	56.9	24.4	41	34	20.2	12	9.2
Madhya Pradesh	59.7	62.5	42.4	41.3	70.2	80	61.9	55.3	49.1	53.6	42	35.7
Maharashtra	74.1	66.1	37.6	23.8	74.2	73.2	51.7	61.6	59.3	47.9	29.5	24.2
Orissa	62.8	67.9	47.1	41.4	82.2	84.4	66	63.5	63.2	60.8	39.2	35.7
Punjab	35.1	38.4	27.2	14.7	35.9	30.7	16.1	0	20.4	22.1	14.6	7.7
Rajasthan	55.3	48.5	38.6	18.6	64.1	59.3	35.9	41.4	40.9	35.8	26.4	16.1
Tamil Nadu	66.4	51.2	31.2	23.3	57	47.3	11.5	36.8	51.2	37.5	21.2	15.8
Uttar Pradesh	68.8	56.6	53.6	41.1	49.6	42	49.8	27	51	42.7	39.3	30.4
Uttarakhand	43.5	46.2	20	15.9	54.9	32.4	20	11.9	37	35.1	13.7	11.7
West Bengal	48.3	37.1	31.5	22.6	66.7	54.3	32.9	50.1	42.6	38.2	28.8	22.5
CV	24.46	37.36	50.76	49.98	30.04	47.30	56.43	61.57	29.35	36.55	53.15	53.23

Sources: Aravind Panagariya and Vishal More

The Scheduled castes (SCs) have highest poverty in Bihar as compared with all states during 1993-94 to 2011-12. The Scheduled tribes having highest poverty in Orissa have 82.2 percent and 84.4 percent during 1993-94 and 2004-05 in rural area. The Scheduled castes highest rural poverty states are Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Haryana. Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala and Panjab having very low poverty in scheduled castes and scheduled tribes during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12 in rural area compared to all states. The incidence of poverty in All groups having highest poverty states are Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Orissa and Maharashtra and low poverty states are Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala and Punjab. The Scheduled castes poverty shows in CV having 24.46 percent in all states during 1993-94. But in the year 2009-10 and 2011-12 the CV has very high like 50.76 percent and 49.98 percent because here poverty not reduction in inter states. This is same situation also seen in STs and All groups during 2009-10 to 2011-12 in rural area.

The table 5 shows that the poverty by social groups in urban area in the largest 21 states during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12. The very high poverty states are Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam and West Bengal in Scheduled castes in urban area during the period 1993-94. The Bihar and Orissa states have highest poverty in scheduled castes in urban area during 2004-05. The Bihar state is continuously highest poverty ratio compared with all states during 1993-94 to 2011-12. The scheduled castes have low poverty states are Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh in urban area during 1993-94 to 2011-12. The C V is very high in Scheduled castes in the year 2011-12. The C V is deciding the scheduled castes have remaining chronically poverty in India. The incidence of poverty in Scheduled tribes having highest poverty states are Karnataka, Jharkhand, Orissa and Maharashtra having 56.9 percent, 56.6 percent, 58.1 percent and 56.1 percent in urban area during 1993-94. The Scheduled tribes poverty ratio is very low compared with Scheduled castes in Urban area. The C V shows that Scheduled tribes have remaining chronically poverty in urban area.

The All groups have highest poverty states are Bihar and Jharkhand having 44.8 percent and 41.8 percent in urban area during the period 1993-94. The incidence poverty in Others Castes have very low compared with Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in urban area.

In the case of SCs and STs, higher rural employment and agricultural wage rates become necessary considering their overwhelming dependence on the rural economy (particularly agriculture and allied sector in rural).

Table 5 Poverty by Social Groups in Urban Areas in the Largest 21 States

States	SC				ST				All Groups			
	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12
Andhra Pradesh	45.6	35	19.8	10.9	43.9	50.1	21.2	12.1	35.3	23.4	17.7	5.8
Assam	51.7	37.2	34.9	30.5	17	29.8	29.2	15.6	27.8	21.8	25.9	20.6
Bihar	66.9	71.2	61	43	43.1	57.2	16.5	10.3	44.8	43.7	39.3	31.2
Chhattisgarh	48.5	44.6	29.7	39.5	18.6	32.7	28.6	35.2	28.4	28.4	23.6	23.9
Delhi	48.8	26.2	33.7	20.1	9.1	0	67.9	0	15.7	12.9	14.3	9.8
Gujarat	49.3	18.7	29.4	12.7	31	31.2	32.2	30.1	28.2	20.1	17.7	10.2
Haryana	41.8	46.9	48.3	25.9	0	22.2	85	14.2	24.2	22.4	23	10.3
Himachal Pradesh	26.9	9.2	20.4	9.9	0	2.4	19.6	4	13.6	4.6	12.5	4.3
Jammu & Kashmir	19.5	13.8	19.1	18	0	0	15	3	6.9	10.4	12.7	7.2
Jharkhand	67.9	52.6	40.5	40.6	56.6	47.2	49.5	28.7	41.8	23.8	31	24.8
Karnataka	55.4	41.2	29.5	25	56.9	55.7	35.6	33.7	34.3	25.9	19.5	15.3
Kerala	34.7	33	25.8	6	15.7	21.8	5	13.6	24.3	18.4	12.1	5
Madhya Pradesh	45.8	59.6	39.2	33.2	51.2	42.6	41.6	32.3	32.2	35.1	22.9	21
Maharashtra	48.6	36	30.4	15.8	56.1	34.8	32.4	23.3	30.5	25.6	18.3	9.1
Orissa	39	63.7	47.1	26.3	58.1	53.4	34.1	39.7	34.8	37.6	25.9	17.3
Punjab	50.6	36.2	35.3	18.3	42.1	2.4	15	7.2	27.4	18.7	18	9.2
Rajasthan	49.5	51	31.6	19.2	12.6	26.8	28.9	21.7	30	29.7	19.9	10.7
Tamil Nadu	57.1	40.7	23.4	9.3	25.4	34.7	17.6	2.8	33.8	19.7	12.8	6.6
Uttar Pradesh	63.8	44.2	42.2	39.1	27.9	40.3	20.2	16.3	38.4	34.1	31.7	26.2
Uttarakhand	22.8	47.5	28.1	9.3	0	39	0	25.7	20	26.2	25	10.5
West Bengal	50.3	40.9	38.2	15.7	28.1	48	20.6	44.5	31.3	24.4	21.9	14.7
CV	27.58	38.03	30.85	51.89	73.69	57.38	66.97	66.62	31.86	37.59	33.34	55.94

Sources: Aravind Panagariya and Vishal More

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Within the agricultural economy, there is a need for improvement in the access to agricultural land by the SCs and STs for improvement in agricultural wages. Since three-fourths of the SCs continue to be landless and near landless, the distribution of agricultural land will definitely serve as social security. Since an overwhelming percentage of the SCs and STs depend on wage employment in agriculture, policies concerning adequate wages in agricultural employment are essential. Availability of employment with subsistence wage in the agricultural sector is essential as is the recognition of the need for full employment throughout the year. A policy, which promotes non-agricultural employment with subsistence wage, is an absolute necessity.

The problem of chronic poverty among SCs/ STs more effectively and comprehensively, certain strategic steps need to be initiated in the domains of land reform measures (improving productive endowments) and human resource development and management (capability building through social security measures). In a bid to improve the resource endowments of the poorest of the poor, land reforms should get top priority to enforce measures to consolidate fragmented landholdings and adopt measures to improve the quality of land already distributed. The incidence of poverty was persistently higher in Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. A special budgetary allocation should be made under different social security and rural development programmes to address this issue. In addition to the general development programmes, special time- bound programmes should be initiated to tackle the ‘chronicness’ of poverty. The implementation of on-going poverty alleviation programmes should be streamlined to ensure equitable outreach and fuller utilisation of the allocated funds.

Although SCs and STs have better access to agricultural land, rural poverty among them has not shown decline, primarily because of low productivity. Therefore, there is a need for policies for increasing the productivity of the agricultural lands, cultivated by them, through introduction of better technology. The Urbanization and non-farm employment have proved important for the SCs and STs, these positive processes are not sufficient to reduce the overwhelming dependence of the tribal community on agriculture in rural areas. Therefore, sustained efforts are required to increase the participation of the SCs and STs in non-agricultural economic activities, which can be brought about through policies promoting educational and skill development.

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