

CBSE Class 9 Social Science Economics Notes

Chapter 3 - Poverty as a Challenge

Poverty is one of the formidable challenges faced by independent India. Chapter 3 of Class 9 Economics discusses the problem of poverty through examples and the way poverty is seen in social sciences. Poverty trends in India and the world are illustrated through the concept of the poverty line. Causes of poverty, as well as anti-poverty measures taken by the government, are also discussed. The chapter ends with broadening the official concept of poverty into human poverty. The notes which we have mentioned below comprise all the concepts mentioned in the chapter. While preparing the CBSE Class 9 Social Science Economics notes Chapter 3 - Poverty as a Challenge, we took help from subject matter experts. With these notes, students can understand every concept thoroughly and will make the exam preparation easier. It is considered as the best study material to revise the entire chapter quickly.

Introduction

In our daily life, we see poverty all around us. They could be landless labourers in villages, people living in overcrowded jhuggis in cities, daily wage workers or child workers in dhabas. According to facts, in India every fourth person is poor.

Two Typical Cases of Poverty

Poverty means hunger and lack of shelter, lack of clean water and sanitation facilities, lack of a regular job at a minimum decent level. Poverty is considered as one of the biggest challenges of independent India. India would be truly independent only when the poorest of its people become free of human suffering.

Poverty as seen by social scientists

Social scientists look at poverty through a variety of indicators. Usually, the indicators are used to relate to the levels of income and consumption. But, now poverty is looked through other social indicators like illiteracy level, lack of general resistance due to malnutrition, lack of access to healthcare, lack of job opportunities, lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation etc.

Poverty Line

The poverty line is a method to measure poverty based on income or consumption levels. Poverty line varies according to time and place. In India, the poverty line is determined through a minimum level of food requirement, clothing, footwear, fuel and light, educational and medical requirement, etc.. These physical quantities are multiplied by their prices in rupees. In India poverty is calculated on the basis of the desired calorie requirement. The accepted average calorie requirement in India is 2400 calories per person per day in rural areas and 2100 calories per person per day in urban areas. On the basis of these calculations, for the year 2011–12, the poverty line for a person was fixed at Rs 816 per month for rural areas and Rs 1000 for urban areas. The Poverty Line is estimated periodically (normally every five years) by conducting sample surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO).

Poverty Estimates

In India, there is a substantial decline in poverty ratios from about 45 per cent in 1993-94 to 37.2 per cent in 2004–05. The proportion of people below the poverty line further came down to about 22 per cent in 2011–12.

CBSE Class 9 Social Science Economics Notes

Chapter 3 - Poverty as a Challenge

Vulnerable Groups

Social groups, vulnerable to poverty are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. Similarly, among the economic groups, the most vulnerable groups are the rural agricultural labour households and urban casual labour households. According to a recent study, except scheduled tribe, all the other three groups (i.e. scheduled castes, rural agricultural labourers and the urban casual labour households) have seen a decline in poverty in the 1990s.

Inter-State Disparities

In India, the proportion of poor people is not the same in every state. Bihar and Odisha continued to be the two poorest states with poverty ratios of 33.7 and 32.6 percent respectively. Urban poverty is high in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal saw a decline in poverty. Punjab and Haryana have traditionally succeeded in reducing poverty with the help of high agricultural growth rates. Kerala has focused more on human resource development. In West Bengal, land reform measures have helped in reducing poverty. In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, public distribution of food grains is responsible for the improvement.

Global Poverty Scenario

In China and Southeast Asian countries, poverty declined substantially as a result of rapid economic growth and massive investments in human resource development. In Sub-Saharan Africa, poverty declined from 51 per cent in 2005 to 41 per cent in 2015. In Latin America, the ratio of poverty has declined from 10 per cent in 2005 to 4 per cent in 2015.

Causes of Poverty

There are various reasons for widespread poverty in India.

1. Under British control, India had a low level of economic development. New policies of the colonial government ruined traditional handicrafts and discouraged development of industries. like textiles. Low rate of growth and an increase in population combined to make the growth rate of per capita income very low. With the spread of irrigation and the Green revolution, many job opportunities were created in the agriculture sector. However, these were not enough to absorb all the job seekers.
2. Another feature of high poverty rates has been the huge income inequalities. One of the major reasons for this is the unequal distribution of land and other resources. In India, lack of land resources has been one of the major causes of poverty in India, but proper implementation of policy could have improved the lives of millions of rural poor.
3. Small farmers needed money to buy agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizer, pesticides etc. So, they used to borrow money and were unable to repay the loan because of poverty.

CBSE Class 9 Social Science Economics Notes

Chapter 3 - Poverty as a Challenge

Anti-Poverty Measures

The current anti-poverty scheme is divided into two parts.

- 1 Promotion of economic growth
- 2 Targeted anti-poverty programmes

Since the eighties, India's economic growth has been one of the fastest in the world. There is a strong link between economic growth and poverty reduction. Some of the schemes which are formulated to affect poverty directly or indirectly are:

1. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 - It aimed to provide 100 days of wage employment to every household to ensure livelihood security in rural areas. It also aimed at sustainable development to address the cause of drought, deforestation and soil erosion. One-third of the proposed jobs have been reserved for women.
2. In 1993, Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) was started. The main aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth in rural areas and small towns.
3. In 1995, Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP) was launched. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns.
4. In 1999, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) was launched. The programme aims at bringing the assisted poor families above the poverty line by organising them into self-help groups, through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy.
5. In 2000, the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) was launched. Under this programme, additional central assistance is given to states for basic services such as primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural drinking water and rural electrification.

The Challenges Ahead

In India, Poverty has certainly declined in India, but it still remains India's most compelling challenge. Poverty reduction is expected to make better progress in the next ten to fifteen years. This can be achieved by higher economic growth, increasing stress on universal free elementary education, declining population growth, increasing empowerment of the women and the economically weaker sections of society.