

A Critical Evaluation on Accounting and Measurements of Poverty and Poverty Line in India

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ABSTRACT

This paper has introduced from Criticism on Poverty measurement of various planning in India. In this world every citizen need some important common needs for entire life. If people doesn't have that needs they would be suffer in future. Poverty measured by policy makers they calculated Below Poverty Line (BPL) one day Rs. 35 for food. According to a new poverty Development Goals Report, as many as 320 million people in India and China are expected to come out of extreme poverty in the next four years, while India's poverty rate is projected to drop to 22 % in 2015. India has 31 % of the population still in poverty line compared with data three African countries contribution of population have. A 2010 report by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) states that 8 Indian states have more poor than 26 poorest African nations combined which totals to more than 410 million poor in the poorest African countries. Montek Singh Ahluwalia said that was enough for either poor or neither richer to satisfy a single day. Entire Indian people were felt shake when heard this announcement. Another side they spent Lakhs Rupees for constructed and repair for single toilet room for planning commission officials. Here notable that is real is differing from originality.

KEYWORDS: Extreme Poverty, intake of Calories, Cut-off household expenditure, NSSO, Below Poverty line (BPL), Bharathiar, Purchasing Parity Term

INTRODUCTION

According to Great Tamil poet Bharathiar stated about poverty that "Even if one man is hungry let us destroy the world". For his words should be proven, paper illustrates on a suggestion made to the committee constituted by the Planning Commission for review the existing methodology for official poverty estimation in India. In brief, the suggestion was to accept the official All-India urban poverty estimates derive the All-India urban poverty line that corresponds to this using the multiple (MRP) rather than uniform (URP) reference period distribution and to recalculate from this modified poverty line variations. Fundamentally, the concept of poverty is associated with socially perceived deprivation with respect to basic human needs. These basic human needs are usually listed in the material dimension as the need to be adequately nourished, the need to be decently clothed, the need to be reasonably sheltered, the need to escape avoidable diseases, the need to be

(at least) minimally educated and the need to be mobile for purposes of social interaction and participation in economic activity.

POVERTY ACCOUNTS AND ISSUES IN THE WORLD: A SCENARIO

The World Bank estimated 1.29 billion people were living in absolute poverty in 2008. Of these, about 400 million people in absolute poverty lived in India and 173 million people in China. In terms of percentage of regional populations, sub-Saharan Africa at 47 % had the highest incidence rate of absolute poverty in 2008. Between 1990 and 2010, about 663 million people moved above the absolute poverty level. Still, extreme poverty is a global challenge; it is observed in all parts of the world, including the developed economies.

Internationally, an income of less than \$1.25 (Approximately Rs.60) per day per head of purchasing power parity is defined as extreme poverty. By this

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estimate, about 40 % percent of Indians are extremely poor. According to Chen and Ravallion, about 1.76 billion people in developing world lived above \$1.25 per day and 1.9 billion people lived below \$1.25 per day in 1981. The world's population increased over the next 25 years. In 2005, about 4.09 billion people in developing world lived above \$1.25 per day and 1.4 billion people lived below \$1.25 per day (both 1981 and 2005). According to the World Bank The purchasing parity term in India in 2005 was 21.6 rupees in urban areas and 14.3 rupees in rural areas. However, poverty is on the decline in India. It has around 84 million people living in extreme poverty which makes up ~6% of its total population as of May 2021. Only paper analyze existing measurement and system of accounting on poverty and poverty line by planning commission recommendations in India.

TRENDS IN POVERTY ACCOUNTINGS IN INDIA: GLOBAL STATEMENT

The poverty line in India was originally fixed in terms of income/food requirements in 1978. It was stipulated that the calorie standard for a typical individual in rural areas was 2400 calorie and was 2100 calorie in urban areas. Then the cost of the grains (about 650gms) that fulfill this normative standard was calculated. This cost was the poverty line. In 1978, it was Rs.61.80 per person per month for rural areas and Rs.71.30 for urban areas. Since then the Planning Commission calculates the poverty line every year adjusting for inflation. The Indian Planning Commission has taken efforts to reduce the number of people living below poverty line by reducing the standards from the international \$1.25 per day to \$0.50 a day instead of improving their standard of living. However, recently, after a lot of criticism, the poverty line had been increased to about a dollar per day (Rs. 65) in urban areas and a little lesser (Rs. 50) in the rural areas¹⁰. This income is the bare minimum to support the food requirements and does not provide much for the other basic essential items like health, education etc. That is why some times the poverty

lines have been described as starvation lines (**Junofy A Rozarina. N. (2013).**)

According to a new Poverty Development Goals Report, as many as 320 million people in India and China are expected to come out of extreme poverty in the next four years, while India's poverty rate is projected to drop to 22 % in 2015. The report also indicates that in Southern Asia, however, only India, where the poverty rate is projected to fall from 51 % in 1990 to about 22 % in 2015, is on track to cut poverty in half by the 2015 target date (**Times of India, 2011**). According to 2010, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), estimated 37.2 %s of Indians live below the country's national poverty line (**Jay Mandal, 2010**). BBC added another news, a 2010 report by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) states that 8 Indian states have more poor than 26 poorest African nations combined (**The Times Of India, 2010**) which totals to more than 410 million poor in the poorest African countries (**BBC (2010)**).

Poverty in India is widespread, with the nation estimated to have a third of the world's poor. In 2011, World Bank stated, 32.7 % (1/3) of the total Indian people falls below the international poverty line of US\$ 1.25 per day (PPP) while 68.7 % live on less than US\$ 2 per day (**World Bank (2017)**). However by 2015, an estimated 53 million people will still live in extreme poverty and 23.6 % of the population will still live under US\$1.25 per day. This number is expected to reduce to 20.3 % or 268 million people by 2020. However, at the same time, the effects of the worldwide recession in 2009 have plunged 100 million more Indians into poverty than there were in 2004, increasing the effective poverty rate from 27.5 % to 37.2 %. Since then the Planning Commission calculates the poverty line every year adjusting for inflation. The poverty line in recent years is as follows-(Rs. per month per head). Sometimes leaders Programme may be used the MPI as a Policy Tool. *To turn a corner on poverty, commitments at the highest levels are essential.* (**Sabina Alkire. 2020**).

Table: 1 Number of Poor (in Millions)

Year	Number of Poor (in Millions)	
	Rural	Urban
1960-61	138	29
1970-71	200	41
1977-78	253	54
1984-85	222	51
1989-90	169	42
2000-2001	328	454
2005-2006	368	560

Source: planning commission, Government of India.

POVERTY MEASUREMENT BY PLANNING COMMISSION IN INDIA

Since 1972 poverty has been defined on basis of the money required to buy food worth 2100 calories in urban areas and 2400 calories in rural areas. In June 1972, this year a government committee headed by NC Saxena committee estimated 50 % Indians were poor as against Planning Commission's 2006 figure of 28.5 %. Since the early 1990, India's poverty line estimated methodology recommended by the Lakshadweep committee. By India's Planning Commission, the number of people living in absolute poverty in India decreased by 12.5 % between 2004-2005 and 2009-2010. India's official poverty rate stands at 29.8 % (**Tripti Lahiri, 2012**), or close to 350 million people using 2010 population figures, down from around 37.2 % or 400 million previously. The latest poverty estimates by the Planning Commission show that 29.8 % or 360 million Indians were poor in 2009-10 as compared to 37.2 % or 400 million in 2004-05 the difference being equal to the population of countries such as Spain, Argentina and Canada (**Chetan Chauhan, 2012**).

TABLE: 2 STATE SPECIFIC POVERTY LINES FOR 2009-10

Sl. No.	States / Union Territories	Rural	Urban
1	Andhra Pradesh	693.8	926.4
2	Arunachal Pradesh	773.7	925.2
3	Assam	691.7	871
4	Bihar	655.6	775.3
5	Chhattisgarh	617.3	806.7
6	Delhi	747.8	1040.3
7	Goa	931	1025.4
8	Gujarat	725.9	951.4
9	Haryana	791.6	975.4
10	Himachal Pradesh	708	888.3
11	Jammu & Kashmir	722.9	845.4
12	Jharkhand	616.3	831.2
13	Karnataka	629.4	908
14	Kerala	775.3	830.7
15	Madhya Pradesh	631.9	771.7
16	Maharashtra	743.7	961.1
17	Manipur	871	955
18	Meghalaya	686.9	989.8
19	Mizoram	850	939.3
20	Nagaland	1016.8	1147.6
21	Orissa	567.1	736
22	Puducherry	641	777.7
23	Punjab	830	960.8
24	Rajasthan	755	846
25	Sikkim	728.9	1035.2
26	Tamil Nadu	639	800.8
27	Tripura	663.4	782.7
28	Uttar Pradesh	663.7	799.9
29	Uttarakhand	719.5	898.6
30	West Bengal	643.2	830.6
	All India	672.8	859.6

Source: Planning Commission

The above table carries details State wise of poverty lines for 2009-10, poverty ratios for 2009-10 and poverty ratios for 2004-05. The Planning Commission setting a poverty line of 32 rupees per day for urban India and 26 rupees for rural India earlier, the country's top economic planners lowered the bar a hefty 12 percent to 29 rupees and 22 rupees to fudge the stats (**Jason Overdorf, 2012**). As per the

Tendulkar Committee Report, the national poverty line at 2004-05 prices was a monthly per capita consumption expenditure of 446.68 in rural and 578.80 in urban areas in 2004-05.

The above poverty lines which refer to the national average vary from state to state because of price differentials. The Tendulkar Committee has mentioned in its report that the proposed poverty lines

have been validated by checking the adequacy of actual private expenditure per capita near the poverty lines on food, education, and health by comparing them with normative expenditures consistent with nutritional, educational, and health outcomes. The Tendulkar poverty line worked out to about 19 rupees and 15 rupees per capita per day in urban areas and rural areas respectively was counted as poor. By new recommendation, everyone spending less than 22.5 rupees a day in rural areas and less than 28 rupees a day in urban areas was counted as poor this time around. That's a pretty significant increase in the cut-offs compared to 2004-2005. In 2010, the official poverty rate started out at 27.5 % of the population. The Planning Commission of India has accepted the Tendulkar Committee report which says that 37 % of people in India live below the poverty line (BPL).

RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF POVERTY MEASUREMENT

The 66th round of the national sample survey for 2009-10 provided a more realistic marker for estimating both the poverty line and the population below it than the Planning Commission's calculation of Rs 28.65 per capita per day for cities and Rs 22.42 for rural areas. The rural and urban all India averages for monthly expenditure are Rs 1,054 and Rs 1,984 per person daily, respectively and if these are projected on the expenditure-population curve, the population below this works out to 64.47 % (rural) and 66.70 % (urban). In September 2011, Based on National Sample Survey Organization report on household spend the government decided to revise the Rs 32 a day expenditure criteria for urban population and Rs 26 for rural population by factoring in the 2009-10. The affidavit uses consumer price index for industrial workers and agricultural labour to state that at June 2011 prices, the poverty line can be "provisionally" placed at Rs 965 per person per month in urban areas and Rs 781 per person per month in rural areas.

EXTENT OF POVERTY IN INDIA A DIFFERENT DIMENSION

➤ Jensen and Miller Approach on Poverty

Jensen and Miller (2010) have proposed a novel approach based on revealed preference of a household in choosing its consumption basket. A rational consumer is expected not to maximize the calorie consumption but to maximize her utility. Nevertheless, when an individual is below her subsistence level of calorie intake, she suffers from various physical inabilities like headache, dizziness and lack of concentration.

Such suffering constitutes a form of disutility on the part of this consumer. Since less than the threshold level of consumption implies disutility for her, she

minimizes these sufferings by augmenting consumption of food items having relatively higher calorie content per unit of expenditure. The food items, which provides relatively high amount of calorie per unit price, are collectively defined as "staple foods" in this context.

➤ JM Estimates of Poverty

First, an all-India study plot SCS against house-hold expenditure for all households in our sample, sector-wise. Cut-off household expenditure for the rural sample in 2004-05 is found to be Rs 1,650. The extent of poverty in rural India through the headcount ratio by considering the proportion of the population with a lower household expenditure compared to the critical value 31 % in 2004-05. Cut-off house-hold expenditure for the urban sample in 2004-05 turns out to be Rs 2,288 and it leads us to a figure of 25.8 % as the extent of poverty in urban India.

Poverty estimates for year 2007-08 stands at 31.3 % and 40.8 % in the rural and urban sectors with cut-off household expenditures of Rs 2,380 and Rs 4,315, respectively. Poverty estimates using this procedure stand at 33.3 % and 28.5 %, with Rs 1,759 and Rs 2,433 as cut-offs for household expenditures in rural-refined and urban-refined sample, respectively for 2004-05. For 2007-08, the poverty estimates stand at 28.9 % and 36.8 % with Rs 2,334 and Rs 4,047 as cut-off household expenditures for rural-refined and urban-refined samples, respectively.

➤ Comparison of the JM Figures with the Tendulkar Estimates

For 2004-05, the Tendulkar Committee decided Rs 447 and Rs 579 as poverty lines for rural and urban sectors, respectively. We find the local averages for the household expenditure around the cut-off expenditure Rs 1,650 and Rs 2,288, for rural and urban sectors, respectively defined by the JM approach. Thereby estimate that the monthly per capita expenditure around the cut-off expenditure stands at Rs 401 and Rs 530 for rural and urban, respectively. By Tabulated JM poverty estimated state-wise, vis-à-vis their Tendulkar Committee counterparts. Both estimates do not differ too widely. Spear-man's rank correlation coefficient is a standard measure to find robustness of ranks for two sets of estimates. For the urban sector, both estimates are similar the JM estimate of 25.8 % for all India is matched by the Tendulkar Committee figure of 25.7 %. However, there is considerable divergence between the JM estimates and the Tendulkar Committee estimates for the rural sector. While the Tendulkar Committee estimate for rural poverty is fixed at 41.8 %, its JM counter-part is between 31.0 and 36.8 % depending on the level of aggregation India, or state-

wise. We also estimate the extent of poverty with 2007-08 data and find a striking increase in urban poverty to 40.8 % on the face of a somewhat unchanging figure for the rural sector.

➤ **Uniformity estimation for poverty by JM approach**

Review committee was appointed in 2012 All approaches are based on a uniform calorie norm for all individuals by the Planning Commission, which make them susceptible to criticism from different quarters for different reasons. In spite of different problems embedded in having a uniform calorie norm for all families, there was no other alternative methodology available for calculation of the poverty line (**Kausik Gangopadhyay & Kamal Singh (2013)**).

➤ **Jensen and Miller Methodology**

Average per capita calorie intake has been extensively used to assess the extent of poverty in India. The approaches taken by two expert groups, which were set up by the Planning Commission in 1973 (task force group) and in 1993 (Lakadawala Committee), constitute two examples. Under those approaches, we specify a threshold daily calorie intake per capita for example, 2,400 and 2,100 calories for rural and urban populations, respectively and then decide a poverty line basket a consumption bundle that ensures the specified threshold level of calories for all members of a household. This basket, in general, depends on the number of members in a household. The definition of the poverty line, in nominal terms, is the per capita expenditure which enables a household to afford that specified poverty line basket. Households with a lower income are categorized as calorie-deprived and, hence, under the poverty line.

SEVERAL LIMITATIONS ON POVERTY MEASUREMENTS

- First, there is, in general, hardly any consensus on the subsistence calorie threshold itself (**Svedberg 2000**).
- Second, there is also evidence of change in calorie norms over time, which makes it even harder to press for a uniform calorie threshold.
- **Deaton and Dreze (2009)** demonstrated that per capita calorie consumption has been declining for the last 25 years despite an increase in the real wages over the years causing a downward shift in the calorie Engel curve. This apparent puzzle is only resolved if the calorie requirements change over time.
- Third, absorption of calories from food items depends on various characteristics of an individual, such as the health status, metabolic rate and fitness level (**Svedberg 2000**). Most of these

characteristics, being unobservable and difficult to measure, pose a severe limitation on the conversion of a calorie threshold into nominal terms. As an example, a person with some stomach disorder may have to consume a larger amount of food items compared to a healthy individual for obtaining a definite level of calories. If we use the same calorie threshold for a person suffering from a stomach disorder and a healthy individual, we either under-estimate the extent of poverty among the persons with stomach disorder or overestimate the degree of poverty among the healthy individuals. In the prevailing studies, none of these characteristics have been considered for estimating poverty in India.

- Fourth, a threshold calorie approach does not consider the non-nutritional attributes for example, taste of food items. In practice, a household's selection of food items not only depends on the calorie content but is also contingent on these non-nutritional attributes. If we merely calculate whether the household's income is sufficient to buy the poverty line basket, it may not be sufficient. As these attributes have been completely ignored in the approaches based on the calorie threshold, estimation of poverty based on a calorie threshold approach may give rise to unreliable figures. There has also been a strong indication that there is no tight link between the income of a household and calories consumed by members of this household (**Deaton and Drèze 2009**). The poverty estimates, therefore, could be arbitrary if we consider the poverty line basket and per capita calorie consumption.

ANOTHER DIMENSION OF POVERTY IN INDIA

1. Global hunger index for poverty

The 2011 Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report places India amongst the three countries where the Global Hunger Index between 1996 and 2011 went up from 22.9 to 23.7, while 78 out of the 81 developing countries studied, including Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Kenya, Nigeria, Myanmar, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Malawi, succeeded in improving hunger condition (**The times of India, 2011**).

2. Persistence of Malnutrition among Children

Data from The World Bank shows that the percentage of underweight children in sub-Saharan Africa is 24 % while India has almost twice the amount at 47 %. Out of the 47 %, 50 % were from rural areas, 38 % from urban areas, 48.9 % of the underweight are girls and 45.5 % are boys.

3. Household Accounts of Poverty

Estimates by NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research) show that 48 % of the Indian households earn more than Rs.90, 000 (US\$1,701) annually (or more than US\$ 3 PPP per person). According to NCAER, in 2009, of the 222 million households in India, the absolutely poor households (annual incomes below Rs. 45,000) accounted for only 15.6 % of them or about 35 million (about 200 million Indians). Another 80 million households are in income levels of Rs. 45,000– 90,000 per year. These numbers also are more or less in line with the latest World Bank estimates of the “below-the-poverty-line” households that may total about 100 million (or about 456 million individuals).

4. The Head Count Ratio (HCR)

The Head Count Ratio (HCR) is obtained using urban and rural poverty lines which are applied on the MPCE distribution of the states. The aggregated BPL population of the states is used to obtain the final all India HCR and poverty lines in rural and urban areas. Some of the key results are: The all India HCR has declined by 7.3 percentage points from 37.2 % in 2004-05 to 29.8 % in 2009-10, with rural poverty declining by 8.0 percentage points from 41.8 % to 33.8 % and urban poverty declining by 4.8 percentage points from 25.7 % to 20.9 %.

5. Health aspects of poverty line:

India must concentration to poverty eradication as well as improvement of health status of people to create healthy citizens with enormous capital formation for economic development; otherwise sans health facility we don't should not make goals to attain in future by government.

5.1. Income / Food Requirement Based Poverty Line In India

The poverty line was originally fixed in terms of income/food requirements in 1978. It was stipulated that the calorie standard for a typical individual in rural areas was 2400 calorie and was 2100 calorie in urban areas. Then the cost of the grains (about 650 gms) that fulfil this normative standard was calculated. This cost was the poverty line. In 1978, it was Rs. 61.80 per person per month for rural areas and Rs. 71.30 for urban areas.

5.2. Monthly Consumption Expenditure:

The poverty line constitutes if the average monthly consumption expenditure is taken as the benchmark of what an individual needs to survive, the poverty line would be Rs 66.10 for urban areas and Rs 35.10 for rural regions, while about 65 % of the population will be below this cutoff. Government study fixed poverty line at Rs 66 for cities and Rs 35 for villages (Rajeev Deshpande, 2012).

5.3. Based On Food:

The proportion of the world's population living in countries where per-capita food supplies are less than 2,200 calories (9,200 kilojoules) per day decreased from 56 % in the mid-1960s to below 10 % by the 1990s. Similar trends can be observed for literacy, access to clean water and electricity and basic consumer items.

5.4. Health is private dominants or Lack of Government Health Care Spending

The health care system in India predominantly is catered to by the private sector and a minuscule contribution through external flows. Expenditure in the private sector contributes to 78.05 % of total health expenditure, public sector accounts for 19.67 % and external flows 2.28 %. In totality, health expenditure formed 4.25 % of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The distribution of total health expenditure and its shared by GDP (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare & Other Central Ministries, (2006–2007), Government of India).

5.5. Low level of investment on Health compare with MSEA Countries

India spent 66 billion US\$ on health care \$54 per capita which has 61 % spent by households. Government's health spending as compared to other countries of the region Among Low-Mid South East Asian Region Countries health spending as a per cent GDP namely both Bhutan and Timor-Leste (5 %), Maldives (4 %), Thailand (3 %), Nepal(2%) and Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka shared 1% respectively. Particularly in India, Total government expenditure is in the median range as a per cent of GDP (33 %) Share of government spending allocated to health is low (4 %) Government expenditure on health as a % GDP is low (1%). Total health expenditure from all the sources was Rs. 1,337,763 million during 2004–05 constituting 4.25 % of GDP. Of the total health expenditure, the share of private sector (78.05 %) and public sector (19.67 %) and the external flows (2.28 %). The provisional estimates from 2005–06 to 2008–09 shows that health expenditure as a share of GDP has come down to 4.13 % in 2008–09. This is not enough for health measure to create health care facilities to encourage human resources all over India.

Some questions to be answers:

1. Is poverty line suitable enough for every one as daily consumption expenditure of Rs. Rs. 32 and Rs. 26 in urban and rural areas?
2. Is it correct methodology to satisfy the utility for all the citizens of country?
3. Is reliable method caloric measurement on food for the people who suffered health problems?

4. Is enough for thresholds at 965 and 781 rupees per capita per month by the Indian planning commission new estimates for the country's poverty lines in urban and rural areas?
5. Has government any correct new measures to identify the poverty and alleviate that subsequently?

CONCLUSION

This paper has more the questions to be clear the answers by policy maker. Every layman knows nowadays, poverty alleviation programs running smoothly to devoid, but in reality the the deteriorating people have nothing from poverty programs across the country. Unexpectedly government of India reformed the planning commission in to new format named NITI Aayog. Existing JM approach on poverty based on human choice and utility maximization based on their needs and utility is ignoring abundantly. Government should be concentrated on another side of health status of people in the country instead of existing strategy for take care of the struggled people for measuring the poverty line exactly otherwise it will not be valid.. Poverty measured by nutritional status of people that will be compared with national accounts for calculation. But, in these days, poverty measurement is not only intake of food in terms of caloric and spending in terms of money across the country.

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